

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

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SENATE
P.S.R. No. **835**

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, THE UNITED NATIONS STUDY ALLEGING ELEVEN FILIPINO
WOMEN DIE DURING CHILDBIRTH EACH DAY *mc*

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, *The Philippine Daily Inquirer*, in an article dated 15 January 2009, reported that based on the latest United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) study on risks faced by pregnant women and newborn babies, eleven Filipino women die in childbirth every day due to poor health care;

WHEREAS, UNICEF reported that newborn child mortality remains high in the Philippines, which is among the 68 developing nations where 97 per cent of maternal, newborn and child deaths worldwide occur and where half of the deaths of children below five years old occur during infancy;

WHEREAS, UNICEF's State of the World's Children Report for 2008 claim that around 11 Filipino mothers die every day or an estimated 4,500 every year due to severe hemorrhage, hypertensive disorders, sepsis and problems related to obstructed labor and abortion;

WHEREAS, the report added that "in the Philippines, the lifetime risk of maternal death is one in 140; and about half of the deaths of Filipino children under five happen in the first 28 days of life";

WHEREAS, it was also reported that both mothers and their infants are vulnerable in the days after birth, so post-natal visits, proper hygiene and health counseling are critical interventions;

WHEREAS, although UNICEF commended many developing countries for making "excellent progress" in improving their child survival rates in recent years, it allegedly said that there has been less headway in reducing maternal mortality in the last 17 years;

WHEREAS, UNICEF reported that the millennium development goal of improving maternal health is one of the goals least likely to be achieved by the Philippines by 2015;

WHEREAS, it was also reported that UNICEF country representative Vanessa Tobin allegedly said that a huge effort is needed to improve public reproductive and maternal health services and educate mothers;

WHEREAS, among the recommended interventions suggested by Tobin include increasing the coverage of births supervised by midwives and skilled health professionals, and providing essential lifesaving care for mother and newborn before, during or after birth in emergency obstetric care facilities”;

WHEREAS, the agency further claimed that to increase women's access to the prevention of unwanted pregnancies, it is essential to provide quality reproductive health services and improve a woman's nutritional status and prevent iron and folate deficiencies;

WHEREAS, UNICEF stressed in its report that “saving the lives of mothers and their newborns requires more than just medical intervention; educating girls is pivotal to improving maternal and neonatal health and also benefits families and societies”;

WHEREAS, at a time when new technological and scientific breakthroughs have been achieved all over the world, it borders on the criminal to see Filipina mothers and babies die allegedly due to these seemingly simple and innocuous causes;

WHEREAS, the implementation of policies and measures that seek to provide better health care to mothers and their children should be periodically checked and thoroughly examined if such policies and measures are implemented properly;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate committee to investigate, in aid of legislation, the United Nations study alleging eleven Filipina women die during childbirth each day.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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