



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

Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7668



Introduced by Representatives Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, Yedda Marie K. Romualdez, Andrew Julian K. Romualdez and Jude A. Acidre

AN ACT
RECOGNIZING ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AS GROUNDS FOR LEGAL SEPARATION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 209, SERIES OF 1987, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE FAMILY CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Nearly four decades since its enactment, the Family Code of the Philippines continues to govern marriage and family relations. While its fundamental principles remain sound, certain provisions require updating to respond to the evolving realities of family circumstances. In particular, Article 55 on legal separation is shown to be inadequate in addressing contemporary forms of abuse experienced in marital relations.

Under the current law, legal separation is primarily grounded on “repeated physical violence”. Apart from failing to protect victims from non-physical forms of abuse (i.e. sexual, psychological and economic violence), it also prolongs the suffering and harm to victims by enduring multiple beatings before becoming eligible for such legal recourse. Substantially, the National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) shows that women experience varying degrees of violence with cuts, bruises or aches being the highest at 43%, while only 5% experienced serious

inflicted injuries¹. Solely recognizing serious injuries as evidence invalidates the pain of victims and fosters a culture of silence among those experiencing abuse.

Thus, this bill seeks to address these gaps by amending Article 55 of the Family Code to expand the coverage of violence to sexual, psychological and economic abuse as valid grounds for legal separation. It also seeks to remove the demand for “repeated” physical violence before a victim can legally separate from the abuser.

Through this bill, the State fulfills its moral and legal obligation to protect victims and safeguard the welfare of Filipino families in general. This amendment holds abusers accountable and strengthens the values of a just and humane society.

Finally, we emphasize that this bill is in line with the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW)’s Priority Legislative Agenda for the 20th and 21st Congress.

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



FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ



YEDDA MARIE K. ROMUALDEZ



ANDREW JULIAN K. ROMUALDEZ



JUDE A. ACIDRE

¹ National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS). Injuries to Women due to Intimate Partner Violence.
https://dhsprogram.com/Data/Guide-to-DHS-Statistics/index.htm#utm_source=chatgpt.com&t=Injuries_to_Women_Due_to_Intimate_Partner_Violence.htm



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

SECTION 1. Article 55 (1) of Executive Order No. 209, Series of 1987, as amended, otherwise known as the Family Code of the Philippines, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

Art. 55. A petition for legal separation may be filed on any of the following grounds:

(1) [Repeated physical violence or grossly abusive conduct] **ANY ACT OF VIOLENCE, INCLUDING PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, OR ECONOMIC ABUSE**, directed against the petitioner, a common child, or a child of the petitioner;
XXX

SEC. 2. Repealing Clause - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 3. Effectivity Clause - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,