

SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 597

REC

Introduced by SENATOR PIA S. CAYETANO

RESOLUTION

URGING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STATUS OF THE COUNTRY'S PROCUREMENT OF COVID-19 VACCINES AND THE NECESSARY MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR INOCULATION OF THE DESIRED NUMBER OF THE POPULATION WHILE ENSURING THAT OTHER HEALTH PROTOCOLS NECESSARY TO DEAL WITH COVID-19, INCLUDING TESTING, QUARANTINE, CONDUCT OF CLINICAL TRIALS, AND THE USE OF MEDICATIONS CONTINUE TO BE IMPROVED

WHEREAS, the widespread and severity of the COVID-19 virus has brought a sense of urgency to develop a vaccine to inoculate the world's population, in fact different manufacturers and developers are conducting clinical trials and releasing data on the efficacy of their vaccines with unprecedented progress;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 vaccines are being tested and rolled out in record time around the world with reports showing that the United Kingdom has vaccinated its first patient just this December,¹ while China has been vaccinating since early November;²

WHEREAS, while there are still other vaccines undergoing trials, other nations have already secured enough vaccines, by the end of 2021, for nearly three times their current population;³

WHEREAS, the United States closed a deal with Pfizer as early as July for one hundred (100) million vials,⁴ and has recently bought another one hundred (100)

¹ Kottasova, I. (2020, December 8). First Britons receive Covid-19 vaccine, a landmark moment in the pandemic. Retrieved from <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/12/08/europe/uk-pfizer-biontech-covid-vaccination-intl/index.html>

² Feng, E. & Ruwitch, J. (2020, November 12). China Is Inoculating Thousands with Unapproved COVID-19 Vaccines. Why? Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/11/12/933956247/china-is-inoculating-thousands-with-unapproved-covid-19-vaccines-why>

³ Picheta, R. (2020, December 9). Rich countries are hoarding Covid-19 vaccines and leaving the developing world behind, People's Vaccine Alliance warns. Retrieved from <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/12/09/europe/covid-vaccine-inequality-developing-world-intl-scli/index.html>

⁴ Pfizer. (2020, July 22). Pfizer and BioNTech Announce an Agreement with U.S. Government for Up to 600 Million Doses of mRNA-Based Vaccine Candidate Against SARS-COV-2. Retrieved from

million from Moderna,⁵ while Canada, with the population of thirty-eight (38) million, has agreed to buy up to seventy-six (76) million doses from Pfizer, and four hundred fourteen (414) million from other vaccine manufacturers;⁶

WHEREAS, vaccines are available at various prices ranging from Six Hundred Ten Pesos (Php 610.00) to Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Forty-Five Pesos (Php 8,845.00) for two (2) doses per person,⁷ with different requirements for storage, transportation, and inoculation due to diverse temperature requirements;

WHEREAS, vaccines come with varying storage temperature requirements: some require special storage equipment and transportation that maintain an ultra-low temperature of between negative 70 degrees Celsius to negative 80 degrees Celsius, others can be kept at negative 20 degrees Celsius, and a few can be stored at 2 to 8 degrees Celsius;⁸

WHEREAS, due to the varying temperature requirements and sensitivities of the vaccines, the temperature of the cold storage and proper handling of the vaccines must be assured at all times in order to ensure efficacy and potency;

WHEREAS, the IATF has just approved the Philippine National COVID-19 Vaccination Roadmap and Implementation Plan⁹ last 5 November 2020;¹⁰

WHEREAS, as of 27 November 2020, the Philippines, through the private sector, secured its first supply deal of 2.6 million vials from vaccine developer AstraZeneca;¹¹

WHEREAS, according to the chief of National Task Force Against COVID-19, the government could secure advance procurement of COVID-19 vaccines by the end of next year and get thirty (30) to fifty (50) million doses once vaccines are rolled

<https://www.pfizer.com/news/press-release/press-release-detail/pfizer-and-biontech-announce-agreement-us-government-600>

⁵ Aljazeera. (2020, December 12). US to buy 100m more doses of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/12/12/us-to-buy-100m-more-doses-of-moderna-vaccine-as-rollout-planned>

⁶ Austen, I. (2020, December 9). Canada Approves Vaccine and Could Start Shots Next Week. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/world/americas/canada-vaccine-approve.html>

⁷ Data from the Department of Health as of 6PM, 18 November 2020

⁸ Data from the Department of Health as of 6PM, 18 November 2020

⁹ Tiburcio, N. (2020, November 6). IATF approves the Philippine National Vaccination Program and Implementation Plan. Retrieved from <https://www.ptvnews.ph/iatf-approves-the-philippine-national-vaccination-program-and-implementation-plan/>

¹⁰ Official Gazette. (2020, November 5). Interagency Task Force for the Management of Infectious Diseases Resolution No. 83 Series of 2020. Retrieved from

<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2020/11nov/20201105-IATF%20Resolution-No.-83.pdf>

¹¹ Channel News Asia. (2020, November 27). Philippines secures 2.6 million doses of AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine. Retrieved from channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/philippines-covid-19-astrazeneca-vaccine-2-6-million-doses-13651706

out,¹² which would cover only fourteen percent (14%) to twenty-three percent (23%) of the population, despite the World Health Organization pronouncement that sixty percent (60%) to seventy percent (70%) of the population need to acquire immunity to break the chain of transmission;¹³

WHEREAS, in addition to the budget allocation for the procurement of vaccines, allocations for other components of the vaccination process, such as storage, training of vaccinators, transportation, waste disposal, health promotion, surveillance, as well as costs for medical supplies like syringes and needles, and other costs for the roll out of the vaccination program must also be carefully taken into consideration;

WHEREAS, countries like the United States have allotted One Hundred million dollars (USD 100,000,000.00) just for needles and syringes for their mass vaccination campaign,¹⁴ while organizations, such as UNICEF, have also started stockpiling for half a billion syringes;¹⁵

WHEREAS, in fact, Terumo Corporation, a medical device manufacturer located in the Philippines, has the capability of manufacturing needles, but there are reports that they are already committed to sell and already secured contracts for the production of needles for Japan;

WHEREAS, it is critical to monitor the status of the procurement of COVID-19 vaccines and medical supplies, as well as the implementation of a national COVID-19 vaccination program;

WHEREAS, it is of paramount importance to set targets on when and how we will realistically be able to inoculate the sixty percent (60%) to seventy percent (70%) of our population, which is around sixty-five (65) to seventy-six (76) million Filipinos, in accordance with the aforementioned World Health Organization recommendation for herd immunity, in order to break the chain of transmission;¹⁶

WHEREAS, vaccine awareness is likewise crucial in effectively implementing a national COVID-19 vaccination program, given the Philippines' persistently low immunization coverage rate, which is mainly due to vaccination hesitancy, and the

¹² Presidential Operations Communications Office. (2020, November 18). Retrieved from https://pcoo.gov.ph/news_releases/govt-may-secure-advance-procurement-for-covid-19-vaccine-by-year-end/

¹³ World Health Organization. (2020, August 29). Episode #1 - Herd immunity. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/media-resources/science-in-5/episode-1>

¹⁴ Brewster, T. (2020, May 4). US Preps For 'COVID-19 Mass Vaccination' With \$110 Million Spent On Needles And Syringes. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/thomasbrewster/2020/05/04/us-preps-for-covid-19-mass-vaccination-with-110-million-on-needles-and-syringes/?sh=ad6e45226266>

¹⁵ Peters, A. (2020, October 19). UNICEF is stockpiling half a billion syringes to get ready for a COVID-19 vaccine. Retrieved from <https://www.fastcompany.com/90565526/unicef-is-stockpiling-half-a-billion-syringes-to-get-ready-for-a-covid-19-vaccine>

¹⁶ World Health Organization. (2020, August 29). Episode #1 - Herd immunity. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/media-resources/science-in-5/episode-1>

Dengvaxia controversy in 2018;¹⁷

WHEREAS, even in the United States, there is much concern about rolling out the vaccine efficiently as it is not only an issue of coordination between the government, healthcare professionals, and healthcare systems but also the involvement of local clinics and the general population because a single misstep may lead to the disruption of the entire system;¹⁸

WHEREAS, there is a need to review and examine our existing policies and programs to expedite the purchase of vaccines and the necessary medical supplies to inoculate the desired number of the population while ensuring that other health protocols necessary to deal with COVID-19 continue to be improved and implemented;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, to urge the appropriate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the status of the country's procurement of COVID-19 vaccines and the necessary medical supplies for inoculation of the desired number of the population while ensuring that other health protocols necessary to deal with COVID-19, including testing, quarantine, conduct of clinical trials, and the use of medications continue to be improved.

Adopted,


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¹⁷ Department of Health. (2019, February 11). DOH Identifies Vaccine Hesitancy as one of the Reasons for Measles Outbreak. Retrieved from <https://www.doh.gov.ph/node/16721>

¹⁸ Glenza, J. (2020, December 13). 'There are many roadblocks': Fears grow over US Covid-19 vaccine rollout. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/dec/13/us-covid-19-vaccine-rollout-hospitals>