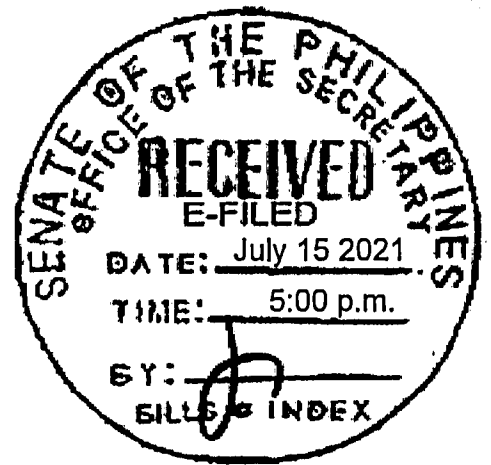


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
*Third Regular Session*



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 779

---

INTRODUCED BY: SENATOR EMMANUEL D. PACQUIAO

---

**A RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, TO LOOK INTO THE QUESTIONABLE PHP 10.4 BILLION FUNDS UNDER THE SOCIAL AMELIORATION PROGRAM SUPPOSEDLY DISBURSED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ELECTRONIC WALLET APPLICATION STARPAY**

WHEREAS, Art. II, Sec. 27 of the 1987 Constitution declares that “[t]he State shall maintain honesty and integrity in the public service and take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption;

WHEREAS, Art. XI, Sec. 1 of the 1987 Constitution states that “[p]ublic office is a public trust. Public officers and employees must, at all times, be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency; act with patriotism and justice, and lead modest lives;”

WHEREAS, in response to the effects of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic in the country, the government provided an emergency subsidy intended for around 18 million low income households pursuant to Republic Act No. 11469, otherwise known as the “Bayanihan to Heal as One Act;”

WHEREAS, Sec. 4(c) of the said Act provides that the subsidy shall amount to a minimum of Five Thousand Pesos (PHP 5,000.00) to a maximum of Eight Thousand Pesos (PHP 8,000.00) a month for two months, computed based on the prevailing regional minimum wage rates;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the said law, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) issued several Memorandum Circulars to provide the guidelines for the implementation of the Emergency Subsidy Program (ESP) through the DSWD-Special Amelioration Program (SAP);

WHEREAS, further in implementation of the foregoing, the DSWD entered into a very sizable contract with Starpay, an Electronic Money Issuer (EMI) and Remittance agent, to disburse funds for the second tranche of SAP;

WHEREAS, based on reports received by the Office of the undersigned, the DSWD engaged Starpay to distribute SAP payouts to 1.8 million beneficiaries amounting to Php 14 billion;

WHEREAS, under the said disbursement scheme, beneficiaries would neither be able to receive nor withdraw any subsidy under the program without accessing and downloading Starpay application;

WHEREAS, records show that only 500,000 beneficiaries out of the total projected 1.8 million beneficiaries were able to download the Starpay application. This means around 1.3 million projected beneficiaries were unable to download the said e-wallet application and therefore could not have electronically received through Starpay the subsidy amounting to Php 10.4 billion earmarked for them. However, records from the DSWD show that all of these payouts have already been completed;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to look into this anomaly to untangle the web of corruption involving DSWD and Starpay which has robbed our people of economic resources and denuded the government of its basic capacity to provide a lifeline to the vulnerable segment of the society that has been hit the hardest by the current pandemic;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, to direct the appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, to look into and recover the Php 10.4 billion missing funds under the Social Amelioration Program disbursed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development through electronic wallet application Starpay.

Adopted,



EMMANUEL D. PACQUIAO