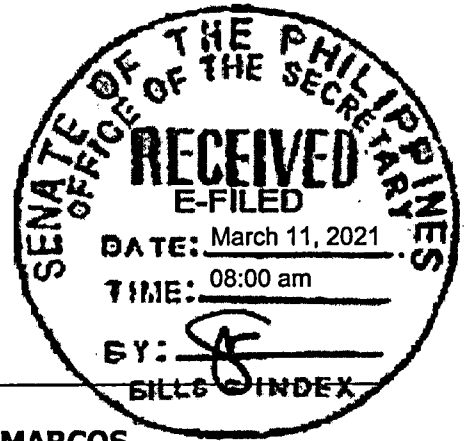


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

SENATE
P.S. Resolution No. 678



Introduced by **SENATOR IMEE R. MARCOS**

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN
INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE CONTINUED
ACCUMULATION AND PROPER DISPOSAL OF PLASTIC WASTE, INCLUDING
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT, DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 16 of the 1987 Constitution provides that, "*The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature*";

WHEREAS, in *Oposa v. Factoran*, G.R. No. 101083, the Supreme Court held that the right to a balanced and healthful ecology carries with it the correlative duty to refrain from impairing the environment. There is no question that "*the right to a balanced and healthful ecology*" is fundamental and that, accordingly, it has been constitutionalized;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly increased the demand for the production and use of personal protective equipment (PPE). In response to the increase in demand of PPE among the general public, health care workers, and service workers, single-use face mask production in China soared to 116 million per day, about 12 times the usual quantity;

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization (WHO) has requested a 40% escalation of disposable PPE production. If the global population adheres to a standard of one disposable face mask per day after lockdowns, the pandemic could result in a monthly global consumption and waste of 129 billion face masks and 65 billion gloves;

WHEREAS, the pandemic puts extra pressure on regular waste management practices, leading to inappropriate management strategies, including mobile incineration, direct landfills, and local burnings. Improper disposal of just 1% of face masks translates to more than 10 million items, weighing 30,000 to 40,000 kg;

WHEREAS, waterlogged COVID-19-related plastic has been observed on beaches and seabed potentially aggravating the challenge of curtailing microplastics;

WHEREAS, in a report by the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA), a non-governmental organization, it showed that the Philippines uses a "shocking" amount of single-use plastic, including nearly 60 billion sachets a year. It contains eye-popping figures wherein almost 48 million shopping bags are used daily throughout the Philippines, adding up to more than 17 billion a year to which figure does not include the smaller, thinner and often transparent plastic bags known as "labo" bag of which around 16.5 billion are used per year across the country;

WHEREAS, based on a study by the United States and Australia led by Jenna Jambeck in 2010, the Philippines ranked third in the countries polluting the most through mismanaged plastic waste that ended up in global waters, having 1.90 million metric tons of wastes. China ranked first with 8.80 million metric tons followed by Indonesia with 3.20 million metric tons;

WHEREAS, plastic pollution is a major problem in the Philippines, which is among the world's offenders, particularly on marine plastic pollution. The country accounts for up to 60% of the plastic waste leaking into the world's oceans. Further, licensed diver Danny Ocampo told Philstar.com that he saw single-use face masks along the coastline of Anilao Bay in Mabini, Batangas and even underwater on a seagrass bed;

WHEREAS, according to a 2020 study by The Pew Charitable Trusts and SYSTEMIQ on ocean plastic pollution, the amount of plastic dumped into the ocean will triple by 2040 — from 11 million metric tons in 2016 to 29 million metric tons — if no action is taken which is equivalent to 50 kilograms of plastic per meter of coastline around the world;

WHEREAS, there must be proactive action to address the emerging environmental effect of wastes accumulated in the country especially with the Philippines extreme vulnerability to climate change, the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, and the continued use and demand of PPEs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, directing the appropriate Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the continued accumulation and proper disposal of plastic waste, including personal protective equipment, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Adopted,


IMEE R. MARCOS