

SENATE

'18 AUG 28 P 6:22

P.S.R. No. 868

RECEIVED



---

Introduced by Senators Francis N. Pangilinan and Paolo Benigno Aquino IV

---

**RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND  
FOOD TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE RICE CRISIS  
IN ZAMBOANGA CITY AND THE CONTINUOUS HIKE OF RICE PRICES IN THE  
COUNTRY**

**WHEREAS**, on 20 August 2018, Zamboanga City was placed under a state of calamity in light of the dwindling supply and soaring prices of rice, which reached P70 per kilogram (kg). Said declaration allowed the local government, led by Mayor Maria Isabelle Climaco-Salazar, to control the price of the staple grain and to buy buffer stocks using a P15 million calamity fund;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the rice shortage is attributed to several factors including: (1) government's strengthened campaign against smuggled rice; (2) delay of government imports; (3) off harvest season; (4) lack of serious efforts in the local level to develop and support the rice industry due to the proliferation of cheap, quality smuggled rice; (5) farmers' and traders' giving up on local rice production due to their inability to compete with prices of smuggled rice and legally imported rice; and (6) NFA's lack of ample supply of rice and failure to deliver cheap rice;

**WHEREAS**, Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol blamed Zamboanga's reliance on smuggled rice for the shortage in the region.<sup>2</sup> He further opposed the proposal of Zamboanga City officials to rely on additional importations to ease the tight rice supply in Mindanao. He claimed, in his Facebook page post, that "Zamboanga City as well as the island provinces of Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi [has] been relying on smuggled rice from Vietnam and Thailand for many years." Further, he noted that the government crackdown

---

<sup>1</sup> Julie Alipala. "Zamboanga City under state of calamity due to rice shortage." *Inquirer.Net*. Published on 21 August 2018. Available at [newsinfo.inquirer.net/1023327/zamboanga-city-under-state-of-calamity-due-to-rice-shortage](http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1023327/zamboanga-city-under-state-of-calamity-due-to-rice-shortage). Accessed on 25 August 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Kuhlín Ceslie Gacula. "Zambo rice crisis blamed on smuggling." *The Daily Tribune*. Published on 23 August 2018. Available at <http://tribune.net.ph/index.php/2018/08/23/zambo-rice-crisis-blamed-on-smuggling/>. Accessed on 26 August 2018.