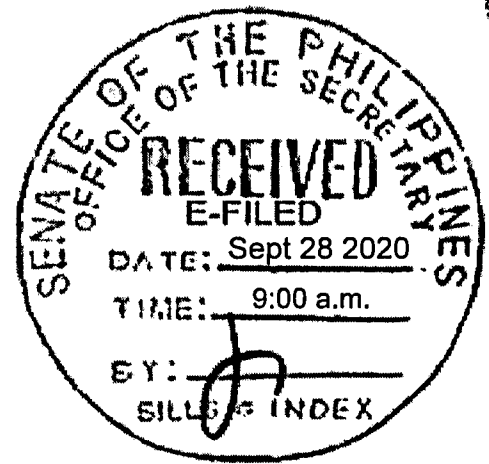


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Second Regular Session )



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 529

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Introduced by Senator SONNY ANGARA

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE TO LOOK INTO THE FINANCIAL REQUIREMENT IN ACHIEVING THE DESIRED RATIO OF HEALTHCARE WORKERS TO THE GENERAL POPULATION WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ENSURING THAT ALL PRACTICING HEALTHCARE WORKERS IN THE COUNTRY WILL BE EMPLOYED, UTILIZED AND COMPENSATED COMPETITIVELY**

1 WHEREAS, along with the rest of the world, the Philippines continues to grapple  
2 with the COVID-19 pandemic with the number of confirmed cases already breaking  
3 the 200,000 threshold and the number of deaths already over 3,500 since President  
4 Rodrigo Roa Duterte declared a State of Public Health Emergency throughout the  
5 Philippines on 8 March 2020;

6 WHEREAS, our healthcare workers continue to bear the brunt of this health  
7 crisis resulting to around 7,000 of our medical professionals contracting COVID-19 –  
8 with 40 of them unfortunately succumbing to the disease. Recently, over 80 medical  
9 societies have issued their strong position stressing that the country's healthcare  
10 system has been overwhelmed<sup>1</sup> which led to the President imposing the Modified  
11 Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ) in the National Capital Region (NCR) and  
12 other parts of the country;

13 WHEREAS, to address the shortage of healthcare workers responding to the  
14 threat of COVID-19, the Department of Health (DOH) implemented emergency hiring  
15 for Human Resources for Health (HRH) which includes physicians, nurses, medical  
16 technologists, radiologic technologists, medical officers, etc. As of 21 September 2020

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<sup>1</sup> Tomacruz, Sofia, "Doctors warn Duterte: PH 'nearing the end of the line' in coronavirus battle." *Rappler*, 2 August 2020. <https://rappler.com/newsbreak/in-depth/doctors-warn-duterte-ph-nearing-end-of-the-line-coronavirus-battle>

1 data, DOH was able to hire 8,427 healthcare workers – with bulk of the augmentation  
2 assigned in the NCR where the disease hit the hardest;

3 WHEREAS, on 2 April 2020, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration  
4 (POEA) also issued Governing Board Resolution No. 09-2020 imposing a temporary  
5 suspension in the deployment of identified healthcare workers citing the need “to  
6 prioritize the human resource allocation for the national healthcare system at the time  
7 of the national state of emergency”;

8 WHEREAS, this resolution was met with strong opposition from healthcare  
9 workers – particularly nurses with employment obligations overseas – which resulted  
10 in the relaxation of the temporary suspension to allow healthcare workers with existing  
11 contracts and Overseas Employment Certificates (OEC) as of 8 March 2020 to leave<sup>2</sup>;

12 WHEREAS, the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging  
13 Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), in light of the temporary suspension of deployment of  
14 healthcare workers, urged DOH and other government hospitals to “hire these medical  
15 and allied health workers to supplement their current workforce”<sup>3</sup>;

16 WHEREAS, despite the call from the IATF-EID, DOH Secretary Francisco Duque  
17 III reported that the department only received 25 applications from thousands of  
18 healthcare workers seeking employment abroad which led to Duque appealing to their  
19 “sense of nationalism” and “sense of patriotism”<sup>4</sup>;

20 WHEREAS, this poor number of applications can be interpreted as a cautious  
21 approach of our healthcare workers as they have experienced years of being meagerly  
22 paid, overworked, and unnoticed even by their own government – especially with the  
23 ongoing health crisis, many of them are expecting to be overly stretched once hired.  
24 In addition, healthcare workers who have found gainful employment abroad have  
25 already realized the true value of their service and experience;

26 WHEREAS, even with the compensation and other incentives for healthcare  
27 workers during the pandemic, the government should address the root of this long-  
28 standing problem of our healthcare workers being underappreciated here in the  
29 country by determining how the thousands of healthcare workers in the country can

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<sup>2</sup> Tomacruz, Sofia, “Health workers with contracts, employment certificates as of March 8 can leave PH.” *Rappler*, 14 April 2020. <https://rappler.com/nation/health-workers-contracts-march-8-2020-allowed-leave-philippines>

<sup>3</sup> “Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases Resolution No. 62.” *Official Gazette*, 17 August 2020. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/07jul/20200817-IATF-RESOLUTION-NO-64.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Yee, Jovic, “Only 25 grabbed DOH job offer to health workers.” *Inquirer.net*, 22 August 2020. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1325450/only-25-grabbed-doh-job-offer-to-health-workers>

1 be utilized and employed with competitive compensation in order to provide them with  
2 an option to stay in the country and help bring the much-needed improvement in our  
3 healthcare system;

4 WHEREAS, according to the data from the Health Human Resource  
5 Development Bureau of DOH, there are around 860,000 registered medical  
6 professionals in the country; however, the total number of healthcare workers in the  
7 country both in private and public institutions is only at 189,204 – not even half of the  
8 total registered which could mean that over 600,000 could be non-practicing medical  
9 professionals or could have found jobs abroad;

10 WHEREAS, as we further improve our healthcare system especially with the  
11 soon-to-be fully implemented Universal Health Care Law, there is an urgent need for  
12 us to utilize what many consider to be one of our best resource – our healthcare  
13 workers; hence, it is only vital that the government examine how we can fully utilize  
14 and appreciate their value to the country by first determining the needed cost to  
15 provide a competitive compensation to these healthcare workers in the long run. This  
16 could finally address the desired ratio of healthcare workers to the general population;

17 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, for the Senate of the Philippines to direct  
18 the Senate Committee on Finance to look into the financial requirement in achieving  
19 the desired ratio of healthcare workers to the general population with the end in view  
20 of ensuring that all practicing healthcare workers in the country will be employed,  
21 utilized and compensated competitively.

*Adopted,*



**SONNY ANGARA**