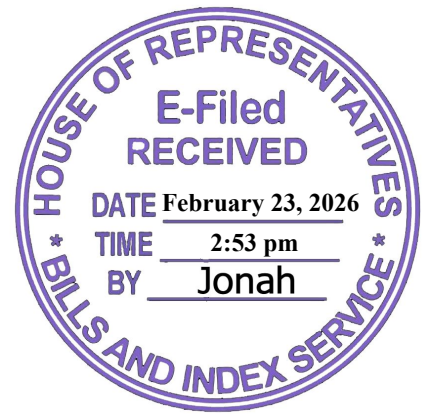


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 7953



Introduced by Lone District of Agusan del Norte Representative
HON. DALE B. CORVERA

AN ACT

**INSTITUTIONALIZING A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION AND
CRISIS RESPONSE, CREATING THE SUICIDE PREVENTION AND CRISIS RESPONSE
CENTER, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

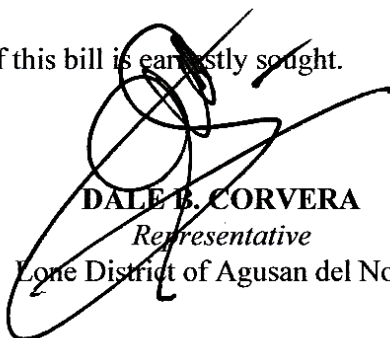
EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 2021 data of the World Health Organization show that the Philippines has a suicide mortality rate of 5.2 males and 1.8 females per 100,000 population. While more men die by suicide, women are more likely to experience suicidal ideation or attempt suicide. The higher completion rate among men is partially due to the fact that men tend to choose more violent and highly lethal methods for suicide, such as firearms, hanging, or jumping from heights, which have lower chances of survival. In contrast, women are more likely to use methods like drug overdoses, which, are less immediately fatal and allow for a greater chance of medical intervention. Alarming, it is also observed that suicide rate among the 15-24 age group has been steadily increasing in recent years.

This bill seeks to establish the Suicide Prevention and Crisis Response Center (SPCRC) under the Department of Health. It also helps aims to provide tele-counseling, psychological first aid, and referrals to mental health professionals for affected individuals. The proposed law also seeks to establish, operate and maintain a 24/7 toll-free National Crisis Hotline which can be easily accessed by affected individuals at the time of their weakness. Likewise, the SPCRC will provide reading, media, and information materials on suicide prevention, crisis response, and stigma reduction.

A range of factors - at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels – contributes to suicide risk. However, it has been found that the implementation of collaborative evidence-based interventions is most effective in helping people who are at risk of suicide. Thus, this proposed measure focuses on the conduct of coordinative efforts between the SPCRC, relevant national government agencies and local government units (LGUs) in the implementation of community-based interventions, safe spaces, and emergency response, with the end in view of minimizing, if not totally eliminating, suicide among Filipinos.

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


DALE B. CORVERA
Representative
Lone District of Agusan del Norte

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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 and referred to as the “*Suicide Prevention and Crisis Response Act*”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is a declared policy of the State that the maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty and property, and promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy.

The State recognizes suicide as a serious public health concern requiring a comprehensive, compassionate, and community-driven response. The government shall develop accessible, inclusive and science-based crisis intervention and suicide prevention programs to protect the mental health and promote the emotional resilience of its citizens, especially the youth.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act:

- a) Suicide refers to the act of intentionally causing one’s own death.
- b) Crisis Response refers to timely intervention strategies aimed at persons in acute psychological, emotional, or mental distress.
- c) First Responders refer to persons designated or trained to respond to a suicide emergency, including police officers, emergency medical service workers, barangay health workers, social workers, disaster response personnel, security personnel and firefighters.

SEC. 4. *Creation of the Suicide Prevention and Crisis Response Center (SPCRC).* – There is hereby created the Suicide Prevention and Crisis Response Center under the Department of Health (DOH) tasked with:

- a) Providing tele-counseling, psychological first aid, and referrals to mental health professionals;
- b) Operating and maintaining a 24/7 toll-free National Crisis Hotline;
- c) Developing digital and SMS-based mental health support systems;

- d) Coordinating with local government units (LGUs) for community-based interventions, safe spaces, and emergency response;
- e) Providing and distributing reading, media, and information materials on suicide prevention, crisis response, and stigma reduction.

SEC. 5. *Multi-Sectoral Suicide Prevention Framework.* – The SPCRC shall formulate a multi-sectoral suicide prevention framework in coordination with the following:

- a) Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for learning-based mental health programs and suicide risk assessments;
- b) Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and Civil Service Commission (CSC) for workplace wellness and burnout mitigation strategies;
- c) Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) for wellness and mental resilience of overseas Filipino workers;
- d) Philippine National Police (PNP), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) to train personnel on suicide risk detection and compassionate crises response;
- e) Media agencies to ensure responsible and ethical reporting of suicide cases.

SEC. 6. *Hiring and Deployment of Psychologists in City Health Offices and Municipal Health Offices.* – The DOH shall hire and deploy at least one (1) licensed behavioral psychologist in every city or municipality charged with the responsibility of coordinating and implementing suicide prevention programs, including the creation of customized safety plan or crisis response plan for affected citizens.

SEC. 7. *Responsibilities of City Health Offices and Municipal Health Offices.* – The implementation of the programs under this Act shall be the responsibility of the City Health Office and Municipal Health Office within their respective territorial jurisdictions.

SEC. 8. *Mandatory Training.* – All first responders, teachers, guidance counselors, CHO and MHO psychologists, and human resource focal persons, shall undergo annual training in suicide risk recognition and crisis de-escalation, to be administered by DOH and accredited providers.

SEC. 9. *Suicide Surveillance and Research.* – The SPCRC shall establish a Suicide Data and Monitoring System, in coordination with the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and LGUs, to track suicide cases, risk patterns, and intervention outcomes. Suicide-related reports shall be submitted annually to Congress and made accessible to stakeholders.

SEC. 10. *Public Awareness Campaign.* – The SPCRC, in coordination with the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) and private partners, shall implement a nationwide education campaign on suicide prevention, mental health literacy, and stigma reduction.

SEC. 11. *Protection from Liability.* – No trained first responder, volunteer, or accredited mental health provider shall be held civilly or criminally liable for actions performed in good faith under this Act.

SEC. 12. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DOH. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The DOH shall, in coordination with other relevant agencies, promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act within ninety (90) days after its approval.

SEC. 14. *Separability Clause.* – If any part or section of this Act is declared unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect the other parts or sections of this Act.

SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, and issuances inconsistent with any provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 16. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,