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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
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SENATE

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR MANNY VILLAR

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**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE WORKING CONDITIONS OF MINERS AND REMUNERATION ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF MINING-RELATED DISASTERS IN LIGHT OF THE RECENT INCIDENT IN ITOGON, BENGUET WHERE SEVERAL MINE WORKERS DIED AND WERE TRAPPED IN A FLOODED MINE TUNNEL, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF TIGHTENING OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHS) MEASURES CURRENTLY IN PLACE IN THE MINING INDUSTRY**

*Whereas*, the International Labor Organization (ILO) considers mining as the most unsafe human activity;

*Whereas*, mines expose workers to different types of airborne particulates, which makes them vulnerable to systemic toxic effects due to the absorption of lead, manganese, cadmium, zinc and other toxic materials;

*Whereas*, acute effects due to prolonged exposure in mines include rapid breathing, gasping, tremors, convulsions and death;

*Whereas*, effects of sublethal poisoning include headache, dizziness and thyroid enlargement;

*Whereas*, several miners in Itogon, Benguet were trapped to death recently after a private mine collapsed due to typhoon Nina;

*Whereas*, 50 miners in Compostela Valley were buried alive after the mine collapsed in 2005;

*Whereas*, to revitalize the mining industry, mineral resources development has been identified by the government as an area of focus in the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan, 2004-2010;

*Whereas*, the Philippines is the fifth mineralized nation in the world, and is 2nd to Indonesia in terms of geological prospectivity in South East Asia, 2nd to South Africa in gold production, 3rd in copper production, 3rd richest in gold, 4th in copper deposits, 5th in nickel deposits and 6th in chromite;

*Whereas*, the government unveiled the Mineral Action Plan (MAP) in 2004, which identifies 24 large-scale mining projects that are expected to bring in US\$4-6 billion in investments and US\$5-7 billion in foreign exchange between 2004-2010;

*Whereas*, by the year 2009, there will be 455 Exploration Permits or 1,685% increase from the number in 2005<sup>1</sup>;

*Whereas*, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) projects employment in the sector to reach 590,000 by 2009 or a 440% jump;

*Whereas*, in view of the government's efforts to revive the Philippine mining industry, it is imperative to safeguard the health of miners, and ensure a decent remuneration package in view of the fatal and non-fatal hazards they face in their line of work;

*Whereas*, wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) is not sufficient to shield miners from workplace hazards; Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Senate Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resource Development and other appropriate committees, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the working conditions of miners and remuneration assistance to victims of mining-related disasters in light of the recent incident in Itogon, Benguet where several mine workers died and were trapped in a flooded mine tunnel, with the end in view of tightening occupational health and safety (OHS) measures currently in place in the mining industry.

Adopted,

  
**MANNY VILLAR**  
Senator

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<sup>1</sup> Roadmap for the Philippine Minerals Industry, Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), 2003