

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Bill No. 9919

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVES LANI MERCADO-REVILLA, BRYAN B.
REVILLA AND RAMON JOLO B. REVILLA III

AN ACT SEEKING TO INTEGRATE IN THE CURRICULA OF ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, AND UNIVERSITIES EDUCATION ON PHILIPPINE WOMEN VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF WARTIME SEXUAL COERCION, SLAVERY, AND VIOLENCE DURING THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION OF THE PHILIPPINES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

By delving into our nation's historical roots, the next generation can effectively guide the country into a promising future.

Victims and survivors of wartime sexual coercion, violence, and slavery during the Second World War have persistently sought an official apology and just legal reparation from Japan. Despite the veracity of this issue, justice has remained elusive for them. Therefore, the least, yet most crucial action we can take is to acknowledge and perpetually remember their struggles and plight.

It is noteworthy that on March 8, 2023, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) issued its Decision in Communication 155/2020 (Natalia Alonzo, et al. v. The Philippines), finding that the Philippines, as a State Party, failed to fulfill its obligations under the CEDAW Convention. Among the recommendations is the integration of the history of Philippine women victims and survivors of wartime sexual coercion, violence, and slavery into the curricula of all academic institutions. This remembrance is pivotal for a sensitive understanding of the history of human rights violations they endured.

Throughout previous Congresses, both at the House of Representatives and the Senate, bills of similar nature have been filed but never reached the plenary. However, during the 14th Congress on April 23, 2008, the Philippine Senate adopted Resolution No. 59, acknowledging the plight of these women, by commending Tomasa Dioso Salinog, also known

as “Lola Masing,” for her courage and unwavering determination to pursue justice for Filipino survivors of sexual slavery.

In this revised version of the bill, we assert our support for a more conscientious use of terminology, favoring the phrase “victims and survivors of wartime sexual coercion, violence, and slavery” over the term “comfort women.” The latter is a translation of the Japanese term “ianfu,” which means “a woman who gives ease and consolation,” a euphemized term that refers to “military prostitutes.”¹ The use of this term is without regard to questions on the willingness of these women to enter the so-called “comfort stations.” Furthermore, it limits the sexual abuses committed against them. A more politically sensitive term accords these victims and survivors the dignity they deserve.

Given these considerations, we earnestly request the immediate passage of this bill.



REP. LANI MERCADO-REVILLA
2nd District of Cavite



REP. BRYAN B. REVILLA
AGIMAT Partylist



REP. RAMON JOLO REVILLA III
1st District of Cavite

¹ Wang, Q. E. (2019). The study of “comfort women”: Revealing a hidden past—introduction. *Chinese Studies in History*, 53(1), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00094633.2019.1691414>

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

SECTION 1. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State recognizes the fundamental role of educational institutions in the inculcation of patriotism and nationalism, respect for human rights, and appreciation of the role of national heroes in the historical development of the country. In the same manner, the Philippines remains fully committed to women's rights pursuant to its duties under international and domestic laws.

Consistent with the foregoing, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to fully recognize, through the inclusion in the curriculum, the struggles and plight of Filipino women victims of sexual coercion, slavery and violence in the hands of the Japanese Imperial Army during the Second World War.

SEC 2. *Integration of Wartime Sexual Coercion, Slavery, and Violence Education in Curriculum.* – The Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) are hereby authorized and directed to adopt measures to integrate education on the sexual coercion, slavery, and violence committed during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines in the curriculum of all public and private elementary, secondary, and tertiary schools.

SEC 3. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be charged to the respective appropriations of the DepEd and CHED under the current General Appropriations Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be

necessary for its continuous implementation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC 4. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DepEd and CHED shall, within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, promulgate their respective rules and regulations, including those of disciplinary nature, to carry out and enforce the provisions of this Act.

SEC 5. *Separability Clause.* – Any portion or provisions of this Act that may be declared unconstitutional or invalid shall not have the effect of nullifying other portions and provisions hereof as long as such remaining portions or provisions can still subsist and be given effect in their entirety.

SEC 6. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, executive orders, proclamations, and administrative regulations, or any parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are revoked, repealed or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,