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SENATE

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND OTHER CONCERNED STATE AGENCIES TO STRATEGIZE AND INITIATE IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENDANCE, DISSEMINATE RELEVANT HEALTH BULLETINS AND INFORMATION AND FORMULATE APPROACHES TO CONTROL THE SURGING LEPTOSPIROSIS OUTBREAK IN AREAS AFFECTED BY TROPICAL STORMS "ONDOY," "PEPENG" AND OTHER CALAMITIES WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF IMPLEMENTING PREVENTIVE MEASURES TO AVERT THE SPREAD OF THE DISEASE

Whereas, the Philippine Constitution safeguards the people against diseases, the same which may be caused by natural calamities as provided by Article 11, Section 15, "[t]he State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them;"

Whereas, the effects of Tropical Storm "Ondoy" which brought menacing floods that distraught 333,188 families mainly the National Capital Region (NCR) and parts of Luzon on September 26, 2009, leaving 246 casualties¹, continue to manifest peril several weeks after, as that 700 cases of leptospirosis are reported being treated in four government hospitals in Metro Manila, according to a report in the Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI) on October 14, 2009;

Whereas, most of the patients being treated of leptospirosis, a bacterial infection caused by exposure to the urine of rats and other animals in floodwaters, came from Marikina, Pasay, Pasig, Mandaluyong and San Mateo in Rizal province which were submerged in floods at the height of "Ondoy";

Whereas, it is alarming that the disease has already caused 39 fatalities as of October 14, 2009;

Whereas, four government hospitals released a tally on the number of patients admitted and treated for leptospirosis since October 1, consequently days after the wallop of "Ondoy", to wit: 134 suspected cases at San Lazaro Hospital (SLH) in Manila with 20 deaths; 96 reported

¹ National Disaster Coordinating Council data, as of 29 September 2009, 3:00 pm

cases in East Avenue Medical Center (EAMC) in Quezon City with 19 deaths; 400 reported cases in Quirino Memorial Medical Center (QMMC) and 70 confined patients at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH);

Whereas, Dr. Rontgene Solante, a consultant at SLH and vice president of the Philippine Society of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases confirmed that the hospitals did not expect the surge of patients suspected to have leptospirosis, and a result of which is manifested in the lack of necessary supplies to deliver corresponding medical attention to the patients;

Whereas, it is complained that the hospitals had run out of beds, testing kits and life-saving dialysis machines;

Whereas, EAMC spokesperson Dr. Emmanuel Bueno expressed concern that most of the people who sought treatment were already showing signs of being in the advanced stage of leptospirosis, which contributes to the high risk in mortality of the patients

Whereas, local governments should be at the forefront in devising ways to control and decrease the risks posed by the outbreak of leptospirosis in the areas affected;

Whereas, the city government of Pasig has started delimiting the harmful effects that still flooded areas might bring to the residents by pouring several drums of chlorine into stagnant, dirty floodwaters in low-lying barangays to prevent the spread of diseases including leptospirosis;

Whereas, Pasig City Mayor Robert Eusebio explained that the chlorine treatment of floodwaters will reduce the concentration of disease-causing bacteria in floodwaters and thus make it less murky;

Whereas, the Department of Health (DoH) shall devise immediate assistance to contain the threatening outbreaks of leptospirosis especially in areas that are still flooded since "Ondoy" struck the Metro;

Whereas, a joint effort by the principal department of the government tasked to safeguard the health of the citizens, the local government units, and even private hospitals must be concerted to immediately address the increasing number of victims of leptospirosis and control the outbreak, NOW THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to recommend to the Department of Health and other concerned state agencies to strategize and initiate immediate medical attendance, disseminate relevant health bulletins and information and formulate approaches to control the surging leptospirosis outbreak in areas affected by tropical storms "Ondoy," "Pepeng" and other calamities with the objective of implementing preventive measures to avert the spread of the disease

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR
Senator