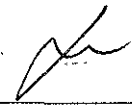


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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 1316

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,  
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE  
DEGREE PROGRAMS OFFERED IN THE NEW BILIBID PRISONS BY  
ENCOURAGING MORE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SUPPORT

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 5 states: "The maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty and property, and the promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy";

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 9 states: "The State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all";

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 11 states: "The State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights";

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* in an article dated 24 August 2009, featured the commerce degree program offered at the New Bilibid Prisons at Muntinlupa City, the program's vision and how the program has already helped a number of prisoners;

WHEREAS, it was reported that the University of Perpetual Help Delta System (UPHDS) Extension School, which operates inside the New Bilibid Prisons, seeks to provide inmates with the opportunities to develop themselves professionally, socially, culturally and spiritually, so that the bitterness, apathy, indifference and hopelessness because of long empty years of incarceration may be replaced with a sense of hope, dignity, self-respect, self-reliance and faith in the goodness of man and of the Divine Being;

WHEREAS, it was claimed that the prison school offers Bachelor of Science in Commerce, a course designed to help inmates start their own business after serving their terms;

WHEREAS, the report stated that some 200 of the 6,000 inmates at the Medium Security Compound are currently enrolled in college;

WHEREAS, the campus inside the prison reportedly started in June 1984 through an agreement between the University of Perpetual Help Rizal-Las Pinas, Rotary Club of Las Pinas, and the Bureau of Corrections;

WHEREAS, every year the prison extension school allegedly accepts about 80 new students, who must have finished high school and should pass an entrance test and an interview;

WHEREAS, the extension school's assistant officer in charge, Mr. Victor Fajardo, reportedly said that though the school wanted to accommodate more inmates and rebuild more lives, the funds were limited and private donations have slowed down;

WHEREAS, aside from the commerce degree program, the New Bilibid Prisons also reportedly offers alternative learning programs for preschool, elementary and high school levels accredited by the Department of Education;

WHEREAS, the view that a prison is intended solely for the punishment of persons who have committed wrongs to the society has long been an obsolete concept; the more progressive view is that a prison system should also seek, not only to punish, but also to rehabilitate;

WHEREAS, it is a fact that ex-convicts find it hard to find jobs when they get out of prison and this is a problem that will make it difficult for them to rejoin their respective communities as productive and good citizens;

WHEREAS, the educational program offered at the New Bilibid Prisons is a helpful tool that will enable ex-convicts to find jobs after serving sentence, thereby restoring their dignity and self-respect;

WHEREAS, the Government is enjoined to infuse resources that will bolster the ongoing education programs, and to encourage more public and private funding for its more effective operation;

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 strengthen the degree programs offered in the New Bilibid Prisons by encouraging more public and private support

Adopted,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/ctr