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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

RESOLUTION

URGING THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-TUBERCULOSIS CAMPAIGN VIS-À-VIS THE REPORTED HIGH INCIDENCE OF DRUG-RESISTANT TUBERCULOSIS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND IN FACT, THE SECOND HIGHEST AMONG COUNTRIES WITHIN THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION PER THE REPORT OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF CREATING HEALTH PROGRAMS THAT WILL FACILITATE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF ANTI-TUBERCULOSIS VACCINES AND CHEAP MEDICINES TO ALL FILIPINOS

Whereas, Article II Section 15 of the Philippine Constitution states, "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill consciousness among them";

Whereas, the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) reported on May 16, 2000 an alarming health concern citing that one third of the people in the world are believed to be carrying the tuberculosis (TB) microbe, jeopardizing over 8 million disease carriers a year;

Whereas, tuberculosis (TB) is a known contagious lung disease which spreads through the air and is manifested through coughing and sneezing;

Whereas, a more severe variety of the TB, the multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) emerges as a current global concern since it is harder and more expensive to treat than the common variety of TB of the lungs thereby posing higher morbidity risks;

Whereas, the Philippines, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) – Western Pacific Region, ranks second highest in the Western Pacific region with cases of MDR-TB in 2007;

Whereas, WHO revealed that there are 60,000 new cases of drug-resistant TB in the Philippines in 2007 alone, subsequent to China with 112,000 new reported cases in that same year;

Whereas, relatively, Cambodia and Vietnam have lower cases of MDR-TB, recording 1000 patients and 3,000- 4,000 patients with TB respectively, in 2007, as reported during the World Stop TB Day on March 17, 2009;

Whereas, the implementation of good health programs and the availability of a powerful anti-TB drugs that had only been introduced during the past decade in Cambodia and Vietnam

were significant in controlling if not preventing the spread of TB cases in these countries, as discussed in a Business World article dated March 24, 2009;

Whereas, WHO advised the countries to strengthen their health systems to forestall contamination of the serious drug- resistant TB virus, since The San Diego Union-Tribune reported already about 500,000 new cases of drug-resistant TB every year which is about 5 percent of the 9 million new TB cases;

Whereas, the provision of good health programs as professed by Cambodia and Vietnam will significantly help in preventing the spread of the TB virus, such that our government should implement more comprehensive health programs to ease the people from the threat of TB;

Whereas, the government through the initiative of the Department of Health (DoH) as the primary government agency responsible for ensuring access to basic public health services to all Filipinos should provide for free anti-tuberculosis vaccination in all health centers at the barangays or at local governments;

Whereas, the government should also tap civil society groups particularly the local drug producers to supply cheap medicines needed by TB patients in "Botika sa Barangay" (BsB) outlets nationwide to make quality yet cheap medicines accessible to all Filipinos;

Whereas, there are already about 4,506 "Botika sa Barangay" outlets in 2005 extending from Batanes to the province of Jolo in Mindanao;

Whereas, the DoH in coordination with the local government must formulate comprehensive health programs to address the spread of TB as well as other serious diseases and also to educate the people on how they can prevent the risk of acquiring the tuberculosis virus;

Whereas, as part of the roster of developing countries, the Philippines is perceived to be more susceptible to the wide spread of the tuberculosis virus manifestly that the country ranks second highest with drug- resistant TB cases in Western Pacific region, hence it will certainly be significant for the government to devise stricter measures and implement health programs that will save the Filipinos from the peril of tuberculosis; NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Senate Committee on Health to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the government's anti-tuberculosis campaign vis-à-vis the reported high incidence of drug-resistant tuberculosis in the Philippines and in fact, the second highest among countries within the Western Pacific region per the report of the World Health Organization, with the objective of creating health programs that will facilitate the accessibility of anti-tuberculosis vaccines and cheap medicines to all Filipinos.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR
Senator