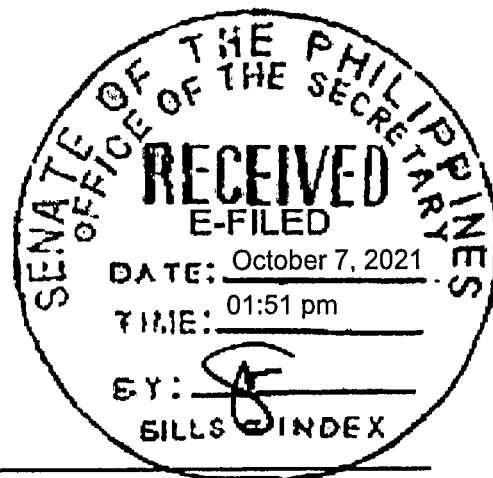


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 924

Introduced by **SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA**

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT
AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED
PROLIFERATION OF SMUGGLED CARROTS FROM CHINA IN LOCAL
MARKETS WHICH HAVE DETRIMENTAL EFFECTS ON THE INCOME
AND LIVELIHOOD OF LOCAL FARMERS, PARTICULARLY THOSE IN
THE PROVINCE OF BENGUET

1 WHEREAS, Section 2 of Republic Act (R.A.) No. 10845 or the Anti-Agricultural
2 Smuggling Act of 2016 declares, in part, that “[i]t is the policy of the State to promote
3 the productivity of the agriculture sector and to protect farmers from unscrupulous
4 traders and importers, who by their illegal importation of agricultural products,
5 especially rice, significantly affect the production, availability of supply and stability of
6 prices, and the food security of the State”;

7 WHEREAS, Section 2 of the same also provides that “[t]he State shall impose
8 higher sanctions for large-scale smuggling of agricultural products, as a self-
9 preservation measure to shield itself from the manipulative scheme of economic
10 saboteurs, and to protect the livelihood of our farmers and to ensure their economic
11 well-being”;

12 WHEREAS, Section 2 of R.A. No. 11321 or the *Sagip Saka* Act declares, in part,
13 that “[i]t is the declared policy of the State to achieve sustainable modern agriculture
14 and food security by helping the agricultural and fishing communities to reach their
15 full potential, increasing farmers' and fishermen's incomes, and bridging gaps
16 through, public-private partnerships, thereby improving their quality of life”;

17 WHEREAS, it was recently reported that smuggled carrots from China were
18 being sold in various markets in the Philippines. According to Augusta Balanoy of the

1 Highland Vegetable Multipurpose Cooperative in La Trinidad, a big volume of foreign
2 carrots was seen in key markets across the country and their investigation showed that
3 small warehouses near Divisoria had been releasing imported vegetables whenever
4 Benguet prices rose. Traders in Cebu also advised the Benguet vegetable industry that
5 four container vans filled with carrots from China were being distributed in their
6 markets every week;¹

7 WHEREAS, this severely affected local farmers because of the predatory
8 undercutting of the smuggled carrots which are being sold at ₱25 pesos a kilo while
9 the wholesale price of carrots from Benguet which are being sold at ₱50 a kilo;²

10 WHEREAS, the selling of smuggled carrots is detrimental to the local farmers
11 as they are being forced to compete with prices that they cannot match. This results in
12 massive losses in income which severely affects not just the local farmers but also the
13 local farming industry;

14 WHEREAS, moreover, these smuggled carrots translate to millions of pesos in
15 losses to our government in lost customs duties;

16 WHEREAS, most importantly, these smuggled goods are neither inspected nor
17 regulated for safety, thus risking possible health hazard to the public;

18 WHEREAS, due to COVID-19 restrictions, thousands of Filipinos have already
19 lost their jobs and their livelihoods and the country's most vulnerable sectors are
20 struggling to recover let alone adapt to the rapid changes occurring nationwide;³

21 WHEREAS, if unabated, food smuggling will cripple the local food industry,
22 making our economy almost totally dependent on imports. This would place our
23 country at the mercy of food producing-countries where they would be able to control
24 the volume and price of goods to be made available to us;

25 WHEREAS, in times where government should take decisive actions to prevent
26 further loss, any form of threat to the economy should be immediately eliminated.
27 Local farmers are already struggling from the economic fallouts of trade liberalization

¹ Philippine Daily Inquirer. (4 October 2021). *Recurring blight*. Retrieved 4 October 2021, from <https://opinion.inquirer.net/144878/recurring-blight>

² *Ibid.*

³ Rivas, R. (16 September 2020). *PH with most business closures, layoffs vs peers during pandemic – ADB*. Retrieved 4 October 2021 from: <https://www.rappler.com/business/adb-study-philippines-closures-layoffs-peers-coronavirus-pandemic>

1 but when the pandemic began, their situation worsened. The rise of smuggled
2 vegetables only adds to their worries as they should have been the primary focus of the
3 government's initiative to stimulate the country's economy⁴;

4 WHEREAS, there is a need for Congress to formulate amendments to existing
5 laws in order to protect local agricultural products and local farmers;

6 WHEREAS, it is also necessary to strengthen trade laws and agreements,
7 protect local producers and consumers and stabilize the price of agricultural products
8 in the local market;

9 WHEREAS, it is the primordial duty of the Philippine Senate, in the exercise of
10 its legislative and oversight functions, to ensure that the government is strictly
11 implementing the law against agricultural smuggling and provide mechanisms to
12 improve the country's policy regarding agricultural smuggling and protection of local
13 farmers especially during this time of pandemic;

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, directing the
15 appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the
16 reported proliferation of smuggled carrots from China in local markets which have
17 detrimental effects on the income and livelihood of local farmers, particularly those in
18 the province of Benguet.

Adopted,


LEILA M. DE LIMA

⁴ Araneta, M. (27 September 2021). *Pangilinan hits smuggled carrots flooding markets*. Retrieved 4 October 2021 from: <https://manilastandard.net/mobile/article/366013>