

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2897



Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III


EXPLANATORY NOTE

In the advent of increasing awareness on the issue of mental health here in the Philippines, it is thus timely to recognize the relevance of such issues as it relates to our very own armed forces. Undoubtedly, our armed forces, in the performance of their duties are often exposed to perturbing situations such as the downright violence and destruction of wars and a myriad of life-threatening instances that would make even the toughest men flinch. The consequences of living with these realities have put their minds under extreme duress and in some cases, have led to serious mental health problems like post-traumatic stress disorder, a potentially debilitating condition that can affect the lives of our uniformed men.

Given the obscurity of such issues inside the military establishment and the lack of focus on PTSD as a legitimate problem in the country, those who suffer the effects of this condition are often dismissed as trivial, yet in a report of the World Health Organization on the impact of PTSD for its 25 most populated member states, the Philippines ranked 3rd on the overall list tying Indonesia and the United States.

With this in mind, this proposed measure aims to institutionalize the treatment and prevention of post-traumatic stress disorder for the benefit of the country's armed forces. It is my hope that the success of this measure would boost the morale and further empower our troops, so that they may, despite the dangers of their chosen profession, continue to serve the Filipino people with renewed strength.

In view of the foregoing, approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III
Representative
Magdalo Para sa Pilipino Party-List

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session
House Bill No. 2897

Introduced by **MAGDALO Party-List Representative**
HON. MANUEL DG. CABOCHAN III

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE TREATMENT OF ACTIVE MILITARY
PERSONNEL WITH POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AND PROVIDING
FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

1 **SECTION 1. *Short title.*** - This Act may be cited as the “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
2 Treatment Act.”
3

4 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of policy.*** - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to institutionalize
5 the treatment and prevention of post-traumatic stress disorder for the benefit of the country’s
6 armed forces. Under this Act, the institutionalization of the treatments and preventive
7 measures required to treat such a disorder is incorporated in the network of medical centers
8 under the authority of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Moreover, the conduct of
9 researches in partnership with the Department of Health and other medical institutions aims
10 to develop the country’s capabilities in catering to the mental health needs of its military
11 personnel.
12

13 **SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.*** – For the purposes of this Act:

14 1) Post-traumatic stress disorder is a serious potentially debilitating condition that can
15 occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a natural disaster, serious
16 accident, terrorist incident, sudden death of a loved one, war, violent personal assault
17 such as rape, or other life-threatening events.

18 2) PTSD is the abbreviation of post-traumatic stress disorder.

19 3) Temporary limited duty is the assignment of an active duty member to a duty status
20 for a specified time, with certain medical limitations or restrictions concerning the
21 duties the member may perform.
22

23 **SEC. 4. *Institutionalizing Treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.*** –

24 a) Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Armed Forces of the
25 Philippines in coordination with the Department of Health shall—

- 1 1) establish a post-traumatic stress disorder clinical team at every medical center of
- 2 the Armed Forces of the Philippines; and
- 3 2) appoint a post-traumatic stress disorder coordinator for every medical center of the
- 4 Armed Forces of the Philippines.

5 b) Each PTSD coordinator appointed for each medical center of the Armed Forces of the
6 Philippines shall—

- 7 1) evaluate post-traumatic stress disorder and family therapy treatment programs of
- 8 the Armed Forces of the Philippines within its network of medical centers;
- 9 2) identify and disseminate best practices on evaluation and treatment of post-
- 10 traumatic stress disorder within the armed forces' network of medical centers; and 20
- 11 3) recommend the resource allocation necessary to meet post-traumatic stress disorder
- 12 treatment needs within the network of the armed forces' medical centers.

13
14 **SEC. 5. *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Screen for Active Military Personnel.*** – The
15 Armed Forces of the Philippines shall—

16 a) at the conclusion of each military operation, require all military personnel involved to
17 undergo a post-traumatic stress disorder screen to be conducted by a physician from the
18 clinical team established in subsection (a)(1) of Section 4.

- 19 1) military personnel required to undergo PTSD screens shall be limited to
- 20 combatants of combat operations and military personnel who suffered traumatic
- 21 experience/s during other military operations.

22 b) The AFP shall consult with the DOH in formulating the criteria to set the standards of
23 what is to be considered as traumatic experiences in relation to military operations.

24
25 **SEC. 6. *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Treatment for Active Military Personnel*** - Should a
26 military personnel, after a PTSD screen, be diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, the
27 Armed Forces of the Philippines shall—

- 28 a) immediately administer the proper treatment and provide for the necessary medications as
- 29 prescribed by a physician;
- 30 b) place diagnosed military personnel on temporary limited duty until such persons, as
- 31 prescribed by the physician, become fit again for active duty; 6
- 32 c) ensure that diagnosed military personnel regularly attends the sessions as required by their
- 33 attending physician; and
- 34 d) orient the family of diagnosed military personnel to the medical condition of such persons.

35
36 **SEC. 7. *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Research and Development.*** – The Secretary of
37 Health, in coordination with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, is hereby directed to
38 conduct a study evaluating and comparing the effectiveness of programs designed to
39 diagnose, treat, and prevent post-traumatic stress disorder.

40 a) Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary of Health may seek to enter into
41 agreements with entities described in subsection (b) to collaborate on one or more of the
42 following:

- 43 1) Treating veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder;
- 44 2) Researching the causes of post-traumatic stress disorder;

- 1 3) Researching innovative treatments of post-traumatic stress disorder;
2 b) An entity described in this subsection is a university, hospital, or other similar entity that
3 treats or researches post-traumatic stress disorder.
4 c) In order to enter into an agreement under subsection (a), an entity described in subsection
5 (b) shall submit to the Secretary an application in such form and containing such information
6 as the Secretary may require.
7 d) The Secretary of Health shall include in an agreement entered into under subsection (a)
8 policies regarding the ownership of any intellectual property developed as a result of research
9 conducted under such agreement.
10 e) Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health
11 shall submit to Congress a report containing

12
13 **SEC.8. *Yearly Progress Report.*** – At the end of every year, the Armed Forces of the
14 Philippines shall submit to the President of the Philippines a detailed report on the progress,
15 condition and needs of the program as established under this Act.

16
17 **SEC.9. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act
18 shall be included in the budget of the AFP and the DOH in the annual General Appropriations
19 Act.

20
21 **SEC. 10. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provisions of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or
22 invalid, the other provisions not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

23
24 **SEC.11. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, executive orders, rules and regulation inconsistent
25 with or contrary to this Act, are hereby deemed accordingly repealed or amended.

26
27 **SEC. 12. *Effectivity Clause.*** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its
28 publication in at least two (2) newspaper of national circulation.

Approved,