



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development

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20 January 2017

REPRESENTATIVE EMMELINE Y. AGLIPAY - VILLAR

Chairperson

Committee on Women and Gender Equality

House of Representatives

Quezon City

Dear **Chairperson Aglipay - Villar**:

This refers to House Bill No. 1182 or "The Comfort Women Compensation and Benefit Act" filed by Representative Pia S. Cayetano.

Our Department supports the intention of the bill to provide women who were forced into sexual slavery during World War II with health insurance and additional pension. While the proposed incentives could never replace the formal apology, compensation and recognition being sought by these women for the atrocities committed against them, the health insurance and additional pension will at least address some of their needs.

To contribute to the bill's enhancement, may we also recommend the following:

1. On Section 2, Definition of Terms, Item B: Should be Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) per Republic Act No. 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women instead of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW).
2. On Section 3, Determination of Comfort Women: Clarify whether this is within the mandate of PCW or the Commission on Human Rights' Center for Gender Equality and Human Rights.
3. On Section 4, Responsibility of the Department: The needs of these comfort women may go beyond counseling and guidance as these may have been provided to them already by concerned non-government organizations (NGOs) including Lila Pilipina, an organization of Filipino comfort women, victims and survivors of rape and military sexual slavery by the Japanese troops during World War II.

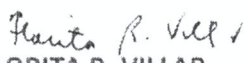
On this we recommend that the section simply state that the DSWD shall formulate a comprehensive program to address the specific needs of comfort women in

coordination with the concerned government agencies and non-government organizations with proven track record in providing services to the sector.

4. On Section 5, Duty of PhilHealth: The inclusion of this section may no longer be necessary since all senior citizens are already covered by PhilHealth's National Health Insurance Program by virtue of Republic Act No. 10645 or An Act Providing for the Mandatory PhilHealth Coverage for All Senior Citizens, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 7432, as Amended by Republic Act No. 9994, Otherwise Known as the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010.
5. On Section 6, Responsibility of PVAO: Clarify if the PVAO is the proper office to provide the monthly pension for these comfort women since its mandate is focused on war veterans and veterans of military campaigns, their surviving spouses and orphans.
6. Others:
 - a. Indicate the lead agency tasked to oversee the implementation of the law.
 - b. Engage the Department of Health (DOH) to look into the health needs of comfort women and if applicable, provide them with the needed therapy sessions which would suit their current fragile condition.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,


FLORITA R. VILLAR
Undersecretary and
Officer-in-Charge