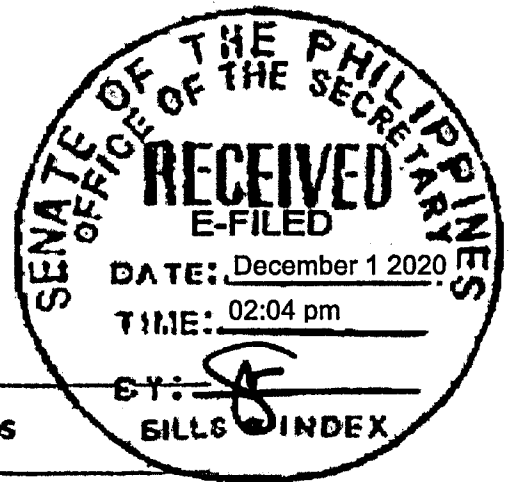


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

SENATE

P.S.R. No. 584



Introduced by SENATOR RISA MONTVEROS

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PROCEDURAL OR INSTITUTIONAL BOTTLENECKS THAT PREVENTED THE TIMELY RELEASE OF THE COVID-19 HAZARD PAY AND SPECIAL RISK ALLOWANCE RIGHTLY DESERVED BY THE COUNTRY'S VALIANT FRONT LINERS IN ORDER TO PREVENT FURTHER PROBLEMS IN THE RELEASE OF THEIR WELL-DESERVED COMPENSATION AND TO AVOID MAKING THE SAME MISTAKES IN THE FUTURE

WHEREAS, as of 9 August 2020, 5,551 health workers have contracted COVID-19 in the line of duty, where 4,902 of our health front liners recovered and 39 of lost their lives while saving others¹;

WHEREAS, one of our medical front liners who bravely reported to work despite the unsafe workplace, longer hours, and constant danger was Theresa Cruz, whose death exposed the harsh reality of working and dying as a medical front liner;

WHEREAS, the compensation of Theresa Cruz that was expected by her family differed greatly from the amount that her daughter received, from an estimated 30,000 worth of hazard pay to a paltry 7,000²;

WHEREAS, it was revealed that the expected 500 per day hazard pay of Theresa Cruz was actually worth 64 per day after all deductions were made³, which is miniscule compared to the hazards that her work exposed her to;

WHEREAS, Secretary Roque, in response to Theresa Cruz' death, promised that "sisiguraduhin natin na ang ganitong delay ay hindi mangyayari"⁴ and emphasizing that all medical front liners will receive their hazard pay and other benefits on time⁵;

WHEREAS, as recent as 20 November 2020, UP Philippine General Hospital's (UP PGH) workers and front liners have denounced the glacial pace of the release of their long-awaited COVID-19 benefits⁶, which includes a 500/day hazard pay for all health workers and a one-time Special Risk Allowance that were mandated by Malacañang's Administrative Order (AO) 26 and 28 respectively;

WHEREAS, a few days before the UP PGH's denouncement, AO 35 was issued and laid out the guidelines for the release of a monthly active hazard duty pay of up to 3,000 for frontline workers⁷ that is in addition to any existing hazard pay and/or allowance, hazard duty pay, special risk allowance or any similar benefits;

¹ <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/8/13/health-worker-benefits-nurse-COVID-19-death.html>

² <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1321435/nurse-who-died-of-covid-19-gets-p7000-hazard-pay-not-p30000-daughter>

³ <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/in-depth/cabita-nurse-wrote-theresa-cruz-died-covid-19-before-getting-hazard-pay>

⁴ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1112199>

⁵ <https://rtr.com.ph/2020/11/20/uph-health-workers-demand-release-of-hazard-pay-allowance/>

⁶ <https://www.cnn.ph/news/2020/11/16/covid-health-workers-additional-benefits.html>

WHEREAS, in October, the DOH has sought the approval of the Office of the President for a 20.58 billion budget for health-related responses which include Special Risk Allowance and Actual Hazard Duty Pay, among others¹;

WHEREAS, there's still an estimated 16,764² medical front liners who are yet to receive their hazard pay as promised to them under the expired Bayanihan to Heal as One Act;


WHEREAS, the Department of Health's (DOH) lack of funds was presented as an excuse for the unpaid hazard pay, which was estimated to be at 108.2 million³;

WHEREAS, Dir. Legaspi of UP-PGH responded to the hospital's workers, reporting that the hospital's efforts to talk with the Department of Budget and Management to determine the source of funds for the hazard pay's release led to an unsatisfactory and unconscionable conclusion: the DBM cannot favorably act on the requested SRA and hazard pay of UP PGH;

WHEREAS, the fund needed to properly compensate the UP PGH front liners is approximately 49 million⁴, a small price to pay for the service they continue to give the country and for tirelessly and unwaveringly holding the line for the rest of us;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Senate direct the appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the procedural or institutional bottlenecks that prevented the timely release of the COVID-19 Hazard Pay and Special Risk Allowance rightly deserved by the country's valiant front liners in order to prevent further problems in the release of their well-deserved compensation and to avoid making the same mistakes in the future.

Adopted,


RISA MONTIVEROS
Senator

¹ <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/index.php/secretary-s-corner/press-releases/list-of-press-releases/1743-statement-of-the-department-of-budget-and-management-dbm-on-the-release-of-funds-under-the-bayanihan-to-recover-as-one-act>

² <https://www.cnn.ph/news/2020/11/19/DOH-hazard-pay-special-risk-allowance-COVID-19.html>

³ *IBID*

⁴ <https://mb.com.ph/2020/11/25/led-funds-for-hazard-pay-benefits-of-pgh-health-workers-rector/>