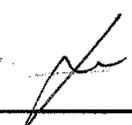


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SENATE
P.S. Res. No. 1507

RECEIVED BY 

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR MANNY VILLAR

RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING AND RECOMMENDING THE EXPANSIVE UTILIZATION OF THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE, "FILIPINO," AND OTHER PREVAILING DIALECTS IN PERTINENT PROVINCES OF THE COUNTRY BY THE JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, BUREAUS AND OFFICES PERFORMING QUASI-JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS WITH THE END VIEW OF STRENGTHENING ACCESSIBILITY, SIMPLIFYING COURT AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS AND MAKING THEM EASILY COMPREHENSIBLE BY THE ORDINARY LITIGANTS

Whereas, Article XIV, Section 6 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution states that "[t]he national language of the Philippines is Filipino. As it evolves, it shall be further developed and enriched on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages. Subject to provisions of law and as the Congress may deem appropriate, the Government shall take steps to initiate and sustain the use of Filipino as a medium of official communication and as language of instruction in the educational system";

Whereas, this resolution recognizes the Supreme Court's premier responsibility on matters affecting court procedures, the independence of the Judiciary and intends to commend the High Court effort in making the legal system a worthy institution to support the welfare of ordinary citizens and to promote efficient public service;

Whereas, the current Chief Justice of the Philippine Supreme Court, Reynato Puno, reports that as of 2006 the total case load of our Judiciary alone was 754,360;

Whereas, the average court case disposition ratio of the Judiciary stands at 85% as reported by the National Statistics and Coordination Board;

Whereas, a significant portion of the surveyed cases that remain undecided range from 13% to 33%;

Whereas, among the causes of case backlogs are the judicial process, severe inadequacy of resources, judges and court personnel competency, case complexity and culture;

Whereas, these causes of backlogs are a function of or is often affected by communication competencies of the stakeholders thus resulting to a bottleneck or serves as a barrier in the judicial process;

Whereas, the standard language used before the courtrooms is English;

Whereas, a survey conducted by the Social Weather Station (SWS) in 2006 showed that only 61% of the Filipinos said that they write in English and even worse only 38% said they can think in English;

Whereas, the Supreme Court conducted a pilot study in Bulacan wherein the Tagalog language was used as a medium of communication in the courtroom and Chief Justice Puno revealed that the result of the study is very positive;

Whereas, the study shows that the litigants are able to "understand better what rights are being litigated by the lawyers and are being resolved by the judges";

Whereas, among the perceived benefits obtained when the Filipino language is used in the courtroom is that it "enabled the litigants, especially members of marginalized sectors, to better understand what was transpiring in the courtroom";

Whereas, there is a greater chance that the use of the Filipino language or the prevailing dialects in certain areas in the provinces will bring justice closer to the litigants;

Whereas, it high time that we shift the paradigm and be pliant in the changing times by embracing the use of our national language Filipino and other prevailing dialects in the respective provinces before the courtrooms and in the use of pleadings and motions in order to facilitate not only the access of the majority of our people to the courts but likewise making the proceedings and the documents related thereto easily comprehensible by the layman; Now therefore be it

RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Senate to support and recommend the expansive utilization of the national language, "Filipino," and other prevailing dialects in pertinent provinces of the country by the Judiciary and government agencies, bureaus and offices performing quasi-judicial functions with the end view of strengthening accessibility, simplifying court and administrative proceedings and making them easily comprehensible by the ordinary litigants.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR