

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
H.B. No. 3041

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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Introduced by Representative Harry L. Roque Jr.

AN ACT
REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A GUN
SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM AND INCLUDE THIS IN THE CURRICULUM
OF ALL ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 13 states:

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.

Section 15 states:

The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

A child as young as three has the finger strength to pull a trigger. Many parents incorrectly assume that their child is educated about gun safety, can tell the difference between a real gun and a toy gun, and would know not to handle a real gun. A study in the June 2001 issue of *Pediatrics* showed this to be false.

The 2002 edition of *Injury Facts* from the U.S. National Safety Council reports that in 1999, there were 3,385 kids below the age of twenty who were killed with a gun. This includes homicides, suicides, and unintentional injuries.

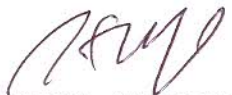
In the United States, programs have been developed to educate parents and children about gun safety due to the increasing number of injuries from guns. These include such programs as the Eddie Eagle gun safety program from the National Rifle Association and the “Keep Your Family Safe from Firearm Injury” program of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Gun safety is a collection of rules and recommendations that can be applied when handling firearms. The purpose of gun safety is to eliminate or minimize the risks of unintentional death, injury or damage caused by improper storage and handling of firearms. It emphasizes the danger and possible serious consequences of playing with guns.

The Philippines has no such gun safety program designed for children and their parents. Yet, we are confronted with regular reports of gun-related deaths in the country. In fact, in May 2009, Reuters reported that the Philippines had more gun-related deaths than any other country in Asia relative to its size. Chief Superintendent Reynaldo Rafal told reporters that about 70 percent of small arms are in the hands of civilians and that the number of small arms has grown about 10 percent since 2007, matched by an increase in gun-related violence in the country.

These figures make it incumbent on us to treat this issue as an urgent public health matter. Consequently, this bill proposes a comprehensive program which shall include mandatory gun safety education for all students and their parents, in order to resolve and

prevent the problems and dangers relating to the use of guns. Being safe can keep kids and even adults from getting hurt. All kids should know what to do if they find a gun or if they are with someone who finds a gun or what to do if a gun is fired by accident.

It is imperative that we establish such programs if we want to save lives.¹



HARRY L. ROQUE JR.

¹ This bill was originally filed in during the Fourteenth Congress, Third Regular Session, and refiled by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago in the Sixteenth Congress, Third Regular Session.

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*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 “Gun Safety Education
2 Act.”

3 SECTION 2. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act, the term:

4 A. “DepEd” means the Department of Education.

5 B. “Gun Safety Education Program” means an age-appropriate, research-based
6 program that educates children and their parents on how to prevent or respond to
7 problems or dangers related to firearms.

8 C. “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Department of Education.

9 SECTION 3. *Incorporation of a Gun Safety Education Program in the curriculum*
10 *of Public and Private Secondary Schools.* – A program on Gun Safety Education shall be
11 incorporated in the curriculum of both public and private elementary and secondary

1 schools. In addition, to this, gun safety classes will be offered at times convenient to
2 parents, including evenings and weekends.

3 SECTION 4. *Implementing Agency and its Duties.* –

4 A. The DepEd shall:

5 (1) identify, develop, and implement gun safety education programs.

6 The DepEd shall consult with a certified firearms instructors, and research
7 on programs in other jurisdictions which have shown to be effective;

8 (2) develop online gun safety programs for children and their
9 parents;

10 (3) develop and implement public education campaigns to promote
11 awareness of online risks to children and Internet safety education;

12 B. The DepEd Secretary shall, within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of
13 this Act, promulgate rules and regulations, including those of disciplinary nature,
14 to carry out and enforce the provisions of this Act. Further, the DepEd shall be the
15 lead agency in the carrying out the following: the Secretary is hereby authorized
16 and directed to adopt a system to implement and carry out the provisions of this
17 Act.

18 SECTION 5. *Appropriation.* – To carry out the provisions of this Act, such
19 amount as may be necessary is hereby authorized to be appropriated from the National
20 Treasury. Thereafter, the amount necessary for the continuous operation of this program
21 shall be included in the annual appropriation of the DepEd.

1 SECTION 6. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or
2 unconstitutional, the same shall not affect the validity and effectivity of the other
3 provisions hereof.

4 SECTION 7. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, and issuances, or
5 portions thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby
6 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

7 SECTION 8. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after
8 its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,