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SENATE
P.S. Resolution No. 29

RECEIVED BY:

Introduced by: Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE EDUCATION OF YOUTH REGARDING THE MARTIAL LAW PERIOD AND HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES UNDER THE MARCOS REGIME WITH THE END VIEW OF PRESERVING MEMORY THROUGH HISTORICAL TRUTH-TELLING, PROTECTING OUR DEMOCRACY, AND PROMOTING A SENSE OF JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS AMONG YOUNG FILIPINOS

WHEREAS, it is stated in Section 11 of Article II of the 1987 Philippine Constitution that, "The State values the dignity of every person and guarantees full respect for human rights." In line with this, Section 12 of Article III of the Constitution prohibits the use of torture, force, violence, threat, intimidation, or any other means which vitiate the free will. It further mandates the compensation and rehabilitation of victims of torture or similar practices and their families;

WHEREAS, Section 2 of Republic Act No. 10368, otherwise known as the "Human Rights Victims Reparation and Recognition Act of 2013," as amended, declares it a policy of the State "to recognize the heroism and sacrifices of all Filipinos who were victims of summary execution, torture, enforced or involuntary disappearance and other gross human rights violations committed during the regime of former President Ferdinand E. Marcos covering the period from September 21, 1972 to February 25, 1986 and restore the victims' honor and dignity." Pursuant to this, the State also acknowledges its moral and legal obligations to recognize and provide reparation to these victims and their families "for the deaths, injuries, sufferings, deprivations and damages they suffered under the Marcos regime;"

WHEREAS, historical records show that 3,257 were killed, while an estimated 35,000 tortured and 70,000 were incarcerated, during the Martial Law period under the Marcos regime. As of May 2015, a total of 75,730 persons already filed their claims as victims of human rights violations with the Human Rights Victims Claims Board.¹ Claimants included relatives of victims of extra-judicial killings and disappearances, and victims of detention and torture, rape or sexual abuse. Their claims were backed by submission of narratives and

¹ <http://hrvclaimsboard.gov.ph/index.php/claim-process/announcements/98-press-release-6-2015>

supporting documents on what they had undergone in the hands of Martial Law enforcers, mainly military and police elements;²

WHEREAS, Alfred McCoy, a leading historian for SouthEast Asia and the Philippines, asserts that the legacy of the Marcos era is “a collective trauma and an ingrained institutional habit of human rights abuse. “ He further concludes that, “If the Philippines is to recover its full fund of social capital after the trauma of dictatorship, it needs to adopt some means for remembering, recording, and, ultimately, reconciliation;”³

WHEREAS, former Human Rights Commissioner Loretta Rosales has stated that, “The Marcos dictatorship was marked by unparalleled human rights violations. No less than an institutional teaching of its history is needed to remind the people of the need to safeguard their rights against systemic abuses and to fend off attempts to curtail their rights in the future. Historical truth is a powerful weapon in this regard;”⁴

WHEREAS, Section 27 of Republic Act No. 10368 establishes the Human, Rights Violations Victims’ Memorial Commission to be primarily responsible for “the establishment, preservation and conservation of the Memorial/Museum/Library/Compendium” to honor the sacrifice of the human rights violations victims (HRVVs) of the Marcos regime. The said Commission was also mandated to coordinate and collaborate work with the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to ensure that “the teaching of Martial Law atrocities, the lives and sacrifices of HRVVs in our history are included in the basic, secondary and tertiary education curricula;”

WHEREAS, Section 5 of Republic Act. No. 10086 mandates the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) to be the primary government agency responsible for history and for determining all factual matters relating to official Philippine history. As such, it also has responsibility for developing educational materials in various media, implementing historical educational activities for the popularization of Philippine history, and disseminating information regarding Philippine historical events, dates, places and personages;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Association of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA) and other human rights groups had in previous years noted the need to teach the youth about Martial Law given attempts at historical revisionism through videos and other materials circulated through social media, seeming to glorifying the Marcoses and downplaying the 1896 EDSA People Power Revolution that ousted the dictator;⁵

² <http://hrvclaimsboard.gov.ph/index.php/claim-process/announcements/98-press-release-6-2015>

³ <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/54a/062.html>

⁴ <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/275716/deped-sets-new-directions-on-teaching-martial-law-era#ixzz4D7PQWefq>

⁵ <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/275716/deped-sets-new-directions-on-teaching-martial-law-era#ixzz4D7UBxwF0>

WHEREAS, an online petition on change.org appealed to DepED to “Rewrite Philippine History books to include the full story of the Martial Law era.” The petition, led by the Campaign Against the Return of the Marcoses to Malacañang (CARMMA) has garnered close to 26,000 signatures to date. The petition expressed concern that the Filipino youth of today are no longer aware of the various human and civil rights violations accounted for during the Marcos Martial Law era. According to the petition, this is because “the history books and syllabus have never been changed to include the other side of the Marcos Martial Law era;”⁶

WHEREAS, in a statement released on 3 March 2016, DepEd clarified that with the implementation of the K to 12 Program, curriculum guides for Grades 5 and 6 Social Studies or Araling Panlipunan have already been designed to allow for more in-depth discussion on Philippine history, including the Martial Law period. It also emphasized its continuing commitment to highlighting the importance of learning the lessons of history and preserving the gains of democracy;

WHEREAS, on 8 March 2016, the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), composed of 1,425 member-schools, colleges and universities in the country, called on various learning institutions, DepEd and CHED, to assess the quality and content of their instructions in relations to abuses during the period of the Marcos regime. It reminded that, “The fullness of democratization, especially the creation of a social order which respects the dignity of all Filipinos, has yet to be achieved. It is our responsibility now as a people to continue and complete this unfinished struggle. We must start with the truth;”

WHEREAS, the preservation of the truth in our history, particularly with regards to the from the dark period of Martial Law, is made a priority so the next generation of Filipinos may learn from the past and strive to build a better Philippines that is honest, just, and free of corruption and greed. We must move on and move forward, but never forget the pursuit of justice and quest for true, meaningful democracy;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of the Philippines to direct the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the education of youth regarding the Martial Law period and human rights abuses under the Marcos regime with the end view of preserving memory through historical truth-telling, protecting our democracy, and promoting a sense of justice and human rights among young Filipinos.

Adopted,



⁶ <https://www.change.org/p/departament-of-education-rewrite-philippine-history-books-to-include-the-full-story-of-the-martial-law-era-019f57a2-e77a-4469-b8c7-9f57c4b4b0fd>