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SENATE  
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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS

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**A RESOLUTION URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN, CHILDREN, FAMILY RELATIONS, AND GENDER EQUALITY TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE RECENT RESCUES OF SEXUAL TRAFFICKING VICTIMS AND PROBE INTO THE PROSTITUTION RINGS IN THE COUNTRY AND TO EXAMINE THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT PUSH WOMEN TO WORK UNDER EXPLOITATIVE CONDITIONS WITH THE END IN VIEW OF CRAFTING LEGISLATION AND POLICIES THAT WILL ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSE THAT DROVE THESE WOMEN INTO EMPLOYMENT THAT DOES NOT RESPECT AND FULLY UTILIZE THEIR POTENTIAL**

**WHEREAS**, last September 6, six Vietnamese women were rescued in a condominium in Makati City. They were held in what was allegedly a prostitution den managed by two Chinese women named Kuang Meiting and Li Xiumei.<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the rescued victims and arrested suspects are in the country only with travel visas and already have departure tickets before their visas' expiry.<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS**, foreigners, particularly Chinese men working in nearby Philippine Offshore Gambling Operators (POGOs), were the main clientele of the prostitution ring. The transactions with the prostitution ring also took place in a Chinese social media app. Promotions by the prostitution ring shows that the trafficked women, mostly Vietnamese, Chinese, and Malaysian, could be chosen in a 'show room'.<sup>3</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the trafficked victims could be hired for at least ₱9,000 for 'to-go' services.<sup>4</sup> The costumers could also rent the condominium units for ₱4,500 per night.

**WHEREAS**, the suspects Kuang Meiting and Li Xiumei were detained at the NCRPO headquarters and are facing charges for violating RA 10364 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012.<sup>5</sup>

**WHEREAS**, last August, thirty four Chinese women who are believed to be human trafficking victims were rescued from a KTV bar in Cebu City.<sup>6</sup> The victims were allegedly promised legitimate work in an offshore gaming company in Cavite but were coerced into working in a KTV bar in Cebu.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1161487/sex-den-for-pogo-workers-busted>

<sup>2</sup> ibid

<sup>3</sup> ibid

<sup>4</sup> ibid

<sup>5</sup> ibid

<sup>6</sup> <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/08/06/19/34-na-babaeng-chinese-nasagip-sa-human-trafficking-sa-cebu>

<sup>7</sup> ibid

**WHEREAS**, the trafficked victims have tourist visas that are only valid for three months.<sup>8</sup> The NBI investigation into the incident revealed that the victims were 'working' as high class prostitutes.<sup>9</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the NBI arrested four Chinese women during their operation in the KTV bar. Their identities are: Zeng Dan, Quan Yiqing, Xiuzhu Weu, and Xiushen Wei.<sup>10</sup> There are also four other suspects that acted as managers and supervisors that were still being hunted down.

**WHEREAS**, during the course of the NBI investigation, it appears that the KTV bar where the victims were rescued were exclusive to Chinese nationals because the Filipino NBI informant was denied access when he tried to enter the said bar.<sup>11</sup> The bar charges ₱6,000 for the use of an exclusive VIP room and ₱7,500 for a female entertainer.<sup>12</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the arrested Chinese women were charged for the violation of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act.<sup>13</sup>

**WHEREAS**, a special report of the Philippine Star last June 17 revealed that Filipinas are being employed by POGOs as card dealers in virtual casinos.<sup>14</sup> Some POGOs have Filipina card dealers clad in short, revealing clothing.<sup>15</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the objectification of women in the gambling industry as evidenced by the Filipinas in POGOs and the more serious problem of sexual slavery experienced by human trafficking victims here in the Philippines that coincidentally have POGO operators as clientele are problems that have underlying roots in the misogyny that have been normalized by a president who have delivered sexist remarks without care or remorse.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, for the Senate Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations, and Gender Equality to conduct an investigation in aid of legislation on the recent rescues of sexual trafficking victims in the Philippines and probe into the existence of prostitution rings in the country and to examine the circumstances that push women from vulnerable sectors of society to work under exploitative conditions with the end in view of crafting legislation and policies that will address the root cause that drove these women into employment that does not respect and fully utilize their potential.

**Adopted,**

  
**RISA HONTIVEROS**  
*Senator*

<sup>8</sup> ibid

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.philstar.com/the-freeman/cebu-news/2019/08/07/1941333/women-bar-trafficked-china>

<sup>10</sup> ibid

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.philstar.com/the-freeman/cebu-news/2019/08/07/1941333/women-bar-trafficked-china>

<sup>12</sup> ibid

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/1817631>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.philstar.com/business/2019/06/17/1927013/special-report-inside-philippine-offshore-gaming-company>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/a05550ce-a389-11e9-974c-ad1c6ab5efd1>