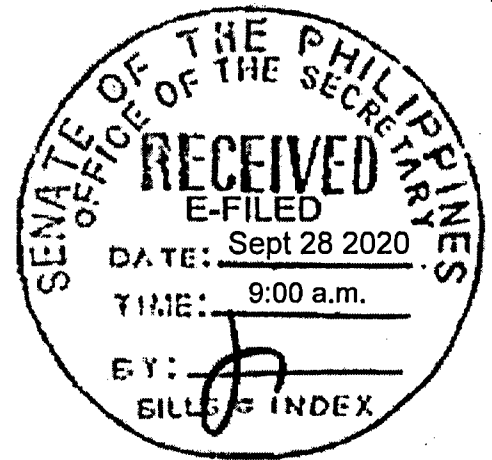


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 528

Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE TO LOOK INTO THE FINANCIAL REQUIREMENT IN ESTABLISHING PUBLIC MEDICAL SCHOOLS IN EVERY REGION OF THE PHILIPPINES

1 WHEREAS, the current coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic is stretching
2 the already under capacitated, undermanned, and underappreciated healthcare
3 system of the country with no immediate end in sight as the number of confirmed
4 cases continue to rise and with a vaccine yet to be developed;

5 WHEREAS, Filipino healthcare workers (HCWs) are deemed the most vulnerable
6 not only from exposure to the disease but also to mental and emotional stress and
7 other non-COVID-19 related health issues or problems brought about by the physical
8 toll of manning the front lines. This resulted in the Department of Health (DOH)
9 ordering an Emergency Hiring of Human Resources for Health (HRH) which, as of 21
10 September 2020, has brought in a total of 8,427 medical professionals to augment the
11 capacities of various health care institutions (HCIs);

12 WHEREAS, according to the data from the Health Human Resource
13 Development Bureau (HHRDB) of DOH, a total of 860,000 medical professionals are
14 registered in the country; however, the same bureau noted that the total number of
15 healthcare workers actually serving in either public or private institutions is only
16 around 189,000;

17 WHEREAS, this could be a considerable factor as to why the Philippines has not
18 met the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation of 10 doctors per 10,000
19 population as, according to a study by the University of the Philippines (UP), there are
20 only 3.7 doctors per 10,000 population in the Philippines. When broken down per

21 region, only the National Capital Region (NCR) has achieved the desired ratio at 13.5
22 doctors per 10,000 population while Region IV-B (MIMAROPA) only has 1;

23 WHEREAS, DOH data puts it close to the findings of the UP study at 3.4 per
24 10,000 population; however, the department noted that – based on Professional
25 Regulation Commission (PRC) February 2020 data – the ratio of licensed physicians
26 per 10,000 population is at 7 which could mean that not all licensed medical doctors
27 are currently practicing in the Philippine health sector;

28 WHEREAS, in comparison to the rest of the ASEAN states, WHO data shows
29 that, per 10,000 population, Brunei Darussalam has 16.09; Cambodia has 1.93;
30 Indonesia has 4.27; Laos has 3.73; Malaysia has 15.36; Myanmar has 6.77; Singapore
31 has 22.94; Thailand has 8.05; and Vietnam has 8.28;

32 WHEREAS, the current crisis underscores the need for the country to prioritize
33 producing more competent medical doctors and professionals to respond to future
34 public health emergencies – a call which, based on the existing setup, will be
35 challenging as out of 115 state universities and colleges (SUCs), only nine (9) are
36 offering a medical degree and only forty-five (45) are offering a nursing degree;

37 WHEREAS, the nine (9) SUCs namely: University of Northern Philippines,
38 Mariano Marcos State University, Cagayan State University, Bicol University, West
39 Visayas State University, University of the Philippines – Leyte, Mindanao State
40 University – Marawi, Mindanao State University – General Santos, and University of
41 the Philippines – Manila are situated in only eight (8) regions out of seventeen (17)
42 which poses a major hindrance to the Filipino youth, not situated in those regions,
43 who may want to enroll in SUCs and pursue a medical degree;

44 WHEREAS, during the Senate Committee on Finance hearing on the proposed
45 2021 budget for the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the SUCs, the
46 Commission presented several potential SUCs that could offer a medical degree
47 program – Benguet State University (CAR), Nueva Ecija University of Science and
48 Technology (Region 3), Bataan Peninsula State University (Region 3), Cavite State
49 University (Region 4-A), Palawan State University (Region 4-B), Cebu Normal
50 University (Region 7), Western Mindanao State University (Region 9), Mindanao State
51 University – Iligan Institute of Technology (Region 10), and University of Southeastern
52 Philippines (Region 11);

53 WHEREAS, moving forward, this present pandemic should be an opportunity to
54 boost the country's capacity not only in upgrading existing health facilities but also in
55 producing more medical professionals; hence, the need to determine: 1) whether
56 SUCs in regions without a public medical degree program should be introducing this
57 in their respective curricula, and 2) the additional financial requirements to fund the
58 needed personnel, facilities and infrastructure;

59 WHEREAS, SUCs – as they are funded by the national government and are
60 deemed the most accessible higher educational institution to the general public –
61 should take up the cudgels of ensuring that their own regions would have enough
62 medical manpower to be ready for existing and emerging health services needs of the
63 country;

64 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, for the Senate of the Philippines to direct
65 the Senate Committee on Finance to look into the financial requirement in establishing
66 public medical schools in every region in the Philippines.

Adopted,



SONNY ANGARA