

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



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 1001

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

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE REPORTED LAPSES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD) IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VARIOUS SOCIAL AMELIORATION PROGRAMS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF DETERMINING WHETHER SUCH SHORTCOMINGS RESULTED IN BENEFICIARIES BEING DEPRIVED OF ASSISTANCE, AND ASCERTAINING THE CAPACITY OF THE DEPARTMENT TO ENSURE THAT ANY FUTURE PROGRAMS ARE NOT COMPROMISED**

1 WHEREAS, Article II, Section 10 of the Constitution mandates that “[t]he State  
2 shall promote social justice in all phases of national development”;

3 WHEREAS Article II Section 28 of the same provides that “the State adopts and  
4 implements a policy of full public disclosure of all its transactions involving public  
5 interest”;

6 WHEREAS, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is the  
7 “primary government agency mandated to develop, implement, and coordinate social  
8 protection and poverty-reduction solutions for and with the poor, vulnerable, and  
9 disadvantaged”;

10 WHEREAS, by virtue of Executive Order No. 15 s. 1998, “Redirecting the  
11 Functions and Operations of the Department of Social Welfare and Development”, the  
12 DSWD has been “transformed from a direct service deliverer to a technical assistance  
13 provider as a result of the devolution of basic services to the local government units”;

14 WHEREAS, as observed by the Right to Know Right Now (R2KRN) Coalition,  
15 the Department, presently, has been “placed in charge, simultaneously, of at least half

1 a dozen statutory and specialized social welfare and community-based programs, and  
2 serves as frontline emergency relief and aid agency when calamities and typhoons  
3 visit”;

4 WHEREAS, it appears that the DSWD has been deluged with different  
5 functions over the years. And with it being a fairly small agency of less than 3,000  
6 permanent personnel, several reported lapses over the years seem attributable thereto.  
7 These functions have even necessitated an expansion of the DSWD’s total manpower  
8 complement by eight times or 25,042 persons across its field offices, according to  
9 R2KRN;

10 WHEREAS, with social protection programs having been made even more  
11 crucial in recent years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become vital to determine  
12 whether the DSWD is sufficiently equipped and capacitated to continue to deliver  
13 services and programs in accordance with its various statutory mandate;

14 WHEREAS, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) reported in December  
15 2021 that the proportion of poor Filipinos is at 23.7% in the first semester of 2021.  
16 This poverty incidence translates to 26.14 million Filipinos who live below the poverty  
17 threshold estimates. PSA also noted that the substance incidence among Filipinos or  
18 those whose income is not enough to meet even the basic food needs, registered at  
19 9.9% or about 10.94 million Filipinos in the first semester of 2021;<sup>1</sup>

20 WHEREAS, at the helm of the government’s poverty alleviation measures,  
21 DSWD has recently been flagged several times by the Commission on Audit (COA). In  
22 its 2020 report, the COA observed that DSWD certain problems and issues that  
23 ultimately cast doubt on whether DSWD, with its current set-up and personnel, has  
24 the capacity to fulfill its mandate. The COA flagged the following: ₱780 million  
25 unutilized funds due to “insufficient validation process” intended as cash assistance to  
26 pandemic-hit Filipinos;<sup>2</sup> Social Amelioration Program (SAP) overpayments to 20,196  
27 beneficiaries who had already received cash and other forms of aid from other

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<sup>1</sup> PSA. (17 December 2021) *Proportion of Poor Filipinos Registered at 23.7 Percent in the First Semester of 2021*. Retrieved 17 April 2021, from: <https://psa.gov.ph/poverty-press-releases/nid/165535>

<sup>2</sup> Ayalin, A. (13 August 2021) *COA calls out DSWD over unutilized P780 million intended for pandemic ayuda*. Retrieved 18 April 2022, from <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/08/13/21/coa-flags-dswd-over-unused-p780m-intended-for-cash-aid>

1 government agencies;<sup>3</sup> “oversight” by the DSWD in its implementation of its  
2 Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation (AICS) which resulted in “deficiencies” in  
3 around ₱722.8 million worth of funds;<sup>4</sup> and “inappropriately documented” DSWD  
4 funds for ex-rebels,<sup>5</sup> among others;

5 WHEREAS, the issue of undisbursed “*ayuda*” is more than that of mismanaged  
6 funds, but more importantly, of the beneficiaries deprived of assistance at their  
7 greatest time of need. In the 2020 budget deliberations in the Senate, it was revealed  
8 that despite many poor Filipinos begging to be given government assistance, DSWD  
9 was able to have ₱10 billion worth of “savings” from SAP funds;<sup>6</sup>

10 WHEREAS, it is unfortunate and unacceptable that the DSWD was unable to  
11 serve its targeted beneficiaries amidst growing clamor from the public for palpable and  
12 readily available assistance at the height of the pandemic;

13 WHEREAS, some 3.2 million to 5 million families were tagged as “waitlisted  
14 beneficiaries” who, despite having qualified, failed to receive their SAP for various  
15 reasons in 2020. R2KRN revealed that one of the causes of such encountered problem  
16 are apparent overlaps of DSWD’s programs;

17 WHEREAS, these overpayments, delays in implementation, spotty  
18 documentation, unutilized funds and unserved beneficiaries, shed a light into the  
19 ongoing crisis inside DSWD which inevitably jeopardizes the efficiency of its programs  
20 and services;

21 WHEREAS, it is imperative to determine whether the DSWD’s lapses resulted  
22 in the deprivation of assistance which beneficiaries were qualified to receive, and  
23 whether such lapses could have been avoided had the Department been more prudent  
24 in the implementation of its programs;

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<sup>3</sup> Devio, L. (14 August 2021) *DSWD flagged for SAP overpayments*. Retrieved 18 April 2022, from <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/08/14/news/dswd-flagged-for-sap-overpayments/1810895>

<sup>4</sup> Business World. (17 August 2021) *COA finds lapses in DSWD program for crisis fund*. Retrieved 18 April 2022, from <https://www.bworldonline.com/the-nation/2021/08/17/389899/coa-finds-lapses-in-dswd-program-for-crisis-fund/>

<sup>5</sup> Bolledo, J. (18 August 2021) *COA flags P5M ‘inappropriately documented’ DSWD funds for ex-rebels*. Retrieved 19 April 2022, from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/dswd-funds-inappropriately-documented-former-rebels-flagged-coa-report/>

<sup>6</sup> Ramos, C. (22 September 2020) *Senators puzzled over DSWD’s P10-B ‘savings’ from SAP funds*. Retrieved 19 April 2022, frp, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1338603/senators-puzzled-over-dswds-p10-b-savings-from-sap-funds>

1           WHEREAS, given the DSWD's crucial role in poverty alleviation, it can ill-  
2 afford any setbacks or inefficiencies in the implementation of its key social protection  
3 programs;

4           WHEREAS, it behooves upon the Senate to ascertain whether the DSWD still  
5 has the capacity to ensure that none of programs are compromised by reason of  
6 institutional weaknesses brought about by the various duties it has been tasked to  
7 fulfill above and beyond its current mandate;

8           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, to direct the  
9 appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the  
10 reported lapses of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in the  
11 implementation of various social amelioration programs, with the end in view of  
12 determining whether such shortcomings resulted in beneficiaries being deprived of  
13 assistance, and ascertaining the capacity of the Department to ensure that any future  
14 programs are not compromised.

*Adopted,*

  
**LEILA M. DE LIMA**