

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development

IBP Road, Batasan Pambansa Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City 1126

Telephone Nos. (632) 931-8101 to 07; Telefax (632) 931-8191

E-mail: osec@dswd.gov.ph

Website: <http://www.dswd.gov.ph>

26 October 2016

Senator CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

Chairperson

Committee on Social Justice, Welfare
and Rural Development

Senate of the Philippines

Pasay City

Dear Senator Villar,

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 two bills, Senate Bill Nos. 372 (Protection for the Elderly Act) and 1012 (Anti-Senior Citizen Abuse Act of 2016) filed by Senators Win Gatchalian and Sonny Angara were referred to your Committee on 3 August and 17 August 2016, respectively.

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

1. Consolidate the two bills into one.
2. 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.”
3. 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.”
4. **On the Reporting of Abuse and Establishment of a Senior Citizen Help Desk.** Adopt the composition of the Protective Committee for Senior Citizens (PCSC) 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 the barangay as members.

5. **On SBN 1012, Section 5. Penalties last paragraph:** Rephrase into “The abovementioned penalties shall not preclude the consequent civil case for damages or administrative charges that may also result in the suspension or revocation of registration, license to operate and accreditation of programs and services of any facility catering to senior citizens and of any residential care facility managed and operated by the Department of Social Welfare and Development.”

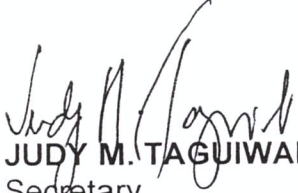
6. **Other Recommendations:**
 - a. Include provisions for prescriptive period and exemption from payment of docket fees and other expenses

 - 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

Thank you.

Very truly yours,


JUDY M. TAGUIWALO
Secretary