

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines
Senate

Manila City

Nineteenth Congress

Third Regular Session



RESOLUTION No. 226

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND
SYMPATHY AND SINCERE CONDOLENCES OF
THE SENATE ON THE DEMISE OF FORMER
SENATOR SANTANINA "NINA" TILLAH RASUL

WHEREAS, the Honorable Santanina "Nina" Tillah Rasul, who made history as the first Muslim to be elected Senator and as the only Muslim woman to serve in the Philippine Senate, passed away on November 28, 2024, at the age of 94;

WHEREAS, a native of Sulu, the favored muse of National Artist Napoleon Abueva and acclaimed artist Irineo Miranda was truly the portrait of a "Tausug Princess", having led a noble life of purpose and service;

WHEREAS, the life of Senator Rasul was remarkably progressive in every aspect, including her marriage with Ambassador Abraham Rasul, Sr., with whom she shared six children and eleven grandchildren, who were nurtured by the couple with the same love for community, service, and country;

WHEREAS, a staunch advocate of education, equality, and peace, her devotion to public service began even before she held public office and extended beyond her tenure as an elected official — from being a public school teacher, barrio councilor, provincial board member, Commissioner for the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, to being a Senator and a lifetime literacy champion through the *Magbassa Kita* Foundation;

WHEREAS, a true intellectual, she graduated valedictorian at Laum, Tabawan Elementary School, first honor at Sulu High School, and *cum laude* at the University of the Philippines with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. She also earned a master's degree in National Security Administration from the National Defense College of the Philippines and doctoral units in Public Administration from the U.P. College of Public Administration;

WHEREAS, embodying the adage that those who do not seek power are best suited to wield it, she was invited to join the senatorial slate of President Corazon Aquino and was the first Muslim to be elected and re-elected to the Senate, blazing a trail for all women and Muslims;

WHEREAS, her legacy lives on in the measures that she championed as a legislator, such as Republic Act No. 6850, more commonly known as the "Rasul Law", which grants civil service eligibility to government employees who have worked in a career civil service position for at least seven years; Republic Act No. 7192 or the "Women in Development and Nation Building Act", which dismantled gender discrimination, opened the doors of the Philippine Military Academy to women,

and allocated funds for women in all government agencies; Republic Act No. 6949, which declared March 8 of every year as "National Women's Day"; Republic Act No. 7168, which elevated the Philippine Normal College to Philippine Normal University; and the provisions on women's representation in local legislative bodies contained in the Local Government Code;

WHEREAS, Senator Rasul successfully pushed for landmark reforms on education, the rights of women, marginalized communities, and Filipino Muslims, armed not just with brilliance, but also with her trademark diplomacy and motherly charisma, earning her the title, "*Puso ng Senado*";


WHEREAS, a true advocate of literacy, she established the *Magbassa Kita* Foundation in the 1960s, dedicating herself to her lifelong mission of teaching non-literate adults in Mindanao to read. She also authored the law that created the Literacy Coordinating Council, and was fittingly appointed Honorary Ambassador of the UNESCO in 1990, during the International Literacy Year;

WHEREAS, Senator Rasul's role as part of the government panel that negotiated the signing of the peace agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front in 1996, is an outstanding example of what can be achieved when women are given the space to participate meaningfully in political affairs and decision-making, and are made an indispensable part of crafting wholistic and empathic solutions for resolving conflict and building lasting peace;

WHEREAS, Senator Rasul, whose life and legacy are marked by courage, intellectual prowess, and tireless dedication to public service, has left an indelible imprint, deserving of the deepest respect and heartfelt appreciation of this Chamber and the Filipino nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the Philippines, To express its profound sympathy and sincere condolences on the demise of former Senator Santanina "Nina" Tillah Rasul.

Adopted,



FRANCIS "CHIZ" G. ESCUDERO

President of the Senate

This Resolution was adopted by the Senate on December 3, 2024.



RENATO N. BANTUG Jr.

Secretary of the Senate

