


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SENATE

P. S. Res. No. 921

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION AND OTHER PERTINENT COMMITTEES OF THE PHILIPPINE SENATE, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE GROWING CRISIS IN THE COUNTRY'S NURSING PROFESSION, SUCH THAT CORRECTIVE MEASURES SHALL BE CRAFTED AND/OR REMEDIAL ACTIONS SHALL BE UNDERTAKEN, TO ONCE AND FOR ALL ADDRESS THE CONCERNS, PROBLEMS AND/OR ISSUES PERENNIALY AFFECTING THE PROFESSION

WHEREAS, Section 15, Article II of the Constitution declares that the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them;

WHEREAS, the people's right to health rests essentially on the capability of the state to deliver adequate and quality health care; and one of the key human resource sectors in the provision thereof is the nursing profession sector;

WHEREAS, in view of the foregoing, Republic Act No. 9173, otherwise known as the Philippine Nursing Act of 2002 was enacted, with the end in view of instituting measures that will result in relevant nursing education, humane working conditions, better career prospects and a dignified existence for our nurses;

WHEREAS, however, more than a decade following its passage, the deplorable working conditions of the nursing professionals in the country have grown worse, running counter to the above lofty policy declaration;

WHEREAS, last January 2014, the Professional Regulation Commission released the names of a new batch of 10,977 nurses who passed the December 2013 Licensure Examination, with the hope that they will not be an addition to the already more than 221,000 unemployed nurses in the country¹;

WHEREAS, despite the growing supply of nurses in the country, the ideal nurse to patient bed ratio of 1:4 is hardly met: many hospitals remain understaffed and ill-equipped to respond to the needs of our people for quality healthcare, and hundreds of thousands of registered Filipino nurses are unemployed;

WHEREAS, to illustrate, "in many government hospitals, a nurse usually handles more than 20 patients – often even more, like in the National Mental Health Center, where a ward nurse is made to take charge of an average of 80-100 psychiatric patients."²

¹ 'PRC releases nursing licensure exams results'. Information retrieved from on <http://www.sunstar.com.ph/breaking-news/2014/01/16/prc-releases-nursing-licensure-exams-results-323522> on 9/15/2014.

² 'RN Heals is essentially a form of exploitation'. Information retrieved from <http://opinion.inquirer.net/34924/rn-heals-is-essentially-a-form-of-exploitation#ixzz3Dl425et1> on 9/14/14.

WHEREAS, moreover, although the Nursing Law of 2002 expressly mandates that the entry-level salary grade of registered nurses in government hospitals is Salary Grade 15 or a starting monthly salary of more than Twenty Thousand Pesos³, the Department of Budget Management clarified that “its implementation would distort the hierarchical relationships of medical and allied positions, as well as other positions in the bureaucracy; and its implementation would also further strain the government coffers.”⁴

WHEREAS, hence, government hospitals are constrained not to fill up available plantilla positions and instead, employ “volunteer nurses” who become reluctant victims of peculiar employment schemes;

WHEREAS, in fact, many volunteer registered nurses who are actually eligible for entry-level positions, and who assume the full responsibilities of employed staff nurses such as workload and shift duties, do not receive the same rights and benefits accorded to staff nurses; worse, they are left with no recourse but to “volunteer” or undergo “training” in hospitals in exchange for payment of “training fees” to said hospitals;

WHEREAS, in view of all the foregoing, it is high time that the government address this long overdue neglect of the country’s nursing profession which has deprived our qualified and committed nurses of their right to job security and just compensation;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as it is hereby resolved by the *Philippine Senate* to direct the Committee on Civil Service and Government Reorganization and other pertinent committees of the Philippine Senate to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation on the growing crisis in the country’s nursing profession, such that corrective measures shall be crafted and/or remedial actions shall be undertaken, to once and for all address the concerns, problems and/or issues perennially affecting the profession.

Adopted,


ANTONIO “SONNY” F. TRILLANES IV
Senator

³ Based on the Salary Standardization Law 3.

⁴ Letter of the Department of Budget and Management to Rep. Leah S. Paquiz of Ang NARS Party-List, dated 26 May 2014.