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OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



Senate
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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 259

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SCHEME CURRENTLY BEING STUDIED BY THE BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY TO HAVE SOME DETAINEES PAY RENT FOR SPACE, FOOD, AND UTILITIES WHILE THEIR CASES ARE BEING HELD IN COURT, AND THE WORSENING CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY'S JAILS THAT PROMPTED SUCH PROPOSAL

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 10 states that "The State shall promote social justice in all phases of national development";

WHEREAS, Section 11 of the same states that "The State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights";

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* in its 23 September 2010 issue, reported that officials from the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) are studying proposals that some inmates pay for space, as well as food, electricity and water consumption, while their cases are being heard in court;

WHEREAS, BJMP officials said that the idea for the scheme arose from the limited budget the agency receives from the national coffers and the increasing demand for space and basic necessities;

WHEREAS, BJMP officials pointed out that only an estimated five percent of the detainees can afford such a payment scheme, since about 95 percent of the detainees come from poor families;

WHEREAS, the BJMP reportedly requested a budget of around P5 billion for 2011, or a 10-percent increase from its nearly P4.5-billion allocation in 2010; it noted that the agency's growing expenditures are for food and personnel;

WHEREAS, sources said that each detainee is allocated P50 worth of meals throughout the day; the agency estimates that it spends P3 million a day for food alone;

WHEREAS, agency officials say that the BJMP is on the budget's end list because it spends a lot of money with no returns;

WHEREAS, BJMP officials also said that the lack of funds severely hinders the agency from accomplishing its mandates, and that the dismal situation of the country's jails might lead to charges of human rights violations because the agency cannot meet its goal of humane safekeeping;

WHEREAS, sources say that the present conditions of the country's jails can be considered a form of torture, and Congress, with its oversight on the national budget, should formulate remedies for BJMP to carry out its mandate of humane safekeeping;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation on the proposal by

the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology to have some detainees pay rent for space, food, and utilities while their cases are being held in court, and the worsening condition of the country's jails that prompted such proposal.

Adopted,

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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