

September 10, 2019

**HONORABLE MA. LUCILLE L. NAVA, M.D.**  
Chairperson  
Committee on Population and Family Relations  
RVM Bldg., House of Representatives  
Quezon City

Dear **Representative Nava**:

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) submits its comments on the dissolution of marriage or divorce in relation to **House Bill Nos. 100 and 2263** entitled: "**Absolute Divorce Act**", introduced by Representatives Edcel Lagman and Pantaleon Alvarez, respectively and **House Bill No. 838** or the "**Philippine Divorce Act of 2019**", introduced by Representatives Arlene Brosas, France Castro, Sarah Jane Elago, Eufemia Cullamat, Carlos Isagani Zarate, and Ferdinand Gaité.

The DSWD considered **Section 19** (Equal Rights in All Matters Relating to Marriage and Family Relations), **letter (a)** of Republic Act No. 9710 or "**The Magna Carta of Women**", which provides:

*"The State shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and shall ensure the same rights to enter into and leave marriages or common law relationships referred to under the Family Code without prejudice to personal or religious beliefs."*

We believe that the enactment into law of these proposed measures other than the existing laws on legal separation, declaration of nullity or marriage and annulment will aid individuals, especially women, who are suffering from various forms of violence from their spouses. These will enable them to end their dysfunctional marriages and regain dignity, self-esteem, and worth as persons.

Further, we would like to emphasize that despite the dissolution of marriage, the best interest of the divorcees' children should never be compromised particularly their legal status, custody and financial support.

Attached is a copy of the **DSWD's Official Position Paper in the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress**, which was received by the same Committee on December 13, 2017 for reference.

For the Committee's consideration.

Very truly yours,



**ROLANDO JOSELITO D. BAUTISTA**  
Secretary  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by:  
Jina Asuncion  
19 - 24 - 19