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

SENATE
P.S.R. No. **400**

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON PROGRAMS AND MEASURES TO PROTECT WOMEN
AND CHILDREN FROM ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION IN EVACUATION CENTERS
DURING TIMES OF NATURAL AND MAN-MADE CALAMITIES

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 11 provides: "The State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights";

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 13 provides: "The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs";

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 14 provides: "The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building, and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men";

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 13, Section 1 provides: "The Congress shall give highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the right of all the people to human dignity, reduce social, economic, and political inequalities, and remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power of the common good";

WHEREAS, in an article posted on www.inquirer.net on 26 November 2013, entitled "Women, kids in danger in evacuation centers-Gabriela," the party-list group Gabriela warned that the crowded condition in evacuation centers, where people sought temporary shelter in the aftermath of supertyphoon Yolanda, makes women and children vulnerable to rape, trafficking, prostitution, and other forms of exploitation;

WHEREAS, according to Gabriela Rep. Luzviminda Ilagan, abnormal conditions during calamities have induced some people to exploit the vulnerable sectors of society; the party-list is reportedly verifying claims of abuse against women and children in provinces in Visayas devastated by supertyphoon Yolanda; there have been reports of alleged rape crimes in Leyte and Samar in the aftermath of Yolanda;

WHEREAS, according to Ilagan, when Mt. Pinatubo erupted in 1990, cases of prostitution in exchange for rice were reportedly documented in areas surrounding evacuation centers in Zambales;

WHEREAS, Gabriela urged the government to speed up the provision of basic social services to counter the risks of abuse on women and children; the lack of electricity in provinces affected by Yolanda allegedly makes nighttime more dangerous for women and children;

WHEREAS, Gabriela said that the number of abuses against women and children has been rising; in 2012, the Philippine National Police Women and Children Protection Center reported 15,969 cases of violence against women and children, and 5,180 cases of rape and

attempted rape;of these, 3,861 involved children and minors;another 249 cases of trafficking were also reported;

WHEREAS, the government should provide counselling, medical treatment, and legal aid to victims of abuse and exploitation in evacuation centers; alleged cases of abuse against women and children should be investigated and criminal cases filed against perpetrators;

WHEREAS, security in evacuation centers should be beefed up in order to protect women and children; there should be police officers, social workers, health professionals, and other government workers to attend to the needs of the evacuees; local governments should ensure that designated evacuation centers have adequate space, resources, and security for evacuees in times of calamities;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate committee, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation,on programs and measures to protect women and children from abuse and exploitation in evacuation centers during times of natural and man-made calamities.

Adopted,

MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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