



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 5493

Introduced by Representatives Rolando M. Valeriano, Ronaldo V. Puno, Jennifer A. Lagbas, Anna Victoria Veloso-Tuazon, Aniela Bianca D. Tolentino, Antolin A. Oreta III, and Romeo M. Acop

AN ACT
REORGANIZING THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN PROTECTION CENTER (WCPC) OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE INTO THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN PROTECTION GROUP (WCPG), DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONS, STRUCTURE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The protection of women and children from violence, exploitation, and trafficking remains a paramount concern of the State. Over the years, the Philippine National Police (PNP) has made significant strides in addressing these issues through the Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC).

The Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC) began as the Women's Crisis and Child Protection Center (WCCPC) which became functional in 2001. While originally created with the general objective of providing appropriate police services to women and children who are victims of abuse through an interdisciplinary approach, the unit has gone through several restructurings over time in order to adapt to the changing landscape and address the ever evolving crime towards women and children. Re-named as the Women and Children Concerns Division (WCCD) in 2002, the WCPC became a division of the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM) that same year.

In 2014, in response to RA 9208, as amended, which designated the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) as the primary law enforcement agencies for human trafficking cases, and the Revised Implementing

Rules and Regulations of RA 10364 which mandated the PNP to organize a separate and dedicated anti-trafficking in persons at the national and regional levels, the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) restructured and strengthened the WCPC by expanding the mandate of the unit to include cases Trafficking in Persons in addition to its original mandate covering Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) cases.

During its maiden year of operation as the national anti-trafficking unit, the WCPC with only 71 officers, conducted 26 operations and rescued 234 victims of human trafficking in 2015.

For the past 10 years, the WCPC has more than proven its mettle as an operational unit in anti-TIP and anti-VAWC. In its latest accomplishment report, from January 1 to December 31, 2024, the WCPC successfully conducted 101 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) operations, leading to the rescue of 208 victims, both minors and adults. Notably, 47 alleged Traffickers were apprehended. Among these operations, 52 have been resolved, 80 cleared, and 21 are still under investigation. Additionally, during the same specified period, the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Section addressed a total of 308 walk-in complainants. Among these cases 24 were referred to prosecutors, 4 were regrettably faced with refusal to file, 3 are currently under investigation.

Moreover, the WCPC-Helpline has effectively managed 999 complaints, with 711 being appropriately referred to Police Stations and 102 to Family Courts and Barangays. These achievements have strengthened the Police-Community-Relationship and fostered a harmonious collaboration with the public. The outcome has been the administration of justice, empowering women, and promoting the best interests of children – fundamental objectives underlying the establishment of this Center

With the evolving nature of crimes against women and children—especially those involving technology, however, there is a need for a more robust, responsive, and strategically organized unit.

This bill seeks to reorganize the WCPC into the Women and Children Protection Group (WCPG), elevating its status to a National Operational Support Unit under the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM). The reorganization will enhance its operational capacity, expand its regional reach, and institutionalize its mandate to lead the enforcement of laws protecting women and children.

Importantly, this move reinforces the Philippines' commitment to maintaining its Tier 1 ranking in the U.S. State Department's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report. Tier 1 status is awarded to countries that fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The continued effectiveness and modernization of law

enforcement mechanisms—such as the WCPG—is essential to sustaining this recognition. It signals to the international community that the Philippines remains vigilant, proactive, and serious in its anti-trafficking efforts.

Of particular concern is the rise of Trafficking in Persons involving Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Materials (CSAEM). This form of trafficking has rapidly evolved due to digital platforms, encrypted communications, and anonymous financial systems. The Philippines has been identified as a primary source of CSAEM and addressing this crime requires specialized investigative capabilities, inter-agency coordination, and international cooperation—all of which are central to the mandate of the proposed WCPG.

The WCPG will be equipped with specialized divisions, regional units, and a dedicated personnel complement to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated action nationwide which will significantly increase the PNP's umbrella of protection over Filipino women and children.

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


ROLANDO M. VALERIANO


RONALDO V. PUNO


JENNIFER A. LAGBAS


ANNA VICTORIA VELOSO- TUAZON


ANIELA BIANCA D. TOLENTINO


ANTOLIN A. ORETA III


ROMEO M. ACOP



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5493**

Introduced by Representatives Rolando M. Valeriano, Ronaldo V. Puno, Jennifer A. Lagbas, Anna Victoria Veloso-Tuazon, Aniela Bianca D. Tolentino, Antolin A. Oreta III, and Romeo M. Acop

AN ACT
REORGANIZING THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN PROTECTION CENTER (WCPC) OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE INTO THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN PROTECTION GROUP (WCPG), DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONS, STRUCTURE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 "Women and Children Protection Group Act of 2025."

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.

It is the policy of the State to protect women and children from abuse, exploitation, and trafficking. Towards this end, the State shall strengthen the enforcement of laws addressing these concerns, the Philippine National Police (PNP) its operational capacity, expand its regional reach, and institutionalize its mandate to lead the enforcement of laws protecting women and children.

SECTION 3. Reorganization and Renaming.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) Women and Children Protection Center (WCPC) is hereby reorganized and renamed as the Women and Children Protection Group (WCPG).

SECTION 4. Mandate

The WCPG shall be the lead unit of the PNP in enforcing relevant and pertinent laws against trafficking in persons (TIP) and violence against women and children (VAWC), such as:

- (a) Anti-Mail Order Spouse Law (Republic Act No. 10906);
- (b) Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act (RA No. 7610);
- (c) Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 (Republic Act No. 7877);
- (d) Anti-Rape Act of 1997 (Republic Act No. 8353);
- (e) Rape Victims Assistance Act (Republic Act No. 8505);
- (f) Enhanced Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (Republic Act No. 9208 as amended by Republic Act No. 10364 and Republic Act No. 11862)
- (g) Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004 (Republic Act No. 9262); and
- (h) TIP-OSAEC/CSAEM as prohibited under the Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM) Act (Republic Act No. 11930).

SECTION 5. Functions:

The WCPG shall:

- (a) Maintain a "one-stop shop" of the PNP for the investigation and treatment of victims of child abuse, violence against women, trafficking in persons, and other similar crimes, through a multi-disciplinary approach;
- (b) Conduct intelligence gathering, operations, and investigation of cases of violence against women and children (VAWC) and trafficking in persons (TIP) and initiate necessary actions against these offenders for prompt prosecution and arrest;
- (c) Conduct computer-based investigations to identify and apprehend suspects who utilize the internet as a means of enticing and/or coercing young people into prostitution, in coordination with the PNP Anti- Cybercrime Group and other law enforcement agencies;
- (d) Conduct rescue operations of victims of VAWC and TIP;

- (e) Monitor, evaluate, and assist the Women and Children Protection Desks (WCPDs) established in local police units in the conduct investigation of cases of VAWC and TIP;
- (f) Formulate and implement policies and strategies for effective law enforcement and public awareness on VAWC and TIP;
- (g) Maintain linkages with local and international authorities or non-government organizations for exchange of information and necessary assistance for the protection, rehabilitation, and health related services of rescued victims;
- (h) Maintain and update relevant database including watchlist of most wanted traffickers in compliance with Section 16 of Republic Act No. 10364; and
- (i) Proactively determine whether the crime has a nexus abroad and coordinate respectively with foreign law enforcement agencies for the exchange of intelligence and information for the purpose identifying additional victims and suspects, and carrying out further investigation, case build-up, including the referral of information to foreign law enforcement agencies for the conduct of a parallel investigation;
- (j) Perform other tasks as directed by the Chief, PNP or Director, DIDM.

SECTION 6. Inter-Agency Coordination.

The WCPG shall coordinate closely with the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT), Inter-Agency Council on Violence Against Women and Their Children (IACVAWC), and other relevant government bodies in order to ensure harmonized law enforcement, victim protection, and referral mechanisms.

SECTION 7. Organizational Structure.

The WCPG shall be headed by a Director with the rank of Police Brigadier General. The Director shall be assisted by a Deputy Director for Administration, Deputy Director for Operations, and Chief of Staff, all with the rank of Police Colonel.

The WCPG shall maintain:

- (a) Four (4) Support Staff Divisions, namely:
 - (1) Administrative and Resource Management Division (ARMD);
 - (2) Operations Management Division;
 - (3) Intelligence and Investigation Division (11D); and
 - (4) Legal Affairs Division.

(b) Three (3) Operating Divisions, namely:

- (1) Anti-violence Against Women and Children Division (AVAWCD);
- (2) Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division (ATIPD); and
- (3) Social Services and Facility Security Division (SSFSD).

Each Division shall be headed by a Police Commissioned Officer with a rank of Police Colonel.

(c) Six (6) WCPG Field Units, namely:

- (1) National Capital Region Field Unit (NCRFU)
- (2) Northern Luzon Field Unit (NLRFU)
- (3) Southern Luzon Field Unit (SLRFU)
- (4) Visayas Field Unit (VFU)
- (5) Eastern Mindanao Field Unit (EMFU)
- (6) Western Mindanao Field Unit (WMFU)

These field units shall perform WCPG's investigative and operational functions in anti-trafficking in persons and violence against women and children in their respective areas of jurisdiction;

SECTION 8. Personnel Complement.

The WCPG shall have an initial complement of seven hundred and two (702) personnel, composed of one hundred and fifty-three (153) Police Commissioned Officers with the ranks of Police Captain (PCPC) to Police Brigadier General (PBGEN) and five hundred and forty-nine (549) Police Non-Commissioned Officers with the ranks of Police Corporal (PCpl) to Police Executive Master Sergeant (PEMS).

It shall be supported by four (4) Legal Officers detailed from the PNP Legal Service and two (2) Information Technology personnel detailed from the Information Technology Management Service.

SECTION 9. Organizational Structure and Staffing Pattern.

Within thirty (30) days after the activation of the WCPG, the Director of the WCPG shall formulate an organizational structure and staffing pattern and submit the same to the Chief, PNP, for approval;

SECTION 10. Delineation of Functions with other PNP Units.

Within sixty (60) days after the activation of the WCPG, appropriate directives providing for a clearer delineation of functions and responsibilities of the Director of the WCPG, Directors of other national support units and the Regional Directors of Police Regional Offices in addressing VAWC and TIP shall be formulated by the DIDM, subject to the approval of the Chief, PNP.

The DIDM shall likewise issue detailed implementing directives necessary for the enhancement of the operational capability of the WCPG.

SECTION 11. Five Year Development Plan

Within ninety (90) days from the activation of the WCPG, the Director of the WCPG shall submit to DIDM for subsequent approval of the Chief, PNP, a Five-Year Development Plan to include facilities and equipment acquisition, personnel recruitment and training as well as manpower build-up for the 17 Regional Women and Children Protection Units (RWCPUs) following the approved organizational structure and staffing pattern.

Section 12. Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.

A Joint Congressional Oversight Committee is hereby created to oversee the implementation of this Act. The Committee shall be composed of seven (7) members each from the Senate and House of Representatives to be designated by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, respectively. The Committee shall be jointly chaired by the respective Chairpersons of the House Committee on Public Order and Safety, the House Committee on Social Services, House Committee on Welfare of Children, House Committee on Women and Gender Equality, the Senate Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality, and the Senate Committee on Youth.

Section 13. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The IRR Committee shall be composed of the Chief of the PNP, who shall be the Chairperson, Secretary of the Department of Social Work and Development, the Secretary of the Department of Health, the Secretary of the Department of Education, and the PNP as the Secretariat.

The members of the IRR may designate their respective alternates whose acts shall be considered the acts of their principals.

The IRR Committee shall promulgate the IRR within ninety (90) calendar days from the effectivity of this Act, after a public consultation with relevant stakeholders LGUs,

and the. The IRR shall include, among others, the procedures for handling of TIP cases and the qualifications of the personnel complement.

The IRR Committee may promulgate, after due public consultation, amendments to the IRR, consistent with the provisions of this Code. Amendments to the IRR shall take effect fifteen (15) calendar days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

SECTION 14. Transitory Provisions.

Upon approval of this Act, the functions, personnel, records, equipment, facilities, funds, and other resources of the WCPC shall be absorbed and transferred to the newly activated PNP Women and Children Protection Group. The WCPG shall occupy the current facility being occupied by the deactivated WCPC.

SECTION 15. Appropriations.

The initial funding shall be sourced from the existing WCPC budget. Thereafter, the annual fund support for the full operationalization of the WCPG should be programmed in the regular appropriation of the PNP by the Directorate for Comptrollership.

SECTION 16. Repealing Clause.

All laws, decrees, orders, rules, and regulations inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 17. Effectivity.

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

Approved,