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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 999

RECEIVED BY:

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED NEED TO DEVELOP
PROGRAMS THAT WOULD CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE AND ENTICE
SCIENTISTS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE BETTERMENT OF THE NATION BY
INCREASING THEIR GRANTS AND FUNDS FOR THEIR SCIENTIFIC
ENDEAVORS

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 16 states: 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, Article 2, Section 17 of the same states: The State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development;

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* in its 13 April 2009 issue reported that Augustine Doronila, a University of Melbourne senior research fellow, and scientist is proposing to develop a solution to clean up areas that have been ruined by mining contamination;

WHEREAS, the report stated that Doronilla, who is part of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Balik Scientist Program, is willing to help establish a "phytoremediation" research group that would harness plants to recover contaminants from the ground and water, which could restore ecological balance in a mining area;

WHEREAS, it was also reported that the program, dubbed as the Philippine Metalophyte Research Consortium, will study and make use of endemic plants in the country that could be used for phytoremediation, such as the spurge plant or Euphobiaceae (scientific name *Phyllanthus balgooyi*), which has been described in a study by botanist Domingo Madulid as a "hyper accumulator" or a plant that could absorb large quantities of heavy metals;

WHEREAS, Doronilla allegedly said that the yield of contaminated farmlands could increase from P 5,500 per hectare to P 165,000 of crops per hectare if these farms undergo phytoremediation;

WHEREAS, it is a given that mining contamination could affect people's lives and health; with 24 medium to large scale metallic mines operating in the country, as stated in the report, there is a need to cleanse contaminated farmlands to increase agricultural produce, and the earnings of farmers;

WHEREAS, it is imperative for the State to encourage more Filipino scientists to contribute to the betterment of the nation by enticing them with grants and by giving them proper funding;

WHEREAS, the State should also entice students to learn more about scientific advancements by having the DOST contact schools and arrange with them programs and fora where scientists could peak the interest of the youth in science explorations and experiments especially those that deal with agriculture;

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 reported need to develop programs that would continue to encourage and entice scientists to contribute to the betterment of the nation by increasing their grants and funds for their scientific endeavors.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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