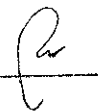


FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



11 FEB 10 P3:57

SENATE
P. S. R. No. **376**

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON WAYS TO PROMOTE CHEMICAL SAFETY AND STRENGTHEN THE NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT (SAICM)

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Sections 15 provide: "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them,"

WHEREAS, Article 2, Section 16 of the same provides: "The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature";

WHEREAS, paragraph 23 of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Johannesburg Plan of Implementation called for the development of a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM);

WHEREAS, according to EcoWaste Coalition, a nongovernment pro-environment organization, the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Chemicals Management held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, adopted SAICM on 6 February 2006 as a policy framework for global action on chemical hazards with the view of promoting chemical safety around the world;

WHEREAS, SAICM seeks "the achievement of the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on human health and the environment";

WHEREAS, it was reported that SAICM represents a commitment by the international community, including the Philippines, to act in order to prevent human exposure to harmful chemicals, particularly to protect sectors that are most vulnerable to risks from toxic substances such as the children, women of child-bearing age, the elderly, farmers, workers, waste pickers and the poor;

WHEREAS, it was also reported that SAICM addresses both agricultural and industrial chemicals, covering all stages of the chemical life cycle from their manufacture, use and disposal and including chemicals in products and wastes;

WHEREAS, the implementation of SAICM is fundamental to realizing sustainable development, including eliminating poverty and disease, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, promoting gender equality and empowerment, and ensuring environmental sustainability, among other priority developmental goals;

WHEREAS, the government of the Philippines mainly through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Department of Health and other national agencies are undertaking specific projects in pursuit of SAICM's "2020 goal" such as the ongoing multi-

stakeholder projects on mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls, and other persistent organic pollutants on chemical accident prevention, preparedness and response, and on a national chemical safety program;

WHEREAS, civil society groups, especially the EcoWaste Coalition, Ban Toxics, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, Greenpeace Southeast Asia and Health Care Without Harm, are actively pursuing chemical safety objectives, locally and globally, including upholding the citizens' right to know and participate in decision-making processes relating to chemical safety;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need for a robust and coherent national policy framework, strategy and program for chemicals in line with SAICM that will ensure and advance the right of every Filipino of the current generation, as well as those yet to be born, to live, learn, and work in a healthy, safe, and toxic-free environment;

WHEREAS, there is an equally urgent need for strong policies, giving priority consideration to the precautionary principle, pollution prevention and environmental justice, that will respond to some of the most pressing chemical safety issues today such as measures to eliminate lead in paints, prohibit phthalates and other chemicals of concern in toys, school supplies and children's articles, prevent and control mercury pollution from human activities, ensure the environmentally-sound management of electrical and electronic waste (e-waste), and curb dependency on pesticides in agriculture;

WHEREAS, in addition to a framework legislation and to specific chemical safety laws and regulations, there is also an essential need for expanded public information and education on chemicals and chemical safety issues that could be attained through a "Toxic Awareness and Action Day," among other possible efforts, every 6 February to mark the adoption of SAICM;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved, as it is hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate committees, to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation, on ways to promote chemical safety and to strengthen the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) in the Philippines.

Adopted,

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
avr

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