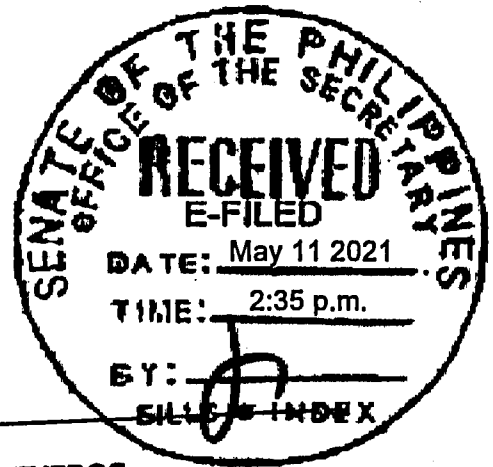


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Second Regular Session

SENATE

P.S.R. No. 721



INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRARIAN REFORM AND AGRICULTURE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE CANCELLATION OF CERTIFICATE OF LAND OWNERSHIP AWARDS IN SARIAYA, QUEZON AND ITS IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND GOOD SECURITY

WHEREAS, according to the 1987 Philippine Constitution, "(t)he State shall undertake an agrarian reform program founded on the right of farmers and regular farmworkers who are landless, to own directly, or collectively, the land they till or, in the case of other farmworkers, to receive a just share of the fruits thereof";

WHEREAS, according to the World Bank, the agriculture sector of a country is critical in speeding up the country's recovery from the economic devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic and abet poverty reduction and food insecurity¹;

WHEREAS, particular to the Philippines, improving farming and good systems is even more important during the pandemic to ensure strong food value chains, affordable and nutritious food, and a vibrant rural economy;

WHEREAS, Sariaya, Quezon has for many decades been an important example of the impact of a successful land redistribution complemented by support services – infrastructure development such as farm-to-market roads, warehouses, solar dryers for rice; capacity building interventions, and credit programs – on the local economy;

WHEREAS, the gains of agrarian reform and the local agricultural industry transformed Sariaya, Quezon into the food basket of Quezon province, and even some of its surrounding provinces in the Southern Tagalog region;

WHEREAS, there has also been a quantifiable decrease in rural poverty;

WHEREAS, despite these promising developments, the success of the agrarian

¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/philippines/transforming-philippine-agriculture-during-covid-19-and-beyond-june-2020>

reform program is under threat because of the cancellation of Certificate of Land Ownership Awards (CLOA) of farmers, as a result of a pre-CARP zoning ordinance of the Municipality of Sariaya, ratified under Board Resolution No. 92, s. 1982, of the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board;

WHEREAS, it is important to note that the agricultural lands reclassified on paper under this ordinance four decades ago continue to be used as farmlands even to this date, and have never been developed according to its intended use;

WHEREAS, despite the actual use of these lands for agricultural production, at least three (3) cases of reversals were already carried out for 200 hectares of land involving 100 farmers and there is one pending case in the Supreme Court for 416 hectares of 255 farmers;

WHEREAS, the exclusion of agricultural lands from the coverage of agrarian reform threatens not only the Constitutional mandate of agrarian reform and the livelihood and rights of the individual farmers of Sariaya, it also threatens food security for the populations dependent on the agricultural produce of the area, especially in this period of economic distress;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Philippines to direct the Senate Committees on Agrarian Reform and Agriculture to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the cancellation of Certificate of Land Ownership Awards in Sariaya, Quezon and its impact on agricultural production and good security.

Adopted,


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator