



Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE CLAIM THAT THE PRACTICE OF
PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES OF ISSUING DISCOUNT CARDS ARE
DECEPTIVE AND DISCRIMINATORY

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

WHEREAS, the *Manila Bulletin*, in its 22 June 2009 issue, reported that the Ayos na Gamot sa Abot-kayang Presyo (AGAP) and the Cut the Cost Cut the Pain Network (3CPNet) claimed that pharmaceutical companies deceive patients into saving in the cost of medicines by issuing discount cards;

WHEREAS, the groups allege that multinational companies use the discount cards to dominate the market while discriminating against patients who do not possess the cards since only five million out of 90 million Filipinos are cardholders;

WHEREAS, the groups assert that the issuance of discount cards by drug companies create an impression that cardholders save more, although the cards are merely issued in limited numbers;

WHEREAS, both AGAP and 3CPNet allege that a leading multinational pharmaceutical company issue discount cards through partnerships with doctors in order for patients to patronize their drug;

WHEREAS, the groups claim that in addition to this, cardiovascular patients are prescribed with a leading drug and provided reference materials that promote compliance with the prescribed drug;

WHEREAS, the interest groups reportedly call for an administrative order from the Department of Health (DoH) to remove this practice by drug companies;

WHEREAS, the issuance of discount cards by pharmaceutical companies may be counterproductive to the objectives of the Cheaper Medicines Law, and would require Congress to either amend or supplement the existing law to ensure that the Filipino populace would benefit from this piece of legislation;

WHEREAS, Congress should always be vigilant and tenacious in dealing with ingenious and seemingly innocent schemes that could undermine well-meaning legislation aimed to improve the plight of the masses;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved in the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation, on the claim that the practice of pharmaceutical companies of issuing discount cards are deceptive and discriminatory.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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