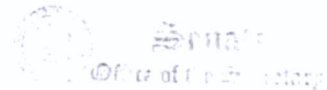


SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



SENATE
P.S. Res 563

'17 DEC -6 A11 :24

Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

RECEIVED BY

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE REPORTED DANGER OF THE SCHOOL-BASED DENGUE VACCINATION PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF CRAFTING MEASURES THAT WILL ENSURE THE SAFETY AND EFFICACY OF GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMS; STRENGTHEN PARTICIPATORY AND TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE; AND HOLD ACCOUNTABLE PERTINENT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURERS IN THIS REGARD

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

WHEREAS, Section 11, Article 13 of the same further provides that the “State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavour to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost”;

WHEREAS, the Department of Health (DOH) is one of the principal agencies tasked to oversee and implement the government’s policies and programs on public health;

WHEREAS, the Philippines became the first country in Asia to approve the Dengue Vaccination Program targeting public school students in selected dengue-endemic areas of the country;

WHEREAS, it was reported that the Dengue Vaccination Program made use of the experimental anti-dengue vaccine *Dengvaxia* developed and manufactured by the French pharmaceutical company Sanofi-Pasteur;

WHEREAS, various Sanofi-Pasteur infomercials claimed that *Dengvaxia* can purportedly prevent four (4) types of dengue hemorrhagic fever while a study conducted by the National Institutes of Health-University of the Philippines (NIH-UP) projected that the said vaccine can potentially reduce dengue incidence in the Philippines by 24 percent;

WHEREAS, notwithstanding these positive claims, a number of public health advocates, health professionals, academics, and medical organizations in the Philippines have

reportedly expressed misgivings about the efficacy of *Dengvaxia* and raised concerns about its possible harmful side-effects like the development of Anti-Body Dependent Enhancement (ADE) in individuals injected with the said vaccine;

WHEREAS, it was also reported that due to the still unknown side-effects of *Dengvaxia*, concerned medical professionals and public health advocates in the country have advised the DOH to exercise caution and delay the implementation of the Dengue Vaccination Program pending the final report of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts-World Health Organization (SAGE-WHO) on the true efficacy, safety and side-effects of *Dengvaxia*;

WHEREAS, disregarding opposition from various quarters, the DOH reportedly proceeded with the Dengue Vaccination Program for public school students in Regions 3 and 4, and the National Capital Region during the first quarter of 2016;

WHEREAS, reports claimed that around 800,000 public school students were selected to have three doses of dengue vaccines worth Php 4,000 per child, or a spending total of Php 3.5 billion;

WHEREAS, on 29 November 2017, more than a year after *Dengvaxia* vaccine was released to the public, Sanofi-Pasteur released an advisory that clinical studies revealed that the vaccine may cause “severe dengue cases” on those who had no prior infection;¹

WHEREAS, on 4 December 2017, Sanofi-Pasteur further disclosed that *Dengvaxia* vaccine is not guaranteed to prevent dengue after all and is not recommended for those without prior infection;²

WHEREAS, reports claimed that public health advocates, health professionals, academics, and medical organizations now fear that the mass vaccination program may have put at risk the health of over 700,000 Filipino children in Luzon that were already given the vaccine, especially those vaccinated without prior infection of the disease;

WHEREAS, Dr. Anthony Leachon, former president of the Philippine College of Physicians Foundation, reportedly said that the advisory of Sanofi-Pasteur is alarming for thousands of Filipino children who have already received the *Dengvaxia* vaccine; and stressed that “mass vaccination is not advisable without a rigid selection process;”³

WHEREAS, due diligence on the effects of the drugs should have been observed and clear lines of protocols should have been established before allowing vaccines to be administered to large groups, especially children;

¹ Abs-Cbn News. (December 1, 2017). DOH: No severe infection among PH kids given dengue vaccine. Retrieved from <http://news.abs-cbn.com/news/12/01/17/doh-no-severe-infection-among-ph-kids-given-dengue-vaccine>

² Rappler. (December 4, 2017). Sanofi: Dengvaxia not guaranteed to prevent dengue. Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/190281-sanofi-pasteur-dengvaxia-no-guarantee-dengue>

³ Rappler. (November 30, 2017). Vaccinated Filipino youth now at risk of getting severe dengue. Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/science-nature/life-health/190008-dengvaxia-dengue-vaccine-filipino-youth-risks>

WHEREAS, considering that the DOH is set to introduce new vaccines, such as the Japanese Encephalitis (JE) vaccine, under its expanded program on immunization in 2018,⁴ the agency should exercise more prudence before approving mass vaccination;

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon the government to promote the long-term health and well-being of all Filipinos, including infants and children;

WHEREAS, the DOH officials have a sworn duty to uphold and safeguard public health, to exercise caution and prudence in the formulation of health programs and prevent our children from being used as “guinea pigs” or laboratory rats to test the efficacy and safety of experimental drugs such as *Dengvaxia*;

WHEREAS, various news reports reveal that in other countries, mass vaccinations of children without strictly controlled randomized trials have resulted in worsened conditions of immunocompromised children;

WHEREAS, pharmaceutical companies should also be held responsible for selling vaccines that are still undergoing clinical trials; and should be held equally accountable for any problem that arises due to the use of their manufactured vaccines;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported danger of the school-based dengue vaccination program of the Department of Health (DOH) with the objective of crafting measures that will ensure the safety and efficacy of government-sponsored immunization programs; strengthen participatory and transparent governance; and hold accountable pertinent government officials and pharmaceutical manufacturers in this regard.

Adopted,


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⁴ Sunstar. (September 6, 2017). DOH to introduce JE vaccine in 2018 immunization program. Retrieved from <http://www.sunstar.com.ph/pampanga/local-news/2017/09/06/doh-introduce-je-vaccine-2018-immunization-program-562620>