

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines

Senate

Manila City

Eighteenth Congress

First Regular Session



RESOLUTION No. 45

RESOLUTION URGING THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
TO FORMULATE AND IMPLEMENT A *BALIK*
PROBINSIYA PROGRAM

WHEREAS, Article XII, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution provides that “the goals of the national economy are a more equitable distribution of opportunities, income, and wealth; a sustained increase in the amount of goods and services produced by the nation for the benefit of the people; and an expanding productivity as the key to raising the quality of life for all, especially the underprivileged”, and that “in the pursuit of these goals, all sectors of the economy and all regions of the country shall be given optimum opportunity to develop”;

WHEREAS, among the country's regions, the most densely populated is the National Capital Region (NCR), with a population density of 20,785 persons per square kilometer. This figure is more than 60 times higher than the population density of 337 persons per square kilometer at the national level. The continued migration of Filipinos from the provinces to Metro Manila has resulted to cramped housing; slower traffic; higher crime rate and other societal ills;

WHEREAS, the Asian Development Bank in 2019 tagged Metro Manila as the most congested natural city in Asia with a population greater than five million. According to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), economic cost of transportation in Metro Manila has risen to P3.5 billion pesos a day, and the situation can get worse at P5.4 billion a day by 2035 if interventions will not be made;

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Health, as of May 1, 2020, of the total 8,772 COVID-19 infection cases; NCR registered a total of 5,968 cases, representing 68% of the country's total cases;

WHEREAS, given the nature of the virus and the manner by which it is spread between humans, it is argued that the highly dense communities in Metro Manila explain why nearly seven out of ten infected Filipinos are found in the nation's capital;

WHEREAS, the implementation of community quarantine measures in the country to combat the spread of COVID-19 left several workers and Overseas Filipino Workers stranded in Metro Manila and other Metro areas;

WHEREAS, there is a need to improve the quality of life in all regions of the country, improve access to social services, especially in rural areas, and decongest Metro Manila

WHEREAS, given the foregoing, it is imperative for the government to formulate and implement a *Balik Probinsiya* Program which must be a multi-sectoral

comprehensive program to decongest Metro Manila by helping stranded workers and OFWs, assisting people who want to relocate to the provinces, and encouraging people to settle down in the provinces for good. People, particularly informal settlers and those living in danger areas, shall be encouraged to move out of Metro Manila and go back to their home provinces;

WHEREAS, all relevant government agencies must work together to satisfy the immediate requirements needed by the beneficiaries of the Program, such as mass transportation, logistics, food and housing, among others, while also providing medium- to long-term measures to ensure sustainability of the Program, such as, but not limited to, the following:


- Support for agri-fishery entrepreneurship and improvement of agricultural productivity by the Department of Agriculture
- Employment facilitation and provision of trainings by the Department of Labor and Employment
- Support for local industries and micro, small and medium enterprises, and provision of incentives to investors by the Department of Trade and Industry
- Identification of land tenurial instruments by the Department of Agrarian Reform
- Promotion of responsible allocation and administration of land resources and environment by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- Construction and improvement of basic education facilities by the Department of Education
- Improvement of local health care systems by the Department of Health

- Construction of access roads and improvement of transportation networks by the Department of Public Works and Highways, and the Department of Transportation
- Establishment of sustainable communities and provision of resettlement assistance by the National Housing Authority
- Provision of social service assistance and support to relocating families by the Department of Social Welfare and Development;

WHEREAS, while the entire country currently addresses the COVID-19 crisis, it is important to give Filipinos 'hope for a better future' and motivate all sectors to work together to learn from this experience, address perennial problems in the Metro and bring more opportunities to the countryside: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate of the Philippines, as it hereby resolved, To urge the Executive Department to formulate and implement a *Balik Probinsiya* Program.*

Adopted,



VICENTE C. SOTTO III
President of the Senate

This Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 4, 2020.



MYRA MARIE D. VILLARICA

Secretary of the Senate

