

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

SENATE

P.S.R. No. 772

Introduced by **Senator Risa Hontiveros**

RESOLUTION
CALLING FOR AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO
STRENGTHENING THE COUNTRY'S CIVILIAN ADMINISTRATIVE
INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE KALAYAAN ISLAND GROUP AND
THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA

WHEREAS, the Kalayaan Island Group ("KIG") is a 5th class municipality in the Province of Palawan, located in the West Philippine Sea, composed of seven islands and one reef, including Pag-asa Island, the Philippine's administrative center in the WPS;

WHEREAS, Pag-asa Island is also the home of Rancudo Airfield, Naval Station Emilio Liwag, as well as a recently-constructed beaching ramp for bringing in the materials and equipment needed to upgrade the other facilities in the KIG;

WHEREAS, the KIG is the Philippines' most important outpost in the West Philippine Sea ("WPS"), a region that is the source of around one-fifth of the country's fisheries resources, and whose rich and biodiverse coral formations serve as spawning grounds that replenish depleted fish stocks in the surrounding waters;

WHEREAS, the KIG and WPS are also of vital strategic importance to national security, being the maritime gateway to the Philippine heartland, as the Japanese demonstrated during their invasion of the country during World War II, when these islands were used as a submarine base and as a staging area for attacks on Luzon;

WHEREAS, commentators and analysts have also observed that the KIG and WPS also lie along major Philippine trading channels, and control of these islands and waters by an unfriendly state could strangle the country's trade and economy;


WHEREAS, the KIG and WPS have also been the targets of the Chinese Communist Party's territorial ambitions, with China unlawfully occupying Panganiban Reef in 1995, blockading Panatag Shoal in 2012 after a stand-off with vessels of the Philippine Navy, and the recent use of its so-called "maritime militia" to aggressively swarm Julian Felipe reef earlier this year;

WHEREAS, as early as 1933, the country's leaders realized the importance of the KIG to the country's geopolitical position by calling for its incorporation and integration into our administrative and governmental framework; and

WHEREAS, it is thus necessary to consolidate and strengthen governance in the area for the purpose of emphasizing the civilian character of the country's administration thereof by, among others, establishing regular transportation and logistics routes, and maintaining direct communications linkages, between the KIG and the rest of the country, and enabling local management projects in the area such as: the creation of fish sanctuaries and marine protected areas, the issuance of mariculture concessions, the conduct of regular elections, the maintenance of basic government services, and the promotion of the KIG as a tourism and travel destination.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED TO URGE AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO STRENGTHENING THE COUNTRY'S CIVILIAN ADMINISTRATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE KALAYAAN ISLAND GROUP AND THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA.

Adopted.


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator