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Department of Social Welfare and Development
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29 May 2014

HONORABLE ROGELIO G. ESPINA, M. D.

Chairman
Committee on Population and Family Relations
House of Representatives
Quezon City

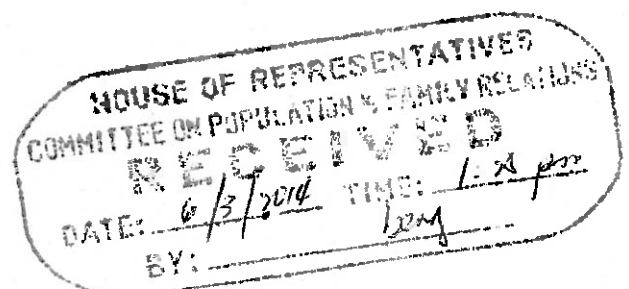
Dear Congressman Espina:

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) expresses its support to the enactment of the following bills:

1. House Bill No. 408 – “An Act To Combat Abuse And Enhance Penalties For Crimes Against And To Strengthen Government Service And Support Mechanisms For Seniors,” by Representative Susan A. Yap
2. House Bill No. 2415 – An Act To Combat Abuse And Increase Penalties For Crimes Against Senior Citizens,” by Representative Teodoro T. Haresco
3. House Bill No. 2569 – “An Act To Establish Programs And Activities To Aid Victims Of Elder Abuse, And Provide Training To Health And Government Professionals In The Assistance Of Such Victims ” by Representative Sol Aragon

Relative to this, may we respectfully suggest the consolidation of the three (3) bills into one and consider the herein suggestions, as follows:

1. To have a clear standard or definition on what constitute elder abuse by contextualizing it into situations that may fall under the category of abuse like in cases where unintentional indifference of family members may result in inadvertent maltreatment of older persons.
2. To cover all persons who committed acts against senior citizens regardless of their circumstance, may he/she be a relative or not.
3. To authorize DSWD to also regulate privately-run, operated for profit, elderly facilities not only the non-stock, non-profit NGOs to require them to conform to social welfare standards through registration, licensing and accreditation.



4. Institute protocols in handling elder abuse cases. The adoption of similar practices and protocols for women and children victims of domestic violence can be replicated in the bill which includes among others the reporting mechanism and intervention made by authorities particularly the role of social worker.
5. For consistency with RA 9257, "senior citizen" or "elderly" shall mean any resident citizen of the Philippines at least sixty (60) years old."
6. On the conduct of research on elderly abuse as provided under Section 4 of HBN 408 and 2415, these may already be undertaken by jointly by the member agencies of the National Coordinating and Monitoring Board (NCMB). It is composed of DSWD, DILG, DOJ, DOH, DTI and five (5) accredited NGOS for senior citizens. The conduct of research is already included in the 2012-2016 Philippine Plan of Action for Senior Citizens.
7. On HBN 2569, we would like to suggest the inclusion of the provision on monitoring and coordinating mechanism and appropriate funds for the purpose.

The required appropriation will support the National Coordinating and Monitoring Board (NCMB) to carry out its mandate to develop an effective monitoring and reporting system, and to develop and institute effective and innovative approaches and methods with which to address the emerging concerns of the senior citizens towards an efficient, consistent and uniform implementation of the law, among others.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,


CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN
Secretary