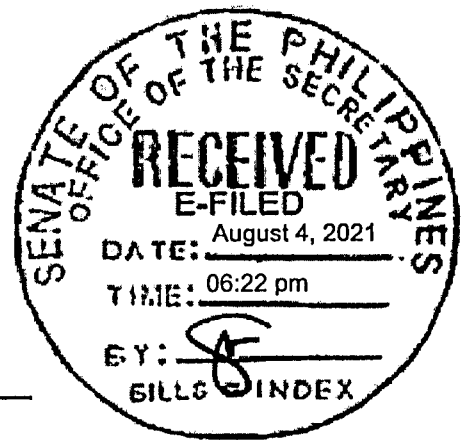


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)



SENATE
P.S. Resolution No. 827

Introduced by **SENATOR IMEE R. MARCOS**

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC OFFICERS AND INVESTIGATIONS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE DELAY IN THE PAYMENT OF CLAIMS OF PRIVATE HOSPITALS BY THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION (PHILHEALTH) INVOLVING COVID-19 CASES

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 18 of the 1987 Constitution states that, "*The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them*";

WHEREAS, it has been more than a year since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic on 11 March 2020;

WHEREAS, as an initial response to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 infections, Presidential Proclamation No. 929 Series of 2020 was issued on 16 March 2021, which placed the Philippines under a State of National Calamity;

WHEREAS, on 08 April 2020, the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) issued PhilHealth Circular 2020-009 which declared that all Filipinos shall be deemed eligible for any of the COVID-19 medical benefits for inpatient care. Further, those who are not registered in PhilHealth shall be automatically covered, provided that they complete the member registration prior to their discharge from the facility;

WHEREAS, through the abovementioned Circular, PhilHealth came up with the following PhilHealth Benefit Package for COVID-19 patients, as follows: (a) Mild Pneumonia - Php 43,997; (b) Moderate Pneumonia - Php 143,267; (c) Severe Pneumonia - Php 333,519; and (d) Critical Pneumonia - Php 786,384;

WHEREAS, on 17 March 2021, the Private Hospitals Association of the Philippines (PHAP) President Jose de Grano expressed in a briefing that PhilHealth failed to pay private hospitals of at least Php 6 Billion-worth of reimbursements. In the said briefing, de Grano voiced out his sentiments by stating, "*Sinasabi po ng PhilHealth every time that they have the money to pay us. We're asking na for the reimbursement of our claims, medyo hindi po dumadarating*";

WHEREAS, in a statement issued by PhilHealth Spokesperson Rey Balena, according to their records, PhilHealth received a total of Php 2.9 million claims amounting to around Php 28.3 billion from PHAP members in 2020;

WHEREAS, Spokesperson Balena also emphasized the significance of swift payment of claims, stating that: "*Recognizing the importance of timely reimbursements to the continuous operations of hospitals especially at this time of the pandemic, PhilHealth remains committed to paying its accredited providers within the prescribed Turn-Around Time,*";

WHEREAS, on 19 May 2021, during the hearing of the Senate Committee on Economic Affairs, the Philippine Hospital Association (PHA), through its President Dr. Jaime Almora, echoed its great concern on the alleged delays of PhilHealth to pay the huge amount of hospital claims for COVID-19 reimbursements since the beginning of the pandemic. Dr. Almora stated that the delays in the COVID-19 reimbursements caused severe financial distress for both private and government hospitals and unsettled claims for reimbursement which went up to as much as Php 1.2 billion;

WHEREAS, the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) even ordered PhilHealth to settle hospital claim payments in all areas with high and critical risk of COVID-19 cases, in line with the directive of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte for PhilHealth to expedite its reimbursement of valid claims;

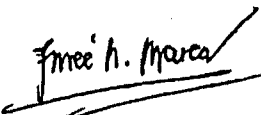
WHEREAS, despite repeated demands, only about Php 6.3 billion in hospital claims have been released by PhilHealth to more than 200 healthcare facilities, a measly amount compared to the Php 28.3 billion of unpaid claims stated. St. Lukes Medical Center alone has a total of Php 2 billion worth of unpaid claims from PhilHealth;

WHEREAS, as the battle against the continuing rise of COVID-19 cases remain in the country, some hospitals are forced to reduce expenses by downsizing operations, bed capacity, manpower, and other resources due to unpaid reimbursements of PhilHealth claims which is detrimental to the country's current health care system;

WHEREAS, despite the issues on nonpayment of claims, issues on alleged corruption continue to surround PhilHealth such as the irregularities in the implementation of the corporation's interim reimbursement mechanism and overpriced projects, among others;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, directing the Senate Committee on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the delay in the payment of claims of private hospitals by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) involving COVID-19 cases.

Adopted,


IMEE R. MARCOS