


FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE }
 REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }
 First Regular Session }

7 SEP 18 2006

SENATE
 P. Senate Resolution No. 138

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator M. A. Madrigal

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE COMMITTEES ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, PUBLIC SERVICES AND FINANCE TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE CONTINUING ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE OIL SPILL ON GUIMARAS ISLAND, THE REPORTED NON-PAYMENT OF CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES OF THE AFFECTED RESIDENTS, AND THE APPARENT LACK OF INTEREST OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN PROSECUTING THE RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS OF SUNSHINE MARITIME DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND PETRON CORPORATION THAT CAUSED THIS ENVIRONMENTAL TRAGEDY

WHEREAS on 11 August 2006, the 298-ton MT Solar I bound for Zamboanga Del Sur sank off the southwestern coast of Guimaras Island;

WHEREAS the sunken MT Solar I was carrying two million liters of bunker oil, of which some 200,000 to 300,000 liters leaked out into the sea, polluting 200 kilometers of the coastline of Guimaras Island that resulted in the destruction of local marine resources and the deprivation of sources of food and livelihood of the local community;

WHEREAS MT Solar I is owned by Sunshine Maritime Development Corporation and was chartered by Petron Corporation;

WHEREAS on 23 August 2006 during the Thirteenth Congress, Sen. M. A. Madrigal filed Senate Resolution No. 552 directing the Committee on Public Services to conduct an investigation on the oil spill in Guimaras Island;

WHEREAS Senate Resolution No. 552 was referred to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, Committee on Public Services and Committee on Finance that jointly conducted an investigation on the said oil spill;

WHEREAS the Special Board of Marine Inquiry released a report finding the owner and charterer of MT Solar I to be negligent and recommended to the Department of Justice the filing of appropriate criminal cases against the owners and officers of Sunshine Maritime Development Corporation and Petron Corporation;

WHEREAS the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, Committee on Public Services and Committee on Finance did not release a report of its findings regarding the Guimaras oil spill;

WHEREAS one year has passed and yet no criminal charges against the officers of Sunshine Maritime Development Corporation and Petron have been filed in court. Moreover, the case filed by the local government officials and affected fisherfolks of Guimaras Island last 2 March 2007 was dismissed by the Provincial Prosecutor of Iloilo;

WHEREAS the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA) and the Iloilo-based group Save our Lives, SOS! Panay and Guimaras, in consultations with the residents of Guimaras, found out that the oil spill has reduced the fish catch by almost 90% even as health and environmental hazards still affect the entire island;

WHEREAS Guimaras residents have also complained that Petron Corporation buried the oil debris in a shallow area near the coast of the island, contrary to the claim of the oil firm that it had shipped out the oil collected for the use of a cement manufacturing plant in Misamis Oriental;


WHEREAS despite the report of the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund (IOPCF), the London-based intergovernmental agency that indemnifies oil spill victims, that it has already paid P177 million, many affected residents and fisherfolk in Guimaras say they have not received their claims for damages. On the other hand, the IOPCF allowed Petron Corporation to reimburse P118 million allegedly for the costs of the clean up;

WHEREAS the Department of Budget Management has allocated P863 million for the rehabilitation of Guimaras Island;

WHEREAS so far only 30% of this budget was released and the remaining 70% that was promised to be released after the May 2007 election has still to be released;

WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, the Committee on Public Services and the Committee on Finance to investigate, in aid of legislation, the continuing adverse effects of the oil spill on Guimaras Island, the reported non-payment of claims for damages of the affected residents, and the apparent lack of interest of local government officials in prosecuting the responsible officers of Sunshine Maritime Development Corporation and Petron Corporation that caused this environmental tragedy.

Adopted,


M. A. MADRIGAL