

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



Senate
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 520

RECEIVED BY: *ji*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID
OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED SHORTAGE OF PHYSICIANS IN THE
COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY IN RURAL AREAS

WHEREAS, the 1987 Constitution, Article 2, Section 15 provides: "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 11 February 2014 online article, reported that there is a shortage of physicians in the country especially in rural areas;

WHEREAS, Dr. Antonio Dans, president of Philippine Society of General Internal Medicine (PSGIM) said that every Filipino would suffer unless this healthcare crisis is solved;

WHEREAS, according to data from the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), there are roughly seven doctors for every 10,000 Filipinos as opposed to the ideal ratio of one doctor for every 1,000 population, as the total number of licensed doctors is 72,000, while the current Philippine population is more or less 100 million;

WHEREAS, Department of Health (DOH) Undersecretary Teodoro Herbosa reportedly said that the Health Human Resources bureau revealed that there were approximately three doctors for every 10,000 population, meaning the physicians could only give a meager five minute consultation time with patients;

WHEREAS, the report claimed the situation is worse in rural settings where an estimated three doctors are serving 100,000 population;

WHEREAS, Undersecretary Herbosa claimed that the population growth has also aggravated the shortage, we have ballooned to 100 million and the way to treat them has become expensive; most of the country is urbanizing and most physicians want to stay in urbanized areas mainly because that is where people have a living;

WHEREAS, it was reported that Dr. Moses Prinsesa, health officer and lone doctor of the Municipality of Busuanga, Palawan, said there is a shortage in front liners, and that the town's health system is also ill-equipped with medical tools and drugs;

WHEREAS, according to PSGIM, the inequity of health professionals is a complex and systematic problem, caused and aggravated by the cross-country migration of Philippine health workers to more developed areas such as the United States, Europe, and the Middle East;

WHEREAS, the report said that the urbanization and rural-to-urban migration of doctors lead to the maldistribution of practitioners in urban areas; the lack of incentives that encourage doctors not only to over-specialize but to seek employment in the private sector as well, thus,

leaving the public health sector understaffed; and in the process, results in the sad state of the overall healthcare situation in local government units due to devolution;

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 shortage of physicians in the country, especially in rural areas.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
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