


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

8 FEB 12 P6:19

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

P. S. Res. No. 305

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Introduced by Senator JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI

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**RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN ON THE  
CREATION OF THE TASK FORCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS TO  
STRENGTHEN LOCAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN  
MONITORING COMPLIANCE TO ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS**

**Whereas**, the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines states in Article II, Declaration of Principles and State Policies, Section 16: "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**, the country has promulgated numerous environmental laws consisting of the Revised Forestry Code (Presidential Decree 705), Marine Pollution (PD 979), Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act (Republic Act 6969), People's Small-Scale Mining Act (RA 7076), Seed Industry Development Act (RA 7208), National Integrated Protected Areas System Act (RA 7586), Philippine Mining Act (RA 7942), Indigenous People's Rights Act (RA 8371), Philippine Fisheries Code (RA 8550), Clean Air Act (RA 8749), Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (RA 9003), National Caves & Cave Resources Management and Protection Act (RA 9072), Wildlife Resources Conservation & Protection Act (RA 9147), Philippine Plant Variety Protection Act (RA 9168), Chainsaw Act (RA 9175) and Clean Water Act (RA 9275);

**Whereas**, the government should provide the necessary legal armor to environmental activists, non-government organizations, local and national government agencies in order to accomplish their mandate to conserve and protect the environment and natural resources;

**Whereas**, the Supreme Court had designated 117 Environmental Courts consisting of Regional Trial Courts (RTCs) in the National Capital Judicial Region, and from 12 other Judicial Regions, Metropolitan Trial Courts (MeTC) and Municipal Trial Courts in Cities (MTCC);

**Whereas**, as of October 2007 there were 3,102 environmental cases pending in various courts of which 109 cases had been filed more than ten years ago;

**Whereas**, documented conflicts on environment and natural resource use had resulted in the killing of environmental activists, community leaders and local and national government employees and officials mandated to implement environmental laws;

**Whereas**, the backlog of environmental cases continues to grow because suspects employed financial and logistical resources including the services of highly-paid lawyers to prevent the prosecution of cases against them;

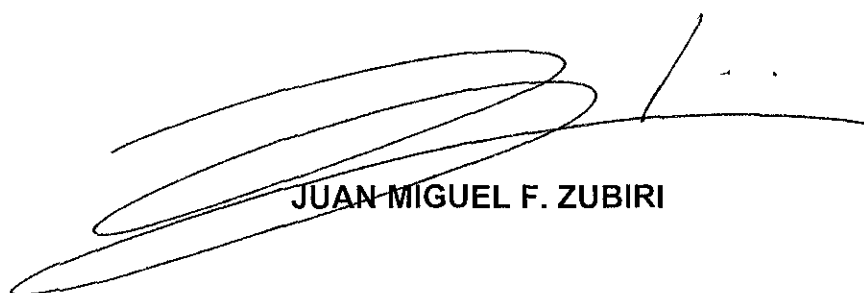
**Whereas**, the Office of the Ombudsman created the Task Force for Environmental Concerns to enhance the capability of local and national government officials to monitor compliance to environmental laws and file the necessary complaint/s against public officials or employees who violate environmental laws whether in conspiracy with private individuals or not;

**Whereas**, the creation of the Task Force was well received by non-government organizations, associations of professionals and government agencies such as the Conservation International, Earth Day Network, Environmental Legal Assistance Center, Greenpeace Southeast Asia, Haribon Foundation, Tanggol Kalikasan, World Wildlife Fund-Philippines, Integrated Bar of the Philippines, Philippine Bar Association, Women Trial Lawyers Organization of the Philippines, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Justice, Department of National Defense, National Bureau of Investigation and the Commission on Audit;

**Whereas**, the creation of the Task Force will strengthen the capacity of the State to reverse the damage to the environment, promote environmental justice, eliminate the backlog of environmental cases and achieve a balanced and healthful ecology;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the Senate of the Philippines commend the Office of the Ombudsman for the establishment of the Task Force for Environmental Concerns to strengthen local and national government agencies in monitoring compliance to environmental laws.

Adopted,



**JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI**