

SECRETARY

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

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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 528

RECEIVED BY: te

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION  
DIRECTING AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION,  
ON THE ALLEGED GROSS MISMANAGEMENT  
OF THE GOVERNMENT'S TELEPHONO SA BARANGAY PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 24 states that: "The State recognizes the vital role of communication and information in nation-building";

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 3019, or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, Section 3, states that "Corrupt practices of public officers. -- In addition to acts or omissions of public officers already penalized by existing law, the following shall constitute corrupt practices of any public officer and are hereby declared to be unlawful: x x x (e) Causing any undue injury to any party, including the Government, or giving any private party any unwarranted benefits, advantage or preference in the discharge of his official administrative or judicial functions through manifest partiality, evident bad faith or gross inexcusable negligence. This provision shall apply to officers and employees of offices or government corporations charged with the grant of licenses or permits or other concessions";

WHEREAS, in 2000, the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) spearheaded the Telephono sa Barangay project which aimed to provide basic telecommunications services to selected barangays in the provinces of Quezon, Negros Oriental, Lanao del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, Nueva Vizcaya, and Misamis Occidental;

WHEREAS, the project, which was part of the National Municipal Telephone Project, was funded by local and foreign funds; it reportedly received over \$20 million in funds;

WHEREAS, the program sought to install three payphones using phone cards for outgoing calls and one ordinary telephone system for incoming calls in 347 barangays in selected provinces;

WHEREAS, according to Mayor Patchito Eguia of Katipunan, Zamboanga del Norte, the telephone booths remain inoperative six years after they were installed;

WHEREAS, Mayor Edgardo Jamero of Dumingag added that the installation of the phone booths was done without any consultation with the local leaders;

WHEREAS, according to Telecommunications Assistant Secretary Francisco Perez, the Telephono sa Barangay project was discontinued because of mismanagement;

WHEREAS, Perez said that the possibility of pursuing the project using Voice Over Internet Protocol technology (VOIP) is being studied; tapping the abandoned phone

lines using VOIP technology would depend on the configuration of each geographical area;

WHEREAS, it is the duty of the government to closely monitor and to ensure effective management of government projects to avoid wasting huge investments that should have benefited the people; now be it

RESOLVED, that the proper Senate committee shall conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the alleged gross mismanagement of the government's Telepono sa Barangay project.

Adopted,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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