


FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

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SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

P. S. Resolution No. 124

Introduced by Senator FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE APPARENTLY DETERIORATING SIGNIFICANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WITNESS PROTECTION PROGRAM AS DEFINED AND ESTABLISHED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED 6981

WHEREAS, Republic Act (RA) No. 6981, or "The Witness Protection, Security and Benefit Act," is enacted into law principally to encourage an individual who has witnessed or has knowledge of the commission of a crime to testify before a court, a quasi-judicial body, or an investigating authority, by protecting him from probable reprisals and from unavoidable economic dislocation.

WHEREAS, the recent spate of extra-judicial killings and involuntary disappearances allegedly perpetrated by elements or agents of the State has brought to fore the issue of whether government sponsored crime related policies such as the Witness Protection Program is still a viable option for victims and their witnesses to take or not.

WHEREAS, the above issue is even made more valid by the fact that the Witness Protection Program is under the Department of Justice (DOJ) whose attached offices, like the Office of the Solicitor General, serve as counsels, to the Armed Force of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP).

WHEREAS, a recent news report reveals that human rights groups have opted to seek judicial custody from the Supreme Court for two (2) supposed victims of abduction and torture instead of availing for them the protection, security and benefit provided for under RA No. 6981.

WHEREAS, this outlook now being had by people especially those belonging to human rights groups and organizations is quite worth to consider since it strikes at the very foundation on which the "The Witness Protection, Security and Benefit Act" lies.

WHEREAS, in view of the foregoing, there is a need to revisit and re-evaluate the efficacy and significance of RA No. 6981 in the light of the incidents that have recently transpired.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE APPARENTLY DETERIORATING SIGNIFICANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WITNESS PROTECTION PROGRAM AS DEFINED AND ESTABLISHED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED 6981

Adopted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'F' followed by a horizontal line and a smaller, less distinct signature.

FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO