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S E N A T E

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

RESOLUTION
URGING THE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD, TRADE AND
COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, ON THE CONDITION OF FILIPINO COCONUT FARMERS, THE
PROBLEMS THEY ENCOUNTER AND THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO RESOLVE
THE SAME FOR THE BENEFIT AND GROWTH OF THE COCONUT INDUSTRY

Whereas, Section 1 Article XII of the 1987 Constitution states 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.

The State shall promote industrialization and full employment based on sound agricultural development and agrarian reform, through industries that make full and efficient use of human and natural resources, and which are competitive in both domestic and foreign markets.

In pursuit of these goals, all sectors of the economy and all regions of the country shall be given optimum opportunity to develop. Private enterprises, including corporations, cooperatives and similar collective organizations, shall be encouraged to broaden the base of their ownership”;

Whereas, one third of the Philippines’ arable agricultural land or about 3.31 million hectares is planted to coconut sprawling in sixty four (64) out of total seventy eight (78) provinces, and 1,195 out of the 1,554 municipalities in the country¹;

Whereas, in 2008, there were more than 300 million coconut trees bearing an annual average of 12 billion nuts and in the preceding five years, the average production was 2.3 million MT in copra terms while on a leaner season, a low of 1.4 million MT²;

Whereas, coconut exports are a major source of foreign exchange and account for some 65% of the world traded coconut products earning an average of US\$800 million per year or P32 billion contributing about 5% of the country’s total annual merchandise exports receipts³;

¹ <http://blog.agriculture.ph/philippine-coconut-industry-situationer.html>

² *ibid.*

Whereas, the productivity level of coconut still remains low due to a number of problems like:

- a.) the lack of resources of farmers to buy agricultural inputs;
- b.) tenurial problems;
- c.) limited access to credit;
- d.) lack of irrigation facilities;
- e.) inadequate farm to market roads and post harvest and processing facilities;
- f.) indiscriminate cutting of productive trees; and
- g.) the increasing trend of conversion of coconut lands for other commercial and agricultural purposes;

Whereas, low coconut production greatly affects the small coconut farmers and producers which constitute a large segment of the marginalized sector;

Whereas, coconut producing provinces account for more than 10 million families, majority of which live below the poverty line;⁴

Whereas, immediate and sustainable intervention must be undertaken by the government to help raise their standard of living;

Whereas, the State, consistent with the declared policy framework for agricultural development, should establish programs, information drives, legislation, research, and rules and regulations through its governmental branches in charge of the same like the Philippine Coconut Authority, Department of Agriculture and the Department of Science and Technology so that when agricultural systems have been formulated and determined, it will be easier to conduct standardized training to farmers and provide them with materials;

Whereas, such training will result to higher yields in production thereby increasing the coconut industry's resilience in the global market, improving the national economy and uplifting the coconut producing families above the poverty line;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Committees on Agriculture and Food, Trade and Commerce and Economic Affairs to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the condition of Filipino coconut farmers, the problems they encounter and the government's efforts to resolve the same for the benefit and growth of the coconut industry.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR
Senator

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Appropriate Technology vs Poverty – Grassroots & Governance by Teresa S. Abesamis, Business World, November 10, 2010