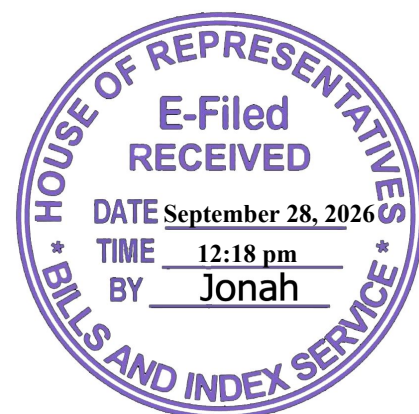




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Twentieth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 11492



Introduced by Representative Jude A. Acidre

AN ACT

**STRENGTHENING THE FILIPINO FAMILY AS THE FOUNDATION
OF THE NATION, INSTITUTIONALIZING FAMILY-CENTERED
GOVERNANCE, ESTABLISHING MECHANISMS FOR THE
PROTECTION, DEVELOPMENT, AND WELL-BEING OF FILIPINO
FAMILIES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution recognizes the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation and commands the State to strengthen its solidarity and actively promote its total development. It further recognizes marriage as an inviolable social institution and the foundation of the family, protects the right of spouses to found a family according to their religious convictions and the demands of responsible parenthood, affirms the natural and primary right and duty of parents in the rearing of the youth, protects the rights of children, and equally protects the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception.

These guarantees reflect a fundamental principle of a free and humane society: the dignity of the person is ordinarily first encountered, recognized, protected and developed within the family.

The family is more than an aggregation of individuals receiving separate government services. It is a community of persons joined by enduring relationships of marriage, parenthood, filiation, kinship, responsibility, care and mutual support. It is where children first experience belonging and formation, where parents assume primary responsibility for their upbringing, where generations care for one another, and where citizens first learn responsibility, solidarity and participation in society.

The rights of persons and the integrity of the family therefore reinforce one another. The State must protect every individual from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect while, at the same time, respecting the legitimate autonomy of family life and supporting families in the discharge of responsibilities that properly belong to them.

This balance requires the principle of subsidiarity. Public authorities should assist families when assistance is needed, coordinate with communities and civil society when these can effectively respond, and intervene directly when protection or the public welfare requires it. Government should strengthen legitimate family functions rather than unnecessarily displace them.

This principle is especially important today.

Filipino families face increasingly complex economic, social and cultural pressures. Household size continues to decline. Marriage is occurring later and less frequently. Fertility has fallen below replacement level. Millions of families experience prolonged separation because of overseas or internal migration. Parents confront growing demands involving work, caregiving, education, technology, mental health and child protection. Grandparents increasingly

perform caregiving responsibilities. Poor and vulnerable families frequently navigate several government agencies merely to address problems experienced simultaneously within one household.

Government possesses numerous family-related statutes and programs, yet these interventions remain dispersed across institutions organized according to administrative mandates rather than around the family that experiences these conditions as one reality.

This bill therefore establishes a permanent national system of family-centered governance.

It creates the National Commission on the Filipino Family, supported by a National Advisory Council and a professional Secretariat, as the principal policy, coordinating, monitoring and standards-setting institution for family-centered governance.

It establishes a National Filipino Family Development Framework, measurable family well-being indicators, proportionate Family Impact Assessments for major government measures, local family-service convergence, and mechanisms for accountability and periodic evaluation.

The bill recognizes the family as a subject of legitimate interests and participation while fully respecting the constitutional and statutory rights of each family member. It preserves the Family Code and expressly avoids altering marriage, filiation, parental authority, support, succession, property relations and other matters of substantive family law by implication.

The measure strengthens marriage preparation and voluntary accompaniment during the early years of married life; expands parenting and family-formation services; promotes responsible fatherhood and motherhood; strengthens family-school cooperation and parental participation in education;

integrates family support with maternal and child health and early childhood services; and reinforces protection of children and other vulnerable family members.

It also recognizes that work and family life are inseparable dimensions of human development. Families require adequate income and conditions of employment that allow parents and carers to perform their responsibilities. The bill therefore integrates family economic security, work-family balance, caregiving, housing, nutrition and social protection into the national family-policy framework.

Consistent with the Constitution, the measure affirms the inherent dignity of every human being and the equal protection of the life of the mother and the unborn from conception. It strengthens prenatal, maternal and early-childhood support, particularly during the first one thousand days of life, while preserving existing laws governing legal personality, health services and family relations.

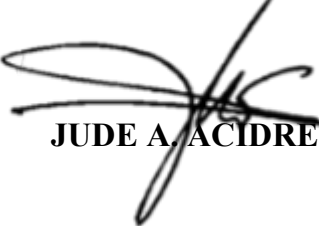
It further recognizes solidarity with the weakest as an essential responsibility of society. Poor families, children, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, solo parents, families affected by migration, disaster or displacement, and persons threatened by violence, abuse or exploitation require particular attention.

At the same time, solidarity must strengthen rather than create unnecessary dependence. Public assistance should, whenever reasonably possible, increase the capacity of families and communities to care for their members and participate fully in economic and civic life.

The Filipino family has always been one of the country's greatest sources of resilience. Public policy should recognize it accordingly.

Government must protect the family without controlling it; assist it without replacing it; strengthen parental responsibility without diminishing the rights of children; protect individual dignity without fragmenting family life; and build public institutions that recognize that the future of the nation is inseparable from the strength of its families.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this bill is earnestly requested.



JUDE A. ACIDRE



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AN ACT
STRENGTHENING THE FILIPINO FAMILY AS THE FOUNDATION
OF THE NATION, INSTITUTIONALIZING FAMILY-CENTERED
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PROTECTION, DEVELOPMENT, AND WELL-BEING OF FILIPINO
FAMILIES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

CHAPTER 1
GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION. 1. *Short Title.* — This Act shall be known as the “Filipino Family First Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to recognize the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation, protect its integrity and legitimate autonomy, strengthen its solidarity, and actively promote its total development.

The State recognizes that the dignity and development of the human person and the strength of the family are mutually reinforcing and that the family performs fundamental functions in the care, formation, education, protection and development of its members which are indispensable to society and the nation.

Towards this end, the State shall:

- a. Recognize and protect the inherent dignity and equal worth of every human being and ensure that government policy serves the integral development of the person within family and community life;
- b. Protect marriage as an inviolable social institution and the foundation of the family in accordance with the Constitution and the Family Code of the Philippines;
- c. Respect the right of spouses to found a family in accordance with their religious convictions and the demands of responsible parenthood;
- d. Strengthen marriage and family life through supportive economic, educational, social, health and community conditions;
- e. Support the natural and primary right and duty of parents in the care, upbringing, education, formation and development of their children, consistent with the rights and best interests of the child and existing law;
- f. Equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception, consistent with the Constitution and existing law, and promote maternal, prenatal, neonatal and child health and nutrition;
- g. Recognize the family as the principal environment for the care and formation of children and promote the preservation of safe and lawful family relationships;

- h. Recognize the complementary responsibilities of fathers and mothers in family life and promote conditions enabling both to participate responsibly in the care, formation and support of their children;
- i. Respect the legitimate autonomy, privacy and integrity of family life. Government intervention affecting family relationships, parental authority or family care shall be authorized by law, directed toward a legitimate public purpose, necessary and proportionate to the circumstances, and attended by due process and appropriate safeguards;
- j. Recognize work as essential to personal dignity and family economic security and promote conditions enabling workers to reconcile employment with family responsibilities;
- k. Promote the right of families to a family living wage and income in accordance with the Constitution and support policies that strengthen family economic security;
- l. Promote solidarity within families, between generations, within communities and throughout society, with particular attention to poor and vulnerable families and persons requiring special care or protection;
- m. Apply the principle of subsidiarity so that public authorities support and strengthen families, communities and intermediate institutions and refrain from unnecessarily assuming functions they can adequately and lawfully perform;
- n. Give effect to the right of families and family associations to participate in the planning and implementation of policies and programs that affect them;

- o. Promote prevention and early intervention so that families receive appropriate support before difficulties develop into more serious social, health, educational or economic crises;
- p. Ensure equitable access to services for children and vulnerable persons regardless of circumstances for which they bear no responsibility;
- q. Respect religious freedom, freedom of conscience, voluntary association and the legitimate diversity of civil-society institutions;
- r. Ensure that programs under this Act neither diminish existing legal protections nor authorize unlawful discrimination; and
- s. Institutionalize evidence-based, measurable and fiscally responsible family-centered governance throughout the public sector.

SEC. 3. *Guiding Principles.* — This Act shall be interpreted and implemented according to the following principles:

- a. *Inherent Human Dignity.*** — Every human being possesses inherent dignity that government is bound to respect and protect. Public policy shall treat persons as ends in themselves and shall avoid degrading or instrumentalizing any person or class of persons;
- b. *Integrity of Rights and Duties.*** — Rights shall be understood together with the corresponding responsibilities necessary for the common good, family welfare and a just social order;
- c. *The Family as a Community of Persons.*** — Family policy shall consider the family as an integrated community of persons and relationships and shall avoid unnecessary fragmentation of family members into isolated administrative categories;

- d. Family Integrity and Autonomy.** — The family possesses a sphere of legitimate responsibility and decision-making that shall be respected by public authorities consistent with the Constitution and law;
- e. Marriage and Family Stability.** — Government policy shall recognize the social value of stable marriages and family relationships and, where lawful and safe, promote conditions that strengthen them;
- f. Parental Primacy.** — Parents possess the natural and primary right and duty to care for, educate and form their children. Government and educational institutions shall ordinarily support and complement, rather than displace, this responsibility;
- g. Best Interests and Rights of the Child.** — The best interests and legal rights of the child shall remain a primary consideration in actions concerning children;
- h. Protection of Human Life.** — Programs under this Act shall respect the constitutional protection afforded to the life of the mother and the unborn from conception and shall promote care and protection throughout pregnancy, birth, infancy and childhood;
- i. Responsible Motherhood and Fatherhood.** — The State shall recognize and support the distinctive and complementary contributions of mothers and fathers to family life while respecting their equal dignity and rights under law;
- j. Subsidiarity.** — A public authority shall not unnecessarily assume or displace functions that families, communities or lower levels of government can adequately perform. Higher levels of government shall

provide support, resources and coordination where needed and direct protection where required by law;

- k. Solidarity.** — Persons, families, communities, civil society, businesses and government share responsibility for the common good, with particular concern for the weakest and most vulnerable;
- l. Participation and Freedom of Association.** — Families and citizens shall be enabled to participate freely in civic, community and family associations and shall not be compelled to join an association except as provided by law;
- m. Prevention and Early Intervention.** — Government shall prioritize timely assistance, family formation, parenting support, health promotion, education and risk reduction;
- n. Integration.** — Government shall coordinate programs around the actual circumstances of families rather than require families to navigate unnecessarily fragmented systems;
- o. Empowerment.** — Public assistance should strengthen the capacity of families and communities to become resilient and self-sustaining whenever reasonably possible;
- p. Accessibility.** — Public programs shall reduce unnecessary geographic, documentary, financial and administrative barriers;
- q. Evidence and Accountability.** — Family-related interventions shall use reliable evidence, measurable indicators and periodic evaluation; and
- r. Fiscal Responsibility.** — New government obligations shall be aligned with statutory authority and lawful appropriations.

SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.* — For purposes of this Act:

- a. **Advisory Council** refers to the National Advisory Council on the Filipino Family;
- b. **Carer** refers to a family member or other person who regularly provides substantial care, supervision or assistance to a child, senior citizen, person with disability, person with serious illness or other dependent person;
- c. **Commission or NCFF** refers to the National Commission on the Filipino Family;
- d. **Family** refers to the family recognized under the Constitution, the Family Code and other applicable laws. Family relations shall retain the meaning provided under the Family Code. Nothing in this Act shall create a new civil status or modify the legal consequences of marriage, filiation or kinship;
- e. **Family-centered governance** refers to the systematic consideration of the effects of government action upon family integrity, relationships, responsibilities, resources, time, caregiving, formation, participation and well-being;
- f. **Family Impact Assessment or FIA** refers to the proportionate assessment established under this Act for major government measures reasonably expected to affect families substantially;

- g. **Family integrity** refers to the legitimate autonomy, continuity, privacy, relationships and lawful functions of the family as protected by the Constitution and existing law;
- h. **Family service convergence** refers to coordinated assessment, referral and delivery of two (2) or more public services needed by the same family;
- i. **Family well-being** refers to the conditions enabling a family and its members to live in dignity, perform lawful family responsibilities, meet material and caregiving needs, protect and form children, support vulnerable members, participate in society and withstand or recover from adversity;
- j. **Household, for administrative, statistical and service-delivery purposes only**, refers to persons who ordinarily reside together or substantially share living, support or caregiving arrangements. Recognition as a household shall not create or modify legal rights concerning marriage, filiation, parental authority, support, succession or property;
- k. **Marriage** refers to a special contract of permanent union between a man and a woman entered into in accordance with law for the establishment of conjugal and family life. It is the foundation of the family and an inviolable social institution whose nature, consequences, and incidents are governed by law and not subject to stipulation, except that marriage settlements may fix the property relations during the marriage within the limits provided by the Family Code of the Philippines;
- l. **Major covered measure** refers to a policy, program, regulation, plan, major budgetary measure or project subject to Family Impact Assessment pursuant to this Act;

- m. **Parent-substitute** shall have the meaning provided under applicable law;
- n. **Vulnerable family** refers to a family experiencing or substantially at risk of poverty, hunger, homelessness, displacement, abuse, exploitation, disability-related barriers, serious illness, loss of livelihood, prolonged separation, disaster, conflict or comparable conditions impairing its ability to care adequately for its members; and
- o. **Voluntary family-support service** refers to counseling, education, formation, accompaniment, mediation, parenting assistance, financial literacy or similar support that a competent person may freely accept or decline except where participation is expressly required by law or lawful court order.

CHAPTER II

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE FILIPINO FAMILY

SEC. 5. *Creation of the National Commission on the Filipino Family.* — There is hereby created a National Commission on the Filipino Family (NCFF) which shall serve as the primary policy, coordinating, standards-setting, monitoring and advocacy institution of the National Government for family-centered governance.

The Commission shall be attached to the Office of the President for administrative purposes.

The Commission shall exercise its functions without diminishing or assuming powers conferred by law upon existing departments, agencies, constitutional bodies, courts or local government units.

SEC. 6. *Composition.* — The Commission shall consist of a Chairperson and four (4) Commissioners appointed by the President.

Collectively, they shall possess demonstrated competence in:

- a. Family law, constitutional law, human rights or public administration;
- b. Marriage and family services, parenting, child development or social welfare;
- c. Health, nutrition, mental health or demography;
- d. Economics, work, livelihood, housing, social protection or development planning; and
- e. Education, local governance, migration, caregiving, research or related fields.

SEC. 7. *Qualifications and Terms.* — The Chairperson and Commissioners shall be natural-born citizens of the Philippines, at least forty (40) years of age, persons of proven integrity, and possess at least ten (10) years of relevant professional or public-service experience.

They shall serve six (6)-year terms without reappointment, subject to the staggered initial terms provided in this Act.

SEC. 8. *Powers and Functions.* — The Commission shall:

- (a) Formulate the National Filipino Family Development Framework;
- (b) promote the integrity and development of the family in government policy;
- (c) monitor compliance with constitutional and statutory mandates affecting the family;

- (d) formulate standards for family-centered governance;
- (e) administer the Family Impact Assessment system;
- (f) recommend policies supporting marriage, family formation, parenting, responsible motherhood and fatherhood, intergenerational solidarity and family resilience;
- (g) identify policies that unnecessarily displace legitimate family functions and recommend corrective measures consistent with law;
- (h) review barriers preventing parents from performing their primary responsibilities in the care and education of their children;
- (i) coordinate government programs concerning family economic security, health, care, housing, education, migration and social protection;
- (j) promote family-supportive employment and workplace policies;
- (k) monitor demographic, marriage, household and intergenerational trends relevant to national development;
- (l) assist LGUs in family-centered planning and service convergence;
- (m) develop national family well-being indicators with relevant agencies;
- (n) conduct or commission research concerning family life, marriage, child development, family economics, migration, caregiving and related issues;
- (o) promote partnerships with qualified family associations, community organizations, professional bodies, academic institutions, faith-based service organizations and the private sector;

- (p) administer the Filipino Family Development Fund;
- (q) require implementing agencies to submit information reasonably necessary for monitoring this Act, subject to privacy and confidentiality laws;
- (r) issue findings, recommendations and compliance notices under this Act;
- (s) report regularly to the President, Congress and the public; and
- (t) perform such other functions necessary to carry out this Act.

SEC. 9. *National Advisory Council on the Filipino Family.* — There is hereby established a National Advisory Council on the Filipino Family chaired by the NCCF Chairperson and composed of representatives of the principal national departments and bodies concerned with social welfare, health, education, labor, migration, housing, development planning, budgeting, justice, digital affairs, children, senior citizens, persons with disabilities and women.

The Council shall likewise include representatives of:

- (a) Family and parent associations;
- (b) marriage and family-service organizations;
- (c) civil-society and community organizations;
- (d) faith-based social-service organizations;
- (e) academe and research institutions;
- (f) employers and labor;
- (g) migrant families; and

(h) organizations serving children, persons with disabilities, senior citizens and carers.

The Council shall serve as the principal inter-agency and multisectoral advisory and coordination mechanism under this Act.

SEC. 10. *Secretariat.* — The Commission shall be supported by a professional Secretariat headed by an Executive Director and organized into appropriate units for policy and planning, Family Impact Assessment, research and data, local governance and partnerships, legal affairs, finance and administration.

SEC. 11. *Family Focal Persons.* — Every national government department and major agency whose mandate substantially affects families shall designate an existing senior official as Family Focal Person.

No new permanent position shall be required solely by reason of this section.

CHAPTER III

NATIONAL FAMILY POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

SEC. 12. *National Filipino Family Development Framework.* — Within one (1) year from its organization, the Commission shall formulate a six (6)-year National Filipino Family Development Framework aligned with the Philippine Development Plan.

The Framework shall establish national objectives, measurable targets, responsible agencies, financing requirements and evaluation mechanisms.

SEC. 13. *Priority Outcomes.* — The Framework shall address, at a minimum:

- (a) Marriage and family formation;
- (b) family stability and functioning;
- (c) parental capacity;
- (d) child health, nutrition and development;
- (e) maternal and prenatal health;
- (f) education and parental participation;
- (g) family living income and economic security;
- (h) employment and work-family balance;
- (i) caregiving;
- (j) housing;
- (k) social protection;
- (l) mental health;
- (m) protection against violence, abuse, trafficking and exploitation;
- (n) migration and family separation;
- (o) senior citizens and intergenerational solidarity;
- (p) persons with disabilities;
- (q) family resilience during disasters and crises;
- (r) digital safety and family life;
- (s) civil registration and access to services; and

(t) participation of families in public policy.

SEC. 14. *Family Well-Being Indicators.* — The Commission, DEPDev and PSA shall establish national family well-being indicators capable of measuring both material and relational conditions affecting Filipino families.

Indicators may include:

- a. Household economic security;
- b. marriage and family formation;
- c. fertility and demographic trends;
- d. child and maternal outcomes;
- e. family stability and functioning;
- f. parental engagement;
- g. caregiving burdens;
- h. work-family balance;
- i. family separation and migration;
- j. family exposure to violence and exploitation; and
- k. intergenerational support.

SEC. 15. *State of the Filipino Family Report.* — The Commission shall annually submit to the President and Congress a State of the Filipino Family Report showing progress, disparities, implementation gaps, public expenditures and recommendations.

CHAPTER IV

FAMILY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SEC. 16. *Family Impact Assessment.* — A proportionate Family Impact Assessment shall be undertaken for major government measures reasonably expected to substantially affect the family.

SEC. 17. *Matters to Be Assessed.* — The FIA shall consider, where relevant:

- a. Whether the measure strengthens or weakens the capacity of families to perform their lawful functions;
- b. effects on marriage and family formation;
- c. effects on family stability and relationships;
- d. effects on parents 'ability to care for, support, educate and form their children;
- e. effects upon the best interests and legal rights of children;
- f. effects upon maternal health, prenatal care, childbirth and early childhood;
- g. effects upon fathers 'and mothers 'ability to participate in family life;
- h. effects on family time, working conditions and caregiving;
- i. effects on family income, housing and material security;
- j. effects on elderly and dependent family members;
- k. effects on poor and vulnerable families;
- l. effects on family privacy and autonomy;

- m. whether the State or another public institution would unnecessarily substitute for a function that families or communities could adequately perform;
- n. whether the measure strengthens or weakens voluntary family, community and civil-society institutions;
- o. demographic and intergenerational consequences where material;
- p. administrative burdens imposed upon families; and
- q. reasonable mitigating measures or alternatives.

SEC. 18. *Subsidiarity Test.* — As part of the FIA, the implementing body shall specifically determine:

- a. Whether the public objective can reasonably be achieved by supporting families rather than replacing their functions;
- b. whether implementation can occur effectively at a level closer to affected families;
- c. whether family associations, communities or accredited nongovernment institutions can contribute lawfully and effectively;
- d. what assistance higher levels of government must provide; and
- e. what circumstances require direct State intervention for protection or the common good.

SEC. 19. *Effect of Assessment.* — The FIA shall guide policymaking and shall not constitute an automatic veto.

Where a measure significantly burdens family integrity or displaces legitimate family responsibilities, the agency shall provide written justification stating the legitimate objective, alternatives considered, proportionality of the proposed action and mitigating measures adopted.

CHAPTER V

MARRIAGE, FAMILY FORMATION AND PARENTHOOD

SEC. 20. *Protection and Strengthening of Marriage.* — Government policies and programs under this Act shall recognize marriage, as defined under the Family Code, as an inviolable social institution and foundation of the family.

Public policy shall seek to create economic, social and cultural conditions conducive to the free and responsible assumption and fulfillment of marital and family responsibilities.

SEC. 21. *Marriage Preparation.* — Existing pre-marriage orientation and counseling programs shall be strengthened to provide meaningful preparation concerning:

- a. Rights and obligations of spouses;
- b. permanence and responsibilities of marriage under law;
- c. communication and conflict resolution;
- d. household financial management;
- e. responsible parenthood;
- f. maternal and child health;

- g. parenting and caregiving;
- h. prevention of violence and abuse;
- i. work-family responsibilities; and
- j. available public and community support.

Nothing herein shall impose additional conditions for marriage inconsistent with the Family Code.

SEC. 22. *Voluntary Post-Marriage Accompaniment.* — Cities and municipalities shall make voluntary family-support services available during the early years of marriage, preferably around six (6), twelve (12) and twenty-four (24) months following marriage.

These may include relationship education, parenting preparation, financial literacy, mental-health assistance and referral services.

Participation shall be voluntary, confidential and non-punitive.

SEC. 23. *Responsible Motherhood and Fatherhood.* — Public programs concerning pregnancy, childbirth, parenting, nutrition, early childhood and family development shall encourage the responsible involvement of both fathers and mothers.

Government shall promote the capacity of fathers to contribute actively to prenatal support, child development, caregiving, education and family economic security.

Government shall likewise recognize and support the substantial contribution of mothers to childbirth, child development, caregiving, education and family well-being.

SEC. 24. *Family Formation and Legal Literacy.* — Family formation, parenting and legal-literacy services shall be made accessible through existing points of government contact, including health facilities, immunization services, early-childhood programs, schools, civil-registration offices and barangay services.

No such voluntary service shall be imposed as a condition for an otherwise available public entitlement.

CHAPTER VI

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND EDUCATION

SEC. 25. *Parents as Primary Educators.* — Consistent with the Constitution, the State recognizes the natural and primary right and duty of parents in the education and formation of their children.

Educational institutions shall support and complement this responsibility consistent with law, educational standards and the rights and best interests of learners.

SEC. 26. *Family-School Partnership.* — Schools shall maintain meaningful mechanisms for cooperation with parents and guardians, including:

- a. Regular communication concerning learner development;
- b. reasonable access to curricula, learning materials and school policies;
- c. opportunities for parents to participate in school programs and consultations;
- d. timely communication concerning significant threats to a child's health or safety, subject to lawful confidentiality requirements; and

- e. guidance enabling parents to support learning and character formation at home.

SEC. 27. *Transparency in Educational Programs.* — Parents and guardians shall have reasonable and timely access to information concerning curricular content, educational programs and learning materials used for their minor children, subject to applicable law.

Government agencies and educational institutions shall establish reasonable procedures for parental questions, participation and lawful accommodations.

SEC. 28. *Early Childhood and the Family.* — Recognizing the decisive importance of early childhood to lifelong development, the ECCD Council, DSWD, DOH and LGUs shall strengthen programs that enable parents to provide safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate care during the earliest years of life.

SEC. 29. *Parent Effectiveness Service Program.* — Implementation of Republic Act No. 11908 shall be strengthened through regular community delivery, evidence-based content, inclusion of fathers, accessible scheduling and referral to other family-support services.

Qualified nongovernment, community and faith-based service organizations may be accredited to assist in delivering such programs according to public standards.

CHAPTER VII

HUMAN DIGNITY, LIFE, MATERNAL SUPPORT AND CHILD PROTECTION

SEC. 30. *Protection of Human Dignity and Life.* — All programs under this Act shall respect the inherent dignity of every human being and the constitutional protection of the life of the mother and the unborn from conception.

Nothing herein shall modify provisions of the Civil Code concerning juridical personality or the rights accorded by law to a conceived child.

SEC. 31. *Maternal and Prenatal Support.* — The DOH, DSWD and LGUs shall strengthen assistance for pregnant women and their families, particularly those experiencing poverty, abandonment, disability, health risks, violence or other vulnerability.

Services may include:

- a. Prenatal and maternal health care;
- b. nutrition;
- c. social-welfare assistance;
- d. mental-health support;
- e. temporary shelter when necessary;
- f. legal and social-service referral;
- g. assistance in establishing lawful support obligations; and
- h. preparation for childbirth and parenting.

SEC. 32. *Protection Before and After Birth.* — Government shall ensure continuity between prenatal, maternal, neonatal, infant and early-childhood services.

Consistent with existing law, no program established pursuant to this Act shall promote abortion as a method of family planning.

Nothing herein shall restrict lawful emergency or medically indicated care for the mother consistent with existing Philippine law.

SEC. 33. *First One Thousand Days Family Convergence.* — Implementation of Republic Act No. 11148 shall, wherever practicable, operate as an integrated family-centered continuum of prenatal, maternal, neonatal, nutrition and early-childhood support.

SEC. 34. *Children With Disabilities.* — Families caring for children with disabilities shall receive appropriate health, rehabilitation, educational, social-protection and carers assistance so that such children may develop their capacities and participate fully in family and community life.

SEC. 35. *Child Protection.* — The State shall protect children against neglect, violence, cruelty, abuse, exploitation, trafficking, online sexual abuse and all conditions prejudicial to their development in accordance with existing law.

Family preservation shall never be invoked to shield an offender, obstruct mandatory reporting or prevent lawful protective intervention.

SEC. 36. *Safeguarding in Family Interventions.* — No government agency or accredited provider shall require or condition assistance upon reconciliation, reunification, counseling or mediation where credible risk exists of violence, abuse, exploitation, trafficking or serious harm.

Protective measures shall take precedence.

SEC. 37. *Family Preservation and Alternative Care.* — The State shall promote safe family preservation and, when parental care cannot safely be maintained, family-based and lawful alternative care according to the best interests of the child and existing adoption and alternative-care laws.

Poverty alone shall not constitute sufficient basis for unnecessary separation of a child from a family capable of providing safe care with appropriate assistance.

CHAPTER VIII

WORK, FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY AND CARE

SEC. 38. *Work and Family Life.* — The State recognizes that work enables persons to contribute to society and ordinarily provides the material foundation upon which family life depends.

Labor, economic and social policies shall seek to harmonize employment and legitimate family responsibilities.

SEC. 39. *Family Living Income Reference.* — The National Wages and Productivity Commission, PSA and DEPDev shall develop and periodically publish an evidence-based Family Living Income Reference considering reasonable family expenditures for:

- a. Food and nutrition;
- b. housing and utilities;

- c. health;
- d. education;
- e. transportation;
- f. childcare and caregiving; and
- g. other basic requirements of dignified family life.

The reference shall inform public policy but shall not, by itself, amend statutory wage-setting mechanisms.

SEC. 40. *Family-Supportive Workplaces.* — DOLE and the Civil Service Commission shall develop family-supportive workplace standards which may include:

- a. Flexible work arrangements permitted by law;
- b. predictable scheduling where operationally feasible;
- c. maternity and paternity support;
- d. breastfeeding support;
- e. childcare arrangements;
- f. reasonable accommodation of significant caregiving responsibilities;
- g. protection against unlawful discrimination based upon lawful family responsibilities; and
- h. reintegration following family-related leave.

SEC. 41. *Recognition of Care Work.* — The State recognizes the substantial economic and social contribution of unpaid care performed within families.

Public policy shall seek to recognize, support and, where appropriate, reduce excessive caregiving burdens without unnecessarily displacing family relationships.

SEC. 42. *National Family Care Framework.* — The DSWD, DOH, DOLE and relevant bodies shall develop a framework providing:

- a. Carer education and training;
- b. respite and community support;
- c. assistance for families caring for senior citizens or persons with disabilities;
- d. home- and community-based care;
- e. long-term care referral;
- f. carer mental-health support; and
- g. appropriate social-protection measures.

CHAPTER IX

SOLIDARITY AND VULNERABLE FAMILIES

SEC. 43. *Preferential Attention to Vulnerable Families.* — Government shall give particular attention to families whose members face poverty, hunger, disability, illness, violence, exploitation, displacement, disaster, family separation or other serious vulnerability.

SEC. 44. *Empowerment Rather Than Dependency.* — Social assistance and family-support programs shall be designed, whenever reasonably practicable, to

strengthen family capacity, economic participation, resilience and long-term self-sufficiency.

This principle shall not be used to deny emergency or continuing assistance to persons legally entitled thereto.

SEC. 45. *Family Social Protection Review.* — The DSWD, DEPDDev, DOLE, SSS, GSIS, PhilHealth, Pag-IBIG Fund and other agencies shall periodically review social-protection programs for:

- a. Coverage gaps;
- b. unnecessary documentary barriers;
- c. gaps affecting children and dependent members;
- d. coverage of informal and migrant workers;
- e. portability of benefits;
- f. caregiving-related vulnerabilities; and
- g. capacity to respond rapidly to family shocks.

SEC. 46. *Shock-Responsive Social Protection.* — Protocols shall be developed for expedited lawful support when a family experiences disaster, displacement, sudden unemployment, death or incapacity of a breadwinner, abandonment or major health emergencies.

CHAPTER X

INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY AND MIGRATION

SEC. 47. *Intergenerational Solidarity.* — Government programs shall recognize and support responsibilities and relationships among children, parents, grandparents, senior citizens and other relatives consistent with existing law.

SEC. 48. *Care for Elderly Family Members.* — Consistent with the Constitution, the family has the duty to care for elderly members, while the State shall provide just programs of social security, health care and social assistance.

SEC. 49. *Families Affected by Migration.* — The DMW, OWWA, DSWD, CPD and LGUs shall address the relational, caregiving, financial and developmental effects of prolonged family separation resulting from overseas employment.

Programs shall include:

- a. Family preparation before departure;
- b. information concerning support obligations;
- c. financial planning;
- d. psychosocial support for family members left behind;
- e. remote parental participation;
- f. child-protection referral; and
- g. reintegration upon return.

SEC. 50. *Overseas Parents and Parenting Programs.* — Where feasible, public parenting programs shall provide remote participation options for overseas

parents and appropriate participation by carer or parent-substitutes in the Philippines.

CHAPTER XI

FAMILY AUTONOMY, SUBSIDIARITY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

SEC. 51. *Non-Substitution Principle.* — Except where intervention is authorized by law for the protection of a person or the public welfare, government shall not unnecessarily replace the lawful responsibilities of parents, families, communities or voluntary institutions.

Public programs shall first consider whether their objectives can be achieved by strengthening such persons and institutions.

SEC. 52. *Partnerships With Civil Society.* — Government may partner with qualified family associations, community organizations, professional bodies, academic institutions, faith-based social-service organizations and private institutions.

Partnerships shall respect:

- a. Voluntary participation;
- b. institutional autonomy consistent with law;
- c. religious freedom and freedom of conscience;
- d. safeguarding;
- e. nondiscrimination in publicly funded services;
- f. transparency;

g. public accountability; and

h. data protection.

SEC. 53. *Freedom of Conscience and Association.* — No person shall be compelled to join a family, civic, religious or private association as a condition for receiving a government benefit under this Act except where membership is inherent in an organization established by law.

No beneficiary of a publicly funded family service shall be compelled to participate in religious worship or instruction as a condition for receiving the public benefit.

SEC. 54. *Family Participation in Governance.* — Families and duly organized family associations shall be provided meaningful opportunities to participate in planning and implementation of public policies and programs that substantially affect family life.

CHAPTER XII

LOCAL FAMILY-CENTERED GOVERNANCE

SEC. 55. *Local Responsibilities.* — LGUs shall integrate family well-being into local development planning and coordinate devolved health, nutrition, social welfare, early childhood, livelihood, civil-registration and protection services.

SEC. 56. *Local Family Governance Committee.* — Each province, city and municipality shall organize a Local Family Governance Committee within an appropriate existing local development or social-development mechanism.

No new local department shall be required.

SEC. 57. *Family Service Access Points.* — Every city and municipality shall designate at least one existing facility or office where families may obtain information, preliminary assessment, referral and assistance in navigating available public services.

SEC. 58. *Coordinated Family Case Management.* — Families requiring substantial assistance from several public bodies may receive coordinated assessment and case management, subject to consent, legal safeguarding duties and privacy laws.

SEC. 59. *Equal Access of Children.* — No child shall be denied an otherwise available public health, nutrition, education, early-childhood, protection or social-welfare service solely by reason of the marital or civil status of the child's parents or the circumstances of the child's birth.

Nothing herein shall alter substantive rules on marriage, filiation, legitimacy, support, succession or parental authority.

CHAPTER XIII

FAMILY RESILIENCE, MEDIA AND DIGITAL LIFE

SEC. 60. *Family-Centered Disaster Response.* — Disaster and emergency planning shall, whenever practicable:

- a. Preserve family unity;
- b. prevent unnecessary separation;
- c. facilitate tracing and reunification;

- d. protect pregnant women, children, senior citizens and persons with disabilities;
- e. ensure continuity of medicines and caregiving;
- f. provide appropriate evacuation arrangements; and
- g. maintain access to social protection.

SEC. 61. *Family Digital Literacy.* — DICT, DepEd, DSWD, CWC and relevant agencies shall provide parents, carer and children with age-appropriate resources concerning:

- a. Privacy;
- b. online exploitation;
- c. cyberbullying;
- d. financial scams;
- e. harmful digital content and behavior;
- f. responsible device use;
- g. parental digital guidance; and
- h. reporting mechanisms.

SEC. 62. *Media and Family Well-Being.* — Government information and media-literacy programs shall promote accurate and responsible understanding of marriage, parenthood, childhood, caregiving and family responsibilities while fully respecting freedom of speech, freedom of the press and applicable constitutional limitations on government regulation.

CHAPTER XIV

RESEARCH, DATA AND FAMILY IMPACT

SEC. 63. *National Family Research Agenda.* — The Commission shall maintain a National Family Research Agenda concerning:

- a. Marriage and family formation;
- b. fertility and demographic change;
- c. family functioning;
- d. parenting;
- e. child development;
- f. motherhood and fatherhood;
- g. family economics;
- h. work-family relationships;
- i. caregiving;
- j. migration;
- k. family breakdown and resilience; and
- l. emerging social and technological pressures upon family life.

SEC. 64. *Family Functioning Module.* — PSA, in consultation with the Commission and qualified experts, shall periodically include scientifically valid measures of family functioning in an appropriate existing national survey, subject to technical feasibility and appropriations.

SEC. 65. *Data Sharing and Privacy.* — Personal and sensitive personal information shall be collected, processed and shared under this Act only pursuant to a lawful basis, for a specific and legitimate purpose, and to the minimum extent reasonably necessary.

Nothing in this Act constitutes general authority to create a centralized personal database of all Filipino families.

SEC. 66. *Program Evaluation.* — Major family-related programs shall undergo periodic outcome or impact evaluation according to their scale, cost and maturity.

Publicly funded findings shall be published subject to lawful confidentiality restrictions.

CHAPTER XV

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND NATIONAL POLICY INTEGRITY

SEC. 67. *International Cooperation.* — The Government may participate in international cooperation concerning family development, health, education, poverty reduction, child protection, social welfare, migration and other matters consistent with the Constitution and Philippine law.

SEC. 68. *Conditions Attached to Foreign Assistance.* — No foreign grant, technical assistance, program condition or international partnership implemented pursuant to this Act shall compel a government agency to undertake an act contrary to the Constitution or Philippine law.

Government shall preserve Philippine sovereignty over national family policy.

SEC. 69. *Respect for Culture and Local Capacity.* — International and national assistance programs shall, where appropriate, strengthen local institutions, family and community capacity and sustainable development rather than create unnecessary long-term dependence.

CHAPTER XVI

FILIPINO FAMILY DEVELOPMENT FUND

SEC. 70. *Filipino Family Development Fund.* — There is hereby established a Filipino Family Development Fund, subject to appropriation through the General Appropriations Act and applicable government accounting and auditing laws.

SEC. 71. *Sources.* — The Fund may consist of:

- a. Specific GAA appropriations;
- b. lawful grants and donations;
- c. transfers expressly authorized by law or the GAA; and
- d. other sources authorized by law.

No contribution shall confer influence over government policy, regulation, procurement or beneficiary selection.

SEC. 72. *Authorized Uses.* — The Fund may support:

- a. Local family-service convergence;
- b. marriage and parenting programs;

- c. RA 11908 implementation;
- d. maternal and first-one-thousand-days support;
- e. accredited family-service providers;
- f. family economic-resilience projects;
- g. carer support;
- h. civil-registration initiatives;
- i. disaster-related family reunification;
- j. research and evaluation;
- k. frontline training; and
- l. approved pilot innovations.

SEC. 73. *Family Financial Resilience and Savings Program.* — The Commission, BSP, government financial institutions and social-insurance agencies shall promote household budgeting, emergency savings, safe financial products, long-term planning and protection against predatory financial practices.

Any matching contribution, subsidy or monetary entitlement shall require specific statutory or appropriations authority.

SEC. 74. *Financial Safeguards.* — All public funds shall be subject to transparent eligibility criteria, accounting, liquidation, audit and public reporting.

CHAPTER XVII

APPROPRIATIONS, OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

SEC. 75. *Appropriations.* — Existing statutory programs shall initially be implemented from the lawful appropriations of their responsible agencies.

The organization and operations of the NCFF and new programs requiring additional expenditure shall be funded through specific appropriations in the General Appropriations Act.

No new permanent cash entitlement or substantial continuing expenditure shall arise solely from this Act without corresponding lawful appropriation.

SEC. 76. *Local Financing.* — LGUs shall finance devolved functions from lawful local sources.

New national mandates requiring significant additional local expenditure shall, where appropriate, be supported through grants, cost-sharing or national appropriations.

SEC. 77. *Congressional Oversight Committee on the Filipino Family.* — A Congressional Oversight Committee composed of five (5) Senators and five (5) Members of the House of Representatives shall oversee implementation of this Act.

SEC. 78. *Corrective Action.* — Where the Commission finds material failure by an agency to comply with an express duty under this Act, it may require a time-bound corrective action plan and report persistent noncompliance to appropriate authorities.

SEC. 79. *Independent Performance Review.* — An independent review shall be conducted three (3) years after the organization of the Commission and every

three (3) years thereafter to evaluate effectiveness, fiscal sustainability, administrative burden, privacy safeguards and family outcomes.

CHAPTER XVIII

FINAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 80. *Preservation of Family Law and Existing Protections.* — This Act shall be implemented in harmony with the Family Code and special laws governing marriage, family relations, filiation, parental authority, support, adoption and alternative child care, child protection, women, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, solo parents, indigenous peoples, migrant workers, social welfare, health, education, labor and housing.

Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to amend, supersede or modify by implication substantive provisions of the Family Code concerning marriage, filiation, parental authority, support, property relations, succession or legal separation.

All existing rights, duties, remedies, protections and benefits shall remain in force.

SEC. 81. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* — Within one hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Commission, in coordination with the Advisory Council, DBM, PSA, National Privacy Commission, Civil Service Commission, Commission on Audit and other concerned agencies, shall promulgate implementing rules after appropriate public consultation.

SEC. 82. *Transitory Provisions.* — The Commission shall be organized within six (6) months from the availability of its initial appropriation.

The first appointments shall be staggered to preserve continuity.

Existing departments and agencies shall continue performing their statutory responsibilities during the transition.

SEC. 83. *Periodic Legislative Review.* — Congress shall undertake a comprehensive review of this Act not later than five (5) years after its effectivity.

SEC. 84. *Separability Clause.* — If any provision of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

SEC. 85. *Repealing Clause.* — All laws, decrees, executive orders, administrative rules and regulations, or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly: Provided, That no provision of the Family Code or of any special law establishing substantive rights, duties, remedies, protections or benefits shall be deemed repealed, amended or modified by implication.

SEC. 86. *Effectivity.* — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,