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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 373

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

RESOLUTION

HONORING AND COMMENDING THE FILIPINO HEALTHCARE WORKERS WHO BRAVELY SERVE AS FRONTLINERS AGAINST THE COVID-19 VIRUS EPIDEMIC IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND RESPECTFULLY URGING THAT THEY EACH BE AWARDED THE APPROPRIATE DISTINCTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 236, s. 2003, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE HONORS CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES

1 WHEREAS, on March 8, 2020, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte signed
2 Proclamation No. 922 declaring a state of public health emergency throughout the
3 Philippines, after the Department of Health (DOH) confirmed the first case of local
4 transmission of the highly contagious COVID-19 corona virus in the country;

5 WHEREAS, the National Capital Region (NCR) was then placed under
6 community quarantine, effective March 15, upon recommendation of the Inter-
7 Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) given that health
8 officials had already raised the alert level to the maximum Code Red Sub-Level 2;

9 WHEREAS, on March 16, the President announced that the entire island of
10 Luzon will be placed under "enhanced community quarantine" in a bid to further
11 prevent any contagion, considering that at the time 142 COVID-19 cases and 2
12 deaths had already been registered¹;

13 WHEREAS, the number of COVID-19 cases in the Philippines have quickly
14 escalated in a span of a few weeks from only one registered case in January 30 to
15 5,223 as of April 14, 2020². Such escalation has exerted immense pressure on the
16 country's healthcare system and its healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses,
17 nursing aides and other hospital staff;

¹ <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/729875/duterte-orders-lockdown-of-entire-luzon-due-to-covid-19-threat/story/>

² <https://www.doh.gov.ph/covid-19/case-tracker>

1 WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, the DOH said that Metro Manila hospitals
2 were experiencing congestion amid the COVID-19 epidemic, as their registered bed
3 capacity was quickly being surpassed by the number of patients seeking medical
4 treatment³. A week later, major private hospitals in Metro Manila including the
5 Makati Medical Center, the Medical City, and St. Luke’s Medical Center announced
6 on separate occasions that they were already operating at full capacity and hence
7 were not accepting any more patients for COVID-19 confinement⁴;

8 WHEREAS, to handle the influx of patients, healthcare workers have
9 resorted to serving at least 12-hour shifts a day, seven days a week. Without the
10 opportunity to rest, many are forced to keep working while greatly fatigued;

11 WHEREAS, in light of the restrictions to mobility and public transportation
12 under the Luzon-wide enhanced community quarantine, some healthcare workers
13 have also been forced to sleep within the premises of their respective hospitals, or
14 find alternative living arrangements amidst the COVID-19 epidemic;

15 WHEREAS, amid a widespread shortage of the necessary medical gear,
16 particularly personal protective equipment (PPEs), many healthcare workers have
17 themselves been unduly exposed to the virus, making them Persons Under
18 Investigation (PUI). That such PUIs are required to go under quarantine only
19 exacerbates the hardships and challenges that COVID-19 frontliners face;

20 WHEREAS, on April 8, 2020, the Department of Health revealed that up to
21 252 healthcare workers contracted the virus—152 of whom were doctors (65
22 percent), and 63 were nurses (25 percent)⁵;

23 WHEREAS, 17 doctors have already succumbed to the virus, as of April 6,
24 2020, according to data from the Philippine Medical Association⁶;

25 WHEREAS, despite these challenges and tragedies, healthcare workers
26 continue to bravely serve in the frontline against the COVID-19 epidemic, risk their
27 lives, and endure immense hardships to treat their patients and stem the contagion;

28
29 WHEREAS, millions of Filipinos owe a huge debt of gratitude to such
30 healthcare workers, given that their commitment to their profession is critical to the

³ <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/730031/doh-metro-manila-hospitals-congested-amid-covid-19-situation/story/>
⁴ <https://www.interakson.com/politics-issues/2020/03/24/164951/private-hospitals-in-the-metro-can-no-longer-admit-covid-19-patients/>
⁵ <https://cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/4/8/doctors-nurses-with-coronavirus.html?fbclid=IwAR3JCY7fscZVWqVClhxNtSJJ3PBjWTxHCEt111ZE0E-ppzZrKifvSusY>
⁶ <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/4/6/COVID-19-frontline-doctor-dies.html>

1 survival of the Republic of the Philippines amid the COVID-19 contagion. Their
2 material sacrifice should not go unrecognized or unawarded;

3 WHEREAS, Executive Order no. 236, s. 2003, otherwise known as the
4 Honors Code of the Philippines, provides the basis wherein the President, as head
5 of state of the Republic of the Philippines, may confer honors to “recognize
6 distinguished achievements or acknowledge the accomplishments and services of
7 patriotic citizens”;

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PHILIPPINE SENATE to
9 honor and commend the Filipino Healthcare Workers who bravely serve as
10 frontliners against the COVID-19 virus epidemic in the Philippines, and respectfully
11 urge that they each be awarded the appropriate distinctions in accordance with
12 Executive Order No. 236, s. 2003, otherwise known as the Honors Code of the
13 Philippines.

Adopted,



SONNY ANGARA
for