



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

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SENATE

P.S.R. No. 797

RECEIVED BY:

Introduced by **Senator Ana Theresia "Risa" Hontiveros-Baraquel**

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN, CHILDREN, FAMILY RELATIONS, AND GENDER EQUALITY TO IMMEDIATELY CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO ALLEGATIONS OF SYSTEMATIC RAPE, SEXUAL ABUSE, TRAFFICKING, FORCED LABOR, AND FORCED MARRIAGE OF CHILDREN IN THE CONTEXT OF CULT-LIKE ACTIVITIES AMONG MEMBERS OF THE SOCORRO BAYANIHAN SERVICES, INC. (SBSI) IN SITIO KAPIHAN, SOCORRO, SURIGAO DEL NORTE

WHEREAS, Article XV, Section 3 of the 1987 Constitution, declares that the State shall defend "the right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development";

WHEREAS, Republic Act 11596, otherwise known as the Prohibition of Child Marriage Law, outlaws the practice of child marriage and declares penalties for the facilitation of child marriage and cohabitation of an adult with a child;

WHEREAS, Republic Act 7610, otherwise known as the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act, prohibits and establishes penalties for those who in engage or facilitate child prostitution and sexual abuse;

WHEREAS, Republic Act 9208 as amended, also known as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003, defines the "offer or contract marriage, real or simulated, for the purpose of acquiring, buying, offering, selling, or trading them to engage in prostitution, pornography, sexual exploitation, forced labor or slavery, involuntary servitude or debt bondage" as an act of trafficking;

WHEREAS, the Senate received alarming reports on the alleged rape, sexual abuse, forced labor, and forced marriage of minors in the context of cult-like activities among members of the Socorro Bayanihan Services, Inc. (SBSI), a People's Organization (PO) with 3560 members including 1587 children, based in an enclosed and heavily guarded area in a mountain known as Sitio Kapihan, in Socorro, Surigao del Norte;

WHEREAS, according to the Socorro Task Force – Kapihan, a Task Force formed by the Mayor of Socorro to investigate these allegations at the local level, the SBSI has indicators of a religious cult with one Jey Rence B. Quilario (aka Senior Agila) as its “Messiah” and leader;

WHEREAS, according to direct and first-hand testimonies, Quilario would engage in acts of sexual abuse and violence against minors, including ordering girl-children to sleep with him, facilitating child marriages of children as young as twelve (12) years old with adults, locking adolescents in rooms in order for them to engage in sexual activities;

WHEREAS, minor and adult members of the organization were made to perform acts of forced labor under pain of physical punishment, and were also forced to surrender 40-60% of their social welfare benefits (4Ps, senior citizen pensions, etc.) to Quilario;

WHEREAS, a Senate investigation is needed to immediately address these urgent and alarming issues, rescue the children, effect the reintegration into society of the victims, and identify policy gaps in legislation that allow these cults to operate in plain view of the local government unit and other institutions;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED TO DIRECT THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN, CHILDREN, FAMILY RELATIONS, AND GENDER EQUALITY TO IMMEDIATELY CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO ALLEGATIONS OF SYSTEMATIC RAPE, SEXUAL ABUSE, TRAFFICKING, FORCED LABOR, AND FORCED MARRIAGE OF CHILDREN IN THE CONTEXT OF CULT-LIKE ACTIVITIES AMONG MEMBERS OF THE SOCORRO BAYANIHAN SERVICES, INC. IN SITIO KAPIHAN, SOCORRO, SURIGAO DEL NORTE.

Adopted.


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator