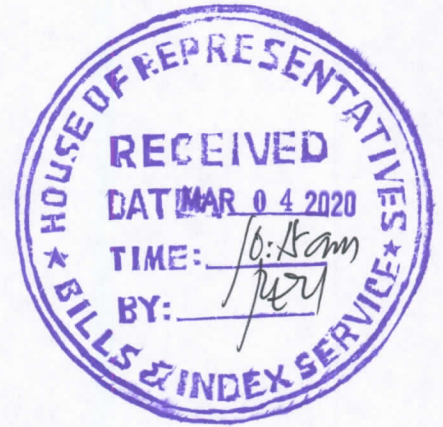


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

762
HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. _____



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE CAMILLE A. VILLAR

RESOLUTION

URGING THE COMMITTEES ON HEALTH, YOUTH AND SPORTS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED INCREASING CASES OF DEPRESSION AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AMONG MINORS AND YOUTH IN THE COUNTRY WITH THE INTENTION OF SUBMITTING LEGISLATIVE APPROACHES TO CURB THIS ALARMING SOCIAL CONCERN AND TO PROMOTE THE WELL-BEING AND WELFARE OF YOUNG FILIPINOS

Whereas, the 1987 Philippine Constitution enshrined the following guarantees:

- Section 13. The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.¹
- Section 15. The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.²

Whereas, very recently, a news article cited "the prevalence of mental illness among the youth is highest among ages 16-24, but in the Philippines it is earlier at 12 years old and that depression and anxiety are the prevalent disorders to up to a fifth of the

¹ 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article II, Sec. 13

² 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article II, Sec. 15

population, but resistance to seek help is common among the adolescents with high susceptibility”³;

Whereas, citing statistics from the World Health Organization, “an estimated 10 to 20 percent of children and adolescents suffer from some form of mental health disorder”⁴;

Whereas, it should be noted that “a 2015 survey of Philippine high school students age 13 to 17 revealed that nearly 17 percent had attempted suicide in the previous year, while 12 percent had thought about it and that the most vulnerable are the postmillennials—a generation of Filipinos born after 1994, the oldest of whom are just on the threshold of adulthood”⁵;

Whereas, accordingly and had been reported, “at least one per day would come in the emergency room for a suicide attempt, one young person”⁶;

Whereas, globally, the World Health Organization reported an average of 3,000 people who die by suicide daily—this translates to one suicide every 40 seconds. Suicide is also listed as the second highest cause of death among people between the ages of 15 and 29⁷;

Whereas, in the country, “there is no one figure for mental health and suicide cases as data is often scattered in different government agencies, and varies across years and that the latest available data on the Philippines recorded by the WHO, however, reported over 2,000 cases of suicide from 2000 to 2012 with majority of individuals dying by suicide also aged between 15 to 29 years old”⁸;

Whereas, as reported, in the Philippines, the rise in the number of suicide cases and youth with mental health issues is brought about by a mix of social and biological factors and that a common theme stands out: disconnectedness and deterioration of relationships brought about by social media and technology. “Experts said young people today tend to be more disconnected despite the internet supposedly opening up

³ Philippine Daily Inquirer. Feb. 19, 2020. C4

⁴ World Health Organization. “Child and Adolescent Mental Health”

⁵ Cebu Daily News. “Young Filipinos are in the midst of mental health crisis.” November 2019

⁶ Rappler. “Mental illness, suicide cases rising among youth.” September 11, 2018

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

the world to everyone. Young people today tend to be very pressured, very stressed, live very complicated lives, and tend to be socially disconnected”⁹;

Whereas, culled from the observations of child psychiatry practitioners in the country through child psychiatrist Dr. Norieta Balderrama from the PGH Child Protection Unit, she said that she and roughly 80 child psychiatrists in the country have shared anecdotes from their practice indicating an increase in young patients who have suicidal thoughts or have attempted suicide¹⁰;

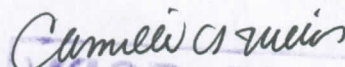
Whereas, there is a dearth of medical people to help in the situation, aggravating the problem “is the lack of psychiatrists in the country, with the Philippines having only one psychiatrist for every 250,000 population, far from the ideal ratio of one psychiatrist to 50,000 population”¹¹;

Whereas, in June 2019, the Department of Health confirmed it can no longer continue funding the hotline for distressed individuals, adding that Hopeline has been a reliable partner in providing hope and support for Filipinos with mental illnesses¹²;

Whereas, the increasing number of suicide and depression among children, minor and youth must be addressed immediately and this social scourge must be stopped: Now therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, as it is hereby resolves, To urge the Committees on Health, Youth and Sports and other appropriate Committees to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported increasing cases of depression and mental health issues among minors and youth in the country with the intention of submitting legislative approaches to curb this alarming social concern and to promote the well-being and welfare of young Filipinos.

Adopted,


CAMILLE A. VILLAR

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Rappler. “DOH withdraws support to Hopeline after launching national crisis hotline.” June 27, 2019