

Golez: Don't use calamities to push RH bill By: Ryan Ponce Pacpaco

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Villanueva said the decision of the Department of Education (DepEd) to cut school hours in overcrowded schools becomes imperative for Congress to pass the controversial reproductive health bill so that the country's population can be managed for the betterment of education sector.

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TWO anti-Reproductive Health bill lawmakers yesterday asked proponents of the controversial and divisive proposal concerning population management not to use the recent calamities, shortage of classrooms and problems on lack of basic services provided by the government to expedite the passage of the measure.

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez and Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante, critics of RH bill, said they would remain steadfast in blocking the measure which they believe is not the solution to the country's widespread poverty.

"I can't believe they are exploiting the misery of the typhoon victims to push their agenda," said Golez who joined the Catholic Church in opposing the measure.

Instead of using the plight of the flood victims, Golez asked their adversaries to just help relief operations and other similar undertakings that would mitigate the impact of the Typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng.

"They should instead harness their lobby resources to help typhoon victims. Now they are blaming the poor for the floods because they claim it is in the ranks of the poor that there is overpopulation," said Golez.

For his part, Abante said "that's madness, they should have better things to think about."

The House Bill (HB) No. 5043 or the "Reproductive Health, Responsible Parenthood and Population Development Act of 2008" seeks to raise public awareness of reproductive health, advance responsible parenthood, and improve access to safe and modern family planning methods in order to reduce unwanted pregnancies and lessen the risk of both maternal and infant mortality.

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Recently, Social Welfare Sec. Esperanza Cabral told the House committee on appropriations hearing that her department, the Departments of Health (DoH), National Defense (DND), Agriculture (DA) and Education (DepEd), National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), Population Commission (PopCom) and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) are supporting the reproductive health bill.

Source: People's Tonight by Ryan Ponce Pacpaco, October 7, 2009