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Senate  
Office of the Secretary

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SENATE

P.S. Resolution No. 1610

6-11-16



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Introduced by Senator Cynthia A. Villar

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE INCREASING COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE OFFICE FOR TRANSPORT SECURITY INVOLVING OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ENSURING THAT OUR OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS AND OTHER FLIGHT PASSENGERS WILL NOT BE SUBJECTED TO EXPLOITATION AND TO SEE TO IT THAT THE INTEGRITY OF THE OFFICE FOR TRANSPORT SECURITY AND OTHER AIRPORT PERSONNEL BE UPHELD**

**WHEREAS**, it is enshrined under Article III, Section 6 of the Philippine Constitution states that one's right to travel shall not be impaired except in the interest of national security, public safety, or public health;

**WHEREAS**, air passengers have the right to be safe and secure not only during their flight but while they are still on the ground and within airport premises;

**WHEREAS**, the Office for Transport Security (OTS) is the single authority responsible for the security of the transportation systems of the country, including on the ground security within airport premises;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, in light of recent events, there have been increasing complaints within the country's airport terminals involving Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and the Office for Transport Security;

**WHEREAS**, it was reported that certain personnel of the OTS have long conducted extortion activities by planting bullets inside a passenger's luggage during x-ray inspection, confronting the innocent passenger about the "prohibited item", and in exchange for not reporting the incident and having a record, the innocent passenger is forced to pay off the personnel;<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS**, news of this *modus operandi* only broke out due to reports by an American missionary, Lane Michael White, and a returning Filipino-American, Rhodora de Guzman, but there have been others who, at the time, chose to keep silent about it to avoid any problems;<sup>3</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the alleged perpetrators of this *modus operandi* have been

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<sup>1</sup> The OTS was created pursuant to Executive Order No. 277 (s2004) and its powers and function expanded and strengthened pursuant to Executive Order No. 311 (s2004).

<sup>2</sup> ABS-CBN News, <http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/video/nation/metro-manila/09/25/15/isa-pang-biktima-ng-tanim-bala-scam-lumantad>

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

terminated from the service and are now facing criminal prosecution;<sup>4</sup>

**WHEREAS**, following this incident, news broke out this time involving an alleged stealing by a certain group of OTS personnel of a carry-on luggage of an OFW after the latter had forgotten to pick up the same and momentarily left at the x-ray station;<sup>5</sup>

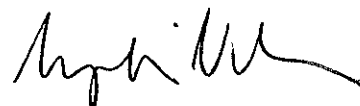
**WHEREAS**, it is understandable that because of these reported incidents that everyone, OFWs and other passengers, are on high alert against any unscrupulous activities and a simple mistake can escalate to a significant problem;

**WHEREAS**, in both cases, the initial investigations reveal that there were procedural lapses committed by OTS personnel, which may become a cause for a misunderstanding or the chance for some devious person to commit an illegal scheme;<sup>6</sup>

**WHEREAS**, in order to ensure the safety of all passengers and to maintain the integrity of the OTS for a secure and unperturbed procedure prior to leaving the airport terminal premises, there arises a need to further investigate these allegations, particularly looking at the protocol being practiced by the OTS to guarantee stricter implementation and whether there is a need to improve the same;

**WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of the Philippines to the appropriate Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the increasing complaints against the Office for Transport Security involving Overseas Filipino Workers, with the end in view of ensuring that our Overseas Filipino Workers and other flight passengers will not be subjected to exploitation and to see to it that the integrity of the Office for Transport Security and other airport personnel be upheld;

Adopted,



CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> ABS-CBN News, <http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/video/nation/metro-manila/09/29/15/3-naia-security-personnel-accused-stealing-ofws-bag>; <http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/global-filipino/10/02/15/3-airport-screener-trouble-over-ofws-bag>

<sup>6</sup> ABS-CBN News, <http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/video/nation/metro-manila/09/29/15/3-naia-security-personnel-accused-stealing-ofws-bag>