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SENATE
S. No. 515

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Introduced by SENATOR RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

**AN ACT
TO PROVIDE EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS, PREVENTION, AND
EDUCATION AMONG ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY AND COLLEGE STUDENTS,
THEIR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

With heavy consumption of social media nowadays, many adolescents and youth, especially females, have become prone to developing unhealthy concerns about their body image, weight and shape, and in the long run, cultivated body dissatisfaction, negative self-image and low self-esteem. Amid the prevalent notion of being thin as being healthy and attractive, some would resort to extreme dieting and harmful eating behaviors.

While this is a simplistic view of eating disorders which are triggered by a myriad of risk factors – biological/genetic, environmental, psychological and emotional – these conditions are serious health issues and potentially life threatening. For instance, anorexia nervosa (an eating disorder characterized by self-starvation, severe food restrictions, and excessive weight loss) has numerous complications such as anemia, bone and muscle loss, heart failure, gastrointestinal and kidney problems, among others, and could lead to death at its most severe¹.

Considering the impact of these eating disorders to our youth, this bill seeks to provide awareness and education to students at all levels, as well as to their parents and guardians. It also mandates the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education to work together and provide

¹ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/anorexia-nervosa/symptoms-causes/svc-20353591>

programs which shall improve the identification of students with eating disorders and train educators and school personnel on eating disorder prevention and assistance methods. Lastly, this measure requires the same agencies to conduct a study to determine the prevalence of eating disorders among students and their effects on educational advancement and achievement.

The immediate passage of this bill is sought.



RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



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

1 Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "*Eating Disorders*
2 *Awareness, Prevention and Education Act.*"

3 Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is a policy of the State to protect and promote
4 the right of the people to health and instill health consciousness among them. The
5 State also recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote
6 and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social wellbeing.

7 Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act, the following terms shall
8 mean:

9 a) *Eating disorder* means a disturbance in eating behavior, such as extreme
10 and unhealthy reduction of food intake (anorexia nervosa) or severe
11 overeating (bulimia nervosa and/or binge eating disorder), as well as
12 feelings of distress or extreme concern about body shape or weight.

13 b) *Anorexia nervosa* means an eating disorder characterized by self-starvation,
14 severe food restrictions, and excessive weight loss.

1 c) *Bulimia nervosa* means an eating disorder characterized by excessive food
2 consumption followed by inappropriate compensatory behaviors, such as
3 forced vomiting, misuse of laxatives, fasting, or excessive exercise.

4 d) *Binge eating disorder* means frequent episodes of uncontrolled overeating.

5 e) *Schools* mean the elementary, secondary and college educational
6 institutions.

7 f) Congress means both the Senate and House of Representatives.

8 Sec. 4. *Innovative Assistance for the Identification, Training, and Educational*
9 *Awareness of Eating Disorders.* – The Department of Education (DepEd), Commission
10 on Higher Education (CHED), and Department of Health (DOH) shall provide programs
11 to:

12 a) Improve the identification of students with eating disorders – anorexia
13 nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder, and other eating disorders,
14 not otherwise specified, in order that they may receive appropriate medical
15 treatment;

16 b) Increase awareness of such disorders among parents and students; and

17 c) Train educators such as teachers, school nurses, school social workers,
18 coaches, school counselors, and administrators on effective eating disorder
19 prevention and assistance methods.

20 Sec. 5. *Public Service Announcements.* – The Secretary of DepEd and the
21 Chairman of CHED, in consultation with the Secretary of DOH, shall carry out a
22 program to develop, distribute, and promote the broadcasting of public service
23 announcements to improve public awareness, and to promote the identification and
24 prevention of eating disorders.

25 Sec. 6. *Eating Disorders Research and Report.* – Not later than eighteen (18)
26 months after the enactment of this Act, the DepEd, the CHED, and the DOH shall
27 conduct a study on the impact eating disorders have on educational advancement and
28 achievement. The study shall:

29 a) Determine the prevalence of eating disorders among students and the
30 morbidity and mortality rates associated with eating disorders;

- 1 b) Evaluate the extent to which students with eating disorders are more likely
2 to miss school, have delayed rates of development, or have reduced
3 cognitive skills;
- 4 c) Report on current national and local programs to educate the youth about
5 the dangers of eating disorders, as well as evaluate the value of such
6 programs; and
- 7 d) Make recommendations on measures that could be undertaken to
8 strengthen eating disorder prevention and awareness programs.

9 *Sec. 7. Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or
10 unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision or part not otherwise
11 affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

12 *Sec. 8. Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive
13 order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule, or regulation contrary to or
14 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, modified, or amended
15 accordingly.

16 *Sec. 9. Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
17 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,