

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
10029
HOUSE BILL NO. _____



Introduced by HON. PHILIP CONRAD "DOK BONG" M. ACOP

AN ACT
STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY,
MANDATING MULTI-DISCIPLINARY EVALUATIONS, AND EXPANDING
REHABILITATION MEASURES FOR REGENERATIVE JUSTICE, AMENDING FOR
THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9344, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
"JUVENILE JUSTICE AND WELFARE ACT OF 2006," AS AMENDED BY
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10630, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The classroom, historically regarded as a sanctuary for intellectual development and a secondary home for the Filipino youth, is increasingly transforming into a theater of unprecedented and complex violence. In recent months, a succession of tragic events has exposed critical vulnerabilities within the country's existing child protection frameworks and juvenile justice system, demanding a rigorous, institutionalized legislative response.

In March 2026, the Philippine National Police Anti-Cybercrime Group apprehended seven 15-year-old students in Laguna who allegedly had been radicalized and recruited through an online gaming platform and messaging community to plan a coordinated mass school shooting. While swift law enforcement action prevented a catastrophe in Laguna, the incident demonstrated how external digital actors can exploit vulnerable, unmonitored minors to orchestrate extreme, structural violence.

On June 16, 2026, a horrific knife attack occurred at Bethel Academy in General Trias, Cavite, where a 14-year-old Grade 8 student entered a classroom and stabbed seven younger Grade 5 pupils, laying bare the devastating physical realities of unaddressed behavioral escalation and localized school security failures.

Less than a week later, on June 22, 2026, the country was profoundly shaken by a fatal mass shooting inside the San Jose National High School in Tacloban City. Two Grade 9 students, aged 14 and 15, managed to bypass perimeter lines while armed with a .38 caliber revolver and a Glock 9mm semi-automatic pistol. The ensuing gunfire resulted in the tragic deaths of three young students and left multiple

others severely wounded. These overt acts of violence are further compounded by emerging digital threats.

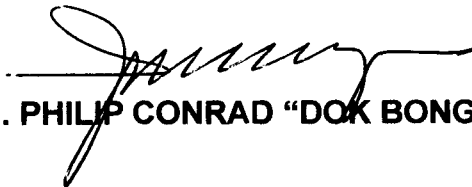
These dark milestones indicate that the public safety problem cannot be solved by simply and reflexively lowering the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (MACR), a move that often isolates children further without addressing root causes. Rather, the legal system must confront the institutional breakdowns, digital radicalization networks, and adult accountability failures that empower minors to hold lethal instruments.

This amendatory bill introduces critical modifications to Republic Act No. 9344, as amended by Republic Act No. 10630, via four strategic policy dimensions:

1. **Stricter Parental and Adult Liability:** Elevating gross negligence by adult weapon owners to criminal accessory charges if their failure to secure a firearm or explosive results in mass juvenile violence.
2. **Multi-Disciplinary Discernment Panels:** Removing the burden of determining discernment from a single, overwhelmed local social worker and mandating an expedited, 30-day psychological, social, and educational panel for grave, weapon-based felonies.
3. **Regional Segregation of Facilities:** Ensuring that youth who exhibit severe psychological deviations or commit high-casualty acts are confined in specialized Intensive Juvenile Rehabilitation and Mental Health Centers (IJR-MHC), keeping them separate from minors who commit petty offenses.
4. **Mandatory Institutional Data Sharing:** Legally binding the Department of Education's Child Protection Committees (CPCs) to seamlessly share chronic bullying and behavioral trauma data with Local Social Welfare and Development Offices (LSWDOs) to trigger proactive community-based counseling before violence manifests.

By addressing adult accountability, modernizing psychological oversight, and breaking the bureaucratic silos between academic institutions and juvenile welfare agencies, this measure aims to restore the safety of our educational sanctuaries and modernly adapt our restorative justice framework.

In view of the urgency to protect the lives of Filipino learners, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.


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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 as the "*Institutional Accountability and Juvenile Welfare Reformation Act.*"

SEC. 2. *Amendment of Section 6.* — Section 6 of Republic Act No. 9344, as amended by Republic Act No. 10630, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 6. Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility. — A child fifteen (15) years of age or under 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 is deemed to be fifteen (15) years of age on the day of the fifteenth anniversary of his/her birthdate.

A child above fifteen (15) years but below eighteen (18) years of age shall likewise be exempt from criminal liability and be subjected to an intervention program, unless he/she has acted with discernment, in which case, such child shall be subjected to the appropriate proceedings in accordance with this Act.

PROVIDED, THAT IN CASES INVOLVING THE COMMISSIONS OF SERIOUS CRIMES AS DEFINED UNDER SECTION 20-A OF THIS ACT, THE DETERMINATION OF DISCERNMENT SHALL NOT RELY SOLELY ON A SINGLE CLINICAL REASSESSMENT BUT ON AN EXPEDITED EVALUATION BY A STATE-BACKED MULTI-DISCIPLINARY

DISCERNMENT PANEL COMPOSED OF A LICENSED SOCIAL WORKER, A CHILD PSYCHIATRIST OR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL, AND AN EDUCATIONAL COUNSELOR, COMPLETED WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS FROM THE INITIAL CONTACT.

The exemption from criminal liability herein established does not include exemption from civil liability, which shall be enforced in accordance with existing laws.”

SEC. 3. *Amendment of Section 20-A.* — Section 20-A of Republic Act No. 9344, as amended by Republic Act No. 10630, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 20-A. Serious Crimes Committed by Children Who Are Exempt From Criminal Liability. — A child who is above twelve (12) years of age up to fifteen (15) years of age, and who commits parricide, murder, infanticide, kidnapping and serious illegal detention where the victim is killed or raped, robbery with homicide, robbery with rape, destructive arson, rape, carnapping where the driver or occupant is killed or raped, offenses under Republic Act No. 9165 punishable by more than twelve (12) years of imprisonment, **OR ACTS OF MULTIPLE FATAL OR GRIEVOUS PHYSICAL ASSAULTS UTILIZING FIREARMS, EXPLOSIVES, OR LETHAL WEAPONS BROUGHT INSIDE ACADEMIC OR SCHOOL PREMISES**, shall be deemed a neglected child under Presidential Decree No. 603, as amended, and shall be mandatorily placed in a special facility within the *Bahay Pag-asa* called the Intensive Juvenile Intervention and Support Center (IJISC).

PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT IN INSTANCES WHERE THE INVOLVED CHILD MANIFESTS SEVERE PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVIATION, INTENTIONAL TRAUMA-INDUCED DELINQUENCY, OR HIGH-RISK VIOLENT TENDENCIES, THE CHILD SHALL BE CONFINED IN REGIONALLY SEGREGATED SPECIALIZED INTENSIVE JUVENILE REHABILITATION AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS (IJR-MHC), TO PREVENT CONTAGION DELINQUENCY AND TO ENSURE FOCUSED PSYCHIATRIC AND REGENERATIVE CARE.”

SECTION 4. *Insertion of New Sections.* — New sections, to be designated as Section 20-F and Section 20-G, are hereby inserted to read as follows:

“SEC. 20-F. STRICTER PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ADULT CRIMINAL LIABILITY FOR WEAPON ACCESS. — ANY PARENT, LEGAL GUARDIAN, OR ADULT REGISTRATION HOLDER WHOSE GROSS NEGLIGENCE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY ALLOWS A MINOR IN THEIR HOUSEHOLD ACCESS TO A LICENSED OR UNLICENSED FIREARM, EXPLOSIVE, OR HIGHLY LETHAL WEAPON, WHICH IS SUBSEQUENTLY USED IN THE COMMISSIONS OF A SERIOUS CRIME CAUSING DEATH OR INJURY, SHALL BE CRIMINALLY LIABLE AS AN ACCESSORY BEFORE THE FACT.

SUCH PARENT OR ADULT COMPLICIT BY NEGLIGENCE SHALL SUFFER THE PENALTY OF PRISION CORRECCIONAL IN ITS MEDIUM TO MAXIMUM PERIODS, WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO STATUTORY CIVIL LIABILITY UNDER ARTICLE 2180 OF THE CIVIL CODE.”

“SEC. 20-G. MANDATORY INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGES AND DATA PROTOCOLS. — THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DEPED), THROUGH ITS INTERNAL CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEES (CPCS), IS MANDATED TO FORMALIZE AN UNIMPEDED DATA-SHARING INFRASTRUCTURE WITH THE LOCAL JUVENILE JUSTICE AND WELFARE COUNCIL (JJWC) AND LOCAL SOCIAL WELFARE DEVELOPMENT OFFICES (LSWDOS).

REPORTED CASES OF ACCELERATING OR CHRONIC BULLYING, VIOLENT BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS, OR SEVERE PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA DETECTED WITHIN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS MUST BE AUTOMATICALLY REFERRED TO LSWDOS WITHIN FORTY-EIGHT (48) HOURS TO TRIGGER PROACTIVE COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION PLANS BEFORE ESCALATING TO EXTREME CONFLICTS WITH THE LAW.”

SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,