

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)

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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 569

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED DISCONTINUED PUBLICATION OF
THE *PHILIPPINE COLLEGIAN* DUE TO THE ALLEGED REFUSAL OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE PHILIPPINES ADMINISTRATION TO RELEASE ITS PRINTING FUNDS

WHEREAS, according to a news report in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* on 27 September 2006, the *Philippine Collegian*, the official student publication of the University of the Philippines-Diliman, has reportedly failed to publish its weekly issue for a month now;

WHEREAS, the failure of the *Collegian* to publish its issues is reportedly due to the continued withholding of its publication funds by UP officials;

WHEREAS, the UP administration reportedly insist that a public bidding for the selection of a printing press for the *Collegian* must first be held before any publication funds can be released;

WHEREAS, the UP administration has reportedly taken the position that *Collegian* funds are government funds such that the selection of the publication's printing press must comply with the Government Procurement Reform Act;

WHEREAS, the *Collegian* editorial board, in a position paper entitled "Autonomy Under Siege," maintains that "[t]he administration's sole task is to collect the publication fee during registration, and thereafter give full discretion of handling of Collegian fund to the duly selected editorial board. The administration may not intervene in any of the publication's operations";

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9184, or the Government Procurement Reform Act, Section 4, states that: "This Act shall apply to the Procurement of Infrastructure Projects, Goods, and Consulting Services, regardless of source of funds, whether local or foreign, by all branches and instrumentalities of government, its departments, offices and agencies, including government-owned and/or -controlled corporations and local government units, subject to the provisions of Commonwealth Act No. 138. Any treaty or international or executive agreement affecting the subject matter of this Act to which the Philippine government is a signatory shall be observed";

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 7079, or the Campus Journalism Act of 1991, Section 2, states that: "It is the declared policy of the State to uphold and protect the freedom of the press even at the campus level and to promote the development and growth of campus journalism as a means of strengthening ethical values, encouraging critical and creative thinking, and developing moral character and personal discipline of the Filipino youth. In furtherance of this policy, the State shall undertake various programs and projects aimed at improving the journalistic skills of students concerned and promoting responsible and free journalism";

WHEREAS, R.A. No. 7079, Section 4, further provides that: "Once the publication is established, its editorial board shall freely determine its editorial policies and manage the publication's funds";

WHEREAS, R.A. No. 7079, Section 5, also provides that: "Funding for the student publication may include the savings of the respective school's appropriations, student subscriptions, donations, and other sources of funds. In no instance shall the Department of Education, Culture and Sports or the school administration concerned withhold the release of funds sourced from the savings of the appropriations of the respective schools and other sources intended for the student publication. Subscription fees collected by the school administration shall be released automatically to the student publication concerned";

WHEREAS, the *Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. No. 7079, Section 4*, states that: "The printing of the student publication by a private printer shall be conducted by the editorial board and the student publication staff through canvass or public bidding";

WHEREAS, given the clear policy of the law to protect the freedom of the press at the campus level and to promote the development and growth of campus journalism in the country, the fiscal autonomy of student publications must be recognized and upheld; at the same time, disbursements of student publication funds must be made according to proper accounting and auditing regulations to guard against corruption and misfeasance;

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Collegian* has a long and valued tradition as a radical, activist student paper that is inextricably linked with our nation's struggle for a just and more humane society; its continued existence, as all student publications, must be jealously protected;

RESOLVED, that the proper Senate committee shall conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported discontinued publication of the *Philippine Collegian* due to the alleged refusal of the University of the Philippines administration to release its printing funds.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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