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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Constitution, Article 2, Section 13 provides that:

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.

In light of the said provision, it is disheartening to note that in the Philippines the incidence of teenage pregnancies is increasing. Teen pregnancy has serious consequences for young women, their children, and communities as a whole. Too-early childbearing increases the likelihood that a young woman will drop out of high school and that she and her child will live in poverty. Statistically, the sons of teen mothers are more likely to end up in prison. The daughters of teen mothers are more likely to end up teen mothers too.

Teens that grow up in disadvantaged economic, social, and familial circumstances are more likely to engage in risky behavior and have a child during adolescence. Teens with strong emotional attachments to their parents are more likely to become sexually active at a later age. Seven out of ten teens say that they are prepared to listen to things parents thought they were not ready to hear. One study found that the likelihood of teens having sex for the first time increased with the number of unsupervised hours teens have during a week. After-school programs reduce teen risky behavior by involving teens in activities that provide alternatives to sex. Teenage girls who play sports, for instance, are more likely to delay sex and have fewer partners and less likely to become pregnant. After-school programs help prevent teen pregnancy by advancing good decision-making skills and providing teens health education and positive role models in a

supervised setting. In order to address this increasing incidence of teenage pregnancies, there is a need to institute projects to provide education on preventing teenage pregnancies.

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  
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AN ACT  
PROVIDING GRANTS TO INSTITUTE PROJECTS TO PROVIDE EDUCATION ON  
PREVENTING TEEN PREGNANCIES

*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 “Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Responsibility, and Opportunity Act of 2007.”

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is the policy of the State to recognize 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. Pursuant to this policy, this Act seeks to provide grants to initiate projects to provide education in preventing teen pregnancies.

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms* – The following terms as used in this Act shall be defined as follows:

(A) AGE-APPROPRIATE- with respect to information on pregnancy prevention, this term means topics, messages, and teaching methods suitable to particular ages or age groups of children and adolescents, based on developing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral capacity typical for the age or age group.

(B) FACTUALLY AND MEDICALLY ACCURATE AND COMPLETE- means verified or supported by the weight of research conducted in compliance with accepted scientific methods and--

(1) published in peer-reviewed journals, where applicable; or

(2) comprising information that leading professional organizations and agencies with relevant expertise in the field recognize as accurate, objective, and complete.

#### SECTION 4. *Grants Authorized* -

(A) IN GENERAL - The Secretary of Health may make grants to local educational agencies, local public health agencies, and nonprofit private entities for the purpose of carrying out projects to provide education on preventing teen pregnancies.

(B) PREFERENCE IN MAKING GRANTS - In making grants under subsection (A), the Secretary shall give preference to applicants that will carry out the projects under such subsection in communities for which the rate of teen pregnancy is significantly above the average rate in the Philippines of such pregnancies.

(C) CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS - A grant may be made under subsection (A) only if the applicant for the grant meets the following conditions with respect to the project involved:

(1) The applicant agrees that information provided by the project on pregnancy prevention will be age-appropriate, factually and medically accurate and complete, and scientifically-based.

(2) The applicant agrees that the project will give priority to preventing teen pregnancies by--

(A) encouraging teens to delay sexual activity;

(B) providing educational services and referrals for sexually active teens or teens at risk of becoming sexually active;

(C) educating both young men and women about the responsibilities and pressures that come along with parenting;

(D) helping parents communicate with teens about sexuality; or

(E) teaching young people responsible decision-making.

(D) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT - With respect to the activities for which a grant under subsection (A) is authorized to be expended, such a grant may be made for a fiscal year only if the applicant involved agrees to maintain expenditures for such activities at a level that is not less than the level of such expenditures maintained by the applicant for the fiscal year preceding the first fiscal year for which the applicant receives such a grant.

(E) EVALUATION OF PROJECTS - The Secretary shall establish criteria for the evaluation of projects under subsection (A). A grant may be made under such subsection only if the applicant involved--

- (1) agrees to conduct evaluations of the project in accordance with such criteria;
- (2) agrees to submit to the Secretary such reports describing the results of the evaluations as the Secretary determines to be appropriate; and
- (3) submits to the Secretary, in the application under subsection (F), a plan for conducting the evaluations.

(F) APPLICATION FOR GRANT - A grant may be made under subsection (A) only if an application for the grant is submitted to the Secretary and the application is in such form, is made in such manner, and contains such agreements, assurances, and information, including the agreements under subsections (C) through (E) and the plan under subsection (E)(3), as the Secretary determines to be necessary to carry out this section.

(G) REPORT TO CONGRESS - The Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing the extent to which projects under subsection (A) have been successful in reducing the rate of teen pregnancies in the communities in which the projects have been carried out.

(H) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS - For the purpose of carrying out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated ten million pesos (Php 10,000,000) for each of the fiscal years 2008 through 2012.

SECTION 5. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the Act or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 6. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 7. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,