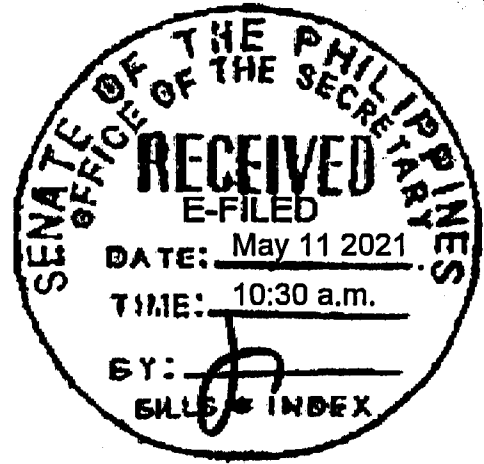


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Second Regular Session

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SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 719



Introduced by SENATOR RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

RESOLUTION

URGING THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT TO INTENSIFY CONTAINMENT MEASURES, BORDER CONTROL, AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION CAMPAIGN TO EFFECTIVELY SUPPRESS A MORE AGGRESSIVE AND DEVASTATING WAVE OF NOVEL CORONAVIRUS INFECTIONS, AND TO PREVENT LOSS OF LIVES, OVERBURDENING OF THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, AND FURTHER ECONOMIC DECLINE

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 5 of the Constitution provides that, "The maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty, and property, and the promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy";

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 15 of the Constitution provides that, "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them;"

WHEREAS, the Philippines is placed under a State of Calamity since March 2020 due to the novel Coronavirus pandemic;

WHEREAS, as of 6 May 2021, there are 154,815,600 confirmed Covid-19 cases globally, with 3,236,104 deaths;

WHEREAS, it is alarming to note that in the past few months, several nations have been experiencing a new or second wave of Covid-19 infections, which is more virulent and has more devastating impact compared to that recorded in 2020;

WHEREAS, India, a country of 1.37 billion people, is grappling with steadily rising Covid-19 cases, and became the first country to register more than 400,000 new cases in a day, with nearly 4,000 patients dying in a span of 24 hours;

WHEREAS, Brazil is also facing what is suggested as "the biggest collapse of the hospital and health service" in its history, as Covid-19 units in 25 out of its 27 states operate at or above 80% capacity¹;

WHEREAS, reports point to Brazil's P1 coronavirus variant, which is said to be 2.5 times more contagious than the original coronavirus and more resistant to antibodies, as a large factor behind the second wave of infections²;

WHEREAS, the African continent experienced a thirty percent (30%) rise in Covid-19 infections in its second wave, likely due to loosening of public health measures such distancing and intermittent lockdowns. A study noted that among the 38 nations with a pronounced second wave, "almost half had fewer measures in place" (i.e. school closures, travel restrictions, among others) compared to the initial wave, as it also recommended improvement in testing capacity and reinvigorated public health campaigns³;

WHEREAS, as of even date, the Philippines with the 1,080,172 total confirmed cases and 17,991 recorded deaths is reported by Bloomberg to be battling the worst Covid-19 surge in Southeast Asia⁴;

WHEREAS, to stem the transmission of the highly contagious disease, community quarantines, travel restrictions, health protocols, and curfew hours have been imposed. These interventions have dramatically disrupted economic activities, which caused massive unemployment, income losses, and business closures, and triggered the steepest economic contraction in the country since 1947;

WHEREAS, the new surge of cases however, overwhelmed the hospitals, left patients lining for hours for oxygen cylinders, and pushed crematoriums to work round the clock to bury the dead. Reports point to recently held large gatherings, election campaign rallies and religious festivals, with people disregarding recommended health protocols such as wearing face masks and physical distancing,

¹ "Brazil health service in 'worst crisis in its history.'" <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-56424611>

² "Brazil's P1 coronavirus variant mutating, may become more dangerous --study." <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/brazils-p1-coronavirus-variant-mutating-may-become-more-dangerous-study-2021-04-14/>

³ "Africa experienced 30% rise in COVID cases during 2nd wave: Study." <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/25/africa-experienced-30-rise-in-covid-cases-during-2nd-wave-study>

⁴ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/newsletters/2021-04-10/the-philippines-hammered-by-worst-covid-surge-in-southeast-asia>

as super spreader events that catalyzed the grim situation. This is even after India "became the fastest country in the world to administer over one hundred million [Covid-19] jabs" in April⁵;

WHEREAS, the experiences of other countries provide meaningful insights into the nature of the novel disease and the possible worst-case scenarios that local authorities should prepare for;

WHEREAS, there is a need to plan and mobilize resources for the probable event of new wave/s of infection caused by more deadly strains or mutations of the virus, and the exponential rise of cases which can further strain the already heavily burdened health facilities;

WHEREAS, there is a need for continued adherence to safety protocols and strengthened surveillance of the disease, even after the administration of Covid-19 vaccines, as this does not guarantee full protection or immunity from the virus, especially against the new and developing strains;

WHEREAS, as the country aims to recover from the economic fallout of the strict lockdowns implemented at the onset of the pandemic, there is a need to ensure that more lethal virus strains do not enter our territory, slow down the spread of this highly contagious disease and keep infections at manageable levels well within the capacities of our health care system;

WHEREAS, under a whole-of-nation approach, there is a need for proactive action and coordinated response from the policymakers, health authorities, law enforcers, academe, and all stakeholders to effectively manage and suppress the adverse impacts of this health crisis;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate, to urge the Executive department to intensify containment measures, border control, and information dissemination campaign to effectively suppress a more aggressive and devastating wave of novel Coronavirus infections, and to prevent loss of lives, overburdening of the health care system, and further economic decline.

Adopted,


RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

⁵ What went wrong in India's handling of Covid-19" Video report embedded in <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/05/03/india/india-coronavirus-fact-check-intl-hnk-dst/index.html>