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SENATE

P. S. Res. No. 1306

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO PARTNER WITH CONCERNED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, BUSINESS LEADERS AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS IN FORMULATING A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY ON THE PROPER COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF MERCURY-CONTAINING COMPACT FLUORESCENT LAMPS THAT WILL ADEQUATELY PROTECT OUR CONSUMERS FROM TOXIC HARM

Whereas, governments worldwide are encouraging consumers to use compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) over incandescent light bulbs because of their environmental and economic benefits;

Whereas, Argentina will forbid the selling and importing incandescent light bulbs starting December 31, 2010;

Whereas, in April 2007, the Canadian province of Ontario announced its government's intention to ban the sale of incandescent light bulbs by 2012;

Whereas, the United States enacted the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 in December 2007, requiring all general-purpose light bulbs that produce 310-2600 lumens of light be 30% more energy efficient (similar to current halogen lamps) than current incandescent bulbs by 2012 to 2014;

Whereas, Cuba exchanged all incandescent light bulbs for CFLs, and banned the sale and import of them in 2005;

Whereas, Venezuela phased out incandescent light bulbs in 2005;

Whereas, member states of the European Union (EU) agreed to a phasing out of incandescent light bulbs by 2012;

Whereas, Australia enacted a law in February 2007 that bans most sales of incandescent light bulbs by 2010;

Whereas, some thirteen million CFLs will be distributed throughout the country in the coming months as part of the government's "Switch to CFL" program to save on fuel costs and mitigate climate change;

Whereas, the program is the first nationwide program in Asia to replace incandescent bulbs with CFLs, making the Philippines the first country in the region to be incandescent bulb-free by 2010;

Whereas, CFLs consume up to 80% less energy than regular incandescent bulbs used by most households, thereby reducing carbon emissions;

Whereas, although much more expensive than incandescent bulbs, CFLs last up to ten times making them cheaper in the long run;

Whereas, using CFLs will also enable the country to save as much as P5 billion in fuel costs every year;

Whereas, the program will reduce the country's carbon emissions by 300,000 tons a year, thus allowing the Philippines to receive at least 200,000 tons of certified emission reduction credits annually;

Whereas, environmentalists have pointed to the toxic nightmare that large-scale use of CFLs can create because they contain mercury, a highly toxic metal;

Whereas, a factsheet on mercury in CFLs published by the US Environmental Protection Authority (USEPA), revealed that exposure to mercury can affect the brain, spinal cord, kidneys and liver, causing symptoms such as trembling hands, memory loss, among others;

Whereas, especially vulnerable to mercury exposure and contamination are pregnant women (including developing fetuses) and young children;

Whereas, mercury in products such as CFLs can be also released into the environment during breakage or when spent bulbs are improperly disposed such as by dumping or burning, causing the toxic metal to enter the environment and the food chain, with the potential to harm other living organisms, pose health risks to humans and the ecosystems;

Whereas, public awareness must not only cover the energy and climate benefits of CFLs, but also about the risk involved when it is accidentally broken, improperly discarded or incinerated;

Whereas, the nationwide switch to CFLs must be matched by a proactive program to reduce the risk of mercury exposure and contamination of humans and the environment: Now therefore be it

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to partner with concerned government agencies, local governments, business leaders and environmental groups in formulating a comprehensive policy on the proper collection and disposal of mercury-containing compact fluorescent lamps that will adequately protect our consumers from toxic harm.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR
Senator