

## RECORD OF THE SENATE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2000

### OPENING OF THE SESSION

*At 3:30 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Franklin M. Drilon, called the session to order.*

**The President.** The 17th session of the Third Regular Session of the Eleventh Congress is hereby called to order.

We shall be led in prayer by Sen. Sergio R. Osmeña III.

*Everybody rose for the prayer.*

### PRAYER

**Senator Osmeña III.**

Lord God Almighty, source of our life and all that is good within us,

We long for Your soothing presence in our soul because our world is now overcome by the destructive effects of rapaciousness and greed.

We thirst for Your compassion because we see so many innocent lives fall victim to the violence of men's hatred and vengeful passions.

We pine for Your justice because all around us the meek and the humble are downtrodden by those who wield power and might with their wealth and their high positions.

We hunger for Your love because we see around us so much of self-interest and self-aggrandizement in the affairs of men who are out only to enrich or perpetuate themselves in power.

When O Lord, will the righteous triumph over the unjust?

When will there be an end to the dishonesty, corruption and wholesale thievery in our government?

When will we learn to appreciate our roles of servanthood so that we may serve our people with unselfish dedication and sincerity?

When will we see Your peace reign over our land?

With full trust in Your wisdom, and in Your divine providence, we deliver ourselves and our country into Your hands.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

Amen.

### ROLL CALL

**The President.** The Secretary will please call the roll.

**The Acting Secretary [Atty. Reyes], reading:**

Senator Teresa Aquino-Oreta .....	Present
Senator Robert Z. Barbers .....	Present*
Senator Rodolfo G. Biazon .....	Present
Senator Renato L. Compañero Cayetano ....	Present
Senator Anna Dominique M.L. Coseteng ....	Present
Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago .....	Present
Senator Juan Ponce Enrile .....	Present*
Senator Juan M. Flavier .....	Present*
Senator Teofisto T. Guingona Jr. ....	Present
Senator Gregorio B. Honasan .....	Present*
Senator Robert S. Jaworski .....	Present
Senator Loren B. Legarda-Leviste .....	Present
Senator Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr. ....	Present
Senator Blas F. Ople .....	Present
Senator John Henry R. Osmeña .....	Absent**
Senator Sergio R. Osmeña III .....	Present
Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr. ....	Present
Senator Ramon B. Revilla .....	Present
Senator Raul S. Roco .....	Present*
Senator Vicente C. Sotto III .....	Present
Senator Francisco S. Tatad .....	Present*
The President .....	Present

**The President.** With 15 senators present, there is a quorum. The Majority Leader is recognized.

### THE JOURNAL

**Senator Sotto.** Mr. President, I move that we dispense with the reading of the *Journal* of Session No. 16, Monday and Tuesday, August 28 and 29, 2000 and consider it approved.

**The President.** Is there any objection? [*Silence*] There being none, the motion is approved.

\* On official mission

\*\* On account of illness

civil and/or criminal sanctions, including suspension and/or dismissal from the government service and forfeiture of benefits.

**SEC. 12. - Rules and Regulations.** - A committee composed of the Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways as chairperson, and the Secretaries of the Department of Transportation and Communications, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Justice, and the Presidents of the Leagues of Provinces, Cities and Municipalities as members shall prepare the necessary rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this Act within sixty (60) days from its approval.

**SEC. 13. Separability Clause.** - If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, other parts or provisions hereof not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

**SEC. 14. Repealing Clause.** - All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

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

Approved,

The President. The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
S. NO. 1404/H. NO. 10615  
(Solo Parents Welfare Act)

**Senator Sotto.** Mr. President, we have another Bicameral Conference Committee Report. This time, it is the report on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1404 and House Bill No. 10615. For this report, Sen. Teresa S. Aquino-Oreta is the main sponsor. I ask that she be recognized.

**The President.** The consideration of the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1404 and House Bill No. 10615 is in order.

Sen. Teresa S. Aquino-Oreta is recognized to submit the same to the Chamber.

REPORT OF SENATOR AQUINO-ORETA

**Senator Aquino-Oreta.** Thank you, Mr. President.

I hereby submit to the Body the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1404 and House Bill No. 10615.

The Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1404 and House Bill No. 10615, after having met and fully discussed the subject matter in a conference on August 15, 2000, hereby report to this august Chamber the following:

1. Initially, the conferees, Mr. President, agreed to adopt the Senate version as the working draft. Since the provisions were identical, if not substantially the same, both Chambers compromised to adopt either the Senate or the House version. However, some provisions were then culled from one or the other for inclusion in the selected version and some were deleted from the bill *in toto*.

2. The "TITLE I - GENERAL PROVISIONS" was deleted.

3. On Section 1 (*Title*), the title of the House version was adopted to be Section 1 of the reconciled version.

4. On Section 2, the Senate version was adopted to be Section 2 of the reconciled version modifying the subtitle from "Purpose" to "DECLARATION OF POLICY" and changing the introductory phrase from "This Act aims" to "IT IS THE POLICY OF THE STATE".

5. On Section 3 (*Definition of Terms*), the Senate version was adopted as Section 3 of the reconciled version with modifications in certain subsections, to wit:

5.a. Section 3(a) (*Solo Parent*) of the Senate version was adopted as Section 3(a) of the reconciled version.

5.b. Section 3(a), item 1) of the Senate version was also adopted with some modifications to read as follows:

"1) A WOMAN WHO GIVES BIRTH AS A RESULT OF RAPE AND OTHER CRIMES AGAINST CHASTITY EVEN WITHOUT A FINAL CONVICTION OF THE OFFENDER: *PROVIDED*, THAT THE MOTHER KEEPS AND RAISES THE CHILD;"

5.c. Section 3(a), item 2) of the Senate version was adopted.

5.d. Section 3(a), item 3) of the Senate version was adopted.

5.e. Section 3(a), item 4) of the Senate version was adopted with the modifications that the word "incapacitation" was changed to "INCAPACITY"; and the word "PUBLIC" was inserted between the phrase "certified by a" and "medical practitioner".

5.f. Section 3(a), item 5) of the Senate version was adopted with modification so that the phrase "AS LONG AS HE/SHE IS ENTRUSTED WITH THE CUSTODY OF THE CHILDREN" was inserted after the phrase "one (1) year".

5.g. Section 3(a), item 6) of the Senate version was adopted.

5.h. Section 3(a), item 7) of the Senate version was adopted.

5.i. Section 3(a), item 8) of the Senate version was adopted.

5.j. Section 3(a), item 9) of the Senate version was deleted.

5.k. Section 3(a), item 10) of the Senate version was renumbered as Section 3(a), item 9) of the reconciled version with modifications that the phrase "Adoptive parent or other solo caregiver" was deleted and in lieu thereof, the phrase "ANY OTHER PERSON" was inserted; the word "solely" was also inserted between the words "who" and "provides" so that the provision shall now read as:

"9) ANY OTHER PERSON WHO SOLELY PROVIDES PARENTAL CARE AND SUPPORT TO A CHILD OR CHILDREN;"

5.l. Section 3(a), item 11) of the Senate version was renumbered as Section 3(a), item 10) of the reconciled version with the modification that the word "desertion" between the words "death," and "disappearance" was deleted and in lieu thereof, the word "ABANDONMENT" was inserted.

5.m. The paragraph "A change in the status..." was placed after Section 3(a)(10) of the reconciled version.

5.n. The Senate version was adopted as Section 3(b) of the reconciled version with the modification that the last word "deformity" was deleted and in lieu thereof, the word "DISABILITY" was inserted.

5.o. Sections 3(c), (d), and (e) of the Senate version were

adopted as Sections 3(c), (d), and (e) of the reconciled version.

6. On Section 4 (*Criteria for Support*), the House version was adopted, with the deletion of the number "9" to be in consonance with the renumbering.

7. "TITLE II—SOCIAL SERVICES" was deleted.

8. On Section 5 (*Comprehensive Package of Social Development and Welfare Services*), the Senate version was adopted with the deletion of the articles "the" before DOH, DECS, CHED, TESDA, DOLE, NHA and DILG; also, the conjunction "on" between the words "track record" and "providing" was substituted by "IN".

9. The second paragraph of both Senate and House versions were identical, hence both versions were adopted.

10. Subsections (a), (b), (c) and (e) of the Senate version and subsection (d) of the House version were adopted as subsections (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e) respectively, of the reconciled version.

11. On Section 6 (*Flexible Work Schedule*), the Senate version was adopted.

12. On Section 7 (*Work Discrimination*), the Senate version was adopted.

13. Section 8 of the Senate version and Section 9 of the House version were adopted as Section 8 (*Parental Leave*) of the reconciled version with the modifications to read as follows:

SEC. 8. PARENTAL LEAVE. - IN ADDITION TO LEAVE PRIVILEGES UNDER EXISTING LAWS, PARENTAL LEAVE OF NOT MORE THAN SEVEN (7) WORKING DAYS EVERY YEAR SHALL BE GRANTED TO ANY SOLO PARENT EMPLOYEE WHO HAS RENDERED SERVICE OF AT LEAST ONE (1) YEAR.

14. Section 11 of the House version was adopted as Section 9 (*Educational Benefits*) of the reconciled version.

15. Section 12 of the House version was adopted as Section 10 (*Housing Benefits*) of the reconciled version.

16. Section 13 of the House version was adopted as Section 11 (*Medical Assistance*) of the reconciled version with a modification exchanging the words "municipal" and "city".

17. Section 15 of the House version was adopted as Section 12 (*Additional Powers and Functions of DSWD*) of the reconciled version.

18. Section 12 of the Senate version was adopted as Section 13 (*Implementing Rules and Regulations*) with modifications to read as follows:

SEC. 13. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS. - AN INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE HEADED BY THE DSWD, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DOH, THE DECS, THE CHED, THE TESDA, THE DOLE, THE NHA, AND THE DILG IS HEREBY ESTABLISHED WHICH SHALL FORMULATE, WITHIN NINETY (90) DAYS UPON THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS IN CONSULTATION WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS.

19. "TITLE III - FINAL PROVISIONS" was deleted.

20. Section 16 of the House version was adopted as Section 14 (*Appropriations*) of the reconciled version.

21. Sections 14, 15 and 16 of the Senate version were identical to Sections 17, 18 and 19 of the House version, all were adopted as Sections 15 (*Repealing Clause*), 16 (*Separability Clause*) and 17 (*Effectivity Clause*) of the reconciled version.

22. Other provisions of the bills were subjected to further styling.

23. Though titles of both versions were identical, the conferees agreed to insert the phrase "APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR" between the words "CHILDREN" and "AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES".

The title now read as:

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO SOLO PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

APPROVAL OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT  
ON S. NO. 1404/H. NO. 10615

Mr. President, with that I therefore move for the approval of the Bicameral Conference Committee Report.

Senator Sotto. I so move, Mr. President.

The President. Is there any objection? [Silence] There being none, the Bicameral Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1404 and House Bill No. 10615 is hereby approved.

The following is the whole text of the conference committee report:

JOINT EXPLANATION OF THE CONFERENCE  
COMMITTEE ON THE DISAGREEING PROVISIONS OF  
SENATE BILL NO. 1404 AND HOUSE BILL NO. 10615

The Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1404 and House Bill No. 10615, after having met and fully discussed the subject matter in a conference on August 15, 2000, hereby report to their respective Houses the following:

1. Initially, the conferees agreed to adopt the Senate version as the working draft. Since the provisions were identical, if not substantially the same, both Chambers compromised to adopt either the Senate or the House version. However, some provisions were then culled from one or the other for inclusion in the selected version and some were deleted from the bill *in toto*.

2. "TITLE I -- GENERAL PROVISIONS" was deleted.

3. On Section 1 (*Title*), the title of the House version was adopted to be Section 1 of the reconciled version.

4. On Section 2, the Senate version was adopted to be Section 2 of the reconciled version modifying the subtitle from "*Purpose*" to "*Declaration of Policy*" and changing the introductory phrase from "This Act aims" to "IT IS THE POLICY OF THE STATE".

5. On Section 3 (*Definition of Terms*), the Senate version was adopted as Section 3 of the reconciled version with modifications in certain subsections, to wit:

5.a. Section 3(a) (*Solo Parent*) of the Senate version was adopted as Section 3(a) of the reconciled version.

- 5.b. Section 3(a), item 1) of the Senate version was adopted with some modifications to read as follows:

"1) A WOMAN WHO GIVES BIRTH AS A RESULT OF RAPE AND OTHER CRIMES AGAINST CHASTITY EVEN WITHOUT A FINAL CONVICTION OF THE OFFENDER: *PROVIDED*, THAT THE MOTHER KEEPS AND RAISES THE CHILD;"

- 5.c. Section 3(a), item 2) of the Senate version was adopted.

- 5.d. Section 3(a), item 3) of the Senate version was adopted.

- 5.e. Section 3(a), item 4) of the Senate version was adopted with the modifications that the word "incapacitation" was changed to "INCAPACITY"; and the word "PUBLIC" was inserted between the phrase "certified by a" and the words "medical practitioner".

- 5.f. Section 3(a), item 5) of the Senate version was adopted with modification so that the phrase", AS LONG AS HE/SHE IS ENTRUSTED WITH THE CUSTODY OF THE CHILDREN" was inserted after the phrase "one (1) year".

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- 5.k. Section 3(a), item 10) of the Senate version was renumbered as Section 3(a), item 9) of the reconciled version with modifications that the phrase "Adoptive parent or other solo care-giver" was deleted and in lieu thereof, the phrase "ANY OTHER PERSON" was inserted; the word "solely" was also inserted between the words "who" and "provides" so that the provision shall now read as:

"9) ANY OTHER PERSON WHO SOLELY PROVIDES PARENTAL CARE AND SUPPORT TO A CHILD OR CHILDREN;"

- 5.l. Section 3(a), item 11) of the Senate version was renumbered as Section 3(a), item 10) of the reconciled version with the modification that the word "desertion" between the words "death" and "disappearance" was deleted and in lieu thereof, the word "ABANDONMENT" was inserted.

- 5.m. The paragraph "A change in the status..." was placed after Section 3(a)(10) of the reconciled version.

- 5.n. The Senate version was adopted as Section 3(b) of the reconciled version with the modification that the last word "deformity" was deleted and in lieu thereof, the word "DISABILITY" was inserted.

- 5.o. Sections 3(c), (d), and (e) of the Senate version were adopted as Sections 3(c), (d), and (e) of the reconciled version.

6. On Section 4 (*Criteria for Support*), the House version was adopted, with the deletion of the number "9" to be in consonance with the renumbering.

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8. On Section 5 (*Comprehensive Package of Social Development and Welfare Services*), the Senate version was adopted with the deletion of the articles "the" before DOH, DECS, CHED, TESDA, DOLE, NHA and DILG; also the conjunction "on" between the words "track record" and "providing" was substituted by "IN".

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13. Section 8 of the Senate version and Section 9 of the House version were adopted as Section 8 (*Parental Leave*) of the reconciled version with modifications to read as follows:

"SEC. 8. *PARENTAL LEAVE*. - IN ADDITION TO LEAVE PRIVILEGES UNDER EXISTING LAWS, PARENTAL LEAVE OF NOT MORE THAN SEVEN (7) WORKING DAYS EVERY YEAR SHALL BE GRANTED TO ANY SOLO PARENT EMPLOYEE WHO HAS RENDERED SERVICE OF AT LEAST ONE (1) YEAR."

14. Section 11 of the House version was adopted as Section 9 (*Educational Benefits*) of the reconciled version.

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16. Section 13 of the House version was adopted as Section 11 (*Medical Assistance*) of the reconciled version with a modification of exchanging the words "municipal" and "city".

17. Section 15 of the House version was adopted as Section 12 (*Additional Powers and Functions of DSWD*) of the reconciled version.

18. Section 12 of the Senate version was adopted as Section 13 (*Implementing Rules and Regulations*) with modifications to read as follows:

"SEC. 13. *IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS*. - AN INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE HEADED BY THE DSWD, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DOH, THE DECS, THE CHED, THE TESDA, THE DOLE, THE NHA, AND THE DILG IS HEREBY ESTABLISHED AND SHALL FORMULATE WITHIN NINETY (90) DAYS UPON THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS IN CONSULTATION WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS."

19. "TITLE III -- FINAL PROVISIONS" was deleted.

20. Section 16 of the House version was adopted

as Section 14 (*Appropriations*) of the reconciled version.

21. Sections 14, 15 & 16 of the Senate version were identical to Sections 17, 18 & 19 of the House version, all were adopted as Sections 15, (*Repealing Clause*), 16 (*Separability Clause*) & 17 (*Effectivity Clause*) of the reconciled version.

22. Provisions of the bills were subjected to further styling.

23. Though titles of both versions were identical, the Conferees agreed to insert the phrase, "APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR" between the word "CHILDREN" and phrase "AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES". The title now reads as:

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO SOLO PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

In case of conflict between the statements/ amendments stated in this Joint Explanation and that of the provisions of the consolidated bill in the accompanying Conference Committee Report, the provisions of the latter shall prevail.

(Sgd.) GENARO M. ALVAREZ JR.  
*Chairman, House Panel*

(Sgd.) RANJIT R. SHAHANI

(Sgd.) PATRICIA M. SARENAS

(Sgd.) GRACE G. SINGSON

(Sgd.) DAISY AVANCE-FUENTES

(Sgd.) BELLA FLOR ANGARA-CASTILLO

(Sgd.) ROBERT ACE S. BARBERS

(Sgd.) MA. ELENA T. PALMA GIL

(Sgd.) TERESA AQUINO-ORETA  
*Chairperson, Senate Panel*

RAUL S. ROCO

(Sgd.) JUAN M. FLAVIER

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1404, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO SOLO PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

and House Bill No. 10615, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO SOLO PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

after having met and discussed the subject matter in full and free conference, has agreed, and does hereby recommend to their respective Houses that Senate Bill No. 1404, in consolidation with House Bill No. 10615, be approved in accordance with the attached copy of the bill as reconciled and approved by the conferees, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO SOLO PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Approved,

CONFEREES ON THE PART OF THE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

(Sgd.) GENAROM M. ALVAREZ JR.  
Chairman, House Panel

CONFEREES ON THE PART OF THE SENATE:

(Sgd.) TERESA AQUINO-ORETA  
Chairperson, Senate Panel

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO SOLO PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

SECTION 1. *Title.* - This Act shall be known

as the "Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to promote the family as the foundation of the nation, strengthen its solidarity and ensure its total development. Towards this end, it shall develop a comprehensive program of services for solo parents and their children to be carried out by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the National Housing Authority (NHA), the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and other related government and nongovernment agencies.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - Whenever used in this Act, the following terms shall mean as follows:

(a) "Solo Parent" - any individual who falls under any of the following categories:

- 1) A woman who gives birth as a result of rape and other crimes against chastity even without a final conviction of the offender: *Provided*, That the mother keeps and raises the child;
- 2) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to death of spouse;
- 3) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood while the spouse is detained or is serving sentence for a criminal conviction for at least one (1) year;
- 4) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to physical and/or mental incapacity of spouse as certified by a public medical practitioner;
- 5) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to legal separation or *de facto* separation from spouse for at least one (1) year, as long as he/she is entrusted with the custody of the children;
- 6) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to declaration of nullity or annulment of marriage as decreed by a court or by a church as long as he/she is entrusted with the custody of the children;

- 7) Parent left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to abandonment of spouse for at least one (1) year;
- 8) Unmarried mother/father who has preferred to keep and rear her/his children instead of having others care for them or give them up to a welfare institution;
- 9) Any other person who solely provides parental care and support to a child or children;
- 10) Any family member who assumes the responsibility of head of family as a result of the death, abandonment, disappearance or prolonged absence of the parents or solo parent.

A change in the status or circumstance of the parent claiming benefits under this Act, such that he/she is no longer left alone with the responsibility of parenthood, shall terminate his/her eligibility for these benefits.

(b) "Children" - refer to those living with and dependent upon the solo parent for support who are unmarried, unemployed and not more than eighteen (18) years of age, or even over eighteen (18) years but are incapable of self-support because of mental and/or physical defect/disability.

(c) "Parental responsibility" - with respect to their minor children shall refer to the rights and duties of the parents as defined in Article 220 of Executive Order No. 209 as amended, otherwise known as the "Family Code of the Philippines."

(d) "Parental leave" - shall mean leave benefits granted to a solo parent to enable him/her to perform parental duties and responsibilities where physical presence is required.

(e) "Flexible work schedule" - is the right granted to a solo parent employee to vary his/her arrival and departure time without affecting the core work hours as defined by the employer.

SEC. 4. *Criteria for Support.* - Any solo parent whose income in the place of domicile falls below the poverty threshold as set by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and subject to the assessment of the DSWD worker in the area shall be eligible for assistance: *Provided, however,* That

any solo parent whose income is above the poverty threshold shall enjoy the benefits mentioned in Sections 6, 7 and 8 of this Act.

SEC. 5. *Comprehensive Package of Social Development and Welfare Services.* - A comprehensive package of social development and welfare services for solo parents and their families will be developed by the DSWD, DOH, DECS, CHED, TESDA, DOLE, NHA and DILG, in coordination with local government units and a nongovernmental organization with proven track record in providing services for solo parents.

The DSWD shall coordinate with concerned agencies the implementation of the comprehensive package of social development and welfare services for solo parents and their families. The package will initially include:

(a) Livelihood development services which include trainings on livelihood skills, basic business management, value orientation and the provision of seed capital or job placement.

(b) Counseling services which include individual, peer group or family counseling. This will focus on the resolution of personal relationship and role conflicts.

(c) Parent effectiveness services which include the provision and expansion of knowledge and skills of the solo parent or early childhood development, behavior management, health care, rights and duties of parents and children.

(d) Critical incidence stress debriefing which include preventive stress management strategy designed to assist solo parents in coping with crisis situations and cases of abuse.

(e) Special projects for individuals in need of protection which include temporary shelter, counseling, legal assistance, medical care, self-concept or ego-building, crisis management and spiritual enrichment.

SEC. 6. *Flexible Work Schedule.* - The employer shall provide for a flexible working schedule for solo parents: *Provided,* That the same shall not affect individual and company productivity: *Provided, further,* That any employer may request exemption from the above requirements from the DOLE on certain meritorious grounds.



SEC. 7. *Work Discrimination.* - No employer shall discriminate against any solo parent employee with respect to terms and conditions of employment on account of his/her status.

SEC. 8. *Parental Leave.* - In addition to leave privileges under existing laws, parental leave of not more than seven (7) working days every year shall be granted to any solo parent employee who has rendered service of at least one (1) year.

SEC. 9. *Educational Benefits.* - The DECS, CHED and TESDA shall provide the following benefits and privileges:

(1) Scholarship programs for qualified solo parents and their children in institutions of basic, tertiary and technical/skills education; and

(2) Non-formal education programs appropriate for solo parents and their children.

The DECS, CHED and TESDA shall promulgate rules and regulations for the proper implementation of this program.

SEC. 10. *Housing Benefits.* - Solo parents shall be given allocation in housing projects and shall be provided with liberal terms of payment on said government low-cost housing projects in accordance with housing law provisions prioritizing applicants below the poverty line as declared by the NEDA.

SEC. 11. *Medical Assistance.* - The DOH shall develop a comprehensive health care program for solo parents and their children. The program shall be implemented by the DOH through their retained hospitals and medical centers and the local government units (LGUs) through their provincial/district/city/municipal hospitals and rural health units (RHUs).

SEC. 12. *Additional Powers and Functions of DSWD.* - The DSWD shall perform the following additional powers and functions relative to the welfare of solo parents and their families:

(a) Conduct research necessary to: (1) develop a new body of knowledge on solo parents; (2) define executive and legislative measures needed to promote and protect the interest of solo parents and their children; and (3) assess the effectiveness of programs designed for disadvantaged solo parents and their children;

(b) Coordinate the activities of various governmental and nongovernmental organizations engaged in promoting and protecting the interests of solo parents and their children; and

(c) Monitor the implementation of the provisions of this Act and suggest mechanisms by which such provisions are effectively implemented.

SEC. 13. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* - An inter-agency committee headed by the DSWD, in coordination with the DOH, the DECS, the CHED, the TESDA, the DOLE, the NHA, and the DILG is hereby established which shall formulate within ninety (90) days upon the effectivity of this Act, the implementing rules and regulations in consultation with the local government units, non-government organizations and people's organizations.

SEC. 14. *Appropriations.* - The amount necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the budget of concerned government agencies in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law and thereafter.

SEC. 15. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, administrative orders or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 16. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 17. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,

Senator Sotto. Mr. President, may we now proceed to the Reference of Business.

The President. Is there any objection? [Silence] There being none, the motion is approved. The Secretary will read the Reference of Business.