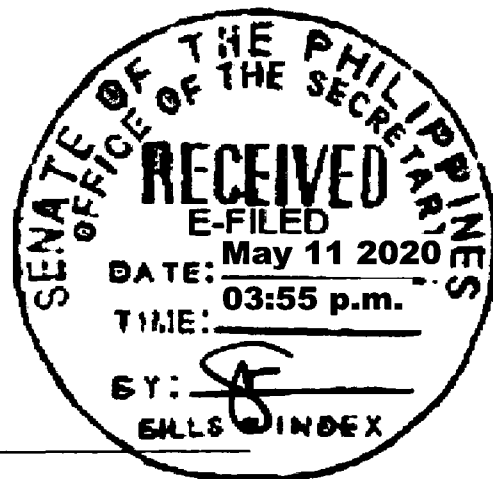


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

SENATE

P. S. Res. No. 400



Introduced by Senator MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON LABOR, EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT, AND CIVIL SERVICE, GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, WITH THE INTENT OF DETERMINING THE COMPLIANCE OF EMPLOYERS WITH REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11058, OR "AN ACT STRENGTHENING COMPLIANCE WITH OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF" AND OTHER OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH MEASURES IMPLEMENTED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THESE STANDARDS AND MEASURES IN RESPONDING TO RISKS AND HAZARDS OF THE PANDEMIC

WHEREAS, the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic has put the global economy to almost a standstill with countries implementing lockdowns and quarantine orders;

WHEREAS, on March 8, 2020, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte declared a State of Public Health Emergency throughout the Philippines due to COVID-19¹. Subsequently, on March 16, 2020, Proclamation No. 929 was likewise issued, declaring a State of Calamity throughout the Philippines due to Coronavirus Disease 2019 and placing the entire Luzon under Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ)². Other provinces and cities had likewise imposed similar lockdown/quarantine orders in their respective territorial jurisdictions;

¹ Proclamation No. 922, s. 2020,

<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/02feb/20200308-PROC-922-RRD-1.pdf>

² <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/03mar/20200316-PROC-929-RRD.pdf>

WHEREAS, while most industries or businesses are closed, essential services, both in the public and private sector, such as key government offices, hospitals, pharmacies, financial institutions (banks and money transfer firms), markets, groceries and convenience stores, food preparation and delivery services and public utilities, among others, remain open and operational;

WHEREAS, the frontline workers and employees of these essential services reported to work and heroically faced the risk of contracting the disease, albeit adjustments, like putting on face masks and personal protective equipment (PPE), strict physical distancing, among others, were put in place for their own health and safety;

WHEREAS, Section 25 of Republic Act No. 11058 or “An Act Strengthening Compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Standards and Providing Penalties for Violations thereof” provides for the standards setting power of the Secretary of Labor and Employment in relation to mandatory Occupational Safety and Health standards to “eliminate or reduce occupational safety and health hazards depending on the number of employees of the establishment, the nature of its business operations, and the risk or hazard involved”;

WHEREAS, with this new hazard and risk of COVID-19, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) issued the Interim Guidelines on Workplace Prevention and Control of COVID-19³. On the part of the public sector, the Civil Service Commission (CSC), DOLE, and Department of Health (DOH) recently issued Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1, s. 2020 which contained the Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health Standards for the Public Sector⁴. However, these guidelines do not include specific measures to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic;

³ <https://www.dole.gov.ph/news/dti-and-dole-interim-guidelines-on-workplace-prevention-and-control-of-covid-19/>

⁴ http://www.csc.gov.ph/phocadownload/userupload/paio_guevarra/JMC%20on%20OSH%20for%20PS%202020.pdf

WHEREAS, there is a need for the government, specifically the DOLE for private sector employees, and the CSC for government employees, to strictly enforce and monitor the compliance of these essential businesses/services to the standards and policies imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, along with other existing Occupational Health and Safety Standards;

WHEREAS, there is a need for the evaluation of the effectiveness of these COVID-19-related Occupational Safety and Health standards and their applicability to the so-called "new normal" when quarantines are eased and businesses and companies re-open and resume their operations;

WHEREAS, it is therefore necessary for the DOLE to give updates and reports on (1) the degree of compliance of firms and businesses to Republic Act No. 11058 and other public health measures implemented in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, and (2) the effectiveness of these Occupational Safety and Health measures in responding to risks and hazards of the pandemic;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Senate Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, with the intent of determining the compliance of employers with Republic Act No. 11058, or "An Act Strengthening Compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Standards and Providing Penalties for Violations thereof" and other Occupational Safety and Health measures implemented in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the effectiveness of these standards and measures in responding to risks and hazards of the pandemic.

Adopted,


MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID