



September 10, 2019

HONORABLE RISA HONTIVEROS
Chairperson
Committee on Women, Children
Family Relations and Gender Equality
Senate of the Philippines
GSIS Bldg., Financial Center
Diokno Blvd., Pasay City

Dear Senator Hontiveros:

This refers to the request of your Committee for the Department's comments on the dissolution of marriage or divorce in relation to **Senate Bill No. 67** entitled: "An Act Recognizing the Foreign Decree of Termination of Marriage and Allowing Its Subsequent Registration with the Philippine Civil Registry, Amending for the Purpose Executive Order No. 209, Otherwise Known as the Family Code of the Philippines" (Sen. Pia Cayetano); **Senate Bill No. 288** or the "Absolute Divorce Act of 2018" (Sen. Cayetano); and **Senate Bill No. 356** entitled: "Divorce Act of 2019" (Sen. Hontiveros).

The Department of Social Welfare and Development 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.

For the Committee's consideration.

Very truly yours,


ROLANDO JOSELITO D. BAUTISTA
Secretary
Date: _____

Office of Sen. Risa Hontiveros
Room 527
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By: 
Tel. No.: 807-8434 / 807-8156