

04 October 2017

REPRESENTATIVE DIVINA GRACE C. YU

Chairperson
Committee on the Welfare of Children
House of Representatives
Quezon City

Dear Representative Yu:

This has reference to the request of the House Committee on the Welfare of Children for our Department's official position on the various legislative measures concerning the establishment of City and Municipal Rehabilitation Centers for Children and Youth with Disabilities (CYWDs) and granting additional privileges to children with special needs (CSNs).

The Department of Social Welfare and Development wishes to express its full support on these measures that seek to strengthen government policies and programs on CSNs and CYWDs. To contribute to the bills' enhancement, we are also proposing the following:

1. Consolidate **House Bill Nos. 352 and 396** as both measures seek to provide financial exemptions for CSNs. In the consolidated bill:
 - a. Under **Definition of Terms**: To replace Children with Special Needs with Children and Youth with Disabilities (CYWDs) as defined under the Children and Young People with Disabilities Fact Sheet by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to be read as:

"Children and Youth with Disabilities - refer to children up to the age of 18 who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."
 - b. May we also inform the Committee that the Philippines define youth as those persons ranging from fifteen (15) to thirty (30) years old under Republic Act No. 8044 or the Youth in Nation-Building Act.
2. For **House Bill No. 396**: Under **Sec. 6**: To include the conduct of baseline studies on the extent of Children with Special Needs in the locality as part of the functions of the proposed Office for Children with Special Needs (OCSN).

3. Consolidate **House Bill Nos. 2442, 4813 and 5836** as all these measures seek to create rehabilitation centers for CYWDs. In the consolidated bill:

- a. To include/adopt the definition of disability as defined under Republic Act No. 7277 or the Magna Carta for Disabled Persons to be read as:

"Disability shall mean (1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more psychological, physiological or anatomical function of an individual or activities of such individual; (2) a record of such an impairment; or (3) being regarded as having such impairment."

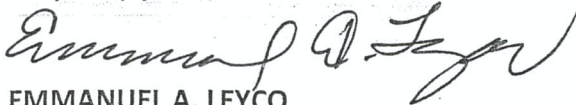
- b. Consider the age bracket for youth with disabilities as stated in Republic Act No. 8044 or the Youth in Nation-Building Act to be read as:

"Youth shall refer to those persons who ages range fifteen (15) to thirty (30) years old."

- c. To include Support Group Program/Activities or "Respite Care Program" for the parents or family members of CYWDs wherein they will be given counselling services and psychosocial support.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,



EMMANUEL A. LEYCO

Undersecretary and Officer-in-Charge