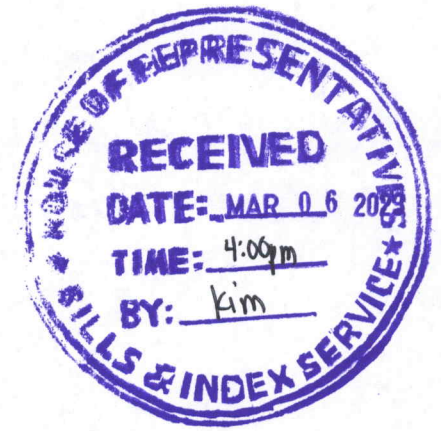


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Nineteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7442



Introduced by Rep. Mary Mitzi "Mitch" Cajayon-Uy

AN ACT
DECLARING SEPTEMBER OF EVERY YEAR AS THE NATIONAL BULLYING AWARENESS
AND PREVENTION MONTH

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Bullying is one of the forms of violence against children that has now become a prevalent issue facing school children and their parents in the country. It is generally defined as an act of repeated aggressive behavior to intentionally hurt another person physically or mentally.

Studies show that school bullying negatively impacts student learning and motivation in the long term. Aside from the learner-level adverse effects, bullying incidents also severely affect the school environment in such a way that even the learners who are not bullied would feel unsafe learning in an environment where they witness bullying.

Against the backdrop of bullying prevalence in the country, Republic Act No. 10627, otherwise known as the "Anti- Bullying Act of 2013" was enacted on September 12, 2013, directing all elementary and secondary schools to adopt policies to address the existence of bullying in their respective institutions.

The latest Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results released on December 3, 2019, however, reveals that Filipino learners are the most exposed to bullying compared to their peers from other countries. Among the 15-year-olds who participated in the large-scale international assessment, 65% said they experienced bullying at least a few times a month. PISA results further show that learners who reported being threatened scored 56 points lower in Reading compared to those who had no or less frequent experiences.

Data from the PISA study also reveals that there were learners who experienced or were threatened with violence. About 32% reported that they got hit or pushed around by other students, and 35% received threats from other students;

According to a study conducted by a De La Salle University team headed by psychology professor Dr. Allan Bernardo, efforts to raise the quality of education must go beyond improving the curriculum and ensuring enough resources for the safety and welfare of schools and learners. The study cited the 2018 PISA results and concluded that poor readers tend to be more exposed to bullying, which aggravated their sense of alienation - and further undermined their learning.

The World Health Organization's Global School-Based Student Health Survey (GSHS) 2019 likewise reveals that 4 in every 10 Filipino learners aged to 17 experienced bullying on school property.

On the other hand, the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) 2019 data shows that, among all countries that took the assessment, the Philippines has the highest incidence of bullying, aggression, violence, and offensive behavior in schools. About 63% of learners reported having experienced bullying at least once a month - the highest among the surveyed neighboring countries, with Malaysia in far second at 26%.

Moreover, the SEA-PLM data shows that in the Philippine school environment, about 9% reported having experienced aggression, 12% experienced violence, and about 29% experienced offensive behavior.

Overall, available nationally representative data depict an alarmingly high incidence of bullying in Philippine basic education schools, notwithstanding the enactment of the "Anti-Bullying Act of 2013" and the implementation of the Department of Education (DepEd) issued DepEd Order (DO) No. 40, s. 20123 on the "Policy and Guidelines on Protecting Children in School from Abuse, Violence, Exploitation, Discrimination, Bullying and Other Forms of Abuse," otherwise known as the "DepEd Child Protection Policy".

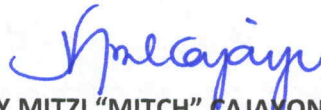
Pending the comprehensive review and gap analysis of RA No. 10627, which is vital to identify the issues and challenges in seeking strict enforcement to address the alarming incidence of bullying in the country, it is important to stem the persistent rise of bullying incidence in the country through rigorous public awareness and information campaign.

Hence, this measure seeks to declare the month of September as the "National Bullying Awareness and Prevention Month" in commemoration of the passage of the law.

Through this effort, it is hoped that the problem of bullying in schools will be effectively prevented or minimized through the conduct of awareness raising activities to regularly and properly educate the public, especially the students, on the deleterious

impact of bullying not only to the future of our children and the Filipino youth but to the developmental goals of the nation.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



MARY MITZI "MITCH" CAJAYON-UY
2nd District, Caloocan City

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
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AN ACT
DECLARING SEPTEMBER OF EVERY YEAR AS THE NATIONAL BULLYING AWARENESS
AND PREVENTION MONTH

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

SECTION. 1. *Short Title.* - This Act shall be known as the “National Bullying Awareness and Prevention Month Act”.

SECTION. 2. *Awareness Month.* - The month of September of every year is hereby declared as "National Bullying Awareness and Prevention Month" to educate and raise awareness of the public on bullying prevention and the importance of protecting children and youth from all forms of abuse, cruelty and exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to their development with the end view of promoting universal primary education.

SECTION. 3. *Public Education and Awareness Program.* - Pursuant to the observance of the National Bullying Awareness and Prevention Month, an annual program of activities shall be prepared and implemented by the Department of Education (DepEd) in cooperation with the National Youth Commission (NYC) and the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC). They are authorized to call upon any department, bureau, office, agency, or instrumentality of the government, including government-owned or -controlled corporations, for any assistance as may be needed in the discharge of the tasks under this Act.

The DepEd shall lead all public and private elementary and high schools nationwide in organizing consciousness raising activities on the problem and prevention of bullying including other forms of abuse, cruelty and exploitation against children.

SECTION. 4. *Media Campaign.* - The Philippine Information Agency (PIA), in coordination with the DepEd, the NYC and the CWC, shall ensure the effective information dissemination of this Act.

SECTION. 5. *Interagency and Multisectoral Effort.* - All local government units (LGUs) and private organizations including the civil society, private organizations, and nongovernment, civic, and people's organizations, are encouraged to observe the National Bullying Awareness and Prevention Month in simple rites and participate in the activities.

SECTION. 6. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - The DepEd, in consultation with the NYC, CWC, the PIA, and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate the appropriate rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act within ninety (90) days from its approval.

SECTION. 7. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION. 8. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,