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SENATE

P. S. Res. No. 1473

INTRODUCED BY THE HONORABLE SENATOR MAR ROXAS

A RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND COMMERCE AND THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS TO JOINTLY CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE UNABATED PROBLEM OF ONION SMUGGLING AND ITS ILLEGAL COMMERCIAL TRADE IN THE COUNTRY, WITH THE END VIEW OF PROPOSING LEGISLATIVE MEASURES THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN ENFORCEMENT AGAINST ONION SMUGGLING AND DUMPING FOR THE BENEFIT AND PROTECTION OF THE COUNTRY'S ONION GROWERS AND FARMERS.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 1, Article XII of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, it is the duty of the State "to protect Filipino enterprises against unfair foreign competition and trade practices;"

WHEREAS, the unabated smuggling and dumping of onions into the country and its subsequent sale to the public is one such unfair trade practice that is adversely affecting the growth and development of the Philippine onion industry, particularly the onion farmers and growers;

WHEREAS, on 14 September 2009, a Joint Senate Committee already conducted a hearing to look into the problem of onion smuggling, through which hearing initial measures to prevent onion smuggling were made by Bureau of Customs officials; Notwithstanding the joint Senate hearing, however, the problem of onion smuggling still continues and persists according to newspaper reports;

WHEREAS, on 13 November 2009, a Philippine Daily Inquirer article by Dr. Ernesto M. Ordoñez detailed the arrival of thirteen (13) container vans of onions at the Subic Bay Freeport in September, all of which allegedly have no import permits and placed on alert by the Bureau of Customs head office;

WHEREAS, according to the article of Dr. Ordoñez, the thirteen (13) container vans of onions were all brought in by one company and that two (2) of these container vans were allowed to be released by a Subic Customs official through the amendment of the consignee's name and identification in the Inward Foreign Manifest in violation of Customs rules;

WHEREAS, according to the same article, there is tremendous pressure for the similar release of the remaining eleven (11) container vans of onions from Subic;



WHEREAS, recent reports made by Alyansa Agrikultura and the Katipunan ng mga Samahang Magsisibuyas ng Nueva Ecija (KASAMNE) reveal that onion smuggling has been ongoing unabatedly, not only in Subic but in other ports of entry as well;

WHEREAS, onion smuggling and dumping, as well as its illegal commercial trade, pose a real and genuine threat to the viability of the Philippine onion industry, which likewise seriously threatens the livelihood of small onion farmers;

WHEREAS, onion smuggling and dumping also injuriously affects the collection of the Bureau of Customs, which according to newspaper reports are already significantly below target;

WHEREAS, onion smuggling and the illegal dumping and commercial trade thereof have not been effectively addressed and, hence, remain unabated, unchecked, and unregulated by the proper government agencies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Senate Committee on Trade and Commerce and the Senate Committee on Ways and Means to jointly conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the unabated problem of onion smuggling and its illegal commercial trade in the country, with the end view of proposing legislative measures that would strengthen enforcement against onion smuggling and dumping for the benefit and protection of the country's onion growers and farmers.

Adopted,


MAR ROXAS
Senator