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OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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SENATE

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P.S. RES. NO. 237

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR PIA S. CAYETANO

A RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO INQUIRE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE QUALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF WATER RESOURCES IN THE PHILIPPINES

Whereas, because clean and safe drinking water is a basic human need, utmost attention must be devoted to the proper and sufficient delivery of potable water to the people;

Whereas, according to the Manila-based University of Asia & the Pacific, Center for Food & Agribusiness, water supply is inadequate even in the urbanized area of Metro Manila, with only 60% of the population being served by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) with a daily output of 4,000 million liters water shared by both the population and industry;

Whereas, various reports show that Philippine waters are rapidly becoming polluted and that drinking waters are being contaminated with poisonous chemicals;

Whereas, according to the 2007 report of the Asian Development Bank, water quality is fast worsening with only about 33% of river systems classified as suitable sources for public water supply, and up to 58% of groundwater are classified as contaminated and require treatment;

Whereas, according to the same ADB report, water quality is poorest in urban areas caused mainly by untreated discharges of industrial and municipal wastewater;

Whereas, untreated wastewater affects health by spreading disease-causing bacteria and viruses, making water unfit for drinking and recreational use, threatening biodiversity, and deteriorating overall quality of life;

Whereas, the ADB reports that 48% of water pollution arise from domestic waste, 37% from agricultural waste and 15% from industrial waste;

Whereas, the ADB further discloses that in Manila, less than 4% of its population is connected to the sewer network adding that sludge treatment and disposal facilities are rare, resulting in indiscriminate disposal of untreated or poorly treated effluent into the Pasig River making it one of the world's most polluted rivers;

Whereas, a study conducted by the College of Public Health of the University of the Philippines found out that one-third of the households in the slum districts of Metro Manila drink water contaminated with waste;

Whereas, the environmental group Greenpeace reports that there has been a continuous decline in the quality of clean water sources in the Philippines citing their

findings of alarmingly high levels of lead content in Marilao River, volatile organic chemicals (VOC) content in Cavite's groundwater and nitrate content in Bulacan and Benguet groundwater wells;

Whereas, according to the World Bank's Philippine Environment Monitor 2006, water pollution and poor sanitation account for 17% of reported disease cases and nearly 6,000 of premature deaths per year;

Whereas, the same WB report states that the cost of treatment and lost income from diseases related to contaminated water amount to PhP6.7 billion or \$143 million per year;


Whereas, it is also reported by the WB that 80% of diseases caused by water pollution, sanitation and hygiene affect children, of which diarrhea is the third leading cause of the death among them;

Whereas, in 2003, five people died and more than 500 residents in Tondo were brought to various hospitals due to contaminated water;

Whereas, given these alarming reports and facts, it is necessary to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the availability and accessibility of clean and potable water in the Philippines;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Senate of the Philippines direct the Committees on Health and Demography and Environment and Natural Resources to inquire, in aid of legislation, on the availability and accessibility of clean and potable water in the Philippines.

Adopted,


PIA S. CAYETANO
Senator