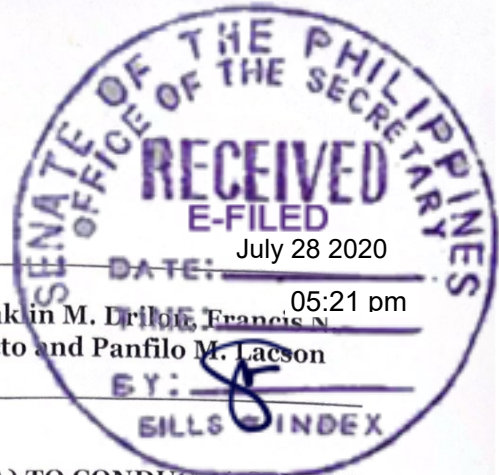


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

SENATE
P.S.R. No. **479**

Introduced by **Senators Risa Hontiveros, Franklin M. Drilon, Francis N. Pangilinan, Leila M. De Lima, Ralph G. Recto and Panfilo M. Lacson**



RESOLUTION

URGING THE COMMISSION ON AUDIT (COA) TO CONDUCT A SPECIAL AUDIT ON COVID 19-RELATED GOVERNMENT SPENDING, LOANS AND DONATIONS, AND TO RELEASE ITS FINDINGS BEFORE THE PHILIPPINE CONGRESS BEGINS ITS DELIBERATIONS ON THE 2021 NATIONAL BUDGET

WHEREAS, R.A. No. 11469 or the “Bayanihan To Heal As One Act” allowed government to undertake the procurement of commodities, facilities, utilities and services deemed necessary for COVID-19 response (including personal protective equipment [PPE], laboratory equipment and its reagents, medical supplies, etc.) in the most expeditious manner and exempted these expenditures from the requirements of bidding as laid out in R.A. No. 9184 or the “Government Procurement Reform Act”;

WHEREAS, various procurements made in relation to COVID-19 have been marred by allegations of overpricing, such as the purchase of automated nucleic acid extractors for P4 million against P1.75 million purchased by the private sector¹, the purchase of PPE sets for P1800 when the market price ranges from P400-1000², and the importation of more expensive RT-PCR test kits from China and Korea while cheaper Philippine-made ones are gathering dust in laboratories³;

WHEREAS, allegations of overpricing of the PPE – purchased by the Procurement Services of the Department of Budget and Management (PS-DBM) and by the the Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC) are particularly egregious, considering that many health workers and frontliners have fallen ill from the lack of adequate protective gear;

WHEREAS, according to the World Health Organization, the Philippines has already received PhP6.5 billion in donations for its COVID response, not including loans and grants from various entities and organizations⁴;

¹ <https://rappler.com/nation/lacson-asks-doh-why-buy-pricier-equipment-coronavirus-testing>

² <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1103229>

³ <https://rappler.com/nation/senators-urge-duterte-administration-to-use-university-philippines-test-kits>

⁴ <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1288898/ph-has-received-p6-5-billion-worth-of-donations-for-fight-against-covid-19-who>

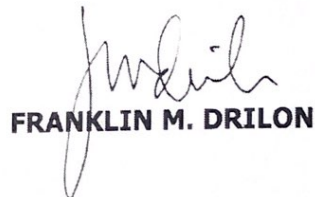
WHEREAS, the World Bank has found that pandemics not only deplete resources from government and lead to economic recession, government responses to them also create pathways for corruption as “emergency laws give government greater power with relaxed accountability⁵”;


WHEREAS, Congress is set to deliberate on the 2021 budget and, anticipating that massive allocations will need to be made to address the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19, it is of critical importance that there be audit findings to guide legislators in their exercise of the power of the purse;

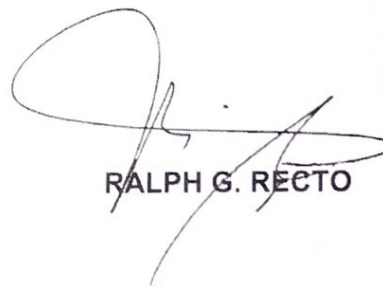
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Philippines to urge the Commission on Audit (COA) to conduct a special audit on Covid 19-related government spending, loans and donations, and to release its findings before the Philippine Congress begins its deliberations on the 2021 national budget.

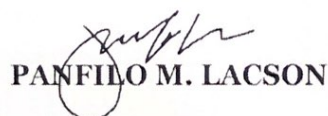
Adopted,


RISA HONTIVEROS


FRANKLIN M. DRILON


FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN


RALPH G. RECTO


PANFILO M. LACSON

⁵ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/governance/what-does-coronavirus-pandemic-mean-supreme-audit-institutions>

FOR THE RESOLUTION URGING THE COMMISSION ON AUDIT (COA) TO
CONDUCT A SPECIAL AUDIT ON COVID-19 RELATED GOVERNMENT
SPENDING

Leila M. de Lima
LEILA M. DE LIMA