

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. 523

RECEIVED BY: *ja*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED ADVERSE EFFECT TO THE ENVIRONMENT OF TREE-BURNING FOR CHARCOAL MAKING IN ARAYAT, PAMPANGA

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 16, provides: "The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature";

WHEREAS, the *Manila Bulletin*, in its 12 February 2014 online article, reported that hundreds of upland farmers in the towns of Magalang and Arayat during a recent consultation meeting, admitted that many of them are doing slash and burn farming, with charcoal making as their means of living;

WHEREAS, Gov. Lilia G. Pineda reportedly said that environmental degradation such as burning of trees triggers landslides and flash floods and causes severe casualties in affected towns or provinces.;

WHEREAS, according to the report, the governor instructed a technical working group from the provincial government to study the provision of alternative means of livelihood for the charcoal-makers and kaingin farmers;

WHEREAS, the governor is reportedly set to adopt upland barangays to help promote various livelihood programs particularly kaingin farmers and encourage them to venture into rice and vegetable farming or try their luck into business;

WHEREAS, according to the news article, Magalang Mayor Romulo Pecson and Arayat Mayor Bon Alejandrino gave their full support to the plans of the provincial government saying it would boost the morale of the concerned farmers, uplift their agricultural production and protect and preserve the environment, particularly Mount Arayat;


WHEREAS, the report claimed that at the height of typhoon Santi in 2013, a rampaging runoff from the steep slopes of Mount Arayat cut a wide swath of destruction at the foot of the mountain in Barangay Ayala, Magalang; it was reportedly learned that the high-velocity deluge overflowed the main road, broke down concrete fences and destroyed properties, including rice crops and fishponds, estimated to be worth millions of pesos;

WHEREAS, the first-time tragedy was said to be blamed on the non-stop charcoal-making by kaingin farmers who cut down hundreds of trees, mostly acacia;

WHEREAS, in September 2009, 12 individuals reportedly died due to landslide at the foot of Mount Arayat at Sitio 7, Barangay San Juan Banyo, Arayat brought about by typhoon Ondoy;

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 adverse effect to the environment of tree-burning in Arayat, Pampanga for charcoal making.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
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