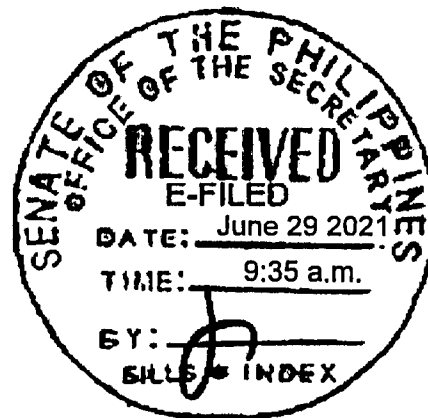


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)



SENATE

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 765

Introduced by Senator FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN

RESOLUTION

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF HIS EXCELLENCY BENIGNO SIMEON "NOYNOY" AQUINO III, 15TH PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

WHEREAS, on 24 June 2021, Benigno Simeon "Noynoy" Aquino III, the 15th President of the Republic of the Philippines, died peacefully in his sleep at the age of 61;

WHEREAS, the only son and third child of democracy icons former Senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. and former President Corazon Aquino, President Aquino III first served in the House of Representatives, representing the Second District of Tarlac from 1998 to 2007. He subsequently served as senator from 2007 to 2010 before being elected to the presidency in 2010;

WHEREAS, President Aquino's administration is best remembered and lauded for putting in place measures that promoted honest and effective governance, or "*Daang Matuwid*" as popularly called, which ultimately led to unprecedented economic growth that lifted millions of Filipinos out of poverty. With foundational theories that good governance is good economics, and "*Kung walang corrupt, walang mahirap*," significant government reforms combined with sound macroeconomic policies ushered in a climate of hope and confidence in government institutions during his administration;

WHEREAS, the Aquino administration advocated good governance by improving the budgeting process, making participatory governance a key strategy, opening up government transactions to the public, incentivizing good local governance, leveling the business playing field, and intensifying the fight against graft and corruption;

WHEREAS, during his term, the Philippines was transformed from being the "Sick Man of Asia" to being hailed as one of the fastest growing economies in the world. The economy grew by an average of 6.2% from 2010 to 2015, the highest six-year average growth since 1978. In the first quarter of his last year in office, the Philippine economy grew by 6.9% - the fastest among the ASEAN-5 and even surpassing global economic powerhouse China;

WHEREAS, under the Aquino administration, the government invested heavily in infrastructure to connect the country's islands through road networks, ports, and

airports, among others. These have benefitted millions of Filipinos and helped them bring their produce to markets much faster and cheaper, reduced the cost of doing business and the prices of consumer commodities, and provided access to livelihood opportunities and social services. A number of major infrastructure projects being completed today, including the Metro Manila Skyway Stage 3 and the NLEX-SLEX Connector Road Project, among others, were started under his administration;

WHEREAS, from December 2011 to June 2016, the Aquino administration awarded 11 government-initiated Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects worth P194.87 billion to private sector partners, almost double the six government-initiated projects awarded during the three administrations that preceded. Significant increases in investments were registered during his six years in office. From US\$1.07 billion in 2010, net foreign direct investments (FDI) reached US\$5.74 billion in 2014, a 436% increase from 2010 and the highest ever recorded level since 2005. Aside from foreign investments, Filipino investors showed remarkable confidence in the local economy, as shown by the increase in the investment promotion agency-approved investments from them;

WHEREAS, under Aquino's leadership, the Philippines leapfrogged in its rankings in various internationally-recognized third-party assessment reports. In the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, the country ranked 95th in 2015 from 146th in 2010 (up 51 places); our World Bank Ease of Doing Business ranking rose to 103 in 2016 from 144 in 2010 (up 41 places); our World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Competitiveness Index 2015-2016 ranking jumped to 47 from 85 in 2010 (up 38 places); and in the Heritage Foundation Economic Freedom Index, the country ranked 70th in 2016 from 109th in 2010 (up 39 places);

WHEREAS, the Aquino government's anti-corruption and transparency efforts contributed to a greatly improved tax effort -- from 12.1% in 2010 to 13.7% in 2015. This was achieved by efficient tax collection as well as programatically going after tax evaders and, notably, without imposing new taxes, except those provided under the Sin Tax Law;

WHEREAS, the gains in the economy and reforms in governance allowed his administration to intensify its efforts to empower and substantially improve the lives of the poor and marginalized and increase their access to better healthcare, education, social protection, and economic opportunities;

WHEREAS, it was during his term that the Philippines recorded 5.6% unemployment rate in October 2015, the lowest in a decade and the first time in history that it dropped below 6.0%. PhilHealth coverage dramatically expanded during his term. PhilHealth coverage rate at the national level was at 92% (93.45 million of the 101.45 million 2015 projected population) as of December 2015;

WHEREAS, the Aquino government continued and ramped up the coverage of the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* Program from only 786,523 poor households as of June 2010 to a whopping 4.4 million poor households and displaced families as of June 2016. As a result of government efforts to uplift the lives of the poor, more than 7 million individuals have improved their status from poor to non-poor;

WHEREAS, President Aquino signed in May 2013 Republic Act No. 10533 which institutionalized the K to 12 Basic Education Program, a landmark reform in the country's

basic education curriculum which ensured that graduates are ready for employment, entrepreneurship, or further education. Government efforts in the basic education sector resulted in the decrease in out-of-school children in the country from 11.7% in 2008 to 5.2% in 2013, equivalent to 1.7 million children back in schools;

WHEREAS, in 2012, President Aquino signed Republic Act No. 10354, or the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act, reflecting the government's commitment to guarantee the exercise of the universal basic human right to reproductive health and the promotion of gender equality and equity through informed choices on reproductive health;

WHEREAS, during the Aquino administration, investments in agriculture increased average annual *palay* production by 21% from 14.92 million metric tons from 2001 to 2010 to 18.05 million metric tons from 2011 to 2015. Rice self-sufficiency ratio rose from 81% in 2010 to 95% by 2016;

WHEREAS, the Aquino administration took decisive steps towards achieving lasting peace and development in Mindanao. In March 2014, the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) signed the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB), the fruit of the efforts of the government to pursue an inclusive, sincere, and transparent peace process. The CAB paved the way for the establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) under the Bangsamoro Organic Law;

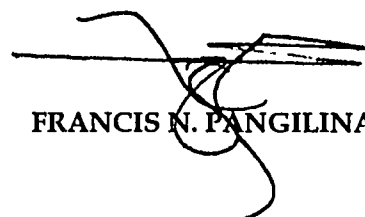
WHEREAS, perhaps President Aquino's most significant legacy is asserting Philippine sovereignty over the West Philippine Sea and standing up to China by initiating the filing of arbitration case before the Permanent Court of Arbitration, a case which the Philippines won on 12 July 2016, shortly after the end of his term;

WHEREAS, President Aquino undeniably left office in 2016 better off than he found it. His administration not only ushered in a period of rapid and sustained economic growth but also a transformation of political institutions. His leadership was marked by competence, honor, humility, and an unimpeachable dedication to serve the Filipino people;

WHEREAS, President Aquino's legacy, which rightfully earns him a place in the annals of our nation's history, is a testament that the Filipino is, indeed, in his own words "worth fighting for;"

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE to honor the life and legacy of His Excellency Benigno Simeon "Noynoy" Aquino III, 15th President of the Republic of the Philippines, and to express the profound sympathy and sincere condolences of the Senate to his family on his passing.

Adopted,


FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN