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Senate
P.S. Resolution No. 809

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Introduced by: Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, COMMERCE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALARMING DISTURBANCE
ON THE OPERATIONS OF LOCAL BUSINESS, IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS
DUE TO THE CONGESTION IN THE PORTS OF MANILA

Whereas, the State recognizes the indispensable role of the private sector, encourages private enterprise, and provides incentives to needed investments. It is also settled in jurisprudence that although the Philippine Constitution enshrines free enterprise as policy, it nevertheless reserves to the government the power to intervene whenever necessary for the promotion of general welfare;

Whereas, the different government agencies have yet to address the gridlock in the ports which already resulted in untimely delays in the shipment of goods. The prices of goods carried by importers and exporters have already been severely affected. The delays in the cargo deliveries also affected the prices of agricultural products. Even manufacturers of fresh produce cannot fully ship out the goods due to possible spoilage because of long cues in the ports. Ultimately, Philippine exports have become highly uncompetitive;

Whereas, the problem on port congestion is not only exclusive to the Philippines but it has also hit other ASEAN countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam. Based on news reports, Saigon Newport proposed to the Vietnamese government diversion of traffic to alternate ports such as the two new ports of Ben Nghe and Phu Huu, as well as to upgrade the ports of Cat Lai port. This is similar to the Philippine government's call to divert Manila shipments to the underutilized ports of Batangas and Subic;

Whereas, according to the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), data showed that containerized cargo volume went down 3.12 percent to 418,204 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in April compared to the 431,654 TEUs handled in the same period last year due to the imposition of the day-time truck ban issued last February 2014. Foreign boxes declined by six percent to 247,547 TEUs wherein import boxes retreated by 4.16 percent to 131,095 TEUs while export boxes dropped 8.1 percent to 116,452 TEUs.;

Whereas, the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion under the Department of Trade and Industry also said that the previous estimated 2013 export tally was at Php 76 Billion, with the growth range pegged between 5.8% and 7.2%. At the rate of the disturbance on the operations of local businesses, exporters and importers, the target for exports in 2014 might not be achieved. On the other hand, the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) has reviewed its targets in the 8% growth in exports from PEZA administered ports due the problem on the congestion of ports;

Whereas, the decrease in trade volume affected the law on supply and demand, which resulted to abrupt price increases. Further, the inefficient operations of the ports had an adverse effect on free enterprise and the competitiveness of Philippine goods. With

the upcoming ASEAN integration in 2015, there is a need to have immediate and long-term solutions to the problems on port congestion since the flow of goods had been restricted by the issuance of policy orders of the different government offices/agencies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved to direct the Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the alarming disturbance on the operations of local business, importers and exporters due to the congestion in the ports of Manila.

Adopted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Aquino". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "B".