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SENATE  
P.S.R No. 890

RECEIVED BY: 

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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 WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION REPORT ON THE  
INCREASING PREVALENCE OF TUBERCULOSIS IN CHILDREN WORLDWIDE

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 15, provides: “The State shall protect the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them”;

WHEREAS, tuberculosis is a contagious disease of the lungs caused by the microbe *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*;

WHEREAS, it was reported in a *Manila Bulletin* article, dated 9 July 2014 that the World Health Organization (WHO) found that twenty-five percent more children are falling ill with tuberculosis than initially projected for this year, with more than 650,000 hit by the disease each year in the 22 worst affected countries;

WHEREAS, the WHO reportedly said that about 53 million children under 15 are living with latent tuberculosis infection, a condition that can develop into active tuberculosis at any time;

WHEREAS, it was reported that millions of people are latent cases, meaning they are infected with the germ have yet to develop any symptoms;

WHEREAS, the WHO reportedly estimated there were 530,000 cases of active tuberculosis cases among children younger than 15 years in 2012, but it was also said that this estimate was based on reporting by paediatric doctors — a technique faulted by many experts as its methods and reliability vary hugely from country to country;

WHEREAS, it was reported that the new estimate is based on a mathematical model based on each of 22 countries where tuberculosis falls into the category of a high burden for health;

WHEREAS, the study’s findings suggested that about 7.6 million children younger than 15 in these 22 countries became infected in 2010; of these, nearly 651,000 developed the disease;

WHEREAS, lead author of the study Peter Dodd, of the University of Sheffield in northern England, reportedly said the figures pointed to the urgent need to focus help on children, using the drug isoniazid;

WHEREAS, the report quoted Dodd saying that data on children are an often ignored but important part of TB control efforts; and that quantifying the burden of tuberculosis in children is important because without good numbers, there can be no targets for improvement, no monitoring of trends, and would be a dearth of evidence to encourage industries to invest in developing medicines or diagnostics that are more appropriate for children than those available at present;

WHEREAS, Congress should strongly consider the results of the WHO study in order to strengthen existing legislation on awareness and treatment of tuberculosis, particularly in children;

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 World Health Organization report on the increasing prevalence of tuberculosis in children worldwide.

Adopted,

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MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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