Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 1581

---

Introduced by
LAS PIÑAS Representative CAMILLE A. VILLAR

---

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY AND OF WELFARE OF CHILDREN TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY ON THE REPORTED RISE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN DURING THE EXISTING HEALTH CRISIS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF FORMULATING MULTISECTORAL APPROACHES AND STRENGTHENING LAWS AND POLICIES TO COMBAT ABUSE OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Whereas, the State “recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men” (Article II, Section 14 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution);

Whereas, the State “recognizes the sanctity of family life and shall protect and strengthen the family as a basic autonomous social institution. It shall equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception. The natural and primary right and duty of parents in the rearing of the youth for civic efficiency and the development of moral character shall receive the support of the Government” (Article II, Section 12);

Whereas, the State “recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs” (Article II, Section 13);

Whereas, “Filipino family [is] the foundation of the nation. Accordingly, it shall strengthen its solidarity and actively promote its total development” (Article XV, Section 1);
Whereas, the State shall defend the right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development (Article XV, Section 3.2);

Whereas, the Philippines passed Republic Act No. 9262 or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004 to address all forms of abuse and violence against women and children;

Whereas, RA 7877 or the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 and RA 11313 or the Safe Spaces Act were enacted to ensure protection of women, discourage any form of violence against them and penalize unlawful acts;

Whereas, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) recorded 13,923 cases of violence against women and children from the start of the lockdown last March 15, 2020 up to November 30, 20201;

Whereas, of the reported cases, a total of 4,747 were cases of abuse against children;

Whereas, the Catholic Church is sounding the alarm on the rise of cases of violence against women and children in the Philippines, with a Catholic prelate urging protection and safety of children;

Whereas, in his homily at the Archdiocesan Shrine of Sto. Niño de Tondo in Manila in time for the celebration of the Feast of the Child Jesus last January 17, Bishop Broderick Pabillo, apostolic administrator of Manila, said the “sexual abuse happening in the family itself is much bigger especially now during the pandemic when everyone is confined in their homes;”2

Whereas, official reported figures of gender-based abuse could also mean that victims were having a hard time reporting the incidents to authorities as the PCW said they could be discouraged by limited mobility and absence of public transportation3;

Whereas, according to the 2017 National Demographic and Health Survey conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority, only one out of three Filipino women who have experienced abuse sought help to stop the abuse;

Whereas, the statistics of victims coming forward to report instances of abuse show the weakness in enforcement despite several laws that were approved to protect women and children from violence;

---


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives, to direct the Committees on Women and Gender Equality and on Welfare of Children to conduct an inquiry on the reported rise of violence against and sexual exploitation of women during the lockdown, with the end in view of formulating multisectoral approaches to address threats of a “silent pandemic” and updating existing laws relating to the protection of women and children.

Adopted,

Camille A. Villar
CAMILLE A. VILLAR