

Republic of the Philippines  
Congress of the Philippines  
Senate

Manila City

Eighteenth Congress

First Regular Session



RESOLUTION No. 43

RESOLUTION AMENDING RULE XI, SECTION 22 AND  
RULE XIV, SECTION 41 OF THE RULES OF THE  
SENATE TO ALLOW THE CONDUCT OF PLENARY  
SESSIONS AND COMMITTEE HEARINGS THROUGH  
TELECONFERENCE, VIDEO CONFERENCE, OR  
OTHER RELIABLE FORMS OF REMOTE OR  
ELECTRONIC MEANS

WHEREAS, on 8 March 2020, President Rodrigo R. Duterte issued Proclamation No. 922, declaring a state of public health emergency throughout the Philippines due to the outbreak of the Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) and enjoining all government agencies and local government units to "render full assistance and cooperation, and mobilize the necessary resources to undertake critical,

urgent, and appropriate response and measures in a timely manner to curtail and eliminate the Covid-19 threat;

WHEREAS, on 16 March 2020, the President also issued Proclamation No. 929 declaring a state of calamity throughout the Philippines for a period of six (6) months, unless earlier lifted or extended as circumstances may warrant. The proclamation also imposed an Enhanced Community Quarantine throughout Luzon, including the National Capital Region, beginning midnight of 17 March 2020 until 2 April 2020;

WHEREAS, the imposition of Enhanced Community Quarantine prohibits mass gatherings, and mandates the suspension of mass public transport facilities, observance of strict home quarantine in all households, and restrictions on movement and travel except those relating to accessing basic necessities like food and medicine, or the provision of health and emergency frontline services, border control, banking and finance, public utilities, and other critical services;

WHEREAS, despite government interventions, the number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 continues to rise, with the latest count of confirmed cases at 7,579 as of 26 April 2020, and this is expected to continuously increase following the broadening of the country's capacity to test more patients not only in the capital but in other regions as well;

WHEREAS, the imposition and extension of an Enhanced Community Quarantine in the National Capital Region and specified provinces, until the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2020, and its attendant limitations should not prevent Congress from exercising its Constitutional mandate to enact laws and authorize appropriations, especially those necessary for the National Government to respond to this national emergency while ensuring the safety and well-being of the affected population;

WHEREAS, Article VI, Section 16(3) of the Constitution allows each House of Congress to determine the rules of its proceedings: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate, To amend Rule XI, Section 22 and Rule XIV, Section 41 of the Rules of the Senate, to read as follows:*

"RULE XI  
MEETINGS AND REPORTS OF  
THE COMMITTEE

"SEC. 22. Every committee shall determine the frequency of its regular meetings. If it so desires, a committee may choose to hold its meetings or hearings on a weekend.

"The committee may conduct meetings or hearings through teleconference, video conference, or other reliable forms of remote or electronic means, using appropriate information and communications technology systems due to *force majeure* or occurrence of an emergency as determined by the majority of all the Members of the Senate which may prevent the senators from physically attending the committee meetings or hearings.

"xxx

"xxx

"RULE XIV  
SENATE SESSION

"xxx

"SEC. 41. The President, after consultation with the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader, respectively, may:

"(a) Postpone the holding of the session on a day to day adjournment, or

“(b) Convene and hold the session through teleconference, video conference, or other reliable forms of remote or electronic means, using appropriate information and communications technology systems, due to *force majeure* or the occurrence of a national emergency as determined by the majority of all the Members of the Senate which may prevent the convening of the Senate or the physical presence of its members in the session hall.

“Notwithstanding the foregoing, senators who elect to be physically present during the holding of teleconference session may personally attend and participate in the said session inside the plenary hall.”

*Resolved, further,* That the Secretary of the Senate shall recommend the appropriate information and communications technology system and, upon the Senate President’s approval, oversee the setting up thereof;


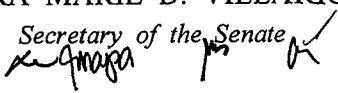
*Resolved, finally,* That the Secretary of the Senate shall provide for relevant safety measures to protect the integrity of the plenary session and committee hearings, the security and reliability of the technology used, and the proper archiving of the audio-visual or electronic recording of the sessions and hearings as part of the records of the Senate.

Adopted,



VICENTE C. SOTTO III  
*President of the Senate*

This Resolution was adopted by the Senate on  
May 4, 2020.

  
MYRA MARIE D. VILLARICA  
*Secretary of the Senate*  


0