



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development

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HONORABLE AQUILINO "KOKO" PIMENTEL III

Chairperson
Committee on Justice and Human Rights
Senate of the Philippines
Pasay City

Dear Honorable Senator Pimentel:

This has reference to the request of the Committee on Justice and Human Rights for our Department's official position on Senate Bill No. 1623 or an Act Providing for Best Practices Guidelines in the Efforts Against Trafficking in Persons authored by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development fully supports the intention of the bill to further improve the implementation of Republic Act 10364 or the Act Expanding Republic Act 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 through the documentation of best practices and issuance of supporting guidelines.

To contribute to the bill's enhancement, we are recommending the following:

1. On Section 2, Best Practices for Implementing Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act:
The guidelines should complement the key result areas of the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) Strategic Plan for 2012-2016. As such, its sections should cover "Advocacy and Prevention; Protection, Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reintegration; Prosecution and Law Enforcement and Partnership and Networking".

In line with this, the guidelines should also have well-defined indicators which would measure whether an intervention may be labeled as best practice.


2. On Section 3, Submission to Congress:
 - a. The Department of Justice (DOJ) as IACAT Secretariat should receive and consolidate the documented best practices prior to its submission to Congress.

Further, there should be a Committee or Technical Working Group (TWG) to screen the submissions based on standard indicators.

- a. The report on Best Practices in the Implementation of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act may also be part of the Philippine Report to the US State Department to highlight the country's serious efforts to curb, if not, eliminate the phenomenon.
- b. On Section 4, Appropriations: The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act should be charged against the General Appropriations Act of the DOJ.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,


CORAZON JULIANO SOLIMAN
Secretary