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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 1208

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIVERSALLY
ACCESSIBLE CHEAPER AND QUALITY MEDICINES ACT OF 2008

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 5 states: “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 the people of the blessings of democracy”;

WHEREAS, Article 2, Section 15 of the same provides: “The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them”;

WHEREAS, Republic Act 9502 or the “Universally Accessible Cheaper and Quality Medicines Act of 2008” (Cheaper Medicines Law) recognizes that an effective competition policy in the drugs and medicines market is the primary instrument for the attainment of accessible and affordable quality drugs and medicines for all;

WHEREAS, the *Manila Bulletin*, in its 9 July 2009 issue, reported that prices of medicines in the Philippines were 40%-200% higher than those in neighboring countries prompted the passage of the Cheaper Medicines Law;

WHEREAS, the Cheaper Medicines Law was passed on 4 July 2008 and became effective two (2) weeks after the publication of its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) in November 2008;

WHEREAS, the IRR empowers the Department of Health Secretary to determine the “maximum retail prices” of drugs and medicines and to impose price regulations on certain products;

WHEREAS, news reports cited an opposition senator who claimed that the President, in conspiracy with multi-national drug companies, has temporarily kept critical drugs out of reach by the poor by delaying the issuance of an executive order implementing the DOH-recommended Maximum Retail Price (MRP) on 22 essential medicines;

WHEREAS, a Palace official in a news report was quoted saying that drug companies have the right to seek an audience and air their concerns to the President;

WHEREAS, after more than six (6) months of implementation, the law must be reviewed to determine whether it is moving in the right direction towards its goal of accessible and cheaper medicines for all;

WHEREAS, amidst reports that diminish the credibility of the implementing arm of the Cheaper Medicines Law, the agencies involved must be given the opportunity to present their accomplishments to-date and their plans for the attainment of the avowed purpose of the Cheaper Medicines Law;

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 implementation of the Universally Accessible Cheaper and Quality Medicines Act of 2008.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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