

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)



15 OCT 14 P3:39

SENATE
S. No. 2991

RECEIVED BY: *J.*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

AN ACT
TO ESTABLISH AN INTER-AGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE THAT
WILL ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF UNDERAGE DRINKING

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 13 provides:

Section 13. The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.

Young people begin to take risks and experiment as they undergo a transition period from childhood to adulthood. Without support and guidance, some young people may engage in behaviors that place them and others at risk – including using alcohol.

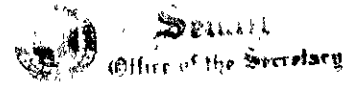
Experts continuously issue their warnings about the risks of underage drinking. During adolescence, the brain goes through dynamic changes, thus, alcohol can result in damage to long-term and short-term growth processes. Even short-term drinking impairs learning and memory far more in youth than adults, and adolescents need only to drink half as much to suffer the same negative effects. Moreover, long years of alcohol abuse can seriously affect the functioning of the liver. In the long run, the heart muscle is also weakened, leaving it unable to pump blood efficiently, which may affect the lungs, liver and brain.

Adolescents should be properly informed regarding the risks involved in underage drinking. For that reason, there is a need to create a body to oversee a coordinated approach to prevention, intervention, treatment, and research on the problem of underage drinking.¹


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
RP

¹ This bill was originally filed in the Thirteenth Congress, Second Regular Session.

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Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Inter-Agency
2 Coordinating Committee to Prevent Underage Drinking Act”.

3 SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to recognize the
4 vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical,
5 moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being.

6 SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall
7 mean:

8 A. “Alcohol” shall refer to ethyl alcohol, ethanol, or spirits of wine including
9 all dilutions, purifications and mixtures thereof, from whatever source by whatever
10 process produced and shall include whisky, brandy, rum, gin, tequila, vodka, and other
11 similar products or mixtures. It shall also include malt beverages, mixed or fermented
12 liquors, including tuba, basi, tapuy, and lambanog;

13 B. “Alcoholic beverage industry” shall refer to the brewers, vinters, distillers,
14 importers, distributors, and retail outlets that sell and serve, beer, wine, and distilled
15 spirits;

1 C. "Committee" shall refer to the Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee to
2 prevent underage drinking;

3 D. "Frequent heavy drinking" shall refer to five or more drinks on at least five
4 occasions in the last 30 days;

5 E. "Heavy drinking" shall refer to five or more drinks on the same occasion in
6 the past 30 days;

7 F. "Minor" shall refer to any person under the age of 18;

8 G. "School-based prevention" shall refer to programs which are
9 institutionalized, and run by staff members or school-designated persons or organizations
10 in every grade of school, kindergarten through high school; and

11 H. "Secretary" shall refer to the Secretary of the Department of Health;

12 SECTION 4. *Establishment of the Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee to*
13 *Prevent Underage Drinking.* – There shall be established an inter-agency coordinating
14 committee, which shall focus on drafting measures to prevent underage drinking.

15 A. Chair – The Secretary of the Department of Health shall serve as the chair
16 of the Committee

17 B. Other Agencies – The Committee shall be composed of the following
18 government agencies:

- 19 1. Department of Health;
- 20 2. Department of Social Welfare and Development;
- 21 3. Department of Education;
- 22 4. National Youth Commission;
- 23 5. Sangguniang Kabataan; and
- 24 6. Other agencies as the Chair determines to be appropriate.

1 SECTION 5. *Duties and Functions.* – The Committee shall have the following
2 functions:

3 A. Guide policy and program development across the national government and
4 local government units with respect to underage drinking;

5 B. Actively seek the input of and shall consult with all appropriate and
6 interested parties, including public health research and interest groups, foundations, and
7 alcohol beverage industry trade associations and companies;

8 C. Submit an annual report to the Congress that summarizes the following:

9 1. all programs and policies of government agencies designed to
10 prevent underage drinking;

11 2. the extent of progress in reducing underage drinking nationally;

12 3. data that the Chair shall collect with respect to the following
13 information:

14 a. patterns and consequences of underage drinking;

15 b. measures of the availability of alcohol to minors and the
16 exposure of this population to messages regarding alcohol in advertising
17 and the entertainment media;

18 c. surveillance data, including information on the onset and
19 prevalence of underage drinking;

20 d. any additional finding resulting from research conducted or
21 supported under Section 5(D);

22 e. evidence-based best practices to both prevent underage
23 drinking and provide treatment services to those youth who need them;

24 D. Collect data and conduct or support research on underage drinking with
25 respect to the following:

1 1. the short and long term impact of alcohol use and abuse upon
2 adolescent brain development and other organ systems;

3 2. comprehensive community-based programs or strategies and nation-
4 wide systems to prevent underage drinking, across the underage years from early
5 childhood to young adulthood, including programs funded and implemented by
6 government entities, public health interest groups and foundations, and alcohol
7 beverage companies and trade associations;

8 3. improved knowledge of the scope of the underage drinking problem
9 and progress in preventing and treating underage drinking; and

10 4. annually obtain more precise information than is currently collected
11 on the type and quantity of alcoholic beverages consumed by underage drinkers,
12 as well as information on brand preferences of these drinkers and their exposure to
13 alcohol advertising.

14 SECTION 6. *Appropriations.* – To carry out the provisions of this Act, such
15 amount as may be necessary is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National
16 Treasury. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continuous operation of the Inter-
17 Agency Coordinating Committee to prevent underage drinking shall be included in the
18 annual operations of the Department of Health.

19 SECTION 7. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or
20 unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other
21 provisions hereof.

22 SECTION 8. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, and issuances, or
23 portions thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby
24 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

1 SECTION 9. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
2 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

/aml 2015