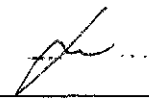


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SENATE

P.S.R. No. 757 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 PROLIFERATION OF
FRAUDULENT ACTIVITIES THROUGH TEXT MESSAGES

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 5 states, "The maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty, and property, and promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy";

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 24 states, "The State recognizes the vital role of communication and information in nation-building";

WHEREAS, the ABS CBN News website reported on 17 October 2008 that the proliferation of scams through text messaging has escalated;

WHEREAS, during the launch of the Security Awareness and Fraud Education (SAFE), Trade Secretary Peter Favila allegedly said that even President Arroyo and her cabinet are no strangers to text scams;

WHEREAS, Deputy Director Vistor Bessat of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Anti Fraud and Computer Crime Division allegedly said that new technology, such as short message sending and the Internet, has emboldened syndicates to target more unsuspecting victims;

WHEREAS, Bessat reportedly said that around 10-20 scams are reported to the NBI daily; majority of these are text scams;

WHEREAS, Patricia Zamora-Riingen, regional vice-president for The Western Union Company Philippines and Indochina reportedly said that the proliferation of fraudulent activities is due to the economic downturn; she also allegedly said that these text scams are also becoming more prevalent and have started to affect overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who are unaware that the text messages they are receiving are fraudulent;

WHEREAS, Favila reportedly asked Congress to impose tougher sanctions including outright imprisonment of fraudsters because of the rise of fraud schemes since the P5,000-P10,000 fine imposed on fraudsters has failed to deter these criminals from breaking the law again and again;

WHEREAS, Bessat reportedly said that consumers should not be ashamed to admit if they have been victimized by these types of scams since this will not bring these criminals to justice;

WHEREAS, Riingen allegedly said that Western Union has re-designed its money transfer forms and added fraud prevention information as well as the NBI Hotline to encourage people to ask the right questions before they send their money;

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon the State to educate its people on fraudulent schemes;

WHEREAS, to diminish the number of fraudsters, stricter penalties should be created aside from a more reliable system of determining fraudulent text messages and emails;

WHEREAS, the State should also encourage its citizens to report people who are engaged in these fraudulent acts, and encourage victims to step forward and report their case;

WHEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED by the Philippine Senate to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry in aid of the legislation, on the reported proliferation of fraudulent activities through text messages.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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