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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 345

RECEIVED BY:

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,  
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE LACUNA IN THE CLIMATE CHANGE ACT, WHICH  
CONTRIBUTES TO THE LAW'S INSUFFICIENCY IN MITIGATING THE ADVERSE  
EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 16 mandates: "The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature";

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9729, also known as the Climate Change Act of 2009, Section 2 recognizes that climate change and disaster risk reduction are closely interrelated, and therefore, effective disaster risk reduction will enhance climate change adaptive capacity; hence, the State shall integrate disaster risk reduction into climate change programs and initiatives;

WHEREAS, based on a 6 January 2011 article in Bulatlat.com, unabated environmental destruction will aggravate the effects of climate change in the country;

WHEREAS, according to Dr. Teresita R. Perez, director of the Ateneo De Manila University's Department of Environmental Sciences, global warming adversely affects energy, agriculture, health, water and marine resources;

WHEREAS, the downstream effects of climate change include extreme changes in the weather and the rise of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere which would reduce the harvests of farmers, cause habitat degradation and species loss, epidemics and diseases, kill corals, and disrupt carbonate chemistry;

WHEREAS, these effects are aggravated by the environmental crisis brought about by large scale plunder of the environment;

WHEREAS, according to Dr. Giovanni Tapang, chairman of Agham (Science and Technology for the People), the large scale plunder of the environment benefits only a small segment of society while generating large scale effects on society; the rapid destruction of the environment is a direct result of the unchecked appropriation of the world's resources for the benefit of a few;

WHEREAS, Rosario Bella Guzman, executive editor of Ibon Foundation, also blamed the anarchic system of production that involves production planning not based on people's needs including the unsustainable balance of consumption;

WHEREAS, the Climate Change Act of 2009 (CCA), which was supposed to curb environmental destruction and protect the country from the adverse effects of climate change has identified gaps and limitations;

WHEREAS, based on a statement by the Center for Environmental Concerns (CEC), the CCA falls short of essential elements in adaptation and mitigation strategies, and ineffective in building a climate resilient nation;

WHEREAS, the CCA aims to address the vulnerability of poor communities to climate change; however, the government's existing laws, policies, and development projects are contradicting since it allegedly intends to stop deforestation but also promotes large-scale mining;

WHEREAS, while the CCA's National Framework and Strategy acknowledges the decline in agriculture and food security, the law does not mention land reform as a crucial adaptation measure to climate change;

WHEREAS, farmers have traditional knowledge on what crops to plant that can adapt to climate change; they also have farming practices that could adapt to the effects of climate change such as a crop diversification system and seasonal climate forecast;

WHEREAS, studies have shown that if the ownership and control of farmers over their land are stable, it allows them to be more flexible in the face of a rapidly changing climate; they could decide what plants to cultivate in what season and what technology to use that will give them the maximum yield with the least impact on the environment;

WHEREAS, the CCA also grants authority to the Climate Change Commission to recommend key development investments in climate sensitive areas; its National Framework Strategy identifies the development of a competitive energy investment climate as part of its mitigation strategy; this resulted to the International Financing Institutions (IFIs) making a business out of the issue of climate change;

WHEREAS, since the government relies on IFIs to finance climate change mitigation programs, the latter allegedly uses this as leverage to push for policies that would enable multinational corporations to earn more profits; this reliance will ultimately make the country vulnerable to the increasing debt-burden, privatization of key industries and social sectors, speculation and financial instability, and corruption;

WHEREAS, according to environmental groups, for as long as solutions to climate change are dictated by developing countries, which are also the major culprits of climate change, these initiatives are bound to fail;

WHEREAS, in confronting the climate crisis, the government has to first satisfy basic human needs, economic and social development, and adequate energy and infrastructure;

WHEREAS, it is imperative for the state to come up with a solution based on the people's welfare and interests; the government needs to initiate a radical shift in its overall framework to one that has a basic appreciation of the root of the current crisis, that would identify who are responsible and thus must be held accountable, and that deals with climate change not simply as an environmental crisis;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation, on the lacuna in the Climate Change Act, which contributes to the law's insufficiency in mitigating the adverse effects of climate change.

Adopted,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  
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