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SENATE
P.S. Res. No. 743

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Robinhood Padilla

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMMUNITIES AND MUSLIM AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE PLIGHT OF OUR MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN LIGHT OF THE NUMEROUS ACTS AND PRACTICES THAT DISADVANTAGE AND UNDERMINE THEIR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, PARTICULARLY IN THE OBSERVANCE OF THEIR DIETARY PRINCIPLES

1 WHEREAS, the 1987 Constitution mandates that “[t]he State values the dignity
2 of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights” (Section 11,
3 Article II) and that “[t]he free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and
4 worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed” (Section 5,
5 Article III);

6 WHEREAS, in the Islamic faith, *halal*, when referring to dietary intake, are those
7 food products that are considered lawful or permissible for consumption or use by
8 Muslims, satisfying specific requirements related to the raw materials, preparation,
9 handling, and processing of products, as well as ethical and health considerations.
10 Notably, these considerations include the prohibition of pork and any of its derivatives;

11 WHEREAS, Muslim Filipinos, constituting a minority within the Philippines,
12 encounter unique challenges in the exercise of their religious beliefs, particularly when
13 it comes to fulfilling their basic dietary needs;

14 WHEREAS, the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), established
15 by Republic Act (R.A.) No. 9997 to ensure the rights and well-being of Muslim Filipinos
16 with due regard to their beliefs, customs, traditions and institutions, is mandated,
17 among others, to promote and develop the Philippine Halal Industry and to accredit

1 halal-certifying entities/bodies for the utmost benefit of Muslim Filipinos and in
2 partnership or cooperation with appropriate agencies, individuals and institutions in
3 the Philippines and abroad (Section 8, R.A. No. 9997);

4 WHEREAS, on 8 March 2023, CDO, the flagship brand of Foodsphere Inc.,
5 through a post on its social media accounts, assured the public that their products,
6 namely CDO Chicken Franks, Holiday Chicken Hotdog, CDO Ulam Burger, CDO Crispy
7 Burger, and CDO Chicken Flakes are halal or lawful for consumption by any Muslim in
8 any part of the world as certified by Ulama Conference of the Philippines and that said
9 products do not contain pork derivatives, while also urging everyone to avoid sharing
10 false and unverified information;

11 WHEREAS, on 10 March 2023, the NCMF issued a Public Advisory stating that:

12 a) The NCMF, through its South Luzon Regional office, in collaboration with
13 the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) - Calabarzon,
14 performed qualitative examinations on mainstream processed meat
15 products available to the general public;

16 b) According to the DOST - Calabarzon Result of Analyses No. R4AL1-
17 102022-HVL-0032, five (5) of fifty-one (51) products bearing "Halal"
18 logo were found to have been contaminated with porcine (pork) or its
19 derivatives, namely: CDO Chicken Franks, Holiday Chicken Hotdog, CDO
20 Ulam Burger, CDO Crispy Burger, and CDO Chicken Flakes; and

21 c) The Halal certifier of these products is not accredited by the NCMF;

22 WHEREAS, the Halal-certified logo is a crucial element in the purchasing
23 decisions of many consumers who rely on it to ensure not only its compliance with
24 Islamic dietary laws but also the quality and safety standards of the products they
25 purchase;

26 WHEREAS, the Commission on Audit, in its audit report for 2021, has flagged
27 the caterer contracted by the Bureau of Corrections for multiple violations, including
28 serving pork to Muslims and Seventh-Day Adventists inmates, in direct contradiction
29 to established requirements under the Food Subsistence Agreement stipulating that
30 inmates shall be given food in accordance with their religious practice;

31 WHEREAS, on 9 October 2022, detained former Senator Leila de Lima became
32 the subject of a hostage-taking incident at the Philippine National Police Custodial

1 Center located within Camp Crame in Quezon City during an escape attempt by three
2 detainees. In a sworn statement dated the same day, former Senator De Lima
3 recounted the events, stating, "*Tinanong ko siya, sino ka nga ba? Ang sagot niya, si*
4 *Sulayao. Ang sabi nya, 'Marami kaming reklamo, sa ginagawa sa amin dito para*
5 *kaming hayop itrato at ang mga pagkain ay may baboy.'*"

6 WHEREAS, according to a report by Rappler on 18 May 2023, a plea has been
7 made for the city government of General Santos to establish a dedicated area for halal
8 food items within the local government-run central public market following the
9 discovery that multiple vendors were applying pig blood coating to fish slices to make
10 them appear fresh;

11 WHEREAS, in an incident on 7 August 2023 reported by Philippine Star, a police
12 officer lost his life, and another remains in critical condition, after an altercation with
13 a Muslim police officer allegedly stemming from a pork dish prepared in the Taguig
14 Police Station. In a letter provided to the Office of Senator Padilla, the suspect insisted
15 that the incident was exacerbated by previous instances of discrimination and mockery
16 aimed at the suspect, coupled with surreptitious serving of pork without his
17 knowledge, which ultimately led to the unfortunate confrontation;

18 WHEREAS, given the recurring unfortunate incidents prejudicial to the Muslim
19 community and their basic necessity for human survival, that is sustenance through
20 food in line with their dietary principles, it is imperative for the Senate to thoroughly
21 evaluate and formulate effective measures to address and mitigate these occurrences:
22 Now, therefore, be it

23 RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, To direct the Senate Committee on
24 Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation,
25 into the plight of our Muslim community in light of the numerous acts and practices
26 that disadvantage and undermine their religious beliefs, particularly in the observance
27 of their dietary principles.

Adopted,


ROBINHOOD PADILLA
Senator