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SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

P. S. Res. No. 1641

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Introduced by Senator FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

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RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO THE ALLEGED EXTORTION ACTIVITIES IN PHILIPPINE AIRPORTS SUCH AS THE "TANIM BALA" OR "LAGLAG BALA" OPERATIONS WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ENACTING LEGISLATIVE MEASURES TO ADDRESS THE SAME

*WHEREAS*, studies show that the correlation between air transport and economic development cannot be understated. Air transport is an integral part of the transport infrastructure and a significant sector of the economy. Airports are recognized for their ability to multiply business activity and stimulate further development.<sup>1</sup>

*WHEREAS*, the recent reports<sup>2</sup> about extortion activities at the country's primary airport hub such as "bullet planting" in exchange for money are quite alarming, not only does it put in bad light our country's airport authorities but create fear as well among travellers or those returning to our country.

*WHEREAS*, the more recent victims of this alleged *modus operandi* are an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW), Gloria Ortinez, and a Japanese national, Kazunobu Sakamoto, who were arrested, detained and charged for violating the Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulation Act or Republic Act No. 10591. The crime committed under the said law, unlawful acquisition or possession of ammunition, is punishable by *prision mayor* or imprisonment from six years and one day to twelve years.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Significance of Air Transport. [www.prg.aero.com](http://www.prg.aero.com).

<sup>2</sup> 'Tanim Bala' case triggers probe call. Cabacungan and Salaverria. INQUIRER.net.

<sup>3</sup> RA 10591, Section 28, paragraphs (g), (i) and (k), Article V.

*WHEREAS*, this *modus operandi*, if were true, is quite condemnable. It strikes at our country's economy in terms of tourism, business and, most especially, the welfare of OFWs.

*WHEREAS*, needless to state, in 2014: "Robust growth in overseas Filipino remittances continued to provide support to the country's economy, with cash remittances accounting for 8.5% of gross domestic product this year." This translates to a whopping \$24.31 billion that year.<sup>4</sup> And for 2015, data show that for the first four months alone, OFW remittances totaled \$8.6 billion, which is 5.1% higher than that recorded in 2014.<sup>5</sup>

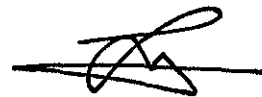
*WHEREAS*, on the other hand, our country's tourism industry recorded that in 2014 it contributed to the economy an estimated rate of 7.8% as measured by the share of tourism direct gross value added (TDGVA).<sup>6</sup>

*WHEREAS*, if this alleged issue of extortion activities in Philippine airports is left unsolved, without tangible and effective measures in place to address them, the economy and that of the welfare of OFWs will greatly suffer, and it is a great disservice to both the State and government not to give the most concrete solution possible.

*WHEREAS*, finally, aside from the foregoing, it is likewise imperative that a comprehensive and accountable security policy in all airports be institutionalized to ensure that neither abuses nor any forms of arbitrariness can be committed by airport authorities in the performance of their duties and that all travellers can be well informed and advised of their rights and prerogatives.

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED***, that the appropriate Senate Committees conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation into the alleged extortion activities in airports with the end in view of enacting legislative measures to address the same.

Adopted,



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<sup>4</sup> OFW remittances hit new high by Caraballo. The Manila Times. 16 February 2015.

<sup>5</sup> April OFW remittances rise to \$2.2B. Rappler.com. 15 June 2015.

<sup>6</sup> TDGVA, which serves as the indicator to measure the value added of different industries in relation to tourism activities of both inbound and domestic visitors in the country, was 14 percent higher in 2014 with P982.4 billion compared to 2013's P861.7 billion.