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Office of the Secretary

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SENATE
P.S. Resolution No. 169

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STATUS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, Section 14 of Republic Act No. 10354, or the "Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act," mandates the State to "provide age- and development-appropriate reproductive health education to adolescents which shall be taught by adequately trained teachers in formal and non-formal educational systems and integrated in relevant subjects;"

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 14 of Republic Act No. 10354, knowledge and skills in self-protection against discrimination, sexual abuse and violence, and teen pregnancy shall be taught in schools. Reproductive health education shall also include the rights of women and children, responsible teenage behavior, gender and development, and responsible parenthood;

WHEREAS, Republic Act. No. 10354 provides for flexibility in the formulation and adoption of appropriate reproductive health education course content, scope and methodology in each educational level provided that these take into consideration various stakeholder perspectives through consultations with parents-teachers-community associations, school officials, and other interest groups;

WHEREAS, the ten-point socio-economic agenda of the current administration includes the strengthened implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law "to enable especially poor couples to make informed choices on financial and family planning;"¹

WHEREAS, the population growth rate of the country was at 1.73% for the period 2010-2015, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).² As of August 1, 2015, the country's population was at 100,981,437, based on the 2015 Census of Population (POPCEN 2015). The 2015 population is higher by 8.64 million compared

¹ <http://www.doh.gov.ph/node/6750>

² <https://psa.gov.ph/content/142-million-philippine-population-2045>

with the population of 92.34 million in 2010, and by 24.47 million compared with the population of 76.51 million in 2000;³

WHEREAS, according to the PSA, teenage pregnancy in the Philippines is on the rise. Based on 2011 to 2014 official statistics, one in every ten women of child-bearing age is a teenager, and 24 babies are born every hour from teenage mothers;⁴

WHEREAS, a study commissioned by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), entitled *Demographic Sweet Spot and Dividend in the Philippines: The Window of Opportunity is Closing Fast*, concludes that the country is currently faced with a rare “demographic window of opportunity” to benefit from its young population and further enhance the country’s economic growth. However, the study notes that lowering the fertility rate, through the full implementation of the Reproductive Health law, is one of the key elements needed to realize this valuable opportunity;⁵

WHEREAS, in line with the administration’s economic program of poverty- and inequality-reducing economic growth, NEDA Chief Ernesto Pernia articulated the government’s intention to fully implement the provision of sexuality education in schools. Secretary Pernia also stated that proper education for the youth on how to take care of their bodies is one of the ways to reduce unwanted teenage pregnancies;⁶

WHEREAS, the youth are faced with critical decisions involving sexual and reproductive health that could have a major impact on their lives. However, research cited by UNFPA shows that majority of adolescents still lack the knowledge needed to make those decisions responsibly. Without adequate information, they are left vulnerable to coercion, sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancies;⁷

WHEREAS, UNFPA Country Representative Klaus Beck highlighted the importance of including sexuality education in our Philippine education system to help ensure young girls and boys make responsible choices based on accurate information;⁸

WHEREAS, pursuant to Republic Act No. 10354, the Department of Education (DepED) is tasked to develop a curriculum for reproductive health education that will be used by public schools and may be adopted by private schools. Thus, in 2013, the DepEd released the K to 12 Curriculum Guide for Health, which incorporates lessons on Reproductive Health and Responsible Parenthood;⁹

³ <https://psa.gov.ph/content/highlights-philippine-population-2015-census-population>

⁴ http://psa.gov.ph/sites/default/files/TRIVIA_teenagemothers_rev.pdf

⁵ http://www.bsp.gov.ph/events/pcls/downloads/2015/BSP_2a_mapa_paper.pdf, p. 19.

⁶ <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/572767/money/economy/neda-chief-pernia-sex-ed-may-be-taught-in-schools-this-year>

⁷ <http://www.unfpa.org/comprehensive-sexuality-education>

⁸ <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/572767/money/economy/neda-chief-pernia-sex-ed-may-be-taught-in-schools-this-year>

⁹ <http://www.deped.gov.ph/sites/default/files/Final%20Health%201-10%2001.09.2014.pdf>

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved, as it is hereby resolved, by the Senate of the Philippines to direct the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the status of the implementation of reproductive health education in schools.

Adopted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Aquino". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.