

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines
Senate
Manila City

Nineteenth Congress

Second Regular Session



RESOLUTION NO. 118

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND SYMPATHY
AND SINCERE CONDOLENCES OF THE SENATE ON
THE DEATH OF FORMER SENATOR RENE SAGUISAG

WHEREAS, the Honorable Senator Rene Augusto Verceluz Saguisag, a dedicated public servant, a staunch defender of human rights, and a true patriot, passed away on 24 April 2024 at the age of 84;

WHEREAS, Senator Saguisag was born on 14 August 1939 in Mauban, Quezon. He obtained both his Bachelor of Arts and Law degrees with honors from San Beda College in 1959 and 1963, respectively, and placed 6th in the 1963 Bar Examinations. He acquired his Master of Laws degree from Harvard University in 1968 under a full scholarship;

WHEREAS, while attending his undergraduate and Law classes at San Beda from 1959 to 1962, he worked as a checker, laborer, construction site guard, and messenger. He started out his legal career as a student researcher, then associate, and eventually a part-time member of Ledesma, Guytingco, Velasco, and Saguisag from 1962 to 1972. He also became a member of the San Beda Law Faculty from 1961 to 1972;

WHEREAS, prior to becoming a legislator, he had a long, illustrious career as a lawyer and human rights defender. He provided legal assistance to victims of human rights abuses during the Martial Law period. He was also a prominent member of the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) founded in 1974 by former Senators Jose W. Diokno and Lorenzo Tañada, which handled various cases against law enforcers accused of killing peasants, activists, and journalists. Senator Saguisag and other FLAG lawyers would eventually start the Movement of Attorneys for Brotherhood, Integrity, and Nationalism, Inc. (MABINI), whose cases have led to landmark Supreme Court decisions;

WHEREAS, following the 1986 EDSA Revolution, he rose to further prominence when he was appointed as spokesperson of then President Corazon Aquino. The following year, he decided to run for Senator without having to spend a single centavo during the election;

WHEREAS, he served as Senator from 1987 to 1992 and was Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Ethics and Privileges and the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. He co-authored landmark pieces of legislation to uphold the integrity and highest standards in public service, such as Republic Act No. 6713 or the "Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees" and Republic Act No. 6770 or the "Ombudsman Act of 1989". During his term, he attended all 415 days of Session and was one of the "Magnificent 12" who voted to remove American military bases from Philippine soil in 1991;

WHEREAS, after his career as a legislator, he devoted his time and talents as an ardent advocate for human rights, the rule of law, democracy, and good governance. He was appointed by then President Joseph Estrada to head the *Ad Hoc* and Independent Citizen's Committee (AHICC) to investigate the alleged irregularities relating to the activities and projects in celebration of the Philippine Centennial. He was also a prolific writer, and shared his opinion and expertise on important national issues, current affairs, and even on sports development in his TGIF column in the Manila Times, Philippine Daily Inquirer, and other newspapers. He continued to shape the legal minds of young Filipinos through his work as a professor of Constitutional Law and Human Rights Law at San Beda College in Mendiola and Alabang;

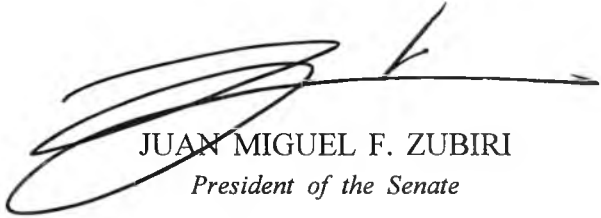
WHEREAS, during the celebration of *Araw ng Kagitingan* on 9 April 2024, which was among his last public engagements, Senator Saguisag was honored by the Bantayog ng mga Bayani Foundation as one of the 13 Haligi ng Bantayog. He served as a trustee of said foundation from 1998 to 2000;

WHEREAS, Senator Saguisag was unwavering in his fight for justice and human rights throughout his life. He was humble, competent, and had an unimpeachable dedication to serve the Filipino people, especially the poor and disenfranchised;

WHEREAS, Senator Saguisag's enduring legacy rightfully earns him a place in the annals of our nation's history and serves as a beacon to current and future public servants and legal practitioners. His passing is a great loss not only to his bereaved family but to the entire nation: Now, therefore, be it

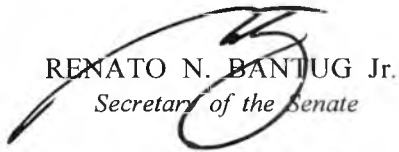
Resolved by the Senate of the Philippines, To express its profound sympathy and sincere condolences on the death of former Senator Rene Saguisag.

Adopted,



JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI
President of the Senate

This Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 7, 2024.



RENATO N. BANTUG Jr.
Secretary of the Senate

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