

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



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SENATE  
P.S. Res. No. 616

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Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

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RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY AND OTHER APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE PREPAREDNESS OF THE PHILIPPINES TO FACE THE DEADLY MIDDLE EAST RESPIRATORY SYNDROME CORONAVIRUS, MORE POPULARLY KNOWN AS THE MERS CORONAVIRUS

*WHEREAS*, Article II, Section 15 of the Constitution provides that the State shall protect and promote the health of the people and instill health consciousness among them;

*WHEREAS*, the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) is a communicable disease, which is considered a more fatal though less-transmissible variation of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), with symptoms that may include fever, coughing, sneezing, and runny nose;

*WHEREAS*, the MERS-CoV was first identified in a patient from Saudi Arabia in April 2012 and since then the World Health Organization has recorded 242 confirmed cases of MERS-CoV in several countries including the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), Jordan, Qatar, Tunisia, Malaysia and the Philippines, 93 of which resulted to death;

*WHEREAS*, at least (eight) 8 Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) have been confirmed positive with the virus, two of whom have been registered as fatalities, one based in Saudi Arabia and another in the U.A.E.;

*WHEREAS*, on 15 April 2014, Etihad Airways Flight No. EY 0424 from Abu Dhabi arrived in Manila with a total of 415 passengers, among them a male Filipino nurse who tested positive for the MERS-CoV in the U.A.E.;

*WHEREAS*, out of the flight's 415 passengers, 245 passengers have been tested and 11 have thus far been quarantined while the Department of Health (DOH) continues to trace and contact the rest of the passengers to administer the appropriate tests;

*WHEREAS*, the remaining 174 passengers in Etihad Airways' Flight No. EY 0424 have yet to submit themselves for examination at the nearest DOH facility to rule out the possibility of infection;

**WHEREAS**, MERS-CoV is transmitted through close contact thus any affected persons who are not placed on quarantine, such as any number of the remaining 174 passengers, may be posing a risk to people around them;

**WHEREAS**, in view of recent developments, there is a need to assess the efficiency of existing policies and measures being implemented by our government to diagnose and treat those affected with MERS-CoV as well as to prevent the entry and spread of the virus within the country;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the Senate Committee on Health and Demography and other appropriate Senate Committees to conduct an inquiry, *in aid of legislation*, into the preparedness of the Philippines to face the deadly Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus, more popularly known as the MERS coronavirus.

*Adopted,*

  
MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID  
Senator