



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 633

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Introduced by Senator **SONNY ANGARA**

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RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SEVERE POLLUTION IN BORACAY WITH THE END VIEW OF FORMULATING POLICIES TO ADDRESS THE ISLAND'S DETERIORATING STATE, PROTECT ITS ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY, AND PROMOTE ITS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, Article II Section 16 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature;

WHEREAS, Boracay Island, a butterfly-shaped island located at the northwestern tip of Panay in Western Visayas, is famous for its four-kilometer White Beach hailed as the "finest beach in the world"; was awarded as the 2012 best island in the world from the international travel magazine *Travel + Leisure*; was at the top of the Best Islands in the World list published by the international magazine *Condé Nast Traveler*; and remains a top-of-mind island destination across the world;

WHEREAS, Boracay is the second top tourist destination in the Philippines attracting 1,107,167 tourists for January to June 2017 alone—495,436 of whom were registered foreign visitors, 584,753 were domestic tourists, and 27,978 were overseas Filipinos;¹

WHEREAS, the massive influx of tourists, free-wheeling development, and poor enforcement of laws on environmental protection are causing coastal pollution and adverse environmental damage;

¹ Accommodation Establishments as submitted to Department of Tourism Regional Offices

WHEREAS, as early as 2015, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources already expressed alarm after its Environmental Management Bureau office in Western Visayas reported that coliform bacteria levels in a drainage outlet that empties into the sea in Bulabog Beach in Boracay exceeded safety standards, reaching 47,460 most probable number per 100 millimeters;

WHEREAS, in January 2018 during a House tourism committee hearing on House Resolution No. 1087, which sought to determine what should be done by the government to prevent the environmental destruction of Boracay, Department of Tourism Secretary Wanda Teo alleged that only 25 out of the estimated 500 local establishments are connected to the central sewage treatment plant being run by the Boracay Island Water Company;

WHEREAS, in the same committee hearing, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Roy Cimatu revealed the presence of 600 buildings, which are occupied by 3,000 to 4,000 illegal settlers;

WHEREAS, Congress must review and intensify existing laws on environmental protection, preservation and rehabilitation so as to sustain the country's tourism growth while preserving the beauty of the island;

WHEREAS, Republic Act 10771 otherwise known as "the Philippine Green Jobs Act" was enacted on April 29, 2016, and its implementing rules and regulations were approved and promulgated on September 2017 by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), under Department Order No. 180, series of 2017;

WHEREAS, under the Philippine Green Jobs Act, the State is mandated to develop and incentivize jobs in a range of industries that "produce goods and render services for the benefit of the environment, conserve natural resources for the future generation, and ensure the sustainable development of the country and its transition into a green economy;"

WHEREAS, the ongoing issue of pollution in Boracay Island may be sustainably resolved with the full implementation of the country's environmental laws, including the Philippine Green Jobs Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PHILIPPINE SENATE to direct the appropriate senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the severe pollution in Boracay with the end view of formulating policies to address the deteriorating state of the island, protect its environment and ecology, and promote its sustainable development.

ADOPTED,



SONNY ANGARA