

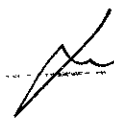
FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Third Regular Session )

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 1410

RECEIVED BY



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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 REPORTED NEED TO STRENGTHEN GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS ON THE MONITORING AND PREVENTION OF PREMATURE BIRTHS DUE TO THE REPORTED RISE OF PREMATURE BIRTHS WORLDWIDE

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

WHEREAS, various news agencies reported that according to a study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other health organizations entitled, "The Global and Regional Toll of Preterm Birth," nearly one out of ten childbirths are premature;

WHEREAS, it was reported that this rate represents an annual estimate of 13 million babies born at less than 37 weeks of gestation;

WHEREAS, the same study claimed that one million of that 13 million premature births die each year because they were born too early;

WHEREAS, the white paper also reveals that Africa and Asia together have the highest percentage of premature births with more than 85 percent of the nearly 13 million;

WHEREAS, seven million premature births in Asia were reported in the study;

WHEREAS, the study identified risk factors for premature birth, some of which are: having given birth to a premature infant in the past; the pregnant woman has an existing medical condition such as diabetes or high blood pressure; use of alcohol, illegal drugs, and/or tobacco by the expectant mother; lack of prenatal care; the pregnant woman is underweight or obese; presence of birth defects; and extremely high levels of stress;

WHEREAS, it was also reported that surviving infants born prematurely are at high risk of experiencing lifelong health problems including brain injury, blindness, hearing loss, learning disabilities, chronic lung disease, and other chronic conditions; other risks were also mentioned, and includes breathing difficulties, pneumonia, jaundice, immature gastrointestinal tract, anemia, an inability to maintain proper body temperature, and delayed brain development;

WHEREAS, the study was reportedly an attempt by the WHO and various health organizations to identify the scope of premature births and related infant deaths since many countries do not have reliable statistics on birth-related information, making it difficult to get an accurate idea of the magnitude of the issue;

WHEREAS, reports also said that the WHO is currently working to improve its database on premature birth rates to support further research efforts;

WHEREAS, the country needs to keep track of the number of premature births among birth-related statistics in order for the government to address the problem efficiently through decision based on empirical data, and in effect, strengthen and augment existing health programs and policies so that it would mitigate premature births and ensure the health of infants who survive premature birth;

WHEREAS, tracking these statistics will also help the government determine key areas of concern and soundly associate premature births with other health and social issues such as prenatal care poverty, malnutrition, alcoholism, and tobacco use, among others;

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 reported need to strengthen government programs on the monitoring and prevention of premature births due to the reported rise of premature births worldwide.

Adopted,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/ptmt