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Senate
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SENATE

P. S. Res. No. 60

RECEIVED BY: *Ji*

Introduced by Senator Ralph G. Recto

A RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE MASS TRANSIT ROADMAP OF THE GOVERNMENT, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF DETERMINING ITS VIABILITY AND ENSURING A SAFE, RELIABLE, EFFICIENT AND AFFORDABLE PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the Constitution mandates the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all;

WHEREAS, the first attempt at a mass transit framework was 120 years ago when *King Alfonso XII* of Spain directed on June 25, 1875 the Office of the Inspector of Public Works of the Philippines to submit a general plan of railroads that would move people and goods within the island of Luzon;

WHEREAS, the plan, which was submitted five months later by Don Eduardo Lopez Navarro, was entitled *Memoria Sobre el Plan General de Ferrocarriles en la Isla de Luzón*, and was promptly approved with the concession to build the railway going to Don Edmundo Sykes of the *Ferrocarril de Manila-Dagupan* on June 1, 1887;

WHEREAS, from the first commercial rail service that linked Manila to Dagupan in Pangasinan in 1891 and followed by the Bicol line, the country has yet to accomplish a working masterplan to efficiently move people and cargo through a state-run mass transit system throughout the archipelago;

WHEREAS, from 1954 to 1956, the Manila Railroad Company, the precursor of Philippine National Railways (PNR), converted its fleet of trains from steam into diesel engines and within the following decade, the Manila Railroad Company was given a new charter under Republic Act No. 4156, and the company changed its name to Philippine National Railways;

WHEREAS, the PNR is a state-owned railway system in the Philippines, organized under the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) as an attached agency;

WHEREAS, the Philippine railway network consists of one commuter rail service provided by the PNR, and a rapid transit system operated by the Light Rail Transit Authority and Metro Rail Transit Corporation (LRT-MRT);

WHEREAS, the three railway networks are integrated, which aims to provide a "reliable, seamless and integrated mass transit system that would be at par with international standards" through the unification of already-existing rail infrastructure under one transit system and fare structure;

WHEREAS, in 2007, the Philippine government initiated a rehabilitation project aiming to remove informal settlers from the PNR right-of-way, revitalize commuter services in Metro Manila, and restore the Manila-Bicol route as well as lost services in Northern Luzon;

WHEREAS, the aborted Northrail Project of the PNR was originally aimed at restoring rail service from North Luzon to Manila until it was deferred due to controversies;

WHEREAS, the Manila Light Rail Transit (MRT) System is the main metropolitan rail system serving the Metro Manila area of the country, consisting of two lines: the LRT-1 which runs from Baclaran in Paranaque to EDSA-Caloocan, called the Yellow Line, and the newer LRT-2, called the Purple Line, which links C.M. Recto Avenue to Santolan in eastern Metro Manila;

WHEREAS, the Manila Metro Rail Transit System has a single line called MRT-3 or the Blue Line, which was originally built to decongest Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA), one of Metro Manila's main thoroughfares;

WHEREAS, a P6-billion loop was built to link the LRT-1 system to MRT-3 in EDSA and unify the two elevated rail networks, which have yet to happen even after completion of the connecting rail structure in 2010;

WHEREAS, the elevated railway systems especially MRT-3 are nearing full capacity as commuters spill over in long queues during peak hours;

WHEREAS, the University of the Philippines (UP) has already inaugurated its automated guideway transit system that would serve as test track for the first mass transit system to be built and developed in the country by local engineers;

WHEREAS, plans are underway to build MRT-7, which would run from North EDSA to San Jose del Monte in Bulacan and to extend LRT-1 to Cavite province to introduce rail service to that Northern and Southern parts of Metro Manila, respectively;

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) has revived a 17-year-old plan to find ways to decongest Metro Manila and improve integration with nearby provinces through the Metro Manila Urban Transportation Integration Study Update and Capacity Enhancement Project (MUCEP);

WHEREAS, the MUCEP, first conceptualized in 1996 and to be implemented with the help of the World Bank, "aims to enhance productivity and quality of life of Metro Manila residents by improving the efficiency and safety of the transport system and access to public transport and non-motorized transport;"

WHEREAS, the DOTC also completed a two-year study aimed at making commuting in Metro Manila more fun as it makes it possible for commuters to plan their trips more efficiently and conveniently through its Philippine Transit Information Service (PTIS);

WHEREAS, to implement the recommendations of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) National Transport Policy and Planning Study, the Philippines-Australia Partnership for Economic Governance Reforms (PEGR) designed RA008-02 or "Formulating a National Transport Plan;"

WHEREAS, the AusAID report, completed in February 2009, summarizes the following four major items that need to be accomplished: 1) the National Transport Policy Framework (NTPF), 2) a Draft National Transport Plan (NTP), 3) a Draft Transport Policy Act (TPA), and 4) DOTC capacity building and organizational restructuring;

WHEREAS, during the short tenure of Secretary Jose de Jesus as DOTC chief, he proposed the following projects under the government's PPP program:

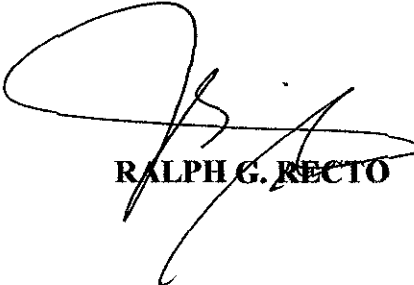
- MRT/LRT Expansion Program: Privatization of MRT 3 Operation and Maintenance;
- MRT/LRT Expansion Program: LRT 1 South Extension and Privatization through concession; and,
- MRT/LRT Expansion Program: Line 2 East Extension Project;

WHEREAS, the Philippines and the World Bank has signed agreements for a US\$60 million loan and a US\$1.3 million equivalent grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) today for the Metro Manila Transport Integration Project (MMURTRIP);

WHEREAS, a Senate inquiry is needed to revisit the weaknesses of the previous mass transit programs, avoid committing the same missteps and also look into the present mass transit road map of the government to determine its viability, particularly using rail system as the core of a holistic mass transit plan;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Philippine Senate, to direct the Senate Committee on Public Services to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the mass transit roadmap of the government, with the end in view of determining its viability and ensuring a safe, reliable, efficient and affordable public transit system.

Adopted,



RALPH G. RECTO