

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Second Regular Session )

5 OCT 13 2013

SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 354

RECEIVED BY: [Signature]

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION  
DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE  
ALARMING VOLUME OF HAZARDOUS WASTES FROM HEALTH CARE  
FACILITIES IN RIVERS AND DUMPSITES

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article II, Section 16, provides that. "The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature";

WHEREAS, Republic Act No 9275, otherwise known as the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004, mandates that. "The State shall pursue a policy of economic growth in a manner consistent with the protection, preservation and revival of the quality of our fresh, brackish and marine waters. To achieve this end, the framework for sustainable development shall be pursued. As such, it shall be the policy of the State:

"a) To streamline processes and procedures in the prevention, control and abatement of pollution of the country's water resources;

"b) To promote environmental strategies, use of appropriate economic instruments and of control mechanisms for the protection of water resources;

"c) To formulate a holistic national program of water quality management that recognizes that water quality management issues cannot be separated from concerns about water sources and ecological protection, water supply, public health and quality of life;

x x x                    x x x                    x x x

"g) To provide for a comprehensive management program for water pollution focusing on pollution prevention x x x",

WHEREAS, the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004 clearly prohibits the dumping or discharge of material of any kind, more so hazardous wastes, directly or indirectly into the water bodies or along the margins of any surface water, where, the same shall be liable to be washed into such surface water, either by tide action or by storm, floods or otherwise, which could cause water pollution or impede natural flow in the water body;

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, 11 tons of hazardous wastes from Metro Manila's health care facilities are dumped into rivers and open dumpsites everyday;

WHEREAS, the untreated hazardous wastes comprise 41% of the total 27 tons generated daily by 3,670 health care facilities in the metropolis;

WHEREAS, the wastes come from hospitals, medical schools, funeral parlors, pharmaceutical laboratories, dental clinics, veterinary clinics, health care centers, blood banks, and research institutions that do not have their own waste treatment facilities and cannot be accommodated in the country's waste treatment plants,

WHEREAS, discharge from health care facilities include general solid wastes, infectious wastes from laboratory work and dressing wounds, chemical wastes like disinfectants and corrosive materials, sharp wastes like needles, syringes, and used scalpels, wastes with heavy metal content, and pressurized containers;

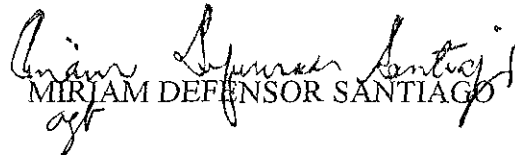
WHEREAS, according to Environmental Management Bureau executive director Lolibeth Medrano, there are only six treatment and disposal facilities for hazardous wastes in the country, which have the capacity to treat only 16 tons of wastes daily,

WHEREAS, untreated hazardous wastes may pollute soil, air, surface water, or underground water; contaminated water can result to highly infectious water-borne diseases such as hepatitis, cholera, dysentery, and typhoid;

WHEREAS, the government has the duty to ensure that health care facilities have proper sewerage and treatment facilities in order to prevent the hazardous wastes from proliferating in rivers and open dumpsites thus reducing the incidence of pollution in the country;

WHEREFORE, be it resolved, as it is hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation on the alarming volume of hazardous wastes from health care facilities in rivers and open dumpsites.

Approved,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  
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