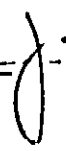


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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 1708

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE
THAT A MULTI-AGENCY TASK FORCE MUST BE CREATED
TO MONITOR THE STATUS OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS
IN ORDER TO PREVENT ABUSE BY EMPLOYERS

1 WHEREAS, the Constitution provides:

2 Article 2. Section 18. The State affirms labor as a primary social economic
3 force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare.

4 Article 13. Section 3. The State shall afford full protection to labor, local
5 and overseas, organized and unorganized, and promote full employment and
6 equality of employment opportunities for all.

7 WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* on 16 December 2015 reported that a Filipino
8 maid Thelma Gawidan was starved by her employer for 15 months in Singapore until her weight
9 dropped to 29 kilograms from 49 kilograms;

10 WHEREAS, the employers also allegedly withheld Gawidan's salary, prohibited
11 Gawidan from leaving their home by herself; and barred Gawidan from using the toilet, forcing
12 her instead to use the washroom near the condominium swimming pool when she had to relieve
13 herself;

14 WHEREAS, this horrible and inhuman treatment could have been prevented or cut short
15 if the government monitored the status of overseas Filipino workers who have been tagged
16 missing, or who have not made contact with their families for a certain period;

17 WHEREAS, in fulfilling its responsibility under the Constitution to protect the welfare of
18 OFWs, the government must create a task force that will, upon receipt of reports of missing
19 registered OFWs, seek out such missing persons using their database;

20 WHEREAS, this task force must include the Department of Foreign Affairs, the
21 Department of Labor and Employment, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, the
22 Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, and other relevant government agencies;

1 WHEREAS, there must likewise be a mechanism for families to report missing persons at
2 the POEA and OWWA offices in the Philippines;

3 WHEREAS, the Congress must consider a law to this effect;

4 WHEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE PHILIPPINE SENATE to
5 express the sense of the Senate that a multi-agency task force must be created to monitor the
6 status of overseas Filipino workers in order to prevent abuse by employers.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO
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