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SENATE  
P.S. Res. 102

RECEIVED BY: *ji*

Introduced by Senator Poe

**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE/S TO COMMENCE IMMEDIATELY A FULL DELIBERATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PROPOSED FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION ITS EFFECTS TO THE CITIZENS, EFFICIENCY IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE, AS A CRUCIAL FRAMEWORK TO PROMOTE INVESTMENTS FOR THE COUNTRY AND FOR MEANINGFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TWIN PRINCIPLES OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN THE BUREAUCRACY**

Whereas, the 1987 Philippine Constitution is recognized for its landmark provisions on accountability and transparency;

Whereas, our fundamental law provides “[t]he right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized. Access to official records, and to documents and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development, shall be afforded the citizen, subject to such limitations as may be provided by law” (Article III, Section 7);

Whereas, the significance of the right to information on matters of public concern is mirrored in the countless theses of some of the most respected leaders and political philosophers:

1. Thomas Jefferson said, “In every country where man is free to think and to speak, differences of opinion arise from difference of perception, and the imperfection of reasons; but these differences when permitted, as in a happy country, to purify themselves by discussion, are but as passing clouds overspreading our land transiently and leaving our horizon more bright and serene.”
2. John Stuart Mill, in explaining his “marketplace of ideas” stated, “no one’s opinions deserve the name of knowledge, except so far as he has either had forced upon him by others, or gone through of himself, the same mental process which could have been required of him in carrying on an active controversy with opponents.”
3. Former Senate President Blas Ople explained on the significance of integrating an umbrella statement in the Declaration of Principles that the government should be open and accessible to the public, “It establishes a concrete, ethical principle for the conduct of public affairs in a genuinely open democracy, with the the people’s right to know as the centerpiece.” (culled from the deliberations of the Constitutional Commission, 1987)

Whereas, in the portal [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com), it was stated that over ninety (90) countries around the world have implemented some form of Freedom of Information Act with Sweden’s Freedom of the Press of 1766 counted as the oldest FOI Law;

Whereas, the 1987 Philippine Constitution is known for its civil liberties provisions including the right of the press and the right of the people to information on matters of public concern (Section 4 and 7, Article III);

Whereas, the Philippine Senate in the Fifteenth Congress has passed on Third Reading a policy measure ordaining an equivalent Freedom of Information Act;

Whereas, after failing to pass in four Congresses, the advocates of the Freedom of Information Act took the route of reviving the policy measure via the process of direct initiative, a constitutional mechanism in which the citizens formally ask the Legislature to enact a law through a petition;

Whereas, the deliberation and the immediate consideration of the Freedom of Information is in order: Now therefore be it

RESOLVED, AS IT HEREBY RESOLVES, That the appropriate Senate Committee/s to commence immediately a full deliberation, in aid of legislation, on the proposed Freedom of Information Act taking into consideration its effects to the citizens, efficiency in government service, as a crucial framework to promote investments for the country and for meaningful implementation of the twin principles of accountability and transparency in the bureaucracy.

ADOPTED,

  
GRACE POE