Republic of the Philippines
QUEZON CITY COUNCIL
Quezon City
23rd City Council

PR23CC-563

64th Regular Session

RESOLUTION NO. SP-10694, S-2026

A RESOLUTION STRONGLY OPPOSING SENATE BILL NO. 372, ENTITLED "AN ACT PROPOSING THE LOWERING OF THE MINIMUM AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY (MACR) IN THE PHILIPPINES FROM FIFTEEN (15) YEARS OLD TO TEN (10) YEARS OLD", AND URGING THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF EXISTING JUVENILE JUSTICE LAWS

Introduced by Councilor NICOLE "Nikki" V. CRISOLOGO

Co-Introduced by Councilors Tany Joe "TJ" L. Calalay, Bernard R. Herrera, Joseph P. Juico, Charm Ferrer, CPA, MPA, JD, Candy A. Medina, Atty. Voltaire Godofredo "Bong" Liban III, Aly Medalla, Dave C. Valmocina, Geleen "Dok G" Lumbad, Albert Alvin "Chuckie" L. Antonio III, Wencerom Benedict C. Lagumbay, Don S. De Leon, Luigi D. Pumaren, Atty. Vicente Belmonte Jr., Edgar "Egay" G. Yap, Nanette Castelo Daza, Imee Rillo, Raquel S. Malañgen, Joseph Joe Visaya, Aiko Melendez, Alfred Vargas, MPA, Karl Edgar Castelo, Shaira "Shay" L. Liban, Ram V. Medalla, Maria Eleanor "Doc Ellie" R. Juan, O.D., Emmanuel Banjo A. Pilar, Kristine Alexia Matias, RN, Victor "Vic" D. Bernardo, Vito Sotto Generoso, and Jose Maria "Mari" M. Rodriguez

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WHEREAS, the current legal framework, established by Republic Act No. 9344, otherwise known as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006, as amended by Republic Act No. 10630, exempts children fifteen (15) years of age and below from criminal liability, subjected them instead to intervention programs under the supervision of local social welfare agencies, in line with principles of restorative justice;

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WHEREAS, this framework is fully aligned with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), to which the Philippines is a State Party, as well as the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) and the UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (The Havana Rules), which obligate the State to focus on rehabilitation and reintegration, not punitive measures;

WHEREAS, lowering the MACR to ten (10) years old would place the Philippines in clear violation of these binding international commitments and erode decades of progress in advocating for child-sensitive justice;

WHEREAS, an extensive body of neuroscientific and psychological research confirms that children aged 10 to 14 possess underdeveloped cognitive functions, particularly in impulsive control, foresight, moral reasoning, and judgement, making them highly susceptible to environmental influence and emotion rather than rational, moral decision-making;

WHEREAS, empirical evidence and criminological studies demonstrate that lowering the MACR is an ineffective crime deterrent and does not reduce crime rates; on the contrary, it increases the risk of recidivism by prematurely stigmatizing children, exposing them to the trauma of the criminal justice system, and depriving them of education and opportunity;

WHEREAS, the identified shortcomings in the juvenile justice system stem not from the provisions of Republic Act No. 9344, but from its weak and incomplete implementation, including a lack of social workers, insufficient youth facilities, and inadequate family-based interventions; the solution is therefore to strengthen implementation, not to alter age threshold;

WHEREAS, lowering the MACR, would entail massive economic and administrative expenditures to create new facilities, train personnel, and separate minors from adult offenders, vital resources that would be far better invested in education, family support, poverty alleviation, and community-based prevention programs that address the root causes of juvenile delinquency;

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WHEREAS, the proposed legislative measure is a regressive, harmful, and counterproductive policy that fails to ensure justice or deter crime; instead, it unjustly punishes children for the failures of adults and societal institutions.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF QUEZON CITY IN REGULAR SESSION ASSEMBLED, to strongly oppose, as it does hereby strongly oppose, Senate Bill No. 372, entitled "An Act Proposing the Lowering of the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (MACR) in the Philippines from fifteen (15) years old to ten (10) years old", and urging the full implementation of existing juvenile justice laws.

RESOLVED FURTHER, the Quezon City Government urges the national legislature to:

1. *maintain the MACR at fifteen (15) years old, consistent with international human rights standards and scientific evidence.*

2. *prioritize the full and effective implementation of Republic Act No. 9344 and Republic Act No. 10630, ensuring that adequate resources are allocated for intervention, diversion, and rehabilitation programs at the local level.*

3. *advocate for the strengthening of family and community interventions, focusing on poverty alleviation, universal access to education, and comprehensive psychosocial services to support vulnerable children and their families.*

4. *promote the enhancement and expansion of Restorative Justice Programs that emphasize accountability, empathy, and community reintegration rather than incarceration.*

5. *support the development of specialized intervention programs for older adolescents (16-18) involved in serious or repeated offenses, without resorting to lowering the minimum age for all children.*

6. *call for the institutionalization of research-based policy reforms, ensuring that any future provision affecting child rights and juvenile justice is grounded in scientific evidence and best practices.*

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RESOLVED FINALLY, to commend the members of the Quezon City Council for the Protection of Children (QCCPC) for their intelligent and principled submissions, which clearly affirm a steadfast commitment to the protection and rehabilitation of every Filipino child, to join them in firmly opposing the proposed measure.

ADOPTED: September 1, 2026.

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this Resolution was ADOPTED by the City Council on Second Reading on September 1, 2026 and was CONFIRMED on September 10, 2026.

MIKEY F. BELMONTE
President Pro-Tempore
Acting Presiding Officer

ATTESTED:

ATTY. JOHN THOMAS S. ALFEROS, III
City Government Department Head III
(Secretary to the Sanggunian)

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DESIGNED BY LUCIANO V. AQUINO