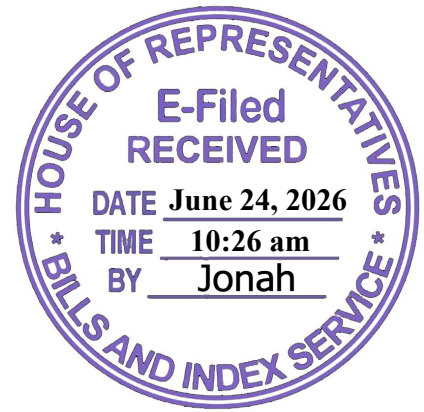


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9934



Introduced by: **REP. SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The state's duty to protect its citizens is paramount, yet a deeply concerning trend is challenging the peace of our local communities. Schools and public spaces—traditionally reserved as safe havens for learning and youth development—have increasingly become the stages for unexpected, lethal acts of violence carried out by minors.

Most recently, on June 22, 2026, the entire nation was shocked by a horrifying mass shooting at San Jose National High School in Tacloban City. In that incident, two heavily armed teenagers—aged 14 and 15—opened fire inside active classrooms with a Glock 9mm semi-automatic pistol and a .38 caliber revolver, killing three innocent students and wounding several others. This tragic event does not stand alone; it follows a string of violent student-on-student offenses nationwide, including a severe multi-victim knife attack just a week prior in Cavite.

While Republic Act No. 9344, otherwise known as the "*Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006*," was originally enacted with the noble intent of protecting the rights and rehabilitation of minors, the evolving landscape of juvenile delinquency requires a firm reassessment. Present-day minors have unprecedented access to sophisticated weapons, criminal networks, and modern communication.

When a 14-year-old or 15-year-old demonstrates the tactical capacity to load, reload, and deploy military-grade firearms inside a crowded classroom, treating them with absolute exemption from criminal prosecution creates a dangerous legal vacuum. It deprives victims' families of meaningful justice and fosters an environment of impunity.

This Bill introduces two critical, targeted updates to the law:

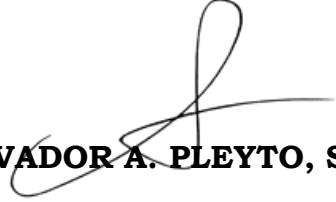
1. Lowering the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (MACR): It lowers the baseline from 15 to 12 years of age, but ensures safeguards by mandating

a strict legal determination of discernment (the capacity to distinguish right from wrong and understand its consequences).

2. Absolute Exclusion for Heinous and Gun-Related Mass Violences: It declares that any minor, from age 12 up to below 18, who commits an act of mass murder, severe gun violence, or heinous offenses inside or near educational institutions, shall automatically be excluded from absolute exemption. Instead, they will be subjected to the standard, specialized prosecution under a modernized family court system, while maintaining high-security rehabilitation under specialized youth facilities (*Bahay Pagasa*).

We must strike a vital balance: we must remain dedicated to reforming troubled youth, but we can no longer allow the law to act as an unyielding shield for those who commit horrific acts of violence against their peers.

In view of the urgent need to secure our schools and restore public safety, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.

Republic of the Philippines
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HOUSE BILL NO. 9934

Introduced by: **REP. SALVADOR A. PLEYTO, SR.**

**AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9344, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS
THE "JUVENILE JUSTICE AND WELFARE ACT OF 2006," AS AMENDED,
LOWERING THE AGE OF CRIMINAL LIABILITY, REMOVING CRIMINAL
EXEMPTIONS FOR HEINOUS CRIMES AND MASS VIOLENCE COMMITTED
WITHIN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Safe Schools and
Juvenile Accountability Act of 2026."

SEC. 2. *Amendment.* – Section 6 of Republic Act No. 9344, as amended, is
hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 6. *Minimum Age of Responsibility.* – A child **BELOW TWELVE (12)**
years of age at the time of the commission of the offense shall be exempt
from criminal liability. However, the child shall be subjected to an
intervention program pursuant to Section 20 of this Act.

"A child **TWELVE (12) YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE** but below eighteen
(18) years of age shall likewise be exempt from criminal liability and be
subjected to an intervention program, **UNLESS** the child has acted with
DISCERNMENT, in which case, such child shall be subjected to the
appropriate proceedings in accordance with this Act and the Revised Penal
Code.

**"PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE EXEMPTION FROM CRIMINAL
LIABILITY ESTABLISHED IN THIS ACT SHALL NOT APPLY TO ANY
CHILD TWELVE (12) TO SEVENTEEN (17) YEARS OF AGE WHO
COMMITTS MURDER, PARRICIDE, INFANTICIDE, RAPE, DESTRUCTIVE**

ARSON, ROBBERY WITH HOMICIDE, OR ANY ACT OF MASS VIOLENCE AND SHOOTING UTILIZING FIREARMS OR DEADLY WEAPONS COMMITTED WITHIN OR IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF SCHOOL PREMISES, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AND PLAYGROUNDS. SUCH JUVENILE OFFENDERS SHALL AUTOMATICALLY BE PROSECUTED UNDER THE SPECIALIZED JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM."

SEC. 3. Amendment. – Section 20-A of Republic Act No. 9344, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 20-A. *Serious and Mass Crimes Committed by Children.* – A child who is twelve (12) years of age up to below eighteen (18) years of age and who commits heinous crimes as defined under existing laws, or who perpetrates acts of gun violence resulting in multiple casualties inside learning spaces, shall be immediately placed under involuntary commitment in the Intensive Juvenile Intervention and Support Center (IJISC) within the nearest *Bahay Pag-asa*.

"The transfer to a specialized high-security youth facility shall be swift, taking place within twenty-four (24) hours from custody to guarantee public safety and the emotional well-being of the surviving community, while awaiting legal trials in proper Family Courts."

Sec.4. Separability Clause. – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected thereby shall remain in full force and effect.

Sec. 5. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, executive orders, presidential issuances, and other administrative rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

Sec. 6. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,