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SENATE
Resolution No. **923**

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Introduced by **Senator Richard J. Gordon**

**A RESOLUTION
COMMENDING DOCTORS VIETREZ PANGANIBAN DAVID-ABELLA, MENNIE
CABACANG AND AFDAL KUNTING FOR THEIR EXEMPLARY SERVICE IN
PROVIDING MUCH NEEDED MEDICAL SERVICES IN DEPRESSED AND
UNDERSERVED RURAL AREAS IN THE COUNTRY**

WHEREAS, the Philippines' health care delivery system is now nearing collapse due to a shortage of doctors brought about by the increasing number of Filipino doctors leaving for better career opportunities overseas, rising trend of Filipino doctors retraining as nurses and fewer young Filipinos taking up medicine due to the high cost of a medical education;

WHEREAS, as evidence of this phenomenon, the Philippine Star, in its 11 August 2008 issue, citing former Health Secretary Jaime Galvez-Tan, reported that 120 municipalities nationwide at this time are without doctors;

WHEREAS, in the same article, the Philippine Star reported that as an offshoot of the acute lack of doctors in our country, seven out of ten sick Filipinos die for want of medical attention;

WHEREAS, due the rising trend of migration of Filipino doctors, only a number of doctors choose to remain in our country, an even fewer number opt to serve in far-flung rural areas serving the poorest of the poor in highly impoverished municipalities;

WHEREAS, Doctors Vietrez Panganiban David-Abella, Mennie Cabacang, and Afdal Cunting are among the select few who have volunteered their services and risen to the occasion by providing medical services to far-flung rural municipalities;

WHEREAS, Doctor Vietrez Panganiban David-Abella is a prolific health advocate organizing various public health projects in her locale, initiating the Catanduanes Breast

Cancer Support Group, cofounding the Virac Ladies Circle and actively participating in various medical missions and outreach programs including blood donation drives;

WHEREAS, Dr. Mennie Cabacang, a four-time recipient of the Green Banner Award, immediately after obtaining her medical license in 2003, practiced as a rural doctor in Maslog Leyte, the poorest and farthest municipality of Eastern Samar, and through her advocacy led Maslog to become the first municipality in Eastern Samar to offer the benefits provided for under Republic Act No. 7305, otherwise known as the Magna Carta of Public Health Workers, to all health workers in her municipality;

WHEREAS, Dr. Afdal B. Kunting is a teacher, community organizer and rural doctor who was instrumental in the creation of the Family Health Guardian Program of the Ateneo Medical Assistance for Doctorless Areas (AMADA), who participated in various health programs in the province and who successfully lobbied for the technology transfer of the Biosand filter water purification system and the solar disinfection of water;

WHEREAS, these three doctors have given up the promise of personal comfort and profit in the spirit of true service and by doing so they are present day heroes who have saved countless lives and have rendered exemplary service worthy of recognition; *Now therefore be it.*

RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Philippine Senate proudly notices and hereby commends Doctors Vietrez Panganiban David-Abella, Mennie Cabacang, and Afdal Cunting for their exemplary dedication and service above self in attending to the medical needs of the depressed and underserved communities in the country;

Adopted,



RICHARD J. GORDON