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SENATE  
P. S. Res. No. **965**

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

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**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON URBAN PLANNING, HOUSING AND RESETTLEMENT AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PRESENT CONDITIONS OF DORMITORIES AND BOARDING HOUSES VIS-À-VIS THE SAFETY OF THE OCCUPANTS FROM STRUCTURAL DEFECTS AND INHUMANE LIVING CONDITIONS WITH THE END-IN-VIEW OF PROVIDING REGULAR INSPECTIONS, PROMOTING SANITATION AND RECOMMENDING REMEDIAL POLICY MEASURES AIMED AT ASSISTING THE SAFETY OF SETTLERS, STUDENTS AND BOARDERS**

*Whereas*, the 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates the safety and protection of the citizens, as manifested in Article II Section 5: "The maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty, and property, and the promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all people of the blessings of democracy.";

*Whereas*, the area surrounding the Manila University Belt alone was documented by the local government of Manila to have at least hundreds of dormitories, housing students who by and large hail from provinces or distant areas and attend schools within the University Belt, if not around neighboring schools in the Metro;

*Whereas*, to ensure the safety and protection of the occupants which mostly are students, local governments in coordination with government units that impose compliance on the safety and facilitation of humane conditions in building establishments, have prescribed safety measures and imposed legal documentation requirements, such as Republic Act 6541, otherwise known as the "National Building Code of the Philippines," among other laws;

*Whereas*, news reports referring to year 2006 attest the comprehensive inspection conducted by the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) as instructed by Secretary Ronaldo Puno of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) on dormitories and boarding houses around the cities in Metro Manila to check their compliance with proper sanitary, fire and safety codes issued by the government;

*Whereas*, BFP ordered the closure of 12 out of 309 total dormitories or boarding houses that were inspected, after discerning that these student houses do not comply with the requirements and standards prescribed by law, after confirming that the dormitory owners' incessantly ignore the orders for compliance despite sufficient lead time given to them, as reported in the Manila Standard Today dated June 22, 2006;

*Whereas*, in addition, the inspectors have found a large number of dormitories that have violations against measures prescribed, the statistics of violators to wit: 118 dormitories in the

City of Manila, 1 dormitory in Caloocan, 4 in Pasay, 3 in Paranaque, 2 in Makati, 10 in Las Pinas, 1 in Muntinlupa and 2 dormitories in Mandaluyong;

*Whereas*, these statistics reveal that a large number of houses or buildings being resided mostly by the students lack abidance to safety standards and/ or proper documentations, jeopardizing the safety of the occupants;

*Whereas*, the following can be considered in the proposal for amendments to improve the conditions and ensure the safety of dormitories and boarding houses:

- there should be consciousness in relation to safety and the importance of attaining healthful living conditions within the community, emanating from the local officials, supported by offices assigned to ensure public health and safety, down to the barangay levels and accordingly the dormitory owners and its occupants at the end, to comply and ensure the attainment of a safe and accident-free neighborhood conducive for learning and well-being of the students living in dormitories
- regular inspections of student apartments, dormitories and boarding houses shall be conducted, whereby a schedule of regular inspection must be endorsed by the government, preferably during vacation just before the start of every school year to ensure the compliance of the dormitories with safety standards and building procedures
- to prevent occurrence of previous cases demonstrating neglect of duty of inspectors who were assigned by local government or government agencies to conduct inventory on the conditions of dormitories, the inspectors assigned should be motivated to live by the virtue of professionalism and commitment to public service in the performance of their duty, avoiding illegal arrangements that facilitate acceptance of bribery or favors from dormitory owners so as to prevent compromising the safety of the occupants
- an organized registration of dormitories and boarding houses should be endorsed by the government; hence obliging the housing owners to abide by the prescribed standards or otherwise shoulder the consequences bearing the accountability of their violation

*Whereas*, there should be comprehensive laws governing the protection of the occupants of dormitories and boarding houses including the facilitation of regular inspections to ensure the provision of proper sanitation facilities, proper ventilation, adequate fire protection and efficient lighting and electricity constituting to an affable and comfortable living condition for occupants;  
NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Senate Committee on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement and other appropriate committees to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the present conditions of dormitories and boarding houses vis-à-vis the safety of the occupants from structural defects and inhumane living conditions with the end-in-view of providing regular inspections, promoting sanitation and recommending remedial policy measures aimed at assisting the safety of settlers, students and boarders.

Adopted,

  
**MANNY VILLAR**  
Senator