

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 3574**



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**Introduced by REP. YSABEL MARIA J. ZAMORA**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

This bill seeks to establish Resource Development and Crisis Assistance Centers for Women and Children (the "Centers") in every province and city in the country. The Centers shall be under the management and supervision of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in consultation with the concerned local government units (LGUs).

The bill broadens the scope of service of the Centers to include women and children who are victims of other forms of abuse. Presently, the Rape Crisis Centers under Republic Act No. 8505 caters only to rape victims.

The Centers under this proposed measure are intended to respond to the needs of women and children who are victims of abuse and to support their recovery. This bill also affirms the continued commitment of the Philippines to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of Children.

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

  
**REP. YSABEL MARIA J. ZAMORA**  
Lone District, City of San Juan

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**AN ACT**  
**ESTABLISHING RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND CRISIS ASSISTANCE CENTERS FOR**  
**WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN EVERY PROVINCE AND CITY OF THE COUNTRY,**  
**AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8505, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS**  
**THE "RAPE VICTIM ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION ACT OF 1998"**

*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 "Resource Development and Crisis Assistance for Women and Children Act."

**SEC. 2.** Section 2 of Republic Act No. 8505 is hereby amended to read as follows:

**"SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to ~~[provide necessary assistance and protection for rape victims]~~ **VALUE THE DIGNITY OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN, DEFEND THEIR RIGHTS, AND RECOGNIZE THEIR ROLE IN NATION-BUILDING AND PROVIDE ALL OTHER IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE AS MAY BE NECESSARY TO PROTECT THEM.** Towards this end, the ~~[government shall coordinate its various agencies and non-government organizations to work hand in hand for the establishment and operation of a rape crisis center in every province and city that shall assist and protect rape victims in the litigation of their cases and their recovery.]~~ **STATE SHALL ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND SHALL PROVIDE THEM WITH FACILITIES, RESOURCES, SERVICES, AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT WILL ENSURE THEIR WELFARE AND ENABLE THEM TO REALIZE THEIR FULL POTENTIALS IN THE SERVICE OF THE NATION. THE STATE SHALL PROVIDE WOMEN AND CHILDREN WITH UTMOST SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE WHICH SHALL INCLUDE AMONG OTHERS, LEGAL SERVICES, LIVELIHOOD AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING AND ALL OTHER ASSISTANCE NECESSARY TO PROTECT THEM AGAINST ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE, NEGLECT, ABUSE, CRUELTY, EXPLOITATION AND OTHER ACTS PREJUDICIAL TO THEIR WELFARE, DEVELOPMENT, AND FULFILLMENT OF THEIR RIGHTS."**

SEC. 3. Section 3 of the same Act is likewise amended to read as follows:

**"SEC. 3. [~~Rape~~] RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND Crisis ASSISTANCE CenterS. – [The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Department of Justice (DOJ), and a lead non-government organization (NGO) with proven track record or experience in handling sexual abuse cases, shall establish in every province and city a rape crisis center located in a government hospital or health clinic or in any other suitable place for the purpose of:**

**~~"(a) Providing rape victims with psychological counselling, medical and health services, including their medico-legal examination;~~**

**~~"(b) Securing free legal assistance or service, when necessary, for rape victims;~~**

**~~"(c) Assisting rape victims in the investigation to hasten the arrest of offenders and the filing of cases in court;~~**

**~~"(d) Ensuring the privacy and safety of rape victims;~~**

**~~"(e) Providing psychological counselling and medical services whenever necessary for the family of rape victims;~~**

**~~"(f) Developing and undertaking a training program for law enforcement officers, public prosecutors, lawyers, medico-legal officers, social workers, and barangay officials on human rights and responsibilities; gender sensitivity and legal management of rape cases; and~~**

**~~"(g) Adopting and implementing programs for the recovery of rape victims.~~**

**~~"The DSWD shall be the lead agency in the establishment and operation of the Rape Crisis Center.]~~**

**"THERE SHALL BE ESTABLISHED RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND CRISIS ASSISTANCE CENTERS FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN EVERY PROVINCE AND CITY OF THE COUNTRY, HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS THE "CENTERS". THESE CENTERS SHALL BE UNDER THE MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD) IN CONSULTATION WITH CONCERNED LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (LGUs)."**

**THE CONCERNED LGUs AND THE DSWD SHALL ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA) INDICATING THEREIN THEIR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY IN THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE CENTERS.**

**"(A) COMPOSITION OF THE INTER-AGENCY COUNCIL TO BE KNOWN AS THE ADVISORY COUNCIL. – AN INTER-AGENCY COUNCIL SHALL BE CONVENED TO SET THE CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF THE SITES OF THE CENTERS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE EXISTING FACILITIES OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND LGUs, NONGOVERNMENT AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE GOVERNMENT. THE COUNCIL SHALL BE COMPOSED OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DSWD, THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG), THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH), THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ), THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (DTI), THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DEPED), THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT (DOLE), THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

(NEDA), THE PHILIPPINE COMMISSION ON WOMEN (PCW), THE NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION (NYC), THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TESDA), THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE – WOMEN AND CHILDREN PROTECTION CENTER (PNP-WCPC), THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION (CHED), THE COUNCIL ON THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN (CWC), AND WOMEN'S NONGOVERNMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS DULY ACCREDITED BY NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES. THE INTER-AGENCY COUNCIL, DULY CHAIRED BY THE DSWD, SHALL ALSO ACT AS AN ADVISORY COUNCIL TO OVERSEE THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE CENTERS' PROGRAMS.

**“(B) FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTERS. – THE CENTERS SHALL HAVE THE FOLLOWING FUNCTIONS TO ENSURE COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED SERVICES:**

**“(1) TO SERVE AS THE VENUE FOR CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING, CAPABILITY-BUILDING AND FUNCTIONAL LITERACY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMS, AMONG OTHERS, THAT WILL EDUCATE THE CENTERS' CLIENTELE, ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF ISSUES, AND PROMOTE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION TOWARD WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S EMPOWERMENT;**

**“(2) TO UNDERTAKE PROGRAMS GEARED TOWARDS MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CARE, SELF-ENHANCEMENT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS FOR LIVELIHOOD GENERATION, SOCIAL COMMUNICATION, AND OTHER RELEVANT OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS;**

**“(3) TO PROVIDE FREE LEGAL SERVICES, MEDICAL ASSISTANCE INCLUDING MEDICO-LEGAL EXAMINATIONS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING TO VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF RAPE AND OTHER CASES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN ENSURING THEIR PRIVACY AND SAFETY;**

**“(4) TO UNDERTAKE PROGRAMS RELATED TO GENDER SENSITIVITY AND GENDER-RESPONSIVE VALUES FORMATION, COUNSELLING, REHABILITATION AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WELLBEING;**

**“(5) TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE TEMPORARY SHELTER TO ABUSED WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN;**

**“(6) TO ASSIST RAPE VICTIM-SURVIVORS OR VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF OTHER FORMS OF ABUSES DURING INVESTIGATION TO HASTEN THE ARREST OF OFFENDERS AND THE FILING OF CASES IN COURT;**

**“(7) TO PROVIDE PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING AND MEDICAL SERVICES WHEN NECESSARY FOR THE FAMILY OF RAPE VICTIM-SURVIVORS OR VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF OTHER FORMS OF ABUSES;**

**“(8) TO PROVIDE SKILLS TRAINING AND LIVELIHOOD ASSISTANCE TO VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE;**

**“(9) TO STRENGTHEN AND FACILITATE LINKAGES OF WOMEN’S AND CHILDREN’S GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS WITH RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND LGUs TO MAXIMIZE THE DELIVERY OF BASIC AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN AND ADVOCATE FOR THE PROTECTION AND ADVANCEMENT OF THEIR RIGHTS;**

**“(10) TO DEVELOP AND UNDERTAKE A CONTINUING CAPACITY-BUILDING AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR FRONTLINE SERVICE PROVIDERS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, PUBLIC PROSECUTORS, LAWYERS, MEDICO-LEGAL OFFICERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, DEVELOPMENT WORKERS, SOCIAL WORKERS, HEALTH WORKERS, THERAPISTS AND BARANGAY OFFICIALS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES; GENDER SENSITIVITY AND LEGAL/CASE MANAGEMENT OF SITUATIONS/CASES INVOLVING WOMEN AND CHILDREN; AND**

**“(11) TO PERFORM SUCH OTHER FUNCTIONS AS MAY BE NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS ACT.**

**“(C) CLIENTS OF THE CENTERS. – ALL WOMEN, INCLUDING TRANSGENDER WOMEN, AND CHILDREN UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES SHALL BE ENTITLED TO PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE BY THE CENTERS:**

**“(1) VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF PROSTITUTION AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION;**

**“(2) VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND BATTERY;**

**“(3) VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF RAPE, INCEST, SEXUAL ABUSE, HARASSMENT OR MOLESTATION;**

**“(4) VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF ILLEGAL RECRUITMENT, TRAFFICKING AND/OR LABOR EXPLOITATION;**

**“(5) VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF ARMED CONFLICT, NATURAL OR ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS WHO ARE SUFFERING FROM TRAUMA DUE TO DEATH OR DISPLACEMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS, DISLOCATION OR LOSS OF LIVELIHOOD;**

**“(6) ABANDONED AND RUN-AWAY WOMEN AND CHILDREN;**

**“(7) WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN DETENTION;**

**“(8) VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF ANY FORM OF VIOLENCE AND SUFFERING FROM ANY CRISIS SITUATION;**

**"(9) VICTIM-SURVIVORS SUFFERING FROM MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL DISABILITIES NEEDING SPECIAL SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE; AND**

**"(10) VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES AS MAY BE DETERMINED BY THE DSWD.**

**"(D) PERSONNEL/STAFF COMPLEMENT OF THE CENTERS. – EACH CENTER SHALL BE HEADED BY A FEMALE DIRECTOR WHO HOLDS A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK OR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OR SIMILAR COURSES, HAS A MINIMUM EXPERIENCE OF FIVE (5) YEARS IN COUNSELLING, SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES AND OTHER RELATED FIELD OR EXPERIENCE, AND POSSESSES A PROVEN TRACK RECORD AS AN ADVOCATE OF WOMEN'S ISSUES AND EXPERTISE IN GENDER-RESPONSIVE TRAININGS AND PROGRAMS FOR CAPABILITY-BUILDING AND IS OF GOOD MORAL CHARACTER.**

**"THE SECRETARY OF THE DSWD, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE HEADS OF THE CONCERNED LGU SHALL APPOINT THE DIRECTOR AND OTHER NECESSARY PERSONNEL OF THE CENTERS. THE STAFF COMPLEMENT OF THE CENTERS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT (DBM).**

**"VOLUNTEERS FROM THE VARIOUS NONGOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS MAY EXTEND PROFESSIONAL, HOUSEHOLD, RECREATIONAL AND TRAINING EXPERTISE TO THE CENTERS. STUDENTS OF SOCIAL WORK AND WOMEN STUDIES AND OTHER RELATED PROGRAMS WHO ARE IN PRACTICUM COURSES MAY RENDER VOLUNTARY SERVICES TO THE CENTERS. THE PERSONNEL AND STAFF AS WELL AS VOLUNTEER WORKERS SHALL UNDERGO REGULAR TRAININGS ON HOW BEST TO HANDLE THE DIFFERENT SITUATIONS OF THE BENEFICIARIES OF THE CENTERS."**

SEC. 4. Republic Act No. 8505 is hereby further amended by inserting the following new Sections after Section 3 thereof:

**"SEC. 4. REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. – THE DSWD, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE INTER-AGENCY COUNCIL CONVENED UNDER SECTION 3(A) HEREOF, SHALL WITHIN SIX (6) MONTHS FROM THE APPROVAL OF THIS ACT, FORMULATE A PROGRAM FOR THE REHABILITATION, DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN, MENTIONED IN SECTION 3(B) HEREOF. THE COUNCIL SHALL ALSO OVERSEE THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMS OF THE CENTERS AND MONITOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PARTICIPATING AGENCIES. IT SHALL ALSO ACT AS AN ADVISORY BOARD.**

**"THE DSWD MAY CALL ON NATIONAL AGENCIES AND LGUS, ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO ASSIST IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT BY WAY OF PROGRAM COLLABORATION AND FUNDING AUGMENTATION, AMONG OTHERS.**

**"SEC. 5. AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT DONATIONS. – THE DSWD, THROUGH THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES, MAY ACCEPT DONATIONS AND GRANTS, BOTH DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN, FOR PURPOSES RELEVANT TO THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTERS. THE DONATIONS AND GRANTS SHALL BE ALLOTTED TO THE VARIOUS CENTERS IN SUCH AMOUNT AS MAY BE DEEMED BEST BY THE DSWD OR FOR THE PURPOSES SPECIFIED BY THE DONOR. SUCH DONATIONS AND GRANTS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO PERTINENT ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING RULES AND REGULATIONS."**

**SEC. 5.** Sections 4, 5 and 6 of the same Act are hereby renumbered accordingly as Sections 6, 7 and 8.

**SEC. 6.** Sections 7 and 8 of the same Act are hereby deleted.

**SEC. 7. Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be included in the budget of the DSWD under the annual General Appropriations Act.

**SEC. 8. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within ninety (90) days upon the approval of this Act, the DSWD and all concerned agencies, including at least three (3) women's and civil society organizations active on the issues of gender-based violence, shall formulate rules and regulations as may be necessary for the proper implementation thereof.

**SEC. 9. Separability Clause.** – If any part, section or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other parts thereof not affected thereby shall remain valid.

**SEC. 10. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, acts, presidential decrees, executive orders, administrative orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Act are deemed amended, modified or repealed accordingly.

**SEC. 11. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

*Approved,*