

Office of Sen. Manny Villar

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NEWS RELEASE
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Villar sponsors committee report on safe toys

Sen. Manny Villar yesterday asked the Senate to approve the committee report on the bill mandating proper labeling of toys.

Senate Bill 3367 under Committee Report 525 or the Toy and Game Safety Labeling Act requires the proper labeling of toys to protect children against toy-related injuries or even death.

Toys or games not in compliance with the requirements of this act will be considered as misbranded or banned hazardous substance and will be withdrawn from the market at the expense of the manufacturer.

Villar, chairman of the Committee on Trade and Commerce, said small components present in some toys, such as magnets, screws or buttons, and the ties, styrofoams, and polystyrene beads that new toys come in with, put children in harm's way.

"Choking and ingestion are the most common types of toy-related injuries, because children have a habit of putting toys in their mouths," he added.

He also noted the danger of suffocation posed by toy packaging like plastic bags or bubble wraps. Injury or death may also result when a child accidentally inhales a whole, or even a fragment of a latex balloon.

"Child safety is largely dependent on parents. We hope that through this bill, parents will gain an increased awareness not only about the child-friendly features of toys, but toy safety in general," Villar said.

Villar said 33.4 percent of the population comprise the 0-14 age group, the same group that is inevitably exposed to toys.

Under the bill, the use of cautionary warning such as "Warning: Choking Hazard" on the packaging of toys with potentially hazardous contents is required.

Failure to put warning labels is punishable with three months to two years in prison and a fine of P10,000 to P50,000.

"As government officials, it is our mandate to safeguard public health. But more than that, it is our absolute and implicit duty as parents to ensure that our children get the best care and protection against possible health risks. The protection of our children against hazardous and toxic toys is a shared responsibility of the government, toy manufacturers, retailers, civil society, and the consumers," Villar said. ###