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OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 197

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, TO CONDUCT AN
INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED DEFICIENCY OF
RESTROOMS AND TOILETS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 13 provides: "The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs";

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

WHEREAS, Article 2, Section 17 of the same states: "The State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development";

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* in its 16 September 2010 issue reported that public schools in the country lack restrooms and toilets, which are critical in the government's initiatives in the prevention of contagious and communicative diseases especially in schools;

WHEREAS, according to the report, Metro Manila public schools have the biggest shortage of sanitation facilities in the country with a deficit of 26,736 toilets, composed of 12,796 urinals for males and some 13,940 bowls for females; second is Southern Tagalog with a shortfall of 15,753 toilets; third is the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao with a shortage of 15,030 toilets; Central Luzon and Central Visayas are said to need at least 10,000 of such facilities more to ease restroom crowding;

WHEREAS, authorities estimate a shortfall of 151,084 toilets by the next school year;

WHEREAS, although the report said that the Department of Education's (DepEd) Physical Facilities and Schools Engineering Division did not release data on the current toilet-to-student ratio, the department is said to be aiming for an ideal ratio of one toilet for every 50 students, and that the deficiency of toilets are currently being addressed;

WHEREAS, the reports said that P200 million is allotted for building and repairing public school restrooms annually; DepEd officials said that they are releasing P50 million for NCR this year for that purpose;

WHEREAS, DepEd officials also said that a standard school restroom, complete with bowls, urinals and hand-washing facilities, costs around P300,000;

WHEREAS, considering the recent dengue outbreak in the country, these toilets require proper maintenance on top of their required sufficient number per student because poorly maintained toilets serve as breeding areas of mosquitoes carrying the dengue virus;

WHEREAS, Congress should look into this glaring deficiency in the country's public school system because it involves children's health and well-being, as well as the proper and efficient use of public funds;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the Senate Committee on health to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation, on the reported deficiency of restrooms and toilets in public schools.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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