


FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



'11 MAR 10 P 3:20

SENATE
P. S. R. No. 424

FILED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PROLIFERATION OF ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE
AND THE NEED FOR A STRONGER ENFORCEMENT OF OUR LAWS TO CURB THE
INCIDENTS OF ANIMAL SMUGGLING

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 16 mandates: "The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature";

WHEREAS, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora of which the Philippines is a party recognizes that wild fauna and flora in their many beautiful and varied forms are an irreplaceable part of the natural systems of the earth which must be protected for this and the generations to come and that international co-operation is essential for the protection of certain species of wild fauna and flora against over-exploitation through international trade;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9147 also known as the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act, Section 27 (e) and (i) penalizes illegal acts such as trading and transporting of wildlife and trading of wildlife;

WHEREAS, according to a 9 March 2011 article in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, the southern Philippines is one of the most notorious trade routes for wild animals from neighboring Indonesia and serves as a transshipment point to other countries;

WHEREAS, this is based on a statement delivered by Dr. Willie Smits, a world authority on orangutans and founder of conservation group Orangutan Outreach, during the Microsoft Regional Innovative Education Forum;

WHEREAS, Smits has been working for the conservation of Borneo's endemic orangutan species since the 1980s and his brainchild, the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation, is known as the world's largest orangutan conservation organization;

WHEREAS, it was reported that the Microsoft for the DeforestAction project hopes to gather 10 million student volunteers from around the world to monitor illegal logging operations on 90 million hectares of forest cover in Borneo;

WHEREAS, it was alleged that syndicates use the seaport in General Santos City to smuggle in endangered animals from Bitung in North Sulawesi, the Indonesian island closest to the Philippines;

WHEREAS, the conservation group has conducted work with smugglers in the Philippines and the modus operandi involves taking the rare animals namely leopards,

orangutans, sun bears, gibbons and birds of paradise and sending them by boat from the port of Bitung to General Santos from where they are forwarded to other destinations;

WHEREAS, from the Philippines, a lot of animals are transported to Japan, Taiwan, America, and other countries, but also quite a lot end up in amusement parks and private zoos in the Philippines owned by wealthy individuals;

WHEREAS, Smits further revealed that wildlife trafficking is a billion dollar a year industry in Indonesia, with syndicates operating at least three routes: Bitung to General Santos; North Sumatra to Guangzhou, China; and from Jakarta to other countries;

WHEREAS, the illegal wildlife trade is a profitable but environmentally destructive crime that threatens species to extinction;

WHEREAS, aside from the risks illegally traded wildlife pose to human health and safety, many trafficked animals do not survive the journey;

WHEREAS, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) have already launched the "Wild Life Trafficking Stops Here" campaign in an effort to stamp out trafficking of endangered animals and plants through airports;

WHEREAS, it is imperative for the State to be proactive in the enforcement of laws on wildlife conservation;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the proliferation of illegal wildlife trade and the need for a stronger enforcement of our laws to curb the incidents of animal smuggling.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/dpm