



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development

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Representative SOL ARAGONES

Chairperson

Committee on Population and Family Relations

House of Representatives

Quezon City

Dear **Representative Aragon**,

Greetings from DSWD!

The Department of Social Welfare and Development strongly pushes for the enactment of the Anti-Elder Abuse Bill as one of its priority legislations for the 17th Congress.

We took note that a similar bill, House Bill No. 2989 or the Protection for the Elderly Act filed by Rep. Wes Gatchalian was referred to your Committee on 23 August 2016.

In line with this may we share with you our comments and recommendations on the said bill:

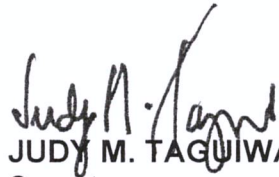
1. The term "senior citizen" is derived from the original senior citizens laws in the Philippines. Internationally, violence and abuse against older persons are generally termed as "elder abuse." For consistency and uniformity with the international usage, we recommend the adoption of the term "elder abuse."
2. On Section 4. Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of the Elderly: Include abandonment as a form of abuse/prohibited act. It should be defined as "the complete desertion of a senior citizen by an individual/family or institution who assumed responsibility of providing care for said senior citizen/elder."
3. State that intoxication, being under the influence of drugs or any other mind-altering substance should not be used as defense for the acts committed.
4. Consider on Sections 5 (Reporting) and Section 6 (Protective Services) the establishment of a Senior Citizen Help Desk at the barangay level and adopt the composition of the Protective Committee for Senior Citizens with the Barangay Captain as the Chairperson and Barangay Senior Citizen Association President, VAWC Desk Officer, Barangay Councilor on Social Services and 2 representatives from CSOs serving as members.

5. Highlight the development and implementation of programs and services for the victim-survivors and offenders - perpetrators as well as the capacity building of service providers. The confidentiality of elder abuse cases should also be upheld at all times.
6. Other recommendations:
 - a. Include provisions for prescriptive period and exemption from payment of docket fees and other expenses
 - b. Highlight affirmative action such as creating more awareness and focusing on preventive measures i.e. appreciating the strong connection between the incidence of elder abuse and attendant dementia and alzheimer's disease in many elder victims
 - c. Formulate mechanisms and protocols to report, refer and document incidence at the community level

Further, we have attached a copy of our version of the bill for the Committee's information and reference.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,


JUDY M. TAGUIWALO
Secretary