


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

8 MAY -6 2010

SENATE
P.S. Reso. No. **386**

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senators Lapid, Lacson, Aquino and Roxas

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON GAMES, AMUSEMENT AND SPORTS OF THE SENATE TO INQUIRE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED UNDUE INTERFERENCE OF THE GAMES AND AMUSEMENT BOARD (GAB) INTO THE POWERS, FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF THE BILLIARDS AND SNOOKER CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES, A DULY RECOGNIZED NATIONAL SPORTS ASSOCIATION (NSA), WITH THE END IN VIEW OF REVIEWING AND AMENDING THE PERTINENT PROVISIONS OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 871 AND OTHER RELATED LAWS DEALING WITH GAMES AND SPORTS

Whereas, the Billiard & Snooker Congress of the Philippines (BSCP) is the governing body for the sport of billiards and snooker in the Philippines. It is a private sports organization, recognized as the National Sport Association (NSA) for billiards and snooker by the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC);

Whereas, the Billiards & Snooker Congress of the Philippines scheduled a billiards tournament inviting, among others, top Filipino and foreign cue artists from around the world to be held on May 6-11 at Mandaluyong City and dubbed as "A Poll Journey Through the Archipelago." Aptly titled "the Mandaluyong Mayor's Cup, the tournament is the inaugural event of the Philippine Pool Tour which is a joint project of the association with strategic cities in the country;

Whereas, said event is in danger of being postponed because of the Games and Amusements Board's directive ordering the promoters to register and secure a license from GAB before staging the same under pain of sanction from the said agency;

Whereas, according to reports, this is not the first time that the GAB issued such directive. In 04 April 2008, the GAB issued a directive to Star Billiard Center, a partner organization of BSCP, ordering its owner to register and secure a permit for a pool tournament that it scheduled for that month, threatening to suspend the promoter and players if they will stage or join the qualifying games and tournament not licensed or supervised by the GAB. It is worth mentioning that said tournament had been running for many years without interference from the government much less the GAB;

Whereas, in said directive, GAB chairman Eric Buhain categorically stated that the GAB is the only national government agency under the Office of the President mandated to regulate and supervise all sports and games in the country;

Whereas, GAB's Resolution No. 98-10, entitled "Adopting Policy Guidelines for the Exercise of the Regulatory and Supervisory Powers of the Games and Amusement Board over Professional Sports" mandated that all tournaments offering cash prizes must secure an authority from the agency, and that all players joining the tournament are considered *de facto* professionals and must therefore secure a GAB license;

Whereas, to make matters worst, in a memorandum dated March 17, 2008, the GAB alleged that it has authority to supervise and regulate the selection of Filipino players for international competition, even in qualifying tournaments without cash prizes;

Whereas, according to the BSCP, the actions and directives of the GAB is not only discriminatory as such is not being applied to all sports and games but also impinges on sports freedom, contrary to the principle of open sports that has been recognized internationally since the 1992 Olympics;

Whereas, the BSCP maintains that considering the circumstances when Presidential Decree No. 871 entitled "Placing Professional Basketball Games and other Professional Games under the Supervision and Regulation of the Games and Amusements Board was issued by then President Marcos, i.e., the era when game fixing and point shaving in professional basketball was rampant, which incidentally is the law being cited by the GAB as its source of authority, the organization is of the view that the PD merely covers professional basketball and other professional games (professional boxing, horseracing and cockfighting) but not sports in general;

Whereas, BSCP also argues that the GAB's basis for distinguishing professional players and amateur players – namely, playing with a salary or competing in an event that offers prize money has been overtaken by the era of open sports;

Whereas, under the era of open sports, it is a settled principle that an athlete becomes a professional for being paid to play and not for competing in an event with a cash prize and that a league tournament becomes professional because it explicitly desires to be classified as professional;

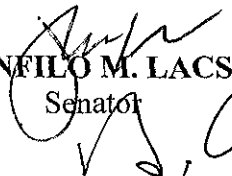
Whereas, BSCP further contends that the demands of GAB that billiards players should secure a license annually in the amount of P950 is an unreasonable imposition on the tens of thousands of Filipino billiard players, who can hardly make ends meet;

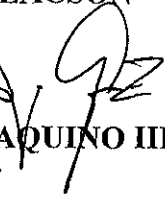
Whereas, it seems that the GAB decision to supervise and regulate the sport of billiards is based mainly on its desire for revenues as it seeks from tournament organizers license fees, a percentage of gate receipts and a share of television revenues;

Whereas, this is an unfortunate and regrettable development in the promotion and further growth of billiards as a major sport wherein more and more Filipinos are trying to excel;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved to direct the Committees on Games, Amusement and Sports of the Senate to investigate, in aid of legislation on the reported interference by the GAB on the work of a duly recognized national sports association, with the end in view of providing remedial legislations that will clearly define the jurisdiction and authority of the GAB over national sports associations thereby further promoting sports freedom in the country.

Adopted,


PANFILO M. LACSON
Senator


BENIGNO S. AQUINO III
Senator


MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID
Senator


MAR A. ROXAS
Senator