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SENATE
P. S. R. No. **733**

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED ACCOUNTS OF CHILD LABOR AND
THE DANGEROUS CONDITIONS THE CHILD LABORERS EXPERIENCE IN DAVAO
CITY

WHEREAS, Presidential Decree No. 603, also known as the Child and Youth Welfare Code, Article 3, Section 8 states that, "Every child has the right to protection against exploitation, improper influences, hazards, and other conditions or circumstances prejudicial to his physical, mental, emotional, social and moral development";

WHEREAS, furthermore, Republic Act No. 9231 provides for the elimination of the worst forms of child labor and affording stronger protection for the working child;

WHEREAS, an article from Inquirer.net entitled "Child labor: Childhood spent on dangerous jobs" posted on 8 June 2014 reported a story of a 16-year old boy named Raymond who started selling vegetables at the local market when he was 8, and who, at that age, knew his parents needed help to bring food to the table and send his five siblings to school;

WHEREAS, it was reported that when he turned 11, he tried his luck by working in a bottle-recycling company cleaning dirty bottles, which was said to include submerging the bottles in water mixed with chemicals, causing his nails to have perforations because of it;

WHEREAS, he reportedly said it was not unusual for child laborers like him to get wounded because of the broken glass and it was very normal for them to have a fever because of infections from the wounds;

WHEREAS, by the time he was 14, it was reported that Raymond was already a worker for a fertilizer company where his job was to carry sacks of fertilizers weighing 50 kilograms;

WHEREAS, Raymond said he afterwards worked as a port laborer, manually filling sacks of pig feeds from a ship and carrying it down to the port where he was paid P1 per sack and worked from 7 in the evening to 4 in the morning, earning an average of P190 per day; according to him, that job was very hard and every night, he suffered from sore muscles and it was very painful;

WHEREAS, Raymond reportedly admitted that his parents had asked him to work and help the family but stressed that it was also his decision;

WHEREAS, Florie May Tacang, executive director of Kaugmaon for Children's Rights and Social Development, reportedly said that in the course of the group's monitoring and organizing work in the villages of Ilang, Tibungco, Panacan and Callawa in Davao City, the group was able to document and provide services to at least 383 child laborers;

WHEREAS, according to Tacang, the immediate need was to provide counseling to children and their parents;

WHEREAS, Tacang reportedly said that parents must not be blamed and urged the public and the government to look at the root causes—lack of access to education, lack of decent health service, insufficient opportunities, and poverty, among others;

WHEREAS, Tacang said her group is working closely with village officials to monitor and document cases of child labor;

WHEREAS, according to Tacang, some villages now have integrated child labor as issues that must be addressed by village councils for the protection of children, and she further added that efforts to address child labor must be recognized;

WHEREAS, the government should look into these cases of child labor despite the implementation of laws and international instruments that prohibit this form of child abuse;

WHEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE PHILIPPINE SENATE to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported accounts of child labor and the dangerous conditions the child laborers experience in Davao City.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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