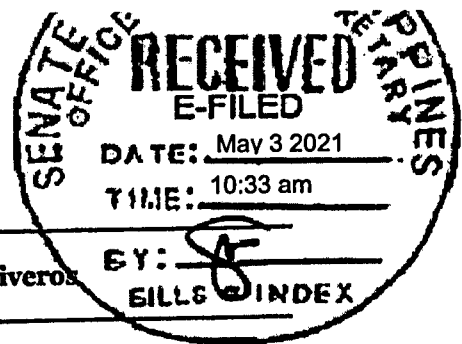


**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
Second Regular Session**

**SENATE  
P.S.R. No. 710**

Introduced by Senator Risa Hontiveros



**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE COMMISSION ON AUDIT (COA) TO CONDUCT A SPECIAL AUDIT ON GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON PROGRAMS MITIGATING THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19, AND TO RELEASE ITS FINDINGS BEFORE THE PHILIPPINE CONGRESS BEGINS ITS DELIBERATIONS ON THE 2022 NATIONAL BUDGET AND IN LIGHT OF THE RECENT SURGE IN CASES AND INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT**

**WHEREAS**, on March 12, 2020 the national government announced the implementation of a 30-day quarantine in order to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The said quarantine was supposed to last until the end of April 2020;

**WHEREAS**, March 15, 2021 marked the 1-year anniversary of the community quarantine. A year later, the Philippines has reverted back into Modified Enhanced Community Quarantine (MECQ). We have tallied over 1,000,000 cases and more than 17,000 casualties. In addition, we have 4 million unemployed Filipinos<sup>1</sup> in January, almost double from the previous year;

**WHEREAS**, Senate Resolution 479 or the resolution urging the Commission on Audit (COA) to conduct a special audit on COVID-19 related government spending was already filed on July 28, 2020, and is still currently pending in the Committee;

**WHEREAS**, the current situation of the country — health care workers lamenting the delay in hazard pay, indigent Filipinos not receiving “ayuda”, overextended health facilities — highlights the urgency of transparency in the use of public funds;

**WHEREAS**, the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act, or Republic Act 11469 was signed on March 24, 2020. According to DBM, over P386 billion was released for the implementation of different programs for COVID-19 response;

**WHEREAS**, the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act, or Republic Act 11494 was signed on September 11, 2020. On January 6, the executive signed RA 11519 extending the availability of R.A. 11494 until June 30, 2021 and, RA 11520 which extends the availability of the P4.1-trillion 2020 national budget until December 31, 2021;

**WHEREAS**, according to DBM, they have released P568,014,985,628 for the country's COVID-19 response including the Social Amelioration Program, and various health programs to stop the spread of COVID-19;

<sup>1</sup>Labor Force Survey (LFS) from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)

**WHEREAS**, our ineffective COVID-19 response has led to the worst surge in cases since the start of the pandemic tallying a record high in cases at 15,310 in April 2021. In addition, the vaccines that were procured in order to curb the spread of COVID-19, have been delayed therefore leaving our priority sectors vulnerable;

**WHEREAS**, the report dated January 4, 2021 was the last available public submission on the report on the implementation and actual accomplishments of COVID-19 related programs, which should include the terms and conditions of loans. In lieu of the extension of RA 11494, Section 14 of the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act states the requirement of the President to update the Congressional Oversight Committee on the status of these funds every first monday of the month;

**WHEREAS**, considering that Congress is set to deliberate on the 2022 budget and must exercise prudence in spending during this crisis, the audit findings would help identify bottlenecks or inefficiencies to guide legislators in their exercise of the power of the purse;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED** that the Senate urge the Commission on Audit (COA) to conduct a special audit on government spending on programs mitigating the effects of COVID-19, and to release its findings before the Philippine Congress begins its deliberations on the 2022 national budget and in light of the recent surge in cases and increase in unemployment.

Adopted.

*Risa Hontiveros - Ranaquel*  
**RISA HONTIVEROS**  
Senator