

Reproductive health bill



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The passage of the Reproductive Health bill (RH bill) is a legislative milestone. It speaks of victory for the Filipino women who have long been deprived of a legally enforceable right over ways to protect their vaginas and to control the number of babies that will pass through it. The provision of options does not force women into one option or the other; it simply educates them about choices so that they are well-informed.

Neither is the bill a panacea, as no single law ever is. What does matter in the entire process of crafting, passing, and signing it into legislation is that the voice of the people prevailed. Beyond social media Social media has, without a doubt, helped in the campaign by increasing levels of knowledge, but it also made it easier for people to voice their support for a controversial battle even if just by tweeting. As I've written before, knowledge expansion through social media should never substitute actual engagement.

Even before fighting for reproductive health rights became a pervasive cause online, there were already people involved in the actual "doing. In a relatively rural area in Palawan, for example, an organization called Roots of Health (ROH) has serviced the unmet contraceptive needs of 237 women just in the previous year. ROH has offered sexual education in 388 elementary school students, 911 high school students, and 1, 778 college students. " There are so many NGOs/CSOs in Palawan that are focused on other issues such as mining and environmental concerns, but very few focus on health.

In fact we are the only maternal and child health organization of our kind in Puerto Princesa," said ROH executive director Amina Evangelista Swanepoel. Myrna, not her real name, is one of the clients recently serviced by ROH. She

is 22, with two kids, and the father of her baby has denied any responsibility over the child she bore weeks ago. It is indeed a milestone that in the days to come, the responsibility of meeting the reproductive health needs of every Myrna in the country will no longer be solely in the hands of civil society but will finally be taken on by government, which is tasked to protect our welfare. Ad hominem attacks There is no denying that the RH bill debate within and outside our nation's legislative chambers has been marked by a great degree of divisiveness.

The religious dimension of the debate is probably what has given rise to more tension. It is disturbing, however, that certain supporters of the RH bill seem to think their stand on the issue gives them license to malign. In the process of advocating for reproductive health, they seem to have acquired a bloated sense of self, regarding themselves as intellectually superior to the anti-RH camp. They make sweeping declarations about religion and its followers on the Internet. They call those who believe in God “idiots,” “blind followers,” “delusional,” and other names.

They issue disparaging statements that ascribe definitive assumptions on the character of believers. Of course, it was well within their right to do so. Yet it certainly did not help in the progression of a mature, secular debate. It is exactly that kind of unabashed hate remarks that either raised tension due to emotional reverberations or alienated some people from the debate out of fear of reproach. Name-calling and ad hominem attacks are tactics used by people who cannot properly frame sound and reasonable cases. Stooping to the level of name-calling is just as useless as an illogical argument, even if you were on the more logical side of the debate.

It is rather hypocritical for these so-called advocates to think their personal, negative feelings against God and His existence have a place in the secular discourse, while personal, positive feelings for God cannot be afforded such privilege. The truth is, neither should have any bearing on the debate if we are to truly aim for a thriving, secular democracy. They are essentially non-issues. Public interest Secularism is hinged on reasoning that takes into account the public interest instead of one's personal - usually religious - convictions.

This means that wherever you may stand on the religious spectrum, you must argue for or against a certain policy based on the public good. Your religious belief or, as many tend to forget, lack of it, should not be the basis. Hopefully in the next policy debates that our nation will face, we will do away with the non-issues. There will no longer be threats of eternal damnation to those who challenge religious dogma in the name of public interest, as much as there will no longer be sweeping degrading judgments on the character of believers. Hopefully, we - each one of us - will get to the heart of the matter.

What tangible benefits do we acquire as a nation? Is the law sensitive to the culture and needs of our people? Is it at the heart of public interest as opposed to personal, religious convictions? There will be a speedier passage of legislative milestones in the future, if only we do away with the non-issues. - Rappler. com ————— Senate, House OK RH bill; make history (UPDATE) MANILA, Philippines - What the President wants, the President gets. In a historic vote, the Senate and the House of Representatives on Monday, December 17, separately approved the controversial Reproductive Health bill (RH bill) on third and final reading.

<https://assignbuster.com/reproductive-health-bill/>

It was a blowout for the RH bill, a measure that was rabidly opposed by the Catholic Church. In the Senate, 13 voted in favor and 8 voted against the bill. In the House of Representatives, 133 voted in favor, 79 voted against, and 7 abstained. The next step is the bicameral conference committee, where both chambers of Congress will consolidate the two different versions of RH bill.

After the bicam, the Senate and the House will need to ratify the consolidated version. Only then will the bill reach President Aquino for his signature. Congress adjourns session this week but President Aquino earlier said he wants to sign the bill into law before the Christmas break. The House has designated the members of the bicam. They are bill sponsor Albay Rep Edcel Lagman, Deputy Speaker Lorenzo Tanada III, Iloilo Rep Janette Garin, Batanes Rep Henedina Abad, Western Samar Rep Mel Sarmiento, Akbayan Rep Kaka Bag-ao, ACT Teachers Rep Antonio Tinio, Paranaque Rep Roilo Golez, Catanduanes Rep Cesar Sarmiento, and Minority Leader Danilo Suarez. Aquino's push President Benigno Aquino III pushed hard for the RH bill, one of his priority measures.

It was upon his request that the House of Representatives terminated long debates on the bill in August. In a surprise move on Thursday, December 13, Aquino also certified the bill as urgent. It allowed the Senate to immediately proceed to third reading vote after the second reading vote. It also sent a strong message to the critics of the bill. Antipolo Bishop Gabriel Reyes slammed the President for his supposed dictatorial tendencies. Reyes said the Catholic Church will continue to educate people about the " evils of contraceptives.

" The earlier second reading vote in the House was close, 113-104-3. It was a difference of only 9 votes. The vote happened before Aquino certified the bill as urgent. It has been 14 years since the first version of the RH bill was filed in Congress. The measure seeks to provide reproductive health services, including free contraceptives, to the poor who cannot afford them. - Rappler.

com ----- [DASH OF SAS] Sex education is good manners and right conduct Outside the highest court in the land where oral arguments against the constitutionality of the RH Law were intensely being debated, another debate was taking place between two groups on opposite sides of the street. The group dressed in green was fervently kneeling and praying the rosary and the other group in purple was singing a jingle about the urgent need for the RH Law. At some point, the heat of being outdoors added to the tension and the green side started shouting, " Ang sarap ng magka-anak at magka-apo! " [It's nice to have children and grandchildren!] and " Mga bading kasi kayo" [You're all gay!]. On the purple side, a straight-faced man dressed in religious robes held onto a sign that read:

Contraception is a sin.

The Church always wins. Former Manila Mayor and Buhay party list representative Lito Atienza, president of Pro-Life Philippines, was among the crowd in green. I pulled him aside and asked him why the RH Law was being questioned. Didn't the current statistics such as the rising incidence of teen pregnancy, the exponential rise in HIV infection underscore the need for the RH Law and teaching responsible sexual behavior? " Absolutely not. It will only promote promiscuity," said Atienza.

“ Condoms will give people a false notion of security; alam natin pumapalpak din yan. [We know the condoms fail.] What we really need to teach people are good values and morals. “ Today is a very important day,” Atienza went on.

“ The future of our country is at stake. Maling turuan ang mga mahihirap na wag mag anak, ang dapat ituro ay positive values. [It is wrong to teach poor people not to have children when what we should teach are positive values.] If we start teaching sex ed (ayon sa RH Law), it will open the floodgates to all other anti-life laws like divorce, abortion, at iba pa.

The sanctity of life should be upheld. ” Sexuality education is a human right But sexuality education is internationally recognized not just as a human right, but also a necessity. This is for the very practical reason that sexuality education and its coverage of knowledge and information about sexuality, sexual and reproductive health and HIV is essential for the realization of other human rights. If effectively used and taught in a culturally-nuanced and non-judgmental manner, sexuality education can teach the basic concept of respect for one’s self and one’s body; the basic human courtesy of extending this same respect to others regardless of gender and orientation. In the end, sexuality education is like biology with life lessons about relationships, equality, and non-discrimination.

In 1994, at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, sexuality education was identified as a “ human right, essential to development and human well-being. ” In this study conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) the right to comprehensive and

non-discriminatory sexuality education is based on rights protected by several human rights agreements and documents such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) among others. Tenets of sexuality education

The resistance to giving young people access to sexuality education needs is linked to our limited understanding and thinking of sexuality education as the equivalent of telling young people to “ go forth and multiply”. As the UNFPA study states, among the principles of effective sexuality education:

- * Uses scientifically accurate information about all relevant psychosocial and health topics
- * Addresses personal values and perceptions of family, peer and wider social-cultural norms. Be culturally appropriate and sensitive to community values
- * Uses multiple activities to teach critical thinking
- * Deliver clear messages that are appropriate for age, sexual experience, gender and culture
- * Design programs that start at a young age and continue through adolescence, reinforcing messages over time through age-appropriate content and methodology

I like to simplify the teachings of sexuality education into three C’s: Consent (respect), cause and effect (critical thinking) and consequence (accountability for the actions you take). In this light, sexuality education could counter the societal norms of entitlement that propagate violence against women; it could rectify the fatalistic attitude that we have little control over our lives outside of what fate has already destined for us; and a woman is meant to get pregnant because all babies are blessings; it could teach that engaging in sex is equally about being prepared for all possibilities.

It's about time we start thinking of sexuality education as values formation because it teaches the values of responsibility, self-respect and self-worth. In that sense, sexuality education could be equated to good manners and right conduct. And when it comes to the subject of plain and simple manners, maybe the greens and purples don't have to be on opposing sides. - Rappler.com ----- Bishops to continue fight vs RH bill

MANILA, Philippines - Catholic Church leaders vowed on Tuesday, December 19 to overturn a Reproductive Health bill after lawmakers passed the landmark legislation to make sex education and birth control more widely available.

The Senate and the House of Representatives approved the bill on December 18, putting it on course to be signed into law by President Benigno Aquino III within a week, after its final wording has been decided. Church leaders, however, pledged to continue their fight against the controversial bill, with an appeal to the Supreme Court and a campaign to oust its supporters in May's general election. Bishop Gabriel Reyes said a group of Catholic lawyers was preparing to challenge the legality of the bill in the Supreme Court as soon as it is signed into law. " We will support that petition...

n the Supreme Court against the RH bill," said Reyes, head of the commission on family issues for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). He added that the Catholic church would also continue to urge the nation of 100 million people — 80 percent of whom are Catholic — to ignore the provisions of the bill once it passes into law. " We will tell Catholics ' even if you are given free contraceptives, do not use them'," he told reporters. Reyes said on Tuesday that it would be left up to each

<https://assignbuster.com/reproductive-health-bill/>

individual bishop to decide whether to urge their dioceses to vote against legislators who supported the bill. He laid the blame for the bill's passage at the feet of President Benigno Aquino, who he accused of using pressure and government funds to get the necessary votes in parliament.

What's next? "The struggle between the pro-RH and the anti-RH... was really the struggle of Malacanang (the presidential palace)," he said, warning that Aquino could become a "threat to democracy" with his domination of Congress. CBCP secretary-general Monsignor Joselito Asis said that the RH bill was a "watershed" and would be followed by bills for the legalization of divorce, abortion, same-sex marriage and euthanasia.

He stressed that if that were the case the church would fight against those laws too. The church had effectively blocked the passage of birth control legislation for over a decade, cowing legislators and presidents by mounting huge protests and threatening to turn the public against them. However the two houses of Congress, with the support of the Aquino administration, voted in favor of the bill after months of bitter debate, during which time some churchmen even threatened to have Aquino excommunicated. Proponents of the bill said it was necessary to bring down maternal death rates, which are among the highest in the region, help poor women avoid getting pregnant and even slow the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. - Rappler.

com 4 Major Pros and Cons About The RH Bill — Is the Battle Over? Finally!

The second reading has been passed for the RH Bill in the Philippines.

Tomorrow, they move for the third and final reading. For fourteen years now, the RH bill issue has been a heated debate. It turns more controversial each

year and even more so, when they announced that it will be put to a vote in the House of Representatives. The outcome of this debate is overdue, but remains to be significant.

Both sides propose strong, and probably, valid arguments. Here are my opinions about the controversial bill: Pros 1. Overpopulation. It is believed that RH Bill is the responsive approach to rapid population growth to which many people point out as a cause to poverty.

One proof is the direct effect of overpopulation on unemployment which is widespread in the country. 2. Pro Choice and Pro Chance. Not only that RH bill is a “ pro choice”, as cited on the bill, but also a chance to alleviate poverty. By using contraceptives, people have a choice as to the number of children that they can afford to care for. Through this method, overpopulation can be reduced.

3. Reproductive Health Education for the Youth. This will raise the level of awareness to the youth’s perception of gender roles and will influence the choices they’ll make about their own sexual behavior. 4. Maternal Care. The bill aims to provide sufficient services such as emergency obstetrics and basic care.

In addition, skilled medical personnel will be provided even in remote areas to decrease maternal death which is mostly caused by unattended childbirth. Cons 1. Overpopulation. (Ironic, isn’t it?) RH Bill is an assumption on the basis that “ overpopulation causes poverty.

" The growing supply of young workers is projected to contribute a high percentage in economic growth for the Philippines. Bernardo M. Villegas, a Filipino writer, economist and Senior Vice-President at the University of Asia and the Pacific(UA; amp; P) mentioned in his article ' Vote No to RH Bill' that ". .

. Japan's second-largest shipbuilder expanded in the Philippines, where workers are on average half the age of its Japanese employees. This further implies to the Philippine demographics in which 61 % of the population are from 15-64 years of age which constitutes to the GDP of the country. 2. Anti Life.

RH Bill in the first place is a violation of a religious doctrine in the Philippines, a Catholic-dominated nation. Contraceptives are not an assurance to prevent fertilization, for medical studies show that some of these contraceptives are abortifacient. 3. Irresponsible Sexual Behavior. Introducing reproductive health education and promoting the use of contraceptives may encourage irresponsible sexual attitude, especially among the youth.

. Prone to Corruption. Implementation of the bill will cost billions of pesos and the threat lies behind the process. History has made us aware of several instances that support this claim. The question is... will the fund be utilized to meet the bill's goal? Although the bill has passed the second reading, some lawmakers who voted against the bill, remain defiant and said that the final reading of the House Bill 4244 may have a different result. But given a chance, are you pro the RH bill or against it? New Update: December 19, 2012Finally, the Philippine government passes the Reproductive Health Bill

and now all we have to wait for is the signature of the President to make it official.

At last, there's an end to the 14 year long debate! Now, our country can finally get what was sorely lacking: the support for the good of its people. In my opinion, sex education and contraceptives isn't everything what the RH Bill is all about. For me, it's about teaching its citizens proper family planning, the conscious effort to raise children well within financial capabilities. I mean, what kind of job should a father or mother get in order to sustain a proper life? Sounds like a full time job isn't going to cut it. Even though this is how I see it, I hear there are already motions to dismiss this by the opposition (oh noes... Not this again!) Keep your fingers crossed! You never know what could happen.

This could be like the Cyber Crime incident a few months ago. But either way, I'm happy about the turn out. MANILA, Philippines (3rd UPDATE) - The House of Representatives has finally approved House Bill 4244, otherwise known as the Reproductive Health (RH) bill, on second reading. Following a close vote of 113-104, the bill moved a step closer to passage after 14 years of being stalled in Congress.

The lower House initially voted on the bill via viva voce, with Deputy Speaker Lorenzo Tanada III calling it for the " ayes". However, the lower House proceeded to nominal voting after a motion was made by Navotas Rep. Tobias Tiangco to confirm the results of the viva voce. The voting process was held for more than 5 hours as representatives who wanted to explain their respective votes were allowed to do so and were given 3 minutes each.

Before the decision was announced, Tanada congratulated his colleagues in the 15th Congress for showing “ courage” to put the RH bill into a vote. The votes were tallied past 2 a. m. Thursday.

Three lawmakers abstained. They include Cavite Rep. Jesus Remulla, who also withdrew his authorship of the RH bill. Most of those in favor of the RH bill chose not to explain their vote.

A total of 217 out of 287 members of the House were present for the vote. The bill now moves to the third and final reading Monday. The lower House will then wait for the results of voting in the Senate version if the bill before the lawmakers tackle it in a bicameral conference committee and submit it to the President for his signature that will formally enact it into law. Lagman: Reason over fanaticism Albay Rep.

Edcel Lagman, the main proponent of the RH bill, shrugged off claims that numbers will doom the proposed law in the 3rd reading. “ Sa palagay ko, sa 3rd and final reading, lalo pang lalaki ang margin of victory,” he told dzMM. “ Ang aking pakiusap lamang sa mga protagonists, ngayong malapity nang isabatas ang ating panukala, suportahan na ang measure upang makita natin that after the voting, after the contest everyone is united,” he added. “ This was virtually on 3rd reading as we were allowed to explain our vote. It was a collective effort of RH proponents and advocates,” he said, as quoted by the Media Relations Service of the House of Representatives. He also described their victory as reason triumphing over fanaticism, logic beating dogma, and hope ruling over fear.

Akbayan Rep. Walden bello echoed Lagman's statements. "Iyung mga absent dito, there's an equal number of pro and anti. I doubt very much mababaligtad ito," he said.

Some lawmakers who voted against the bill, meanwhile, believe that the final reading of House Bill 4244 may have a different result. Sa tingin ko dahil ganito kalapit 'yung boto, sa 3rd reading pwede pa magbago ito," House Deputy Minority Leader and Zambales Rep. Mitos Magsaysay told dzMM. She said the close vote shows that the bill is not overwhelmingly popular.

"Mayroon pang 3rd reading and it will send a very strong signal to Malacanang at sa taong bayan na ang measure na ito ay hindi majority decision ng taong bayan," she said. Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, meanwhile, called the approval on the second reading as "an empty victory" for pro-RH bill advocates. We'll fight up to the 3rd reading," he said.

Majority of the Philippine population have supported the RH and for the passage of the Reproductive Health Bill in countless surveys while congressional and presidential debates have erupted on the issue. It has already been 10 years and 5 congresses have passed but still the RH Bill is languishing in the cobweb drawers of the Philippine Congress. We question, why is there majority support for the RH? Very simple, many strategic and practical reasons will be the marginal benefits should the bill be passed. The following are some of these: RH Bill Does... 1. Prevent Induced Abortions.

Unintended pregnancies precede almost all induced abortions. Of all unintended pregnancies, 68% occur in women without any Family Planning

<https://assignbuster.com/reproductive-health-bill/>

(FP) method, and 24% happen to those who uses the traditional FP methods like withdrawal or calendar-abstinence. If all those who want to space or stop child-bearing would use the modern FP methods, abortions would fall by some 500, 000 which is close to 90% of the estimated total according to research and studies. In my country where abortion is strictly criminalized, and where 90, 000 women are hospitalized yearly for post-abortion complications (whether intentional or unintentional), it would be reckless and heartless not to ensure prevention through modern FP. Again, as I have mentioned in my previous post about Smashing the Myths and Misconceptions About the RH Bill, the bill does not promote nor legalize abortion.

Rather, it upholds the principles of the state that protects the life of the unborn and the mother. I only realized just now that I have been writing thoroughly about the controversial RH Bill for the past few blogs that I have posted. Although some cannot relate to the issue that I am writing, I still would like to try to inform the larger part of audience in this blogging community about this pressing issue that is pertaining to the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and young people in my country. This post would be part of the series of blog posts that I will be writing in support for the legislation of the RH Bill in the Philippines. In 1998, Reproductive Health (RH) was a bland program that 2 former Department of Health (DOH) cabinet Secretaries wished to mainstream into the health system. Now, the RH is a byword that has gripped the public consciousness, which is good.

With the advent of various legal international and national instruments (i. e. ICPD-POA, CEDAW, RA 9262, Magna Carta for Women), it further open the floodgates for women to clamor for the production of their human rights which includes SRHR. 10 Go2. Support and Deploy More Public Health Midwives, Nurses, and Doctors. RH services are needed wherever people are establishing their families.

For example, a report by the UN MDG Task Force points out the need for 1 full time midwife to attend to every 100-200 annual live births. Other health staff are needed for the millions who need prenatal and postpartum care, infant care and family planning. Investing in these core public health staff will serve the basic needs of many communities especially in the rural parts of the Philippines. Moreover, it would solve the problem of surplus nurses and other medical professionals in the country.

3. Protect the Health and Lives of Mothers. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that complications arise in 15% of pregnancies, serious enough to hospitalize or kill women. From the 2 million plus live births alone, some 300000 maternal complications occur yearly in the Philippines. This is 7 times the DOH's annual count for tuberculosis (TB), 19 times for heart disease, and 20 times for malaria in women.

As a result, more than 11 women dies unnecessarily each day, leaving their newly born infants orphan or bringing them along to the grave. This is indeed, a very sad reality. Adequate number of skilled birth attendants (we call it in our local languages as hilot, partera, and kumadrona) prompt referral to hospitals with emergency obstetric care are proven life-saving

solutions to maternal complications especially for those women who only give birth at their homes and in remote local communities. For women who wish to stop child-bearing, usage of modern FP is the best proven preventive measure. Not only does it prevent pregnancies, it also protects women from contracting sexually transmitted infections (STI) from their partners/husbands. .

Save Babies. Proper birth spacing reduces infant deaths. The WHO says that at least 2 years should pass between a birth and the next pregnancy of women. In my country, the infant mortality rate of those with less than 2 years birth interval is twice with those with 3. The more effective and user-friendly the FP method used, the greater the chances of the next child to survive and we can attain our country targets for MDGs 4 (Reduce Maternal Mortality Rate) and 5 (Reduce Child Mortality Rate)! Yey! 5. Reduce Cancer Deaths.

Delaying sex (or coital debut), avoiding multiple partners (tiba-tiba ka teh! Grabe ang booking mo!) or using condoms prevent genital warts or Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) infections that cause cervical cancers. Self breast exams and Pap smears can detect early signs of cancers which can be cured if treated early. All these are part of Rh education and care. Contraceptives do not heighten cancer risks contrary to the popular belief; combined pills actually reduce the risk of endometrial and ovarian cancers. 6. Save Money that Can Be Used for Even More Social Spending.

Ensuring modern FP for all who need it would increase spending from Php 1.9 Billion pesos to Php 4.0 Billion pesos, but the medical costs for unintended pregnancies would fall from Php 3.5 B to P 0.

6 B, resulting to a net savings of Php 0.8 B. There is evidence that families with fewer children do spend more for health and education which I believe is rational and logical as parents don't have to add an additional plate in the dinner table and can invest well for the future of their children. 7.

Respond to the Majority Who Want Smaller Families. Couples and women nowadays want smaller families. When surveyed about their ideal number of children, women in their 40s want slightly more than 3, but those in their teens and early 20s want just slightly more than 2. Moreover, couples end up with families larger than what they desire. On average, Filipino women want close to 2 children but end up with 3.

This gap between desired and actual family size is present in all social classes and regions, but its biggest among those who are poor. 8. Promote Equity for Poor Families. RH indicators show severe inequities between the rich and poor. For example, 94% of Filipino women in the rich quantile have a skilled birth attendant at birth compared to only 26% in the poorest. The richest have 3 times higher tubal ligation rates compared to the poorest of the poor.

This equity gap in tubal ligation partly explains why the wealthy hardly exceed their planned number of children, while the poorest get an extra 2. Infant deaths among the poorest of the poor Filipinos are almost 3 times compared to the richest of rich, which partly explains why the poor lan for

more children to have. A Reproductive Health law will promote equity in health care through stronger public health services accessible and affordable to poor families which comprises the majority threshold of the population in the Philippines. Sad to say, some Filipinos cannot see the beauty of such kind of proposition. 9.

Guarantee Funding For and Equal Access to Health Facilities. RH will need and therefore support the improvement of many various levels of health facilities. These range from barangay health stations, for basic prenatal, infant and FP care; health centers, for safe birthing, more difficult RH services like IUD insertions; and management of sexually transmitted infections; and hospitals for emergency obstetric and newborn care and surgical contraception. Strong RH facilities will be the backbone of a strong and fairly distributed public health facility system.

10. Give Accurate and Positive Sexuality Education to Young People.

Currently, most young people enter relationships and even married life without the benefit of systematic inputs by any of our social institutions. As a result of one just faulty sexual decision, many young women and men can lose their future (studies, career, and dreams); their health; and sometimes their lives (young women are twice at risk of dying in giving birth as their reproductive system is not ready to conceive a child in their wombs. Right?). A lot of my batch mates in high school have already children and got married at an early age.

We insist on young voters' education for an activity that occurs in the Philippine political system once in every 3 years, but leave my fellow young

people with little preparation to cope with life events like puberty and sexual maturation. Talking about sex and relationships is still a taboo in most families in the Philippine society. We have to break these barriers which parents must initiate with the help of young people!

od Reasons to Pass the RH Bill Now

10 Good Reasons to Pass the RH Bill Now FLIPINOS FOR LIFE

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

Fifteenth Congress First Regular Session HOUSE BILL NO. _____ (In substitution to House Bill Nos. 96, 101, 513, 1160, 1520 & 3387 Introduced by Honorables Edcel C.

Lagman, Arnulfo Fegarido Go, Janette L. Garin, Arlene Bag-ao, Walden Bello, Rodolfo G. Biazon, Rodante D. Marcoleta, Augusto Syjuco, Luzviminda Ilagan, Emerenciana De Jesus, Robert Estrella, Mar-Len Abigail S. Binay, Francis Emmanuel R.

Ortega, Nur Gaspar Jaafar, Eufanio C. Eriguel, M. D. , Ma. Angelica M. Amante-Matba, Catalina Leonen-Pizzaro, Marc Douglas Cagas IV, Salvador Escudero III, Napoleon Dy, Nur-Ana Sahidulla, Romeo Jalosjos Jr, Ignacio Arroyo Jr.

, Carol Jayne B. Lopez, Ronald V. Singson, Abigail C. Ferriol, Jeffrey Padilla Ferrer, Joel Roy Duavit, Jesus “Boying” F. Celeste, Teddy A.

Casino, Teddy Brawner Baguilat Jr. , Simeon A. Datumanong, Seth F. Jalosjos, Josefina Manuel Joson, Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza, Reena Concepcion G. Obillo, Raymond V.

Palatino, Carlos Mapili Padilla, Angelo B. Palmones, Philip Arreza Pichay, Jesus Crispin Catibayan Remulla, Mark Aeron H. Sambar, Danilo Etorma Suarez, Susan A. Yap, Jose F. Zubiri III, Antonio L.

Tinio, Victor Jo Yu, Ana Cristina Siquian Go, Emmeline Y Page 2 of 24

SECTION 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the " The Responsible Parenthood, Reproductive Health and Population and Development Act of 2011. " 2 SEC.

2. - Declaration of Policy. - The State recognizes and guarantees the exercise of the universal basic human right to reproductive health by all persons, particularly of parents, couples and women, consistent with their religious convictions, cultural beliefs and the demands of responsible parenthood. Toward this end, there shall be no discrimination against any person on grounds such as sex, age, religion, sexual orientation, disabilities, political affiliation and ethnicity.