



SENATE

P. S. RES. No. 1009

Introduced by **Senators Juan Miguel F. Zubiri, Loren B. Legarda, Joel Villanueva, and Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III**

RESOLUTION
EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND SYMPATHY AND SINCERE
CONDOLENCES OF THE SENATE ON THE DEATH OF FORMER
SENATOR RENE SAGUISAG

WHEREAS, the Honorable Senator Rene Saguisag, a dedicated public servant, a staunch defender of human rights, and a true patriot, passed away on 24 April 2024 at the age of 84;

WHEREAS, he served as Senator from 1987 to 1992 and was chairman of the Senate Committee on Ethics and Privileges and the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. He co-authored landmark legislations to uphold the integrity and highest standards in public service, such as Republic Act No. 6713 or the “Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees” and Republic Act No. 6770 or the “Ombudsman Act of 1989”;¹

WHEREAS, the Honorable Senator from Quezon province obtained both his Bachelor of Arts and Law degrees with honors from San Beda College in 1959 and 1963, respectively, and placed 6th in the 1963 Bar Examinations. He acquired his Master of Laws degree from Harvard University in 1968 under a full scholarship;²

WHEREAS, while attending his undergraduate and Law classes at San Beda from 1959 to 1962, he worked as a checker, laborer, construction site guard, and messenger. He started out his legal career as a student researcher, then associate, and eventually a part-time member of Ledesma, Guytingco, Velasco, and Saguisag from 1962 to 1972. He also became a member of the San Beda Law Faculty from 1961 to 1972;³

WHEREAS, prior to becoming a legislator, Sen. Saguisag had a long, illustrious career as a lawyer and a human rights defender. He provided legal assistance to victims of human rights abuses during the Martial Law period. He was also a prominent member of the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG), founded in 1974 by former Senators Jose W. Diokno and Lorenzo Tañada, which handled various cases against law enforcers accused of killing peasants, activists, and journalists. Sen. Saguisag and other FLAG lawyers would eventually start the Movement of Attorneys for Brotherhood, Integrity, and

¹ https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/photo_release/2024/0424_03.asp

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

Nationalism, Inc. (MABINI), whose cases have led to landmark Supreme Court decisions;⁴

WHEREAS, following the 1986 EDSA Revolution, he rose to further prominence when he was appointed as spokesperson of former President Corazon Aquino. The following year, he decided to run as Senator without having to spend a single centavo during the election. During his single term as Senator, he attended all 415 days of Session. He was also one of the “Magnificent 12” who voted to remove American military bases from Philippine soil in 1991;⁵

WHEREAS, after his career as a legislator, he devoted his time and talents as an ardent advocate for human rights, the rule of law, democracy, and good governance. He was appointed by former President Joseph Estrada to head the *Ad Hoc* and Independent Citizen’s Committee (AHICC) to investigate the irregularities in the preparations and celebrations of the Philippine Centennial Anniversary. He was also a prolific writer, and shared his opinion and expertise on important national issues, current affairs, and even on sports development in his “TGIF” column in the Manila Times, in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, and other newspapers. He continued to shape the legal minds of young Filipinos through his work as a professor of Constitutional Law and Human Rights Law at San Beda College in Mendiola and Alabang;⁶


WHEREAS, during the celebration of *Araw ng Kagitingan* on 9 April 2024, which was among his last public engagements, Sen. Saguisag was honored by the Bantayog ng mga Bayani Foundation as one of the 13 Haligi ng Bantayog. He served as a trustee of said Foundation from 1998 to 2000;⁷

WHEREAS, Senator Saguisag was unwavering in his fight for justice and human rights throughout his life. He was humble, competent, and had an unimpeachable dedication to serve the Filipino people, especially the poor and disenfranchised;

WHEREAS, Senator Saguisag’s enduring legacy rightfully earns him a place in the annals of our nation’s history and serves as a beacon to current and future public servants and legal practitioners. His passing is a great loss not only to his bereaved family but to the entire nation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, as it is hereby resolved, to express the profound sympathy and sincere condolences of the Senate on the death of former Senator Rene Saguisag.

Adopted,


JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI


LOREN LEGARDA


JOEL MILLANUEVA


AQUILINO “KOKO” PIMENTEL III

⁴ From various sources (<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1933173/rene-saguisag-human-rights-defender-moral-compass-fierce-critic>, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/04/24/honoring-philippine-human-rights-icon>, <https://qa.philstar.com/headlines/2024/04/24/2350110/former-senator-rene-saguisag-dies>, <https://www.rappler.com/philippines/former-senator-rene-saguisag-dies/>)

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ <https://www.rappler.com/philippines/former-senator-rene-saguisag-dies/>