

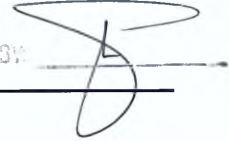
**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**
Second Regular Session

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SENATE
P.S.R. No. 744

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Introduced by **Senator Risa Hontiveros**

RESOLUTION

**CALLING FOR AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO THE
ADOPTION OF MEASURES STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE COAST
GUARD FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENABLING IT TO MAINTAIN THE
MARITIME TRANSPORT NETWORK, ENFORCE PHILIPPINE LAW, AND
IMPROVE MARITIME GOVERNANCE WITHIN THE COUNTRY'S MARITIME
ZONES**

WHEREAS, the Constitution provides that the State shall protect the nation's marine wealth in its archipelagic waters, territorial sea, and exclusive economic zone, and reserve its use and enjoyment exclusively to Filipino citizens;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Republic Act (R.A.) No. 9993, the Philippine Coast Guard, an armed and uniformed service attached to the Department of Transportation ("DoT"), has been mandated to enforce Philippine law in accordance with all relevant maritime international conventions, treaties or instruments, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ("UNCLOS"), within the maritime jurisdiction of the Philippines;

WHEREAS, this includes maritime safety, environmental protection, and maritime governance, law enforcement, and security within strategically vital areas such as the West Philippine Sea, Benham Rise, the Sulo Sea, and the Luzon Strait, as well as the rest of the country's Exclusive Economic Zone ("EEZ") and continental shelf, over which the Philippines exercises sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving, and managing natural resources;

WHEREAS, within the EEZ, the Philippines also exercises jurisdiction with regard to the establishment and use of artificial islands, installations and structures, marine scientific research, as well as the protection and preservation of the marine environment;

WHEREAS, in recent years, the Chinese government which, on the basis of its illegitimate "9-dash line" claim to almost the entire South China Sea, has infringed upon Philippine sovereignty by actively pursuing an aggressive policy of using its navy, coast guard, and so-called maritime militia to harass Philippine vessels, impede the maritime transport network, and disrupt maritime governance within the West Philippine Sea;

WHEREAS, the Chinese government has also militarized portions of the West Philippine Sea by building and fortifying artificial islands in the region, equipping them with military installations such as runways, radar systems, and naval facilities, thus allowing its vessels to operate within the area on a near-constant basis;

WHEREAS, this has led to an unprecedented challenge to the Philippine Coast Guard's primary mission of, among others, maintaining the maritime transport network, enforcing Philippine Law, and upholding maritime governance within Philippine waters;

WHEREAS, not only has the Chinese government promoted its baseless territorial claims by subsidizing the operations of its maritime militia "fishing fleet," it has also recently passed legislation authorizing the Chinese Coast Guard to use force on foreign ships and destroy other countries' structures and facilities in waters claimed by China;

WHEREAS, in the past several months, the Chinese government has attempted to blockade the Philippine Marine garrison on the B.R.P. Sierra Madre, and used military-grade lasers as well as water cannons against vessels operated or escorted by the Philippine Coast Guard;

WHEREAS, a concerted disinformation campaign promoting a pro-China narrative has also directly targeted officials of the Philippine Coast Guard and undermined efforts by the Philippines to assert its sovereignty over its maritime zones;

WHEREAS, this has led the Philippine Coast Guard to urge Filipinos to fight "fake news" discrediting national efforts to uphold Philippine sovereignty over the country's maritime zones, and call out Filipinos defending or "making excuses" for China's aggressive actions in the West Philippine Sea as unpatriotic traitors;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Coast Guard, despite being tasked to maintain maritime domain awareness across the width and breadth of the country's maritime zones, has only been allocated an intelligence budget of only Ten Million Pesos (Php10M), forcing it to rely only on human intelligence ("HUMINT") rather than also on signal intelligence ("SIGINT"); and

WHEREAS, to enable it to maintain the maritime transport network, improve maritime governance and maritime domain awareness, and safeguard the marine environment, there is thus an urgent need to provide the Philippine Coast Guard with additional resources, including marine radar stations and Automatic Identification Systems ("AIS") covering strategically vital areas within the country's maritime zones, among others.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED TO CALL FOR AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO THE ADOPTION OF MEASURES STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENABLING IT TO MAINTAIN THE MARITIME TRANSPORT NETWORK, ENFORCE PHILIPPINE LAW, AND IMPROVE MARITIME GOVERNANCE WITHIN THE COUNTRY'S MARITIME ZONES.

Adopted.


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator