

Philippines Moves Toward Social Justice with Approval of Absolute Divorce Bill

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PHILIPPINES, March 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a historic legislative move, the Philippine Congress has approved the Absolute Divorce Bill (House Bill No. 9349), marking a significant step toward providing a legal remedy for individuals in irreparable and abusive marriages. While still pending Senate approval, this milestone signals a shift in the country's stance on marriage dissolution, addressing the need for a more accessible and humane legal option.



Currently, the Philippines remains the only country, aside from Vatican City, where divorce is not legally recognized. The [existing legal options—annulment](#), nullity of marriage, and legal separation—are costly, time-consuming, and restrictive, leaving many individuals, particularly those in abusive relationships, without viable recourse. The Absolute Divorce Bill aims to alleviate these challenges by broadening the grounds for marriage dissolution, ensuring a fairer and more compassionate legal framework.

Key Provisions of the Absolute Divorce Bill

The bill introduces expanded criteria for divorce, making the process more accessible and equitable. Key provisions include:

- Psychological Incapacity – A spouse's inability to fulfill marital obligations due to psychological incapacity.
- Irreconcilable Differences – Prolonged and unresolved conflicts that render the marriage unsustainable.

□ Domestic Abuse – Protection for spouses suffering from physical, emotional, or psychological abuse.

□ Abandonment – When a spouse leaves without a valid reason for an extended period.

□ Infidelity – Adultery or sexual infidelity as a ground for divorce.

□ Imprisonment – If a spouse is incarcerated for over six years.

□ Substance Abuse – Drug addiction or alcoholism that adversely affects the marriage.

By streamlining the legal process, the bill ensures that individuals can lawfully and affordably end toxic marriages without enduring lengthy and expensive annulment proceedings.

Advancing Social Justice and Gender Equality

A key impact of the Absolute Divorce Bill lies in its potential to advance women's rights and gender equality. Studies show that domestic violence disproportionately affects women and children in the Philippines. This legislation provides a vital legal pathway for victims of abusive marriages, granting them the opportunity to rebuild their lives free from harm and oppression.

The bill also reinforces the government's commitment to social justice, ensuring that financial constraints do not prevent individuals from seeking relief from harmful relationships. By implementing judicial safeguards such as verification of grounds, mediation, and prevention of collusion, the proposed law balances accessibility with legal integrity.

Challenges and Legislative Path Forward

Despite its benefits, the bill faces strong opposition, particularly from religious groups and conservative sectors that argue divorce undermines the sanctity of marriage. The Catholic Church, a dominant influence in Filipino society, remains a steadfast opponent, citing potential negative impacts on family unity and child welfare.

Legal experts also debate the bill's constitutionality, as the Philippine Constitution upholds marriage as an "inviolable social institution." However, proponents argue that the legislation serves as a necessary remedy for individuals trapped in dire circumstances.

Widespread Support from Advocacy Groups and Lawmakers

The bill has gained support from advocacy organizations such as Divorce Pilipinas Coalition (DPC) and Hiwalaya, alongside progressive legislators who emphasize its transformative potential. These groups urge continued advocacy to secure Senate approval and eventual enactment into law.

A Historic Opportunity for Change

The approval of the Absolute Divorce Bill marks a pivotal moment in the Philippines' legal and social landscape. If enacted, it will provide much-needed relief to countless individuals, offering them a second chance at a healthier and more stable life.

The bill now awaits deliberation in the Senate before reaching the President's desk for final approval. Supporters are encouraged to remain engaged in advocacy efforts to ensure the

passage of this groundbreaking legislation.

For further details and updates on the bill's progress, visit [Lawyer Philippines](#).

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Joanne Go

FCB LAW OFFICE

+63 917 681 6100

admin@lawyerphilippines.org

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