

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Seventeenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2985

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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Introduced by Honorable Michaelina M. Antonio

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Drug problems are social ills that have long plagued the country. Drug abuse is a major public health problem that impacts society on multiple levels. Directly or indirectly, every community is affected by drug abuse and addiction, as is every family. Drugs take a tremendous toll on our society at many levels. Based on a study by the Dangerous Drugs Board in 2012,¹ the number of estimated drug users in the Philippines amounts to 1.3 million.

The current administration, under the leadership of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, has waged an all-out war on drugs throughout the country. As of July 2016, nearly 60,000 Filipino drug addicts have surrendered themselves to the government.

Although drug addiction is a chronic disease that is compulsive and difficult to control, it is treatable and can be successfully managed. People who are recovering from an addiction will be at risk for relapse for years and possibly for their whole lives. Rehabilitation, or rehab, can be used to help a person recover from addiction. Drug rehabilitation facilities help drug addicts prepare to re-enter society. In drug rehabilitation, patients do their best to regain their normal lives in a safe and healthy way.

However, even after rehabilitation, drug addicts continue to face problems. They find it difficult to find work in the outside world because of the enormous stigma associated with drug addiction. Many drug addicts do not have college diplomas to begin with, so employment opportunities are already hard to come by. In addition to this, a record as a former addict becomes another major stumbling block for the individual to be able to get a

¹ 2012 Household Survey on the Nature and Extent of Drug Abuse in the Philippines conducted by the Dangerous Drugs Board with the Philippine Normal University

decent and well-paying job. Rehabilitating drug addicts alone is insufficient. Work is necessary for the physical and emotional recovery of clients with substance abuse disorders. In fact, employment has been identified as an important element in the rehabilitation of drug abusers and, together with abstinence from illicit drugs and criminal involvement, is frequently used as a criterion of treatment outcome.

With thousands of drug dealers and addicts surrendering themselves at police stations and flocking to rehabilitation centers across the Philippines, authorities now say they can't cope with the sheer number of drug addicts suddenly seeking help. For our war on drugs to truly succeed, there needs to be an adequate number of rehabilitation centers. Such centers must also offer free vocational trainings to prepare drug addicts to re-enter society with dignity and hope for a better life as they come out of rehabilitation.

To address this problem, this bill seeks to establish drug rehabilitation centers that incorporate vocational trainings in every city and province of the country. This will promote and sustain the treatment and rehabilitation of victims of drug abuse, especially in the critical after-care and social reintegration stages. It will likewise ensure that the reformed drug addicts are able to take their rightful place in the economic and social activities of the country by making them employable individuals.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



MICHAELINA M. ANTONIO

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**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DRUG
REHABILITATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTERS IN
EVERY CITY AND PROVINCE THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

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

SEC. 1. *Creation of Drug Rehabilitation Centers.* - The Department of Health (DOH) shall undertake the establishment of a drug rehabilitation center in every city and province in the country.

SEC. 2. *Incorporation of Vocational Trainings in Drug Rehabilitation Programs.* - Through a partnership between the DOH and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the drug rehabilitation centers will offer vocational training courses for the recovering addicts.

SEC. 2. *Objectives and Functions* — Drug rehabilitation centers shall have the following objectives and functions:

- a) To provide care, treatment, rehabilitation, and accommodation to persons found to be drug dependents;
- b) To train the drug dependent to be physically, psychologically and socially capable of coping with problems common to peer groups;
- c) To facilitate and encourage the dissemination and exchange of ideas and information on the prevention, care, treatment and control of drug addiction;
- d) To provide after-care, follow-up and social reintegration services to enable a drug dependent to adjust to family and community life after his release;
- e) To provide each drug dependent motivation to regain self-confidence, rediscover his working abilities and develop a sense of responsibility for himself; To provide for the promotion of vocational training for the reformed drug addicts and their subsequent return from helplessness to competence; from dependency to self-sufficiency; from hopelessness to active participating and contributing members of society;
- f) To prepare reformed drug addicts for suitable employment so as to place them on the right jobs suitable to their abilities and talents;
- g) To train them to be able to take their rightful place in the economic and social activities of the country;
- h) To make available to such persons vocational rehabilitation services as a legal right;
- i) To encourage the formation of organizations and associations composed of parents, guardians and immediate relatives of drug dependents in order to arouse their awareness and enhance their participation in the treatment and rehabilitation of their relatives or wards found to be drug dependent patients;

- j) To undertake continuous training of physicians, nurses, health officers and social workers on the practical and scientific methods of prevention, care, treatment and the rehabilitation of persons found to be drug dependents; and
- k) To strengthen the emotional and spiritual make-up of an individual drug dependent by conducting regular guidance and counseling sessions as well as interdenominational services.

SEC. 3. *Site of Drug Rehabilitation Centers.* - The Secretary of Health shall, in coordination with the Secretary of Public Works and Highways and local government units, determine the location of the drug rehabilitation centers in each city and province taking into consideration the accessibility of these facilities to most of drug dependents.

SEC. 4. *Government Assistance.* — The Secretary of Health and TESDA Director General are hereby authorized to call upon any department, bureau, agency or instrumentality of the government for such assistance as may be necessary to effectively implement this Act.

SEC. 5. *Public-Private Partnership.* — The Secretary of Health and TESDA Director General are hereby authorized to enter into agreements with people's organizations or religious organizations for the management and operation of the city and province drug rehabilitation centers at no additional cost to the government.

SEC. 6. *Rules and Regulation.* — The Secretary of Health and TESDA Director General, in coordination with the Philippine National Police, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and Department of Social Welfare and Development, shall promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 7. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to carry out the implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the DOH. Thereafter, such sums as may be necessary for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 8. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision, or part thereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the Act or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SEC. 9. *Repealing Clause.* - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.

SEC. 10. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,