

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2652

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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Introduced by **Honorable Luis Jose Angel N. Campos, Jr.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines may have the lowest number of suicides among member nations of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and an estimated number of 2,558 suicides out of the estimated 804,000 suicide deaths worldwide reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2012. But our numbers may only be under reported due to the complication or shame that families may feel.

Per report of WHO, it is estimated that 800,000 people commit suicide every year (that is a rate of one person every forty seconds). In the same report young people are the most affected and suicide is the second cause of death for people between the ages of 15 and 29.

The rates of suicide are shocking, especially considering that majority of those who commit it are young people, people who have their entire lives ahead of them. It is a great tragedy to lose people too young and have all their potential lost.

This bill seeks to establish an urgently needed youth suicide prevention program that starts with schools in order to aid the youth in their initial struggle of growing up and in other difficulties that overwhelm them today.

Several forms of prevention will be undertaken by this bill in order to ensure its success. Measures such as life planning education, employment of a psychologist in every school, public education campaign, and youth health centers will be utilized to prevent the premature and avoidable death of our youth.

In the youth lies the future of our Nation. Our Constitution recognizes this vital role and makes it public policy that all aspects of their well-being be promoted and protected. We will fail this policy and endanger our

country's future if we cannot provide the youth with sufficient support that would enable them to overcome the suicidal tendencies that seem to plague the youth of today.

In view of the foregoing and in my belief for the sanctity of life, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a stylized, flowing script that appears to read 'Luis J. Campos, Jr.'.

LUIS JOSE ANGEL N. CAMPOS, JR.

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Introduced by **Honorable Luis Jose Angel N. Campos, Jr.**

AN ACT
TO PROVIDE YOUTH SUICIDE INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** - This Act shall be known as the "Youth
2 Suicide Prevention Act".
3

4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** - Under Section 13, Article II of the 1987
5 Constitution, the State shall promote and protect the physical, moral,
6 spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being of the youth. In view of this
7 policy, the State shall promote youth programs that will shape their values
8 and inculcate in them positive self-image, self-respect, critical thinking and
9 moral responsibility to enable them to become principle-centered and
10 values-driven individuals.
11

12 **SEC. 3. Formulation of Life Planning Education.** The Department of
13 Education (DEPED) is mandated to formulate and include in the
14 elementary and secondary education curriculum a course on Life Planning.
15 Life Planning Education (LPE) shall require lectures and discussions on self
16 and identity; personal, family, community values; communication and
17 interrelationship with others; sexuality and gender roles; community
18 participation; health; psychological thinking and employment, among
19 others. The DEPED is mandated to ensure that LPE is integrated in all
20 schools. Training shall be provided to school administrators, teachers,
21 guidance counselors and other school personnel responsible for delivering
22 LPE.
23

24 The DEPED is likewise mandated to formulate a mechanism for
25 sustaining peer counseling and peer education programs.
26
27

SEC. 4. Employment of Psychologist in Every School Guidance Counsellor's Office. - The DEPED is mandated to require all schools to employ at least one (1) psychologist in every guidance counselor's office. Said psychologist must be licensed to practice the profession in accordance with existing laws and rules and regulations. The duties and responsibilities of the school psychologist are, but not limited to the following:

- a. Gain up-to-date scientific knowledge about effective screening and crisis intervention strategies to identify symptoms of suicidal behavior;
- b. Formulate and implement standardized and reliable screening procedures of suicidal intent and tendencies;
- c. Provide consultation and assist students in seeking help from their parents, other adults in their social networks, and health care system personnel;
- d. Increase competencies in post suicide intervention to prevent further suicides;
- e. Conduct screening procedures or assessments twice in each school year for every grade level starting from Grade 3 until fourth year high school;
- f. Other duties and responsibilities which DEPED may identify as necessary to fulfill the above mandate.

The Department of Health (DOH) is hereby mandated to provide technical assistance to schools with respect to training psychologists in schools. It shall implement the best practices in the identification and treatment of youth who are at risk for committing suicide.

SEC. 5. Implementation of Public Education Campaign. - The DOH, in coordination with the DEPED is mandated to tap doctors, health specialists, medical experts, hospitals and other medical institutions to conduct a nationwide education campaign to help the youth, parents of youth, teachers, school personnel and the general public to:

- a. Become aware of the increasing problem of youth suicide and suicidal behaviors;
- b. Recognize common warning signs of suicidal thoughts and intent;
- c. Learn how to respond to youth who exhibit such signs; and
- d. Know when and where to go for accurate assessments and professional help.

1 **SEC. 6. Provision of Technical Assistance and Data Management. -**
2 The DOH is mandated to assist the DEPED in:

- 3
- 4 a. Identifying and promoting strategies to prevent suicide
- 5 among the youth;
- 6
- 7 b. Ensuring the quality of screening and crisis intervention
- 8 strategies and procedures;
- 9
- 10 c. Studying the effectiveness of practices relating to the
- 11 identification and treatment of youth who are at risk for
- 12 committing suicide on the overall wellness and health
- 13 promotion strategies related to suicide attempts.
- 14

15 The DOH shall conduct research and development programs on the
16 effectiveness of new and existing youth suicide prevention strategies,
17 techniques, technology, including clinical studies and evaluations of such
18 strategies and related research aimed at reducing youth suicide and
19 providing support for emotional and behavioral disorders which may lead
20 to suicide attempts.

21

22 The DOH is likewise mandated to develop a suicide data collection
23 system to provide reliable data about attempted suicides in the country. In
24 developing the system, the DOH shall:

- 25
- 26 a. Include information on the incidence of suicide attempts;
- 27 b. Include demographic information on the persons who
- 28 attempted suicide; and
- 29 c. Explore prevention strategies to reduce the number of
- 30 attempted suicides and suicides.
- 31

32 **SEC. 7. Establishment of Youth Health Centers. -** The DOH may
33 establish a linkage with national government agencies. Local Government
34 Units (LGUs) and non-governmental institutions to establish a network of
35 health facilities and teen centers catering especially to young people in
36 order to address their identified youth issues.

37

38 These health facilities and teen centers shall provide family services,
39 peer counseling and other related services and may collaborate with
40 parents, schools, religious groups and youth-serving organizations to
41 successfully implement youth suicide prevention strategies.

42

43 **SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations. -** The DEPED and
44 DOH, in consultation with the National Center for Mental Health, National
45 Youth Commission, local and national organizations that serve youth who

1 are at risk for suicide, shall issue the Implementing Rules and Regulations
2 within 90 days from the effectivity of this Act.
3

4 **SEC. 9. Appropriations.** - The amount necessary to carry out the
5 provisions of this Act shall be included in the General Appropriations Act
6 of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter. An initial
7 amount of Fifty Million Pesos (P50,000,000.00) shall be allocated for the first
8 year of its implementation. Such sum shall be included in the special project
9 allocation of DEPED and DOH.
10

11 **SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.** - Any law, presidential decree, issuance,
12 executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rules and
13 regulations contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is
14 hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.
15

16 **SEC. 11. Separability Clause.** - If any provision of this Act is held
17 invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected hereby shall
18 remain valid and subsisting.
19

20 **SEC. 12. Effectivity Clause.** - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15)
21 days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general
22 circulation.
23

24 Approved