

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1301



Introduced by Representative **STEPHEN JAMES T. TAN**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The state recognizes the vital role of the youth in the nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall include in the youth patriotism and nationalism and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.

In relation with the aforementioned provision, it is very alarming to know that in the Philippines, the teenage pregnancy incidence is still increasing. According to the data from Philippine Statistics Authority (2014), 24 babies are delivered in every hour by teenage mothers. Furthermore, the National Demographic and Health Survey revealed that in 2013, one in ten young Filipino women of ages 15-19 has begun childbearing: 8 percent are already mothers and another 2 percent are pregnant with their first child. Moreover, Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality study in 2014 mentioned that fourteen percent (14%) of Filipino girls of ages 15-19 are either pregnant for the first time or teenage parents already.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) reported that the Philippines has the highest teenage pregnancy rate in six economic countries in ASEAN with 53 births per 1,000 women - the only country where the rate is increasing.

Some studies show that the root causes of severe escalation of teenage pregnancy cases in the Philippines are: (1) curiosity of the youth or experimentation; (2) peer pressure; (3) family related problems; (4) insufficient knowledge of youth on teenage pregnancy; and (5) liberal views on sex. Teenage pregnancy has brought serious consequences for teenagers involved. It affects every aspect of a teenager who bears a child, whether physical and mental well-being, while she is pregnant and even after the baby is born.

In the 2015 study of the Population Commission, there are 207,830

teenagers who have given birth in that year alone. Moreover, there is an increase in number of teenage pregnancy cases for adolescents of ages 10-14, from 1,629 in 2013 to 1,986 in 2015.

The proposed bill seeks to create a comprehensive policy enabling youth participation in adolescent pregnancy prevention.

The same Bill was filed last 19th Congress. In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Tan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" and last name "Tan" clearly distinguishable.

STEPHEN JAMES T. TAN

Representative, First District of Samar

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**“AN ACT
CREATING A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY ENABLING YOUTH
PARTICIPATION IN ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY PREVENTION”**

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

Section 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as “*The Local Council Adolescent Act of 2022*”.

Section 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the right to health and instill health consciousness among the youth by sponsoring programs that will address current health predicaments. Article II, Sec. 12 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution expressly provides that the State shall recognize the sanctity of family life and shall protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institution. In fulfilling these mandates, the State shall acknowledge the dynamic participation of the youth in nation-building promoting their holistic growth and well-being.

Section 3. *Definition of Terms.* For the purposes of this Act, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- a. Adolescent Pregnancy - an individual belonging to the age group of 10-19 who is child-bearing;
- b. Unwanted Pregnancy - pregnancy that is unplanned at the time of conception;
- c. Psychosocial Intervention - activities and strategies that aim to improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities in terms of emotional and social factors;
- d. Policy - a set of ideas or a plan of action followed by a government; and
- e. Youth participation - actively involving young people in decision-

making processes on personal development and involvement in society.

Section 4. Coverage. This Act shall apply to all provinces and highly urbanized cities.

Section 5. *Creation of the Local Council on Adolescent Pregnancy.* The Local Council on Adolescent Pregnancy, hereafter known as the Council, is hereby established under each Local Government Unit of the province or highly-urbanized city concerned to provide a coherent, rational, unified and confidential response to the youth with sexual and reproductive health concerns and efforts through the formulation and implementation of the policy and programs mandated under this Act.

The Council shall constitute a family-oriented, youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health program, specifically on the prevention, counselling and post-delivery of adolescent pregnancy through the development of effective and efficient structures, systems and mechanisms for legislation and upholding rights.

Section 6. *Composition of the Local Council on Adolescent Pregnancy.* The Local Council on Adolescent Pregnancy shall be headed by the Local Chief Executive of the province or highly urbanized city, the Local health officer as vice-chairman, the chairman of the committee on health of the Sanggunian, a representative from the private sector or non-government organizations involved in adolescent pregnancy advocacy, representative from the youth organizations or youth-serving organizations as determined by the local health board, and a representative of the Department of Health (DOH) in the locality, as members.

Section 7. *Powers and Functions.* The Council shall exercise the following powers and functions:

- (a) Serve as a hub for collaboration and partnerships, where other stakeholders such as the youth, among others, may play an active role in strengthening emerging projects or complement existing programs that will redound to the advancement of adolescent pregnancy health programs in the LGUs.
- (b) Serve as the highest policy-making body to decide on matters affecting adolescent pregnancy concerns in the locality;
- (c) Propose to the Sanggunian concerned, in accordance with standards and criteria set by the Department of Health, annual budgetary allocations for the operation and maintenance of the council, as the case may be;
- (d) Serve as an advisory committee to the Sanggunian concerned on adolescent pregnancy such as, but not limited to, the necessity for, and application of, local appropriations for public health purposes;

- (e) Create regular and special committees that are consistent with the technical and administrative standards of the Department of Health
- (f) Cascade the proposals and reports from the grassroots communities, municipalities, cities, and provincial adolescent councils.
- (g) Conduct monitoring and pre- and post-evaluation of adolescent pregnancy projects and programs.

Section 8. *Inter-Agency Conference.* The Department of Health shall coordinate with the Department of Budget and Management, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Education, Commission on Population and National Youth Commission on the conduct of an inter-agency conference for the establishment of the Council and appointing the interim executive officials of the Council, including the planning ideal means of implementation of the policy and programs.

Section 9. *Programs.* There shall be established programs for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention, specifically: (1) Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Awareness Week shall be conducted annually every second week of February; (2) Research and Development shall be established for current projects and implementations to make the projects more efficient; (3) Psychosocial Intervention and Support Services that are present in healthcare centers and homecare service facilitation of free psychotherapy and other psychological need in the pre-, during and post-pregnancy; (4) Data Information Privacy or assurance of preserving the confidentiality of information; and (5) Awareness Campaign that shall address the high risk behaviors that contribute to adolescent pregnancy.

Section 10. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the inter-agency body convened in Section 8 hereof shall issue the necessary rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

Section 11. *Appropriation.* The LGUs concerned in the province and highly-urbanized cities shall include in their annual budget the necessary funds for strategies and activities as provided for, within their mandates that are contributory to the implementation of this Act.

Section 12. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, and issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

Section 13. *Separability Clause.* If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 14. *Effectivity Clause.* This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette or at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,