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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 1394

RECEIVED BY: *J.*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE
TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION,
ON THE REPORT THAT ROAD WIDENING ACTIVITIES OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS THREATEN A
SPANISH-ERA CATHOLIC CEMETERY IN SAN JOAQUIN, ILOILO

1 WHEREAS, the Constitution provides, in Article 14, Section 16: "All the country's
2 artistic and historic wealth constitutes the cultural treasure of the nation and shall be under the
3 protection of the State which may regulate its disposition";

4 WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 10066, otherwise known as the "National Cultural
5 Heritage Act of 2009" states:

6 Section 5. Cultural Property Considered Important Cultural Property. For
7 purposes of protecting a cultural property against exportation, modification or
8 demolition, the following works shall be considered important cultural property,
9 unless declared otherwise by the pertinent cultural agency:

....

10 Unless declared by the National Historical Institute,

11 (d) Works of national heroes;

12 (e) Marked structure;

13 (f) Structures dating at least fifty (50) years old....

14 WHEREAS, the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009 also states:

15 Section 15. Conservation of Cultural Property. All intervention works and
16 measures on conservation of national cultural treasures, important cultural
17 property, as well as national historical landmarks, sites or monuments and
18 structures previously marked by the National Museum and/or the National
19 Historical Institute before the implementation of this Act, shall be undertaken
20 through the appropriate cultural agency which shall supervise the same.

21 The appropriate cultural agency shall approve only those methods and
22 materials that strictly adhere to the accepted international standards of
23 conservation.

24 WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* on 1 June 2015 reported that a road widening
25 project of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in Iloilo province threatens
26 to affect the Spanish-era cemetery in San Joaquin town;

1 WHEREAS, the news quoted church-art historian Regalado Trota Jose, former
2 commissioner of National Commission for Culture and the Arts, who said that the San Joaquin
3 Cemetery is possibly the best preserved and most authentic Hispanic cemetery in the country,
4 and perhaps second in monumentality to that of Janiuay, Iloilo;

5 WHEREAS, Iloilo resident and heritage advocate Cristhom Setubal, who was first to
6 openly assail the project, claimed that the municipal engineer of San Joaquin has vowed to raise
7 the issue with the DPWH;

8 WHEREAS, another heritage advocate, Renz Trance, allegedly opposed the road
9 widening project, noting that it did not guarantee economic development;

10 WHEREAS, Eric Zerrudo, a commissioner of the Philippine Unesco Commission,
11 reportedly said that the San Joaquin Campo Santo, along with other Spanish-era cemeteries in
12 Iloilo province, was of high cultural significance to the country;

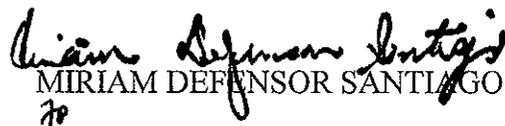
13 WHEREAS, apart from the San Joaquin project, other road widening schemes that have
14 earlier drawn criticism from heritage conservation advocates include those in Ajuy, Iloilo;
15 Sariaya, Quezon; and Dupax, Neuva Viscaya;

16 WHEREAS, this issue brings to the fore the need to improve adherence to laws
17 governing the preservation of heritage structures;

18 WHEREAS, the Congress, in consultation with the National Historical Commission of
19 the Philippines, the National Commission on Culture and the Arts, and other relevant agencies,
20 should intensify laws aimed at improving the registry, monitoring, and preservation of heritage
21 structures in the country;

22 WHEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE PHILIPPINE SENATE to direct
23 the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the report that road
24 widening activities of the Department of Public Works and Highways threaten a Spanish-era
25 cemetery in San Joaquin, Iloilo.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
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