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PRESS RELEASE

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Pro-life group lauds Sotto over budget cut for contraceptive implants

MANILA, Philippines, December 20, 2019 – The Alliance for the Family Foundation Philippines, Inc. (ALFI) today commended Senate President Vicente Sotto III for "upholding the dignity of human life" following his move to slash the Department of Health's (DOH) P195-million budget meant for contraceptive implants. Sotto earlier stated that the budget cut was necessary, as he claimed that contraceptive implants were abortifacients.

ALFI supported Sotto's claim, asserting that there was "solid scientific evidence" that contraceptive implants had an abortifacient effect.

"The progestin subdermal implant has various mechanisms of action, including the suppression of ovulation, increase in the viscosity of mucus, and alteration of the endometrium of the mother's womb. When breakthrough ovulation occurs, the altered endometrium causes the prevention of the fertilized ovum to be implanted in the womb," explained ALFI's Vice President for Communications Anna Cosio, who is also a registered nurse. She stated that anyone looking for information on Implanon can visit the US FDA's website.

She emphasized that, contrary to comments by Commission on Population (Popcom) Executive Director Juan Antonio Perez III, "there is strong and updated scientific literature and evidence pointing to the abortifacient nature of contraceptives." She stressed the need for the public to be informed of the facts about contraceptives.

Apart from having an abortifacient effect, all implantable contraceptives including Implanon and Implanon NXT also have potentially life-threatening side effects to women, said Cosio. "They can increase one's risk of having ectopic pregnancy, breast cancer, ovarian cysts and serious blood clots, as well as other risks like problems with insertion and removal." She added that there have also been reports of Implanon "getting lost" inside women's bodies, which prompted the drug's manufacturer to add barium to its updated model Implanon NXT for it to be detectable by x-ray should it migrate to other parts of the body. She stated that in some cases, Implanon has also been shown to cause unusual scarring at the site of insertion and removal. "You see, contraceptive implants harm not only newly conceived life, but also women's health," she said.

"We, in ALFI, are thankful for Senator Sotto's efforts to protect the rights of the unborn and uphold the dignity of human life," said Cosio. "He has been a strong ally of the pro-life movement in the Philippines for many years."

ALFI is a multi-sectoral organization that lobbies against legislation that threatens the dignity of human life and the Filipino family.

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