

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

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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 459

RECEIVED BY: 

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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RESOLUTION  
DIRECTING AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE INCREASING  
NUMBER OF CHILDREN LANGUISHING IN JAILS

WHEREAS, Presidential Decree No. 603 also known as the Child and Youth Welfare Code, Article 1 provides: "The Child is one of the most important assets of the nation. Every effort should be exerted to promote his welfare and enhance his opportunities for a useful and happy life";

WHEREAS, according to the United Nations Children's Fund, an average of 3,700 children are locked up behind jail bars at any given day;

WHEREAS, more than 2,000 of these children are detained at city, municipal and provincial jails under the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology; the rest are in other detention facilities like police stations, barangay halls and rehabilitation or youth centers;

WHEREAS, the lamentable conditions of our jails such as lack of sanitation, poor facilities, no access to appropriate legal counsel and vulnerability to abuse, are not conducive for the rehabilitation of youth offenders;

WHEREAS, according to Swedish Ombudsman for Children Lena Nyberg, solving the problem in conflict with the law should start from everyone in the immediate society, especially the parents;


WHEREAS, the government is duty-bound to address this perennial problem by setting up an efficient system, which will monitor cases of detained minors;

WHEREAS, the Commission on Human Rights, as provided for by the Constitution in Article 13, Section 18 (4), should also exercise its visitorial powers in partnership with other offices or groups and periodically check each jail facility;

WHEREAS, the state should also address the reasons behind this incidence attributable to poverty at its lowest level, forcing these children to resort to illegal means in order to survive;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved, that the proper Senate committee shall conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the increasing number of children languishing in jails.

Adopted,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  
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