

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )



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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 314

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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 FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO INTENSIFY ITS PROGRAMS ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, MITIGATION, AND RESPONSE, AS WELL AS STRENGTHEN ITS DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT PLANS IN LIGHT OF THE RECENT 7.2-MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE IN VISAYAS

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 5 provides: "Section 5. The maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty, and property, and promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy";

WHEREAS, various news agencies have reported on the 7.2-magnitude earthquake that hit Bohol, Cebu, and parts of Mindanao and southern Luzon last 15 October 2013, killing at least 180 people, leaving at least 580 people injured, displacing 676,000 families or almost 3.5 million individuals, causing centuries-old churches and modern buildings to crumble, disrupting power and phone services, and causing an estimated P867 million in infrastructure damage;

WHEREAS, it was reported that the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said the movement of the triggered the strongest quake in the Visayas in 23 years;

WHEREAS, experts from Phivolcs and the University of the Philippines National Institute of Geological Sciences (UP-NIGS) reportedly said that the earthquakes of that magnitude, particularly in Bohol and Cebu, are relatively rare events, and that other parts of the country are also due for similar quakes, considering the entire Philippine archipelago is earthquake-prone;

WHEREAS, experts from Phivolcs and UP-NIGS have lamented the lack of comprehensive knowledge about the country's numerous geologic faults, and pointed out that a newly-found fault might be the source of the Visayas earthquake since the faults found in Bohol and Cebu are not as active compared to other faults in the archipelago;

WHEREAS, it was also reported that, according to a recently released study funded by the Australian government, P2.4 trillion worth in damage to buildings, 37,000 persons fatalities, and 604,000 injuries would result if a 7.2-magnitude earthquake hits Metro Manila and nearby provinces sitting along the West Marikina Valley Fault;

WHEREAS, Phivolcs officials reportedly said that many buildings, particularly in the Metro Manila, remain unassessed for physical integrity versus strong earthquakes, and that the issue is that some of the buildings are non-engineered and most likely built without permits;

WHEREAS, officials and experts said that major lifelines like water and power supplies, and communication means should be strengthened and made fire and earthquake proof;

WHEREAS, the government should increase efforts in keeping up-to-date the country's earthquake hazard and risk maps, as well as the exposure database containing physical information, population, and socio-economic characteristics of earthquake-prone communities;

WHEREFORE, be it resolved by the Philippine Senate to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported need for the government to intensify its programs on disaster preparedness, mitigation, and response, as well as strengthen its disaster risk reduction and management plans in light of the recent 7.2-magnitude earthquake in Visayas.

Adopted,

*Miriam Defensor Santiago*  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  
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