

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



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SENATE  
P.S. Res. No. 329

RECEIVED BY: 

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Introduced by Sen. Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC OFFICERS AND INVESTIGATIONS (BLUE RIBBON) AND/OR SUCH OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE/S OF THE SENATE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO COMPLAINTS OF ANOMALIES AND ALLEGED COLLUSION WITHIN THE PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ADMINISTRATION (POEA) LEADING TO THE TRAFFICKING AND ILLEGAL RECRUITMENT OF FILIPINOS OVERSEAS**

**WHEREAS**, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) was created in 1982 as a government institution tasked with promoting overseas employment while ensuring the protection of overseas Filipino workers;

**WHEREAS**, from 1982 to 2011, the market for overseas workers has grown exponentially with current POEA daily estimates of around 3,000 Filipinos leaving to work abroad;

**WHEREAS**, the national interest clearly indicates that the global demand for Filipino workers must be balanced with the need to safeguard their rights through duly-verified job contracts, carefully-screened foreign employers, and professionally competent as well as honest licensed recruitment agencies;

**WHEREAS**, at present, this task primarily belongs to the sole jurisdiction of the POEA which has the mandate of approving licenses and job orders of recruitment agencies as well as imposing sanctions against erring recruiters, foreign principals, and foreign agencies;

**WHEREAS**, concern has been raised by various stakeholders regarding allegations that certain officials and employees of the POEA are themselves involved in human trafficking and violations of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act;

**WHEREAS**, based on the complaint filed with the Department of Justice, the alleged connivance between POEA officers and three licensed recruitment agencies led to the exploitation of 100 overseas Filipino workers whose licenses were already cancelled by the POEA but whose penalty were not implemented by the said personnel;

**WHEREAS**, the respondents have denied such allegations and in a rejoinder addressed to the newsdesk of ABS-CBN, expressed desire to face these charges and expose the people within the POEA that “really committed injustice to OFWs”;

**WHEREAS**, at the core of this controversy is the welfare and protection of every overseas worker who relies on the POEA to ensure that his or her job contract and foreign employer have been duly verified and rigorously screened;

**WHEREAS**, one tragic case after another recently surfaced including the cold-blooded killing of Romelyn Ibanez, a native of Northern Mindanao, who left the country with a POEA-processed job contract specifying her employment as a nursing aide in Saudi Arabia but who was later found dead of stab wounds and with acid in her stomach in the household where she worked as a domestic helper;

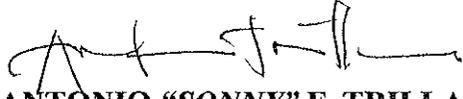
**WHEREAS**, a group of Filipino women employed by the Arabian Gulf Company have recently also sought the help of the Blas F. Ople Policy Center for violations of their work contract as approved and processed by the POEA wherein they were supposed to work as nursing aides receiving a monthly salary of US\$362 dollars but ended up working as cleaners for a labor-supply company with a salary ranging from Php 5,000 to Php 8,000 a month;

**WHEREAS**, such regulatory failures and/or criminal connivance of the erring POEA officials have led to the rampant exploitation and trafficking of overseas workers as well as a sense of demoralization among the rest of the personnel of the POEA;

**WHEREAS**, a Senate inquiry in aid of legislation would help clarify the true situation within the POEA and address, through legislation, policy and structural gaps that enable wanton violations of rules, regulations and labor laws by licensed recruitment agencies, foreign principals and brokers;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved for the Senate to direct the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations (Blue Ribbon) and/or such appropriate Committee/s to conduct an investigation in aid of legislation into the complaints of human trafficking and alleged collusion within the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) leading to the trafficking and illegal recruitment of Filipinos overseas.

Adopted,

  
**ANTONIO "SONNY" F. TRILLANES IV**  
Senator