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SENATE
P.S. Res. No. **349**

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Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

RESOLUTION
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, IN COORDINATION WITH THE
NATIONAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT COUNCIL,
AND MOBILE PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS TO SEND FREE MOBILE ALERTS
ON THE 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

1 WHEREAS, Article 2, Section 15 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution directs the
2 State to protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health
3 consciousness among them;

4 WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 10121, otherwise known as the "*Philippine*
5 *Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act*" defines "disaster" as "...a serious
6 disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread
7 human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the
8 ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.
9 Disasters are often described as a result of the combination of: the exposure to a
10 hazard; the conditions of vulnerability that are present; and insufficient capacity or
11 measures to reduce or cope with the potential negative consequences, Disaster
12 impacts may include loss of life, injury, disease and other negative effects on
13 human, physical, mental and social well-being, together with damage to property,
14 destruction of assets, loss of services, Social and economic disruption and
15 environmental degradation."

16 WHEREAS, R.A. 10121 also defines "hazard" as a "...dangerous phenomenon,
17 substance, human activity or condition that may cause loss of life, injury or other
18 health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihood and services, social and
19 economic disruption, or environmental damage."

1 WHEREAS, finally, R.A. No. 10121 mandates the National Disaster Risk
2 Reduction and Management Council to develop a "...comprehensive, all hazards,
3 multi-sectoral, inter-agency and community-based approach to disaster risk
4 reduction and management.";

5 WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 10639, otherwise known as "*The Free Mobile*
6 *Disaster Alerts Act*" mandates mobile phone service providers, in the event of a
7 calamity, to send out alerts at regular intervals shall consist of up-to-date
8 information from the relevant agencies. The alerts shall include contact information
9 of local government units and other agencies required to respond to the situation;

10 WHEREAS, on 31 December 2019, health authorities in China alerted the
11 World Health Organization (WHO) of several cases of unusual pneumonia in Wuhan,
12 a port city in the central Hubei province;

13 WHEREAS, the mysterious disease was eventually identified to be a new
14 member of the family of coronaviruses which also caused the Severe Acute
15 Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) breakout in 2002 to 2004 the Middle East Respiratory
16 Syndrome (MERS) outbreaks from 2012 to 2018. This new virus is now known as the
17 2019 Novel Coronavirus, or COVID-19;

18 WHEREAS, on 30 January 2020, the WHO declared the COVID-19 a global
19 emergency;

20 WHEREAS, the WHO has reported that so far there are 80,859 cases of
21 COVID-19 around the world, with a total death toll of 3,100;

22 WHEREAS, the detection of COVID-19 is further complicated because
23 individuals may be asymptomatic for up to 21 days;

24 WHEREAS, in severe cases, COVID-19 is known to cause pneumonia leading
25 to respiratory failure particularly in vulnerable individuals such as older adults and
26 people who have chronic conditions such as heart disease, lung disease and
27 diabetes;

28 WHEREAS, as of this date, the Philippines has recorded 20 COVID-19 cases,
29 with 410 cases appearing just the other day;

30 WHEREAS, immediately after the discovery of the new cases, COVID-19 was
31 declared a state of public health emergency through a Presidential proclamation;

1 WHEREAS, there is no doubt that COVID-19 is a disaster or a calamity under
2 the applicable laws, especially after it was declared a health emergency by the WHO
3 and the President, respectively;

4 WHEREAS, the first step in containing a virus is to make information on it viral
5 through all available means, and improve the spread of information to counter
6 misinformation and to prevent mass hysteria;

7 WHEREAS, information on COVID-19 can be further strengthened and
8 augmented through the use of mobile text alerts under R.A. No. 10639;

9 WHEREAS, the free mobile text alerts should contain, at a minimum, the
10 regularly updated summary of confirmed cases, the affected areas of recent cases
11 for the purpose of contact tracing, relevant information on preventing the spread of
12 COVID-19, its known symptoms and when to be concerned, as well as a 24/7 hotline
13 to the DOH to report suspected cases;

14 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of
15 the Philippines, urging the Department of Health, in coordination with the National
16 Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, and Mobile Phone Service
17 Providers to send free mobile alerts on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Adopted,


GRACE POE