

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2626



Introduced by REPS. RENE M. VELARDE, EULOGIO "AMANG" R. MAGSAYSAY
and CHRISTIAN M. SEÑERES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

EMD
The family is once again at the forefront of national issues our country is facing today. The constitutionally mandated sanctity of family life lately came under threat with the various proposals of lawmakers on population control or management or planning as they call it. But one very basic constitutional precept bearing on family issues seems to have drowned into oblivion since seventeen (17) long years have already passed without it being attended to, much less, implemented. It is the issue on when exactly human life begins.

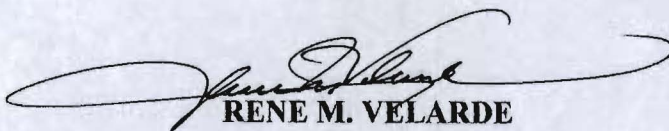
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The 1987 Philippine Constitution, specifically Section 12, Article II thereof, mandates that *"The State recognizes the sanctity of family life and shall protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institution. It shall equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. The natural right and duty of the parents in the rearing of the youth for civic efficiency and the development of the moral character shall receive the support of the Government."*

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As can be gleaned from this provision, it is obvious that nothing in the words therein suggests when exactly the beginning of human life is. The importance of this matter cannot be lightly taken since the human fetus though still unborn already has certain rights accorded to it by law. Even the New Civil Code or the Revised Penal Code or any other statute for that matter fails to unequivocally identify the exact beginning of human life. This fact is rather unfortunate and disappointing considering that the framers of the 1987 Constitution put premium on this matter. Transcripts of the floor debates in the Constitutional Commission of 1986 leading to the promulgation of the above-quoted provision reveal the relative importance of this matter and the clear intent of the framers to emphasize this necessity by requiring it to be embodied in a statute. In the said debates, two points were clarified on the matter of the beginning of human life, to wit: a) that conception begins with the combination, fusion, or integration of the ovum and the sperm cell forming the human nucleus, or the fertilization itself; and the b) that the definition of the beginning of human life as from "conception" shall be provided by appropriate legislation.

Presently, no existing piece of legislation, as aforementioned, implements or embodies this constitutional mandate, thus, utterly neglecting such a plain yet indispensable provision of the Constitution. This omission has sadly resulted into confusion and misconception in the appreciation of the dignity and the worth of the human person especially in the early stages of his life.

This bill is sought to be passed immediately to put an end to this plight and in fulfillment of the duty and responsibility laid down by the fundamental law that has long been put to naught.

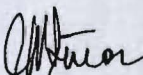
Hence, before we can even talk of population and family life issues and thereafter put our resources to tackle them, it is imperative to first address this one basic issue.



RENE M. VELARDE



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AN ACT
DEFINING THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN LIFE,
RECOGNIZING RIGHTS THEREUNDER, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. This Act shall be known as the "HUMAN LIFE ACT."

SECTION 2. **DECLARATION OF POLICY.** It is the policy of the State to fully implement constitutional mandates especially in regard to persons, human dignity, ethical and moral standards. Correspondingly, it is imperative that appropriate legislation be enacted to give flesh to said mandates or standards.

SECTION 3. **BEGINNING OF HUMAN LIFE.** Except for purposes of succession and successional rights, the beginning of human life shall be reckoned from the moment of the combination, fusion, and integration of the ovum and the sperm cell resulting to the formation of the human nucleus, or fertilization thereof.

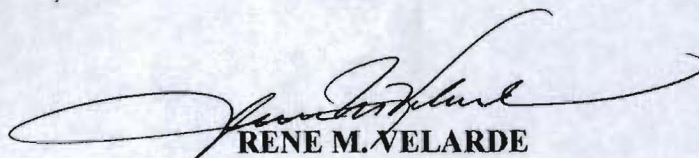
SECTION 4. **RECOGNITION OF RIGHTS.** From the moment of the formation of the nucleus or fertilization, all rights inherent in, and accorded to human persons, as appropriate, shall be recognized in the unborn.

SECTION 5. **SEPARABILITY CLAUSE.** If any part, section or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

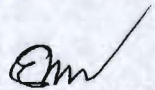
SECTION 6. **REPEALING CLAUSE.** All laws, decrees, orders, issuances, rules and regulations, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 7. **EFFECTIVITY.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

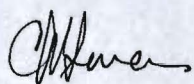
APPROVED.



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