

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

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SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 432

RECEIVED BY: 

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,  
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPEATED USE OF MEDICAL DEVICES  
MADE FROM POLYVINYL CHLORIDE PLASTIC WHICH COULD BE  
DETRIMENTAL TO HEALTH

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 15 provides: "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them";

WHEREAS, in a 27 May 2008 news article in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Dr. Ruth Stringer, the international science and policy coordinator for Health Care Without Harm, warned about the quality of Philippine hospitals alleging that these hospitals may not be good for our health;

WHEREAS, Health Care Without Harm is an international coalition of 473 organizations in more than 50 countries working to transform the health care sector so it is no longer a source of harm to people and the environment;

WHEREAS, Stringer pointed out that medical devices made from PVC (polyvinyl chloride) plastic such as IV bags and tubing, examination gloves, hospital flooring and plastic food wrap contain phthalates which are chemicals that can damage the liver, kidneys and lungs and can also cause birth defects, especially among males;

WHEREAS, Stringer, who is also former deputy head of environmental group Greenpeace International's science unit, claimed that medical devices made of flexible PVC can leach the phthalate DEHP (di-2-ethylhexyl phthalate) into patients;

WHEREAS, according to studies in Europe and the United States, exposure to phthalates has been linked to severe health problems, including infertility, immune system damage, impaired childhood development, hormone disruption and cancer;

WHEREAS, Stringer said that patients may be harmed when exposed to DEHP leaks from PVC medical devices, noting studies involving animals had documented that the developing male reproductive system was the most sensitive to DEHP exposure.

WHEREAS, the scientist also quoted a recent study that found a link between prenatal exposure to DEHP and reproductive changes in boys while another found that higher concentrations of phthalates in breast milk may decrease sex hormone concentrations in baby boys;

WHEREAS, Stringer warned that medical establishments in the United States and Europe have started to take action against vinyl products, including the proper labeling of plastic products and resorting to other alternatives;

WHEREAS, doctors and health care experts in the Philippines have yet to become aware of its hazards;

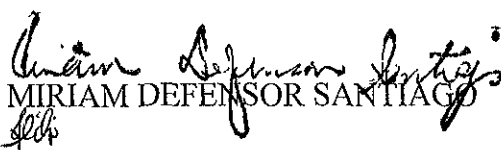
WHEREAS, Stringer visited three hospitals in Metro Manila, namely the San Lazaro Hospital, Philippine Children's Medical Center and Philippine Heart Center, where she found several PVC products that could easily be replaced;

WHEREAS, according to Stringer, there were alternative plastic medical devices that hospitals could use such as those made from polyethylene, polypropylene, polyurethane, silicone, ethylene, vinyl acetate and multi-layer laminate plastics;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to address this issue and craft legislation to protect our countrymen from the effects of these harmful and hazardous plastic materials;

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 repeated use of medical devices made from polyvinyl chloride plastic which could be detrimental to health.

Adopted,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  
SLS

/cdr