

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

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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 132

RECEIVED BY: [Signature]

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE INCREASING NUMBER OF PREMATURE DEATHS DUE TO CARDIOVASCULAR ILLNESSES BROUGHT BY AIR POLLUTION

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 16, provides 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, Republic Act No. 8749, otherwise known as the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999, Section 36, mandates that “Local Government Units (LGUs) shall share the responsibility of the management and maintenance of air quality within their territorial jurisdiction x x x LGUs shall implement air quality standards set by the Board in areas within their jurisdiction”;

WHEREAS, according to World Bank Philippines’ Environment Monitor on Environmental Health, air pollution remains as the major cause of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, which are consistently considered among the leading causes of death in the country; air pollution is estimated to account for over four percent of all deaths in the country;

WHEREAS, according to Rahul Raturi, World Bank sector manager for environment and rural development, the particulate matter emitted from motor and utility vehicles is the largest health risk from air pollution;

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Health (DOH), pollution emitted by motor vehicles accounts for 80 percent of the overall pollution level in the country; DOH also stated that total suspended particulates (TSPs), even in small doses, affect breathing and cause eye irritation and serious lung problems such as lung cancer;

WHEREAS, Metro Manila has the largest “disease burden” from air pollution in the country, with nearly 5,000 premature deaths reported every year due to respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses brought about by exposure to poor air quality or outdoor air pollution;

WHEREAS, citing the latest data from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the World Bank report indicated that Metro Manila specifically recorded 4,968 premature deaths due to outdoor air pollution which accounts for 12 percent of all deaths in the metro; it was followed by Metro Cebu with 608 deaths which accounts for 10 percent; Davao City with 414 deaths accounts for 7 percent; Zamboanga City with 240 deaths accounts for eight percent; Iloilo City with 204 deaths accounts for five percent; Cabanatuan City with 134 accounts for 11 percent; General Santos City with 117 deaths accounts for seven percent; Butuan City with 104 deaths accounts for eight percent; Baguio City with 102 deaths accounts for seven percent; and Tacloban City with 88 deaths accounts for seven percent;

WHEREAS, these estimates were based on the correlations of particulate matter concentration in outdoor air and mortality rate in the Philippines;

WHEREAS, the cities included in the DENR data are those with a population over 200,000 that were monitored by the DENR for air quality;

WHEREAS, the World Bank report also pointed out that treatment of the reported illnesses due to air pollution costs an estimated Php962 million each year; some Php6.7 billion is also lost annually because of air pollution-related deaths due to pneumonia in children and cardiopulmonary disease and lung cancer in adults;

WHEREAS, government interventions over the past decade, such as the phase-out of leaded gasoline, have improved air quality; however, measures under the Clean Air Act must be prioritized in order to improve overall health and wellness and reduce the rate of premature deaths due to air pollution;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate to direct the proper Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the increasing number of premature deaths due to cardiovascular illnesses brought about by air pollution.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/dpm