

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE }
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SENATE

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P.S. Res. No. 99

INTRODUCED BY HON. MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC ORDER AND ILLEGAL DRUGS AND TRADE AND COMMERCE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE PROLIFERATION OF CELLULAR PHONE THEFT, MOST OF WHICH ARE REPORTED TO FIND ITS WAY BACK IN SHOPPING CENTERS, WITH THE END VIEW OF RECOMMENDING MEASURES AS MAY BE NECESSARY TO PROTECT THE CITIZENS FROM CELLULAR PHONE THEFT AND PROTECT THE CONSUMERS FROM SUBSTANDARD PRODUCTS

WHEREAS, the late 1990's saw the boom of mobile technology in the country. It was reported that as of June 2004, there are already 27.3 million cellular phone subscribers in the Philippines;

WHEREAS, the cellular phone has now become an indispensable device for many Filipinos; In fact, the Philippines has become the "texting capital of the world";

WHEREAS, as a consequence of the high demand for cellular phones, both from second hand stores and direct buyers, cellular phone theft has emerged as a new branch of criminal activity. The Philippine National Police (PNP) has placed cellular phone theft on its priority list;

WHEREAS, the PNP Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM) reported cellular phone theft as highly contributory to the upsurge of street crime nationwide;

WHEREAS, cellular phone related crimes ceased to be confined to simple thefts and robberies but had in fact resulted to bodily harm or even death to the victims. People have killed for cellular phones and people have died protecting them;

WHEREAS, the proliferation of cellular phone theft is also linked to drug addiction. Some offenders are users of prohibited drugs who saw cellular phone fencing as a way of sustaining their addiction;

WHEREAS, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), in response to the increased incident of cellular phone theft, had designed a system of disabling or blocking reported lost or stolen units by marking its International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) as invalid;

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the marking of the IMEI, Filipino electronic technicians found a way to unblock a blocked cellular phone unit. Thus, stolen cellular phone units continue to flood shopping centers. Among the shopping

centers believed to sell stolen units are Greenhills in San Juan and Arangque in Manila. Stolen units usually stop working after a few days of use;

WHEREAS, aside from stolen units, some shopping centers also sell the so called "reconditioned" phones, an assembled phone, the parts of which are also believed to come from traded or stolen phones, that are cheaper than brand-new phones but not guaranteed by either the Bureau of Customs or by mobile phone manufacturers;

WHEREAS, the present turn of events may warrant the criminalization of the altering or tampering with the IMEI and the imposition of tighter regulatory measures in the sale of second hand cellular phones;

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the Senate Committees on Public Order and Illegal Drugs and Trade and Commerce to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation on the proliferation of cellular phone theft, most of which are reported to find its way back in shopping centers, with the end view of recommending measures as may be necessary to protect the citizens from cellular phone theft and protect the consumers from substandard products.

Adopted,


MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.
Senator