

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**  
First Regular Session



**Senate**  
Office of the Secretary

**SENATE**

**P. S. RES. NO 377**

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Introduced by **SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA**

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**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE/S OF THE SENATE TO  
STUDY AND RECOMMEND A SECTORAL APPROACH POLICY IN  
GRADUALLY LIFTING THE LOCKDOWN IN ORDER TO DAMPEN  
THE IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) TO THE  
ECONOMY WITHOUT INCREASING THE SPREAD OF INFECTION**

**WHEREAS**, as of April 25, 2020, the Philippines has recorded a total of 7,294 confirmed COVID-19 cases;<sup>1</sup> as of the same date, the country ranks third in the ASEAN region, following Singapore and Indonesia, in terms of total number of confirmed cases;

**WHEREAS**, to limit the spread of the virus, a total of 81 provinces, 122 cities and 1,448 municipalities have declared community quarantine, operating in total 2,021 quarantine control points as of April 24, 2020;<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS**, while the quarantine has been found to be effective in reducing the rate of transmission of COVID-19 or in "flattening the curve," it is expectedly associated with adverse effects on the supply and demand side of the economy, affecting an estimated 1.8 million workers, according to the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA);<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ncovtracker.doh.gov.ph (date last accessed: April 25, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> NDRRMC Situational Report No. 21 (April 21, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> Addressing the Social and Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic (Report as of March 19, 2020). NEDA. Available at [http://www.neda.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/NEDA\\_Addressing-the-Social-and-Economic-Impact-of-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf](http://www.neda.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/NEDA_Addressing-the-Social-and-Economic-Impact-of-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf) (date last accessed: April 26, 2020).

**WHEREAS**, NEDA further estimates that the decline in economic activity and the need to provide relief for affected sectors can increase the government budget deficit to 4.4 to 5.4 percent of GDP;<sup>4</sup>

**WHEREAS**, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) projects the Philippines' 2020 GDP growth to be at 2%, which is clearly lower than last year's 5.9% growth.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, NEDA admitted that a possible contraction of the economy cannot be ruled out;

**WHEREAS**, as of April 24, 2020, a total of 45,455 individuals and 1,094 public utility drivers/ operators were arrested for violating curfews and lockdown restrictions,<sup>6</sup> respectively, which signifies the need for affected citizens to look for food or ways to earn money, especially since government assistance are either lacking or too long in coming;

**WHEREAS**, as of April 26, 2020, it has been more than 160 days since the first detected case of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China;<sup>7</sup> it has been more than 80 days since the Philippines recorded its first case and since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared this outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. Unfortunately, to this date, no vaccine has been developed;

**WHEREAS**, efforts to restart the economy should not be contingent solely on the development of vaccines or treatments, given that such is expected to take 12 to 18 months. Instead, we must begin developing operational plans on gradual lifting of the lockdowns, keeping in mind the set of conditions recommended by the WHO;

**WHEREAS**, according to WHO, any government who wants to start lifting restrictions must meet the following conditions: (i) disease transmission is under control, (ii) health systems are able to "detect, test, isolate and treat every case and trace every contact," (iii) hot spot risks are minimized in vulnerable places, such as nursing homes, (iv) schools, workplaces, and other essential places have established preventive measures, (v) the risk of importing new cases can be managed, and (vi) communities are fully educated, engaged and empowered to live under a new normal;<sup>8</sup>

**WHEREAS**, to further reduce the potential economic losses brought about by shutting down of establishments, the Inter-Agency Task Force must consider the proposal from the University of the Philippines (UP) School of Economics, which is to

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<sup>4</sup> 2020, April 6. DOLE to need more funds in event of NEDA worst-case 1.8 million job losses. Business World. Available at [www.bworldonline.com/dole-to-need-more-funds-in-event-of-neda-worst-case-1-8-million-job-losses/](http://www.bworldonline.com/dole-to-need-more-funds-in-event-of-neda-worst-case-1-8-million-job-losses/) (date last accessed: April 26, 2020).

<sup>5</sup> 2020, April 3. Philippine GDP Growth to Slide in 2020 Due to COVID-19, Strong Rebound Seen in 2021 – ADB. Available at [www.adb.org/news/philippine-gdp-growth-slide-2020-due-covid-19-strong-rebound-seen-2021-adb](http://www.adb.org/news/philippine-gdp-growth-slide-2020-due-covid-19-strong-rebound-seen-2021-adb) (date last accessed: April 26, 2020).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> 2020, April 9. Intelligence report warned of coronavirus crisis as early as November: Sources. ABC News. Available at <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/intelligence-report-warned-coronavirus-crisis-early-november-sources/story?id=70031273> (date last accessed: April 26, 2020).

<sup>8</sup> 2020, April 15. WHO Sets 6 Conditions for Ending a Coronavirus Lockdown. Available at <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/04/15/834021103/who-sets-6-conditions-for-ending-a-coronavirus-lockdown> (date last accessed: April 26, 2020).

modify the lockdown to allow certain sectors to resume operations and to adopt a sectoral approach in doing so;<sup>9</sup>

**WHEREAS**, in addition to the geographical approach (i.e. management of in-city or in-barangay movements), the government must consider adopting a sectoral approach in gradually lifting the lockdown, which requires determining (i) the sectors' risk of contributing to the spread of the virus (e.g. movement and interaction of workers in their ordinary course of business) and (ii) the urgency of their role in rebooting the economy;

**WHEREAS**, sectors with low risk of spreading the virus such as subsistence agricultural workers, workers in food and agricultural production, banking, finance institutions, and telecommunications, may be allowed to resume their operations, provided measures such as social distancing and monitoring are put in place; meanwhile, high value sectors such as logistics, transportation, and construction, which have high risk of spreading the virus, may be considered for reopening as long as movement is strictly monitored, social distancing and wearing of mask are strictly enforced. In addition, for this sector, regular sample-based random COVID-19 testing must be systematically done in order to control further transmission and to slowly shift to a gradual lifting of the lockdown;

**WHEREAS**, sectors such as schools and educational institutions, and theaters and resorts, which are points of entry for mass gatherings and play less urgent role in rebooting the economy, may be reopened at a later date, with the government undertaking efforts to improve online modes of learning;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE**, urging the appropriate committee/s of the Senate to study and recommend a sectoral approach policy in gradually lifting the lockdown in order to dampen the impact of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) to the economy without increasing the spread of infection.

Adopted,

  
**SENATOR JOEL VILLANUEVA**

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<sup>9</sup> A Sectoral View of Lifting the Lockdown and the Use of Sample-based Random Testing (Solon, et al) April 2020.