



SENATE

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P. S. Res. No. 387

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Ralph G. Recto

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STATUS AND PROGRESS OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY TO ADDRESS THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) PANDEMIC, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ADDRESSING ISSUES THAT MAY IMPEDE ITS PROGRESS, ENSURING THE REALIZATION OF ITS OBJECTIVES, RESTORING PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS, AND SUSTAINING GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TOWARDS RECOVERY AND NORMALCY

1 WHEREAS, the 1987 Constitution mandates the State to protect and promote the
2 people's right to health, to instill health consciousness among the citizenry, and to adopt
3 an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development;

4 WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 11332, otherwise known as the *Mandatory*
5 *Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Health Events of Public Concern Act*, upholds the
6 duty of the State to protect the people from threats to public health;

7 WHEREAS, according to the situational report of the World Health Organization
8 as of May 3, 2020, the on-going Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic has already
9 infected 3,356,205 people in 215 territories worldwide, of which 238,730 have died;

10 WHEREAS, the Department of Health recorded, as of May 3, 2020, a total of
11 9,223 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the Philippines, of which 607 have perished;

12 WHEREAS, the Duterte Administration has instituted several measures to
13 mitigate or contain the transmission of the COVID-19 within the country;

1 WHEREAS, the President ordered a ban on travelers from China and other
2 countries with localized transmission of the disease, with the exception of Filipino
3 citizens, their foreign spouses and children, permanent residents and holders of
4 diplomatic visas;

5 WHEREAS, the President issued Proclamation No. 922 s. 2020 to declare the
6 entire Philippines under a state of public health emergency to capacitate government
7 agencies and instrumentalities in implementing urgent and critical measures to prevent
8 loss of life, contain or prevent the spread of the coronavirus disease, lessen the impact
9 of the disease on the communities, and avert serious disruption of government
10 operations and community functions;

11 WHEREAS, the Office of the Executive Secretary, through a series of
12 memoranda, provided the guidelines for the imposition of social distancing and
13 community quarantine measures in the National Capital Region and consequently, the
14 entire island of Luzon;

15 WHEREAS, the President issued Proclamation No. 929 s. 2020 declaring a state
16 of calamity throughout the country to allow government agencies and instrumentalities
17 at the national and local levels ample latitude in the utilization of public funds for
18 disaster preparedness, response efforts, and delivery of basic services;

19 WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 11469, otherwise known as *Bayanihan to Heal as*
20 *One Act*, granted the President extraordinary powers and functions to mitigate or
21 contain the transmission of the disease in the country, and to provide assistance to
22 individuals and families adversely affected by the pandemic, among others;

23 WHEREAS, 1,101 hospitals have been designated as COVID-referral hospital
24 across the country with total dedicated bed capacity of 7,732;

25 WHEREAS, the Philippine economic team has formulated a four-pillar
26 socioeconomic strategy to blunt the impact of COVID-19, which would require P1.49
27 Trillion or about eight percent (8%) of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP);

28 WHEREAS, part of the budget for the four-pillar strategy was released by the
29 government amounting to P352 Billion, which was generated from reprogramming
30 existing appropriations and was funded through tax collections of revenue agencies,
31 dividend income from government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs), and
32 concessional loans and grants extended by multilateral lenders;

1 WHEREAS, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) has released
2 allotments of P245.22 Billion and cash allocations of P245.13 Billion to fund financial
3 subsidies and loans extended to poor families and other sectors adversely affected by
4 the pandemic amounting to over P100 Billion, and the Bayanihan Grant to Provinces,
5 Cities and Municipalities amounting to P42 Billion, among others;

6 WHEREAS, the President issued Executive Order No. 112 s. 2020, imposing an
7 extended enhanced community quarantine in high-risk geographic areas in the
8 Philippines and a general community quarantine in the rest of the country from May 1,
9 2020 to May 15, 2020;

10 WHEREAS, despite the actions undertaken by the government, the COVID-19
11 pandemic still poses a number of policy predicaments;

12 WHEREAS, a protracted influx of patients and asymptomatic carriers infected
13 with the coronavirus can overwhelm health and quarantine facilities, deplete medical
14 supplies, and expose medical and healthcare personnel to various health risks;

15 WHEREAS, the economic team has forecasted that the economic output growth
16 will decline to 0.0% to -0.8%, the government will incur a budget deficit equivalent to
17 5.3% of GDP, and the Philippine debt-to-GDP ratio will increase to 46.7%, despite the
18 strong Philippine economic fundamentals from previous years grounded on substantial
19 economic growth, low inflation, high government revenue effort, and manageable
20 public debt;

21 WHEREAS, the decline in economic activities, coupled with the moratorium on
22 tax collection and other forms of payments, can affect government revenue generation
23 and cash flow and, consequently, impair government's ability to fund critical programs,
24 projects and activities in a timely manner;

25 WHEREAS, the displacement of millions of local and migrant workers due to the
26 pandemic may impact on the economic security of Filipino households and derail
27 government efforts not only in mitigating the transmission of the disease, but also in
28 reducing poverty and inequality in the country;

29 WHEREAS, addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath requires a
30 transparent, accountable, participatory and inclusive approach to problem-solving, for it
31 affects not only the inner workings of the economy and government, but the ways and

1 means by which ordinary Filipinos prepare for, cope with and adjust to the pandemic
2 and post-pandemic situation in the Philippines;

3 WHEREAS, avoiding the collapse of the Philippine healthcare system would
4 necessitate the improvement of its capacity to test, trace, isolate and treat COVID-19
5 patients through the construction, upgrading or designation of appropriate sanitation,
6 medical, laboratory, quarantine and isolation facilities; recruitment of qualified public
7 health workers for pandemic response; investment in scientific and medical research
8 and development programs; and procurement and acquisition of protective equipment,
9 medicine and other essential supplies, among others;

10 WHEREAS, reducing the impact of the pandemic on the economy, government
11 financing, and public debt would require transparent, judicious and insightful
12 rationalization of government expenditures that does not sacrifice public service
13 delivery;

14 WHEREAS, alleviating economic insecurity and preventing social unrest entails
15 the development of mechanisms to provide immediate assistance to individuals and
16 families adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly those who work in
17 the informal economy, and those from poor and marginalized households;

18 WHEREAS, the development of such interventions requires an in-depth
19 understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic, its present and foreseeable impact on
20 Philippine society, and principles behind the national strategy to address such concerns;

21 WHEREAS, Congress, as the representative of the people, repository of
22 legislative and emergency powers and steward of the public purse, has a critical role in
23 fine-tuning government's response to the ongoing pandemic, in allaying fears over
24 socio-economic uncertainties, and in developing a national post-pandemic blueprint;

25 WHEREAS, the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the Management of Emerging
26 Infectious Diseases, created by virtue of Executive Order No. 168 s. 2014, is mandated
27 to establish a system to prevent or minimize the local spread of emerging infectious
28 diseases in the country; to educate the public on emerging infectious diseases and its
29 prevention, control and management; to address public fear and anxiety; and to
30 strengthen the Emerging and Re-Emerging Infectious Diseases Program of the
31 government, among others;

1 WHEREAS, to enable Congress to formulate appropriate and responsive policies
2 to address the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath, the Executive Department,
3 through the IATF, should provide information on the current health situation in the
4 country, the status and progress of interventions being carried out by the government,
5 the plans and prospects of the government to accelerate post-pandemic recovery of the
6 country, and the resources such interventions would require in the short- to medium-
7 term: Now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, as it is hereby resolved, To direct the proper Senate
9 Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the status and progress of the
10 national strategy to address the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic, with the
11 end in view of addressing issues that may impede its progress, ensuring the realization
12 of its objectives, restoring public trust and confidence on social and economic
13 institutions, and sustaining government efforts towards recovery and normalcy.

Adopted,



RALPH G. RECTO

ejcv/mjma/mksbc/mdg