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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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SENATE
P.S.R. No. 680

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Introduced by Senator Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III

A RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND
CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE TO CONDUCT AN
INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE NON-RELEASE OF FUNDS
FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF STATE COLLEGES AND
UNIVERSITIES SEVERELY DAMAGED BY TYPHOON YOLANDA AND
EARLIER CALAMITIES

WHEREAS, the country suffered from a number of natural and human-induced calamities in 2013 resulting in unprecedented extent of damage to life and property, most notable of which was Typhoon Yolanda which devastated the whole of Tacloban;

WHEREAS, in response, the government had allotted supplemental funding in the amount of P14.6 Billion in 2013 and Rehabilitation Fund in the amount of P20 Billion in 2014 to help these distraught communities and institutions, among them the state colleges and universities (SUCs);

WHEREAS, there were 36 SUCs in eight regions, including the University of the Philippines in Tacloban City and in Palo, Leyte, which were severely damaged by different calamities and were allocated funding for rehabilitation and reconstruction;

WHEREAS, the said affected SUCs were required by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to submit damage estimates in November 2013 in order that assistance can be immediately given to them to normalize their operations and allow students to continue their studies;

WHEREAS, the CHED had already submitted the list of damaged SUCs to the Department of Public Works and Highways and other concerned government agencies for validation;

WHEREAS, six months have passed since the submission of damage estimates and no funds have been released for this purpose and there is no visible reconstruction efforts in the state colleges and universities devastated by Typhoon Yolanda and the calamities prior to it;

WHEREAS, the CHED directed the suspension of operations of SUCs and private higher education institutions in Regions VI, VII, and VIII until January 15, 2014 or as soon as their capacity to operate has again been authorized;

WHEREAS, most of the affected SUCs opened classes in January this year without undertaking the needed repairs of their structures to the detriment of the safety, health, and proper learning conditions of their students, faculty, and staff;

WHEREAS, until now, the response of the concerned agencies, such as the Commission on Higher Education, Department of Public Works and Highways, and the Department of Budget and Management is too slow and there appears to be no guidelines to facilitate the release to the SUCs of the rehabilitation funds provided in the 2013 and 2014 General Appropriations Act;

WHEREAS, these delays will severely affect the delivery and quality of education given the impending opening of classes in June 2014;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT HEREBY RESOLVED, THAT THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES DIRECT THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE NON-RELEASE OF FUNDS FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (SUCs) SEVERELY DAMAGED BY TYPHOON YOLANDA AND EARLIER CALAMITIES, IN ORDER THAT APPROPRIATE LEGISLATIVE MEASURES MAY BE UNDERTAKEN TO FACILITATE THE RELEASE OF THE NEEDED FUNDS FOR THE REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION WORKS WHICH IMPACT ON THE NORMALIZATION OF OPERATIONS AND OPENING OF SAID SUCs FOR THE COMING SEMESTER.

Adopted,


AQUILINO "KOKO" PIMENTEL III