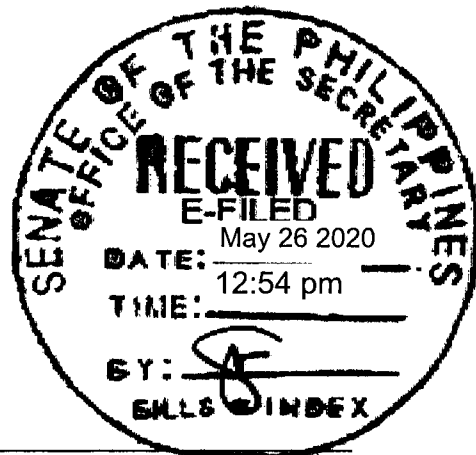


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

SENATE
P. S. Res No. 421



Introduced by Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE COUNTRY'S PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE AGAINST COMMON DISEASES DURING RAINY SEASON AS THE COUNTRY CONTINUES TO CONTAIN THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

1 WHEREAS, as of May 24, 2020, the Philippines has recorded a total of 14,035
2 Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases with 9,918 active cases, 868 deaths and 3,249
3 recoveries¹;

4
5 WHEREAS, after the entirety of Luzon has been placed under Enhanced
6 Community Quarantine (ECQ) last March 16, 2020, parts of the country has started
7 transitioning from ECQ to a Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine or General
8 Community Quarantine as of May 15, 2020. Quarantine restrictions are lifted to gradually
9 open economic activities;

10
11 WHEREAS, in a Post-ECQ Report dated May 20, 2020, experts from the University
12 of the Philippines concluded that: (1) the transmission of the virus in the country is not
13 yet controlled, (2) the country is still in the early part of managing the COVID-19 crisis
14 and (3) the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing and continues to be a clear and present
15 danger to all²;

16
17 WHEREAS, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical
18 Services Administration or PAGASA, rainy season in the Philippines is from June to
19 November³;

¹ Department of Health, COVID-19 Tracker, GOVPH (May 24, 2020), <https://www.doh.gov.ph/covid19tracker>.

² Guido David, Ph.D, Ranjit Singh Rye, MPA, Ma Patricia Agbulos, MBM, COVID-19 FORECASTS IN THE PHILIPPINES: Post-ECQ Report, University of the Philippines (May 20, 2020), <https://www.up.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/UP-OCTA-Forecast-Report-No-7-May-20-2020.pdf>.

³ PAGASA, Climate of the Philippines, GOVPH (last accessed May 25, 2020), <http://bagong.pagasa.dost.gov.ph/information/climate-philippines>.

1 WHEREAS, according to the Department of Health, common diseases during the
2 rainy season include diarrhea, water-borne diseases such as typhoid fever, cholera,
3 leptospirosis, and vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue⁴;

4
5 WHEREAS, it was reported that as the rainy season approaches, doctors fear the
6 surge in seasonal diseases could overwhelm the country's weak health care system, which
7 is already struggling to cope during the COVID-19 pandemic⁵;

8
9 WHEREAS, apart from concerns about the capacity of health centers to treat
10 patients, many of the seasonal illnesses, such as dengue, flu and measles exhibit similar
11 symptoms as COVID-19 in the beginning stages. These symptoms include fever, cough
12 and sore throat, among others. Doctors are worried that patients afflicted with these
13 seasonal diseases may be mistaken as COVID-19 patients and will trigger an avalanche
14 of testing which may become expensive for the ordinary people⁶;

15
16 WHEREAS, according to the Department of Finance (DOF), the onset of the wet
17 season coinciding with the gradual reopening of the economy from quarantine may make
18 it more difficult to fight COVID-19⁷;

19
20 WHEREAS, DOF Undersecretary Gil. S. Beltran stated that, as the rainy season
21 approaches, the battle against the virus will become more challenging. The flu season
22 will have started and flooding could occur in low-lying areas. Distancing in temporary
23 relocation sites could be difficult to implement⁸;

24
25 WHEREAS, as the COVID -19 pandemic remains a threat to the health of Filipinos
26 and the country's economic activities, there is an urgent necessity to determine the
27 country's preparedness and response against common diseases during rainy season as
28 the country continues to contain the spread of COVID-19;

29
30 WHEREAS, there is a need for the government to come up with strategies and
31 measures which will enable the country to cope with the additional challenges posed by
32 the rainy season;

⁴ Department of Health, Prepare for the Rainy Season - DOH, Department of Health (June 07, 2019), <https://www.doh.gov.ph/node/17435>.

⁵ Raissa Robles, Coronavirus: Philippines braces for 'perfect storm' as rainy season brings dengue, flu, measles, South China Morning Post (May 24, 2020), <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/health-environment/article/3085707/coronavirus-philippines-braces-perfect-storm-rainy>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ben O. de Vera, DOF: Rainy season to make fight vs. COVID-19 'more challenging', Philippine Daily Inquirer (May 15, 2020), <https://business.inquirer.net/297349/dof-rainy-season-to-make-fight-vs-covid-19-more-challenging>.

⁸ Ibid.

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Senate directs the appropriate
2 Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the country's
3 preparedness and response against common diseases during rainy season as the country
4 continues to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Adopted,



MARIA LOURDES NANCY S. BINAY