

SENATE
SALVADOR DELA CRUZ SECRETARY

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 262

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE WORSENING INCIDENCE OF MALNUTRITION IN THE COUNTRY, WITH THE END VIEW OF REVIEWING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S FOOD FORTIFICATION PROJECT STRATEGIC PLAN AND RECOMMENDING POLICY MEASURES FOR A HEALTHIER FILIPINO POPULACE

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 15 of the Constitution mandates that "the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them";

WHEREAS, UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Director Anupama Rao Singh said 56-percent of children are malnourished in places in the Philippines;

WHEREAS, child malnutrition in the Philippines is said to be worse than that of North Korea's, a land of chronic harvest failures and widespread famines;

WHEREAS, North Korea's worst places are said to have a malnutrition rate of 47-percent, while East Timor has 53-percent;

WHEREAS, the proportion of malnourished to well-nourished children in the Philippines is 4:1, compared with East Timor's 3:1, and North Korea's 2:1;

WHEREAS, Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said 40 out of 1,000 infants die before reaching the age of five and that the leading causes of deaths are preventable diseases like poor respiratory conditions, malnutrition and diarrhea;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Nutrition Country Profile developed by the National Nutrition Council (NNC) revealed that there are approximately four million preschool children who are underweight-for-age. NNC's findings further showed that malnutrition also affects Filipino adolescents and adults. There are three million adolescents who are underweight-for-age, and five million adults who are underweight and chronically energy deficient;

WHEREAS, protein-energy malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are said to be the Philippines' leading nutritional problems;


WHEREAS, iron deficiency anemia is said to be the most alarming of micronutrient deficiencies affecting 57-percent of infants, 51-percent of pregnant women, 49-percent of male older persons, and 46-percent of lactating women. Meanwhile, severe subclinical vitamin A deficiency affects eight-percent of children six-months to five-years, and seven-percent of pregnant women in the country;

WHEREAS, studies show that the primary cause of malnutrition is the inequitable distribution of food, which is related to poverty. Some 28 million Filipinos are unable to buy food to meet their nutritional requirements and other basic needs;

WHEREAS, there is a need to examine the Department of Health's (DOH) five-year Food Fortification Project Strategic Plan for the year 2000 to 2004 which aims to make widely available vitamin A, iron and iodine fortified foods that would contribute to an increase in the micronutrient intake by at least 50-percent of the Recommended Dietary Allowance of pre-school children and women of reproductive age by the year 2004;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the Senate Committee Health and Demography to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, into the worsening incidence of malnutrition in the country, with the end view of reviewing the Department of Health's Food Fortification Project Strategic Plan and recommending policy measures for a healthier Filipino populace.

Adopted,


MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.
Senator