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SENATE
P. S. R. No. **214**

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 INCREASING PREVALENCE OF OBESITY AMONG YOUNG FILIPINO ADULTS AND EXPLORING POSSIBLE TAXATION MEASURES ON UNHEALTHY FOOD CHOICES TO CURB OBESITY

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

WHEREAS, according to the 23 September 2010 news report published in the *Manila Bulletin*, the increasing prevalence of obesity among Filipino adults ages 20 and up is alarming because this could lead to an increase in the number of people having degenerative diseases such as heart disease, hypertension and diabetes mellitus;

WHEREAS, based on a study conducted by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DoST), there were about 20 out of 100 adults of both sexes who were overweight in 1998 and this figure increased to 24 adults in 2003;

WHEREAS, in 2008, the figure has further increased to 27 out of 100 adults, while about 12 of these adults were chronic energy deficient (CED);

WHEREAS, the number of CEDs has been gradually decreasing at about 0.15 percent per year, while the number of overweight individuals increased at the average rate of 0.67 percent per year;

WHEREAS, prevalence of adults who were at risk to CED were mostly observed in the regions of Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, MIMAROPA, Bicol, Western Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula and ARMM;

WHEREAS, regions with higher prevalence of overweight among adults than the national average were Central Luzon, CAR, NCR, CALABARZON, Central Visayas, Eastern Visayas, Northern Mindanao, Davao and CARAGA;

WHEREAS, in the 2008 survey, 2.7% Filipino adults aged 20 years and over are suffering from impaired fasting glucose, while hyperglycemia or high fasting blood sugar (FBS) level is 4.8%;

WHEREAS, the prevalence of hypertension among adults is 25%, increasing with age, starting from age 40-49 years;

WHEREAS, diabetes is a disease characterized by elevated blood sugar levels due to deficiency or absence of insulin which is needed to utilize blood sugar to turn it into energy;

WHEREAS, the signs and symptoms of diabetes are numerous including frequent urination, excessive thirst, extreme hunger, sudden weight loss, weakness and fatigue, recurring or hard to heal wound or gum infection, drowsiness, tingling or numbness in hands or feet, itching of skin and genitals, sudden vision changes, and blurred vision;

WHEREAS, it is imperative for the government to address the alarming issue of obesity by devising programs which would instill health awareness among young Filipino adults and encourage them to actively engage in physical workout to prevent the onslaught of obesity;

WHEREAS, it would also be prudent for the State to explore the possibility of increasing taxes on less healthful foods as a means of deterring adults from over-consumption; this could also be an appropriate way to correct a market that favors unhealthy food choices over healthier options;

WHEREAS, it is acknowledged that such policies may not resolve the obesity epidemic in its entirety and may face considerable opposition from food manufacturers and sellers but this could be an important strategy to address over-consumption, help reduce energy intake and potentially aid in weight loss and reduced rates of diabetes among young Filipino adults;

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 increasing prevalence of obesity among young Filipino adults and exploring possible taxation measures on unhealthy food choices to curb obesity.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/dpm.