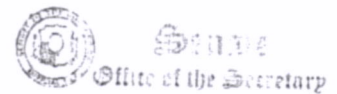


SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



'18 MAY -2 P1 :24

SENATE
S. No. 1792

RECEIVED BY

Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

AN ACT
MANDATING ALL EMPLOYERS IN THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS, INCLUDING ALL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, AGENCIES AND INSTRUMENTALITIES, TO PROVIDE, FREE OF CHARGE, CLEAN, HEALTHY, SUFFICIENT AND ACCESSIBLE DRINKING-WATER TO ALL ITS EMPLOYEES

It might not be known to all that we have a certain "Philippine National Standards for Drinking Water" or "PNSDW", the history of which dates back to 1963. Said PNSDW was subsequently revised in 1978, 1993, 2007 and just recently in 2017 (Administrative Order No. 2017-0010 issued by the Office of the Secretary, Department of Health). The PNSDW, in a nutshell, prescribes the standards and procedures on drinking-water quality to protect public/consumers' health.

In the past, the United Nations itself recognized that one's access to water as a basic human right. There has to be SUFFICIENT, ACCESSIBLE and AFFORDABLE water.

According to studies, adult humans are 60% water and our blood is 90% water. To function properly, all the cells and organs of the body need water. Drinking water is needed to lubricate the joints, form saliva, deliver oxygen throughout the body, cushion the brain, spinal cord, and other sensitive tissues, regulate body temperature, produce hormones and neurotransmitters, help food pass through the intestines, and flush body waste, among others.¹

Drinking-water, no matter how essential, is unfortunately not free. Refilling stations charge around Php50.00 per 5 gallons of drinking-water. For people who are working in the field or those who are obligated to move around and outside an

¹ <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/290814.php>

office, bottled mineral water ranges from Php18.00 to Php40.00 depending on the volume (1 liter to 1.5 liters).

Just by looking around outside one's home or office, one could surely notice our traffic enforcers manning our streets, our policemen patrolling everywhere, construction workers building various establishments, service people catering to the needs of the consuming public, office workers, and the like. One could not help to wonder – How much are they forced to spend to be able to have a healthy drinking-water, a basic human necessity and a UN-declared human right, especially given the fact that they work under the blistering heat of the Sun?

This legislative measure seeks to remove the burden of having to spend for healthy drinking-water while performing one's work off of the pockets of all employees. This legislative measure seeks to mandate all employers to provide free, healthy, and accessible drinking-water to all their employees during working hours whether or not the latter's work, tasks and/or duties are performed inside or outside office or business premises. This legislative measure likewise seeks to penalize non-complaint employers who will deprive employees of the basic human need and human right to have healthy and accessible drinking-water that is compliant with the PNSDW.

It is for the foregoing considerations and reasons that the immediate approval of this legislative measure is earnestly sought.


GRACE POE