

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



Senate
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 1215

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID
OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORT THAT 75 PERCENT OF FILIPINO CANCER
VICTIMS DIE WITH EXCRUCIATING PAIN

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 11 provides: "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them";

WHEREAS, the Constitution also states, in Article 2, Section 15: "The State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights";

WHEREAS, the Constitution further states in Article 13, Section 11:

The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the under-privileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children...

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* on 26 February 2015 reported that 75 percent of Filipino cancer victims die with excruciating pain;

WHEREAS, the news quoted pain medication specialists who said that of the eight Filipinos who die from cancer every hour, five do so with excruciating pain because of inadequate access to full pain treatment;

WHEREAS, the *Inquirer* cited Philippine Cancer Society data, which show that of the 98,200 Filipinos diagnosed with cancer each year 59,000 die;

WHEREAS, the Association of Southeast Asian Pain Societies (ASEAPS) meanwhile claimed that 75 percent of those who die of cancer experience intense pain before finally succumbing to the disease;

WHEREAS, ASEAS president Francis Javier alleged that this is because of the estimated seven to eight Filipinos dying every hour, around five to six of them will die without the benefit of opioids or powerful painkillers;

WHEREAS, opioids, like morphine, are reportedly the main analgesic drugs for pain, especially acute, chronic, or postsurgical pain;

WHEREAS, the Pain Society of the Philippines (PSP) claimed that the Philippines is among the poor countries with lowest morphine consumption at 0.6 milligrams (mg) per capita, way below the global average of 6.11 mg per capita;

WHEREAS, according to PSP president Lilybeth Tanchoco, factors limiting the distribution of pain medication include government policies, insufficient public knowledge, lack

of support from the medical community, and the refusal of patients to receive treatment despite their needs;

WHEREAS, Tanchoco reportedly added that if left untreated or undertreated, pain can produce serious adverse effects such as poor healing, weakness, and muscle breakdown;


WHEREAS, the PSP allegedly urged Congress to amend Republic Act No. 9165 or the Dangerous Drugs Law to set rules on providing the seriously ill, especially cancer patients, with easier access to pain medication;

WHEREAS, it is inhumane for a government to ignore the plea of its people, especially of those in agony due to cancer;

WHEREAS, Congress, through relevant legislation, should ensure that cancer patients have access to means of easing their pain, and are not prevented from such relief by outdated laws, government neglect, or sheer ignorance;

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 report that 75 percent of Filipino cancer victims die with excruciating pain.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
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