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SENATE

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

RESOLUTION

URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE EFFORTS OF THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AGAINST FAKE DOCUMENTS SYNDICATES, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF UPHOLDING THE INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY SCHOOLS/UNIVERSITIES, PRIVATE CORPORATIONS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND OTHER SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS

Whereas, job applicants for local and international placements are required by prospective employers to submit documents such as high school/college diplomas, transcript of records, birth/marriage and previous employers' certificates, among others;

Whereas, applicants who lack the necessary documents often go to the extent of falsifying documents to better their chances of landing a job;

Whereas, professional/master forgers of fake college diplomas, transcript of records, identification cards, and other school credentials operate on the sly in the so-called "Recto University," a cluster of establishments on C.M. Recto Avenue and the adjoining streets in Quiapo and Sta. Cruz in Manila's University Belt;

Whereas, fake clearances by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and Philippine National Police (PNP) can also be produced in Recto University, as well as Land Transportation Office (LTO) registration certificates;

Whereas, the going rate for fake local school diplomas is between P300 and P1,500, (depending on the schools) while foreign school credentials cost much more;

Whereas, printing shops, second-hand bookstores, art and cross-stitch supply shops, locksmiths and watch repair stalls act as fronts for counterfeiting work stations;

Whereas, Manila mayor Alfredo Lim has earlier ordered the clearing of the illegal establishments after receiving numerous complaints from foreign embassies about the proliferation of forged documents submitted by visa applicants, including school records and bank certificates;

Whereas, joint operatives of the Manila City government and Manila Police District (MPD) raided forgery shops along the so-called "Recto University" in June 2010;

Whereas, fake diploma syndicates are apparently getting protection from corrupt law enforcers in the University Belt area;

Whereas, then Commission on Education (CHED) chairman Carlito Puno entered into a memorandum of agreement with the National Printing Office (NPO), the agency that prints official government forms, for the manufacture of "highly securitized" and "tamper-proof" paper for college diplomas;

Whereas, the NPO said security features could be applied in the printing of diplomas, like those found in election returns and certificates of canvass, and watermarks, bar codes and other high-tech printing methods previously utilized only in the printing of currencies like the peso and the US dollar, which would make it difficult to forge them;

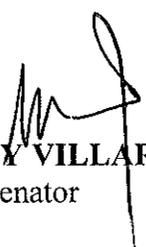
Whereas, former CHED chairman Romulo Neri, however, canceled the CHED-NPO agreement due to what a top commission official called "questions over the deal";

Whereas, the making of fake diplomas at Recto is a recurrent problem, the peak season usually being after graduation;¹

Whereas, the fake documents "industry" continues to thrive to this day: Now therefore be it

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Senate Committee on Education, Arts and Culture to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the efforts of the Commission on Higher Education and other government agencies against fake documents syndicates with the end in view of upholding the integrity and authenticity of public and private documents issued by schools/universities, private corporations, government agencies and other similar institutions.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR
Senator

¹ Manila City legal officer Renato de la Cruz, Philippine Daily Inquirer, *Post-grad a busy time at Recto*, p. A9, Mar 3, 2011