
Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

A RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PROPRIETY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MANILA WATERWORKS AND SEWERAGE SYSTEM (MWSS) MANAGEMENT AND ITS EMPLOYEES REGARDING THE MWSS HOUSING PROJECT IN LA MESA WATERSHED AND RESERVOIR, WITH THE PURPOSE OF RECOMMENDING APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS AND THE PROTECTION OF OUR WATERSHEDS

WHEREAS, Section 16, Article II of the Constitution declares that the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature;

WHEREAS, it is the duty of the government to provide and the right of every Filipino to have access to clean, safe drinking water, the primary source of which is the La Mesa Watershed and Reservoir;

WHEREAS, the La Mesa Watershed and Reservoir covers a total area of 2,700 hectares consisting of 2,000 hectares of forest lands and 700 hectares of man-made lake that serves as a water reservoir;

WHEREAS the La Mesa Watershed and Reservoir is a vital link to the water requirements of 12 million residents of Metro Manila considering that 1.5 million liters of water pass through this reservoir everyday;

WHEREAS, on 25 February 2006, the Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) executed a Deed of Absolute Sale allegedly with the 1,141 awardees of the NAWASA Employees Housing Project in the amount of Three Million Pesos (P3,000,000.00);

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court confirmed such collective bargaining contract with the MWSS management for a housing project but notably, the Supreme Court merely affirmed the housing project within the MWSS property, but not necessarily in La Mesa;

WHEREAS, studies made by the UP College of Engineering, Diliman, QC stated in its official final recommendation that, among others, "it is in the best interest of MWSS and the general public who eventually utilize for drinking the water in the La Mesa Reservoir that the 58 hectares of the La Mesa watershed area being proposed for the MWSS Housing project shall remain a protected watershed area and not be converted to a housing project;"

WHEREAS, on 18 July 2007, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo proclaimed La Mesa watershed Reservoir a protected area "subject to private rights";

WHEREAS, there is a need to inquire, in aid of legislation, what private rights are to be protected over the La Mesa Watersheds;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to determine whether there is a need to enact a law declaring La Mesa Watersheds a protected area and what would be the effects of the same to said private rights;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the appropriate Senate Committees to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the propriety of the implementation of the collective bargaining agreement between the Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) management and its employees regarding the MWSS housing project in La Mesa Watershed and Reservoir, with the purpose of recommending appropriate legislation on environmental concerns and the protection of our watersheds.


LOREN LEGARDA
Senator