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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 1264

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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 EFFICIENCY OF THE POLICY OF  
DEVOLVING SLAUGHTERHOUSE OVERSIGHT AND MEAT INSPECTION TO  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS DUE TO REPORTS OF THE PRESENCE OF  
CHEMICALS AND TOXINS IN LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 15 declares: "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instil health consciousness among them";

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* in its 25 July 2009 issue reported that there is growing evidence that chemicals and toxins ingested by or injected into mass-produced livestock and poultry find their way to the dinner table;

WHEREAS, the report also said that these harmful substances play a bigger role in the increased incidence of aggressive diseases in humans;

WHEREAS, this was reportedly due to the need for faster livestock production in the agribusiness sector, which in turn resulted in practices that were unnatural and could set the breeding ground for new strains of viruses and toxins, according to Dr. Romy de Villa, dean, College of Medicine, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila;

WHEREAS, in an interview for the news article, Rosemarie Antegro of the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) said that the bureau is having difficulty in making sure that meat is safe from the harmful residues of substances like vaccines, drugs, and growth promoters because of BAI's limited control in overseeing slaughterhouses nationwide;

WHEREAS, Antenegro claimed that it was during the devolution of overseeing local slaughterhouses to municipalities and provinces called for the assignment of each of their own meat inspectors that foot and mouth disease became hard to control;

WHEREAS, the report cited an anonymous source that some producers of local processed meats like tapa or longganisa put in nitrates in the meat more than the appropriate proportion to preserve the product longer ;

WHEREAS, studies have shown that sodium nitrate reacts with stomach acid and other chemicals in the stomach to produce nitrosamines, which have been shown to cause cancer in animals when consumed in large quantities, and are carefully regulated in the production of cured products in other countries, limiting it to 200 parts per million or lower;

WHEREAS, the report said that, according to National Meat Inspection Service deputy director Minda Manantan, livestock raising falls almost entirely in the hands of

the farmer in most developing countries like the Philippines where 78 percent of total pig population are found in backyard farms;

WHEREAS, Manantan said that although there are farmers who have adopted modern methods and technologies for livestock raising, there are unscrupulous traders who introduce illegal methods of farming or harvesting;

WHEREAS, Dr. Jaime Montoya, executive director of the Philippine Council of Health Research and Development, said the country did not have local data of diseases attributable to consumption of animal products, but instead only receive case reports from doctors of patients contracting illnesses due to ingestion of specific types of food;

WHEREAS, legislation should be formulated or amended so that the devolution of meat inspection to local government offices would accomplish its goals at its fullest and that food safety would be ensured;

WHEREAS, the efficiency of local government certified meat inspection officers and the methodology of how they are selected and approved by the LGUs should be investigated so that a national food safety standards would be upheld;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved in the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation, on the efficiency of the policy of devolving slaughterhouse oversight and meat inspection to local government units due to reports of the presence of chemicals and toxins in livestock and poultry

Adopted,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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