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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }
First Regular Session }

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SENATE

P. S. Res. No. 131

## Introduced by Sen. M. A. Madrigal

## RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH, WOMEN AND FAMILY RELATIONS TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S US\$465.5 MILLION OR P26.48 BILLION CYBER EDUCATION PROJECT (CEP) FINANCED BY THE SAME CHINESE LOAN PACKAGE AS THE NATIONAL BROADBAND NETWORK (NBN) DEAL (WHICH AT PRESENT IS THE SUBJECT OF NATIONWIDE CONTROVERSY BECAUSE OF ALLEGED CORRUPTION AND ANOMALIES) DUE TO SERIOUS QUESTIONS OF GROSS OVERPRICING, MISALLOCATION OF PUBLIC FUNDS AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE REAL NEEDS OF THE PHILIPPINE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE FILIPINO YOUTH.

WHEREAS the Department of Education is set to implement the Cyber Education Project or CEP which, according to Education Secretary Jesli Lapus, will use satellite technology to provide an "efficient and cost-effective solution" to deliver much needed educational services to public elementary and secondary schools throughout the country;

WHEREAS the Cyber Education Project will cover 23,549 public schools and 665 Alternative Learning System (ALS) centers nationwide through 15- to 20-minute lectures to be conducted by "education experts" for all grade or year levels and broadcasted live via satellite on 12 television channels;

**WHEREAS** the Cyber Education Project, contracted with Chinese firm Tsinghua Tongfang Nuctech Co. (Nuctech), is one of the five agreements signed on April 21, 2007 as part of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) cooperation between the governments of China and the Philippines;

WHEREAS the Cyber Education Project worth US\$ 465.5 million (around P26.48 billion) is even more expensive than the controversial \$329 National Broadband Network deal with ZTE Corp. of China, which is also part of the said ICT package

that UP Economics professors Raul Fabella and Emmanuel de Dios rapped as likely to end up being a waste of funds;

**WHEREAS** the Cyber Education Project is believed to be another white elephant as the money to bankroll it could have been put to better use to address the more pressing problems of the ailing Philippine public school system;

WHEREAS to arrest the plummeting standards and quality of Philippine education, even more urgent than satellite-based distance learning programs are more schools and classrooms, more and better quality textbooks, educational subsidies for children who cannot afford to go to school, more teachers and teacher training programs, and upgrading the economic status of teachers;

WHEREAS the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) says that the costly Cyber Education Project has "little or no proven benefits to the students" as it would simply broadcast a 20-minute lecture to selected schools via satellite. "If that is the only thing the DepEd wants to do, it might as well tape the lectures, place them in compact disks and distribute them to the schools for viewing";

WHEREAS the educational content of the lectures-via-satellite can indeed very well be delivered without prejudice to form and substance through much cheaper "playback technology," i.e., the VCD and DVD;

**WHEREAS** far from delivering quality education and providing savings for the government, the whole Cyber Education Project could be inimical to the interests of the whole country, particularly to the youth whom it is supposed to serve;

WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED TO DIRECT THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH, WOMEN AND FAMILY RELATIONS OF LEGISLATION, IN AID THE DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATE, EDUCATION'S US\$465.5 MILLION OR P26.48 BILLION CYBER EDUCATION PROJECT (CEP) FINANCED BY THE SAME CHINESE LOAN PACKAGE AS THE NATIONAL BROADBAND NETWORK (NBN) DEAL (WHICH AT PRESENT IS THE SUBJECT OF NATIONWIDE CONTROVERSY BECAUSE OF ALLEGED CORRUPTION AND ANOMALIES) DUE TO SERIOUS QUESTIONS OF GROSS OVERPRICING, MISALLOCATION OF PUBLIC FUNDS AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE REAL NEEDS OF THE PHILIPPINE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE FILIPINO YOUTH.

Adopted,

Mallabrigal\_\_\_\_