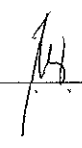


9 MAY 12 P2:07

SENATE
P. S. R. No. 1059

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 CREATE STRICTER MEASURES THAT WILL PROTECT WORKERS FROM THE FRAUDULENT SCHEMES AND USURIOUS MECHANISMS OF RECRUITMENT AGENCIES AND LENDING FIRMS, AND PROVIDE FOR STRICTER PENALTIES TO ADDRESS SUCH VIOLATIONS

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 18 states: "The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare";

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* in its 6 May 2009 issue reported that 137 drivers ended up as scavengers in Dubai after they were duped by recruitment agencies into applying for inexistent jobs;

WHEREAS, it was reported that out of the 137 stranded drivers, 40 have already returned to the Philippines;

WHEREAS, as a result of trusting these agencies, these drivers allegedly became stranded in Dubai for three months; they also incurred a debt of 1.9 million each from lending firms;

WHEREAS, it was reported that these workers were recruited by the CYM International Services, which promised them jobs at the Roads and Transport Authority in Dubai; however, the jobs promised were inexistent;

WHEREAS, lawyers Reynaldo Robles and Susan Ople from the Blas F. Ople Policy Center that is helping the workers, claimed that while the original placement fee was only P150,000, the lending firms were going after the workers for debts totaling P1.9 million each; it was alleged that the lending firms going after the workers included Asia United Bank (AUB), Paramount Life Insurance and General Insurance Corp., HQR Technical Insurance Agency Inc., and RJJ Lacaba Financing Corp.;

WHEREAS, Robles stressed that with each worker owing P1.9 million each, it was blatant that such is not an ordinary case of illegal recruitment, but is clearly an exploitation of workers;

WHEREAS, it was reported that the drivers did not benefit from the loans; Robles allegedly said that the lending firms should investigate their employees and officers for their alleged connivance with the recruitment agencies that sent the drivers to Dubai;

WHEREAS, according to Robles, the workers did not what the checks issued by the lending companies were for, and that they were made to sign inch-thick documents

the workers did not understand; they were also not given copies of the documents they signed before they left for Dubai;

WHEREAS, it was reported that Robles is requesting the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) to expedite the case and cancel the license of the recruitment agencies involved;

WHEREAS, like most Filipinos, who wish to work abroad, many of these workers had to sell their land and carabaos just to pay for their plane fare and stay in Dubai; but, when their money was used up, they had to scavenge for food from trash bins, sometimes eating only once a day;

WHEREAS, the exploitation of these workers should be treated with extreme disgust and vehemence; the employees of these lending firms and recruitment agencies responsible for the suffering of these overseas Filipino workers should be made accountable and punished;

WHEREAS, it is imperative that the legislature creates stricter measures that will protect OFW's and the labor sector, in general, from the fraudulent schemes and usurious mechanisms of recruitment agencies and lending firms;

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 create stricter measures that will protect workers from the fraudulent schemes and usurious mechanisms of recruitment agencies and lending firms, and provide for stricter penalties to address the violations of such.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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