

FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

9 APR 28 15:14

SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 1032

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD, AND HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY TO CONDUCT A JOINT INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE SWINE FLU THREAT AND THE IMMEDIATE INTERVENTIONS TAKEN BY THE APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO STOP THE SAME, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF INTRODUCING MEASURES TO BUILD THE GOVERNMENT'S CAPACITY WITH URGENCY IN PREVENTING THE SPREAD OR THREATS THAT IMPACT ON PUBLIC HEALTH

Whereas, the swine influenza or "swine flu" outbreak has reached alarming levels as the death toll in Mexico climbed to 149 and the number of suspected cases jumped to 6 in Canada and 20 in the United States as of April 27, 2009;

Whereas, on April 23, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) alerted all its member states that the outbreak has heightened into a "public health emergency of international concern" and has upgraded the outbreak from Alert Level 3 to Alert Level 4 as of April 28, 2009;

Whereas, according to the WHO, swine flu is a highly contagious acute respiratory disease normally found in pigs, spreading through tiny particles in the air or by direct contact; this new strain of the swine flu virus can reportedly be transmitted from swine to swine, swine to human, human to human and human to swine;

Whereas, the escalated fears of a global pandemic prompted governments across the globe to take measures in stemming the spread of the strain;

Whereas, to aggressively address the health crisis, the U.S. has declared on April 26, 2009 a public health emergency, which allows the government to devote more funds for antiviral drugs and give some previously unapproved tests and drugs to children; while Mexico closed schools and public places;

Whereas, our national government has reportedly taken all necessary precautions to prevent the entry and spread of the dreaded swine flu;

Whereas, the Department of Health (DOH) clarified on April 27, 2009 that there are no reports yet of swine flu among humans in the Philippines;

Whereas, the Department of Agriculture (DA) has ordered concerned agencies to ban hogs and hog product imports from US and Mexico;

Whereas, the DA has likewise directed the Bureau of Animal Industry to lift the restrictions on the use of swine flu vaccine and called on hog farmers to have the animals regularly vaccinated against swine flu;

Whereas, the DOH immediately stepped up its surveillance and biosecurity measures in all international and local airports to prevent the entry of the virus;

Whereas, the Bureau of Quarantine has already instituted precautionary measures in major ports and possible entry points of the virus in the country;

Whereas, the DOH Referral Hospitals for Emerging Infectious Diseases have also been primed to ready their facilities to receive patients confirmed or suspected to have been infected with the novel swine flu virus;

Whereas, the DOH has advised citizens to take safety precautions by avoiding close contact with sick people, among other measures;

Whereas, preventing the virus from spreading into our shores should be an urgent and pressing priority;

Whereas, the swine flu threat must not be met with panic but with rational action;

Whereas, the government should step up efforts in protecting the health of the people and of our local hog industry;

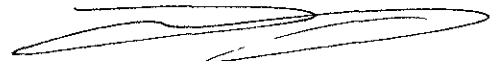
Whereas, it is incumbent upon Congress to determine the threat posed by the swine flu outbreak, to assess the level of preparedness of concerned government agencies in addressing the same and to ensure that the health and welfare of Filipinos is adequately safeguarded;

Whereas, revisiting the country's spending for human health and animal health technologies, is likewise imperative;

NOW BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the Senate Committees on Agriculture and Food, and Health and Demography to conduct a joint inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the swine flu threat and the immediate interventions taken by the appropriate government agencies to

stop the same, with the end in view of introducing measures to build the government's capacity with urgency in preventing the spread or threats that impact on public health.

Adopted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'LOREN LEGARDA', written over a horizontal line.

LOREN LEGARDA
Senator