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RECEIVED BY: 

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Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND OTHER PERTINENT COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE FEASIBILITY, VIABILITY, PRACTICALITY AND THE ACCEPTABILITY OF JUSTIFICATIONS ADVANCED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN IMPLEMENTING THE K TO 12 EDUCATION PROGRAM, AS WELL AS TO REVIEW THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE K TO 12 CURRICULUM WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ENACTING REMEDIAL LEGISLATION TO ADDRESS THE INADEQUACIES IN THE COUNTRY'S PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM**

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Education (DepEd) announced in October of last year the planned twelve-year basic education model called K-6-4-2, otherwise known as the K to 12 basic education system of the present administration, as an expansion of the current ten-year public school program into a program providing for a total of thirteen academic years of basic education;

**WHEREAS**, the new K to 12 curriculum shall be offered to all incoming Grade 1 as well as First Year High School students starting in June 2012, and the Senior High School education program shall be fully implemented by the DepEd by school year 2016-2017;

**WHEREAS**, the K to 12 curriculum is being promoted purportedly in response to the *"poor performance of students in achievement tests like the National Achievement Test (NAT) which has a passing rate of only 69.21% for elementary and 46.38% for high school and even in international tests like TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study)"<sup>1</sup>*;

**WHEREAS**, serious questions, however, have been raised on the soundness of the K to 12 program as the solution to the above-cited problem of the education sector on the ground that the correlation between the number of years of basic education and the overall quality of education has yet to be established. In fact, it is contended by some education experts that the quality of education may not necessarily be a function of the number of years of basic education;

**WHEREAS**, an in-country study conducted by retired UP Professor and former Deputy Minister of Education Abraham I. Felipe and Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE) Executive Director Carolina C. Porio, concludes that: *"[t]here is no clear empirical basis in TIMSS to justify a proposal for the Philippines to lengthen its education cycle... There is no basis to expect that lengthening the educational cycle calendar-wise, will improve the quality of education... The value of the 12-year cycle is ultimately weighing the large and certain costs*

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<sup>1</sup>05 October 2010. *Discussion Paper on the Enhanced K+12 Basic Education Program*. DepEd Discussion Paper. Information retrieved from <http://www.deped.gov.ph/cpanel/uploads/issuance/mg/K12new.pdf> on 9 May 2011.

against the uncertain gains in lengthening the education cycle” and further warns that “[I]f the plan is hastily adopted, pretty soon the problem would be how to cut short a poor quality 12-year cycle.”<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS**, in fact, as can be gleaned from the TIMSS results, “[s]ome countries with the same or shorter school cycle garnered the highest scores while those implementing the K-[to]12 model or more years of schooling got lower scores”<sup>3</sup> than the Philippines. As patent in the records hereunder:

- “Fourth graders from Australia had respectable TIMSS scores despite having only one year of pre-schooling, while Morocco (two years of pre-school), Norway (three years) and Armenia and Slovenia (both four years) had lower scores than Australia. South Korea, which has the same length of basic education cycle as the Philippines, was among the top performers in the TIMSS, while those with longer pre-schooling (Ghana, Morocco, Botswana and Saudi Arabia, three years) had lower test scores;
- Test scores of Filipino students, meanwhile, were lower than those garnered by all 13 countries with shorter elementary cycles, namely, Russia, Armenia, Latvia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, Moldova, Italy, Egypt and Iran;
- In the high school level, Singapore, which also has a four year high school cycle, got the highest score. Ironically, the Philippines got a lower score together with countries that have longer high school cycles like South Africa, Chile, Palestine, Morocco and Saudi Arabia;
- For the pre-college level, the Philippines also got a low score, but so did the United States, which has a 15-year basic and secondary education cycle. Students from Singapore, South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong, all with shorter education cycles, got higher scores than America[n] students.”<sup>4</sup>

**WHEREAS**, it is not surprising that the countries that have been investing heavily in education as a percentage of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) are the ones who performed better in the same assessment;

**WHEREAS**, a teacher’s group estimates that as of Academic Year 2010-2011, the steady decline in our education budget have brought about a glaring shortage of teaching manpower and supervisory personnel which translates numerically to 54,060 teachers, 4,538 principals, and 6,473 head teachers; and of education resources and capital outlay in the form of 61,343 classrooms, 816,291 seats and 113,051 water and sanitation facilities<sup>5</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, DepEd Assistant Secretary Tonisito Umali in fact admitted to the media over the weekend that, if we are to implement the ideal ratio of 45 students to 1 teacher, our shortage in teachers and classrooms would actually amount to around 101,000 to 103,000 teachers and 8,000 volunteer teachers for Kindergarten and around 90,000 classrooms;

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<sup>2</sup> Abraham I. Felipe and Carolina C. Porio. 2010. *Length of School Cycle and the Quality of Education*. Information retrieved from Philippine Education Research Journal. <http://perj.org/?p=10> on 22 May 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Sarah Katrina Maramag. “Is the K-12 model good for the Philippine education system?” Information retrieved from <http://www.thepoc.net/thepoc-features/politi-ko/politiko-opinions/10020-k-12-philippine-education-system.html> on 15 May 2011.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> As quoted from the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT). Philip Tubeza. 06/16/2010. P342-B SOLUTION DepEd chief wants ‘zero backlog’ for 2011 budget. Information retrieved from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/inquirerheadlines/nation/view/20100616-275826/DepEd-chief-wants-zero-backlog-for-2011-budget> on 15 May 2011.

**WHEREAS**, the DepEd itself in its own briefer for the K to 12 Program, estimated that to properly implement the program, the *“total funding requirement to procure all needed resources is [at] P150 Billion for 152,569 new classrooms, 103,599 more teachers, 95.6 million more books, and 13.2 million more seats”*<sup>6</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, considering the foregoing, serious doubts have been expressed on the possible chances of success of the proposed K to 12 Program. Indeed, as pointed out by critics of the proposed program, it makes no sense for the DepEd to adopt this new program if we cannot even meet and resolve the severe shortage of teachers and classrooms and other resources under the current ten-year education system. Likewise, it has been pointed out that the proposed program would only aggravate the already severe shortage not only of teachers and classrooms but also of other resources like books, seats and other necessary infrastructure, a claim which is apparently borne out by the figures cited above, as estimated by the DepEd itself;

**WHEREAS**, despite of the fact that the 1987 Constitution mandates that the government shall give the highest budgetary allocation to education, the budget for education, as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), has in fact been decreasing through the years. Moreover, the education sector in Philippines still has the lowest share in the national budget among ASEAN countries and has fallen short of the budgetary standard set by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which pegged the standard at six percent (6%) of a country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP);

**WHEREAS**, for decades, the budgetary allocation for education remains far below the standard set by UNESCO. Likewise, our allocation for education also falls below the benchmark set by our neighboring countries. In fact, it was almost 11 years ago when we reached more than half of the UNESCO recommended standard of six percent (6%) of GDP and our budgetary allocation for education has barely reached three percent (3%) of the GDP since then.

**WHEREAS**, in 2008, the government’s allocation for education translated as a percentage of the GDP amounted to only 2.8 percent vis-a-vis Malaysia’s 4.13 and Vietnam’s 5.34 percent<sup>7</sup>. This exemplifies our country’s gross underinvestment on education and, consequently, on our youth;

**WHEREAS**, contrary to the rationale advanced by proponents of the K to 12 curriculum that increasing the number of years of basic education would translate to the increase in the quality of education, intervening variables such as the disproportionate ratio of students to teachers, the serious shortage in classrooms and deficiency in educational infrastructure, facilities and academic materials in many areas in the country are perceived to have greater impact on the performance of these students in achievement tests;

**WHEREAS**, it is the aforementioned problems that have apparently deprived our schoolchildren of decent, quality education. In fact, the severe shortage in teachers and classrooms as well as in the required materials, facilities, equipment and resources has compelled

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<sup>6</sup> *Briefer on the Enhanced K+12 Basic Education Program*. Information retrieved from <http://www.gov.ph/2010/11/02/briefer-on-the-enhanced-k12-basic-education-program/> on 11 May 2011.

<sup>7</sup> *Public expenditure on education as % of GDP*; Information retrieved from: [http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=UNESCO&f=series%3AXGDP\\_FSGOV](http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=UNESCO&f=series%3AXGDP_FSGOV) on 22 May 2011.

many public elementary and high schools all over the country to implement two or three shift-class schedules thereby reducing the time allotment for each subject and minimizing the hours children spend in school and endangering the health and well-being of our school children;

**WHEREAS**, by way of contrast, it has pointed out that the often cited example by proponents of the supposed success of the K to 12 Program, Sagada's Saint Mary High School, which has been implementing the K to 12 since 2006 and which has consequently topped the National Achievement Test (NAT) for two (2) years, has a 1:20 teacher to student ratio<sup>8</sup>. Clearly, there can be no comparison between the situation in the said school and the schools under the DepEd, which have an average of 56.1 students per classroom<sup>9</sup>. Indeed, if we compare our average class size of 56.1 with those of our neighboring countries such as Malaysia, South Korea and Thailand, which have an average class size of 34, 35.4 and 41.5, respectively<sup>10</sup>, it is not difficult to see why our students are lagging behind in achievement tests;

**WHEREAS**, serious and legitimate concerns have also been raised on the effect of the implementation of the K to 12 Program on the already disquieting trend of the dropout rates in elementary and secondary education levels, which have been escalating in recent years. Indeed, "[t]he dropout rate for elementary students was reported to have risen from an average of 5.99 percent in 2007 to 6.28 percent in 2010 by the International Labor Organization."<sup>11</sup> In 2008 alone, "out of 100 pupils entering grade one, only 66 finish elementary education; only 58 of the 66 who finish grade school enroll in first year high school, and only 43 of the 58 complete their secondary education; of the 43 students, only 23 enroll in college and out of this only 14 students finish a degree"<sup>12</sup>. Verily, the programmed increase by two (2) years of basic education in the country will almost certainly increase the dropout rate to unprecedented level, thus, further exacerbating instead of resolving our problems;

**WHEREAS**, a study by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) shows that as of January 2011: "[n]early half (48.9% or 1.427 million) of the total unemployed workforce were young workers (aged 15 to 24 years old) ... youth unemployment rate at 17.2% was more than twice the national average... [and] [t]he majority (47.0% or 1.373 million) were high school graduates or undergraduates ... [e]qually large were college undergraduates and graduates (39.1% or 1.141 million)."<sup>13</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the above-cited figures clearly imply that our country's disturbingly high unemployment rates particularly among the youth may have nothing to do with the length of basic education in the country but, rather, calls for a serious review of the country's economic system and the government's job generation policies;

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<sup>8</sup> Caroline J. Howard, ANC. 10/09/2010. *K+12: The Sagada Experience*. Information retrieved from <http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/-depth/10/08/10/k12-sagada-experience> on 14 May 2011.

<sup>9</sup> *Basic Education. Statistical Indicators on Philippine Development*. Information from [http://www.nsch.gov.ph/stats/statdev/2009/Education/Chapter\\_Education.asp](http://www.nsch.gov.ph/stats/statdev/2009/Education/Chapter_Education.asp) on 15 May 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Senator Edgardo J. Angara. ND. *Education is our Future*. Jaime V Ongpin Lecture. Information retrieved from [www.edangara.com/files/lecture.doc](http://www.edangara.com/files/lecture.doc) on 15 May 2011.

<sup>11</sup> *Dropout rate up to 6% in 2010 - ILO*. Information retrieved from <http://www.tucp.org.ph/news/index.php/2011/04/dropout-rate-up-to-6-in-2010-%E2%80%93-ilo/> on 10 May 2011.

<sup>12</sup> Benjie Oliveros. 23 October 2010. *What is wrong with K+12 Education Program?* Information retrieved from <http://hulatlat.com/main/2010/10/23/benjie-oliveros-what-is-wrong-with-k-12-education-program/> on 15 May 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics. Department of Labor and Employment. Information retrieved from [http://www.bles.dole.gov.ph/PUBLICATIONS/LABSTAT%20UPDATES/Vol15\\_4.pdf](http://www.bles.dole.gov.ph/PUBLICATIONS/LABSTAT%20UPDATES/Vol15_4.pdf) on 22 May 2011.

**WHEREAS**, the K to 12 Program is perceived by some sectors as an utter waste of time and resources because it shall unduly force *all* high school students to undergo two more years of general technical-vocational training, including those who will have no use for such training. Indeed, as pointed out by critics, if the intention of the DepEd is to provide students with technical-vocational skills purportedly to address youth unemployment, as it claims in its public pronouncements, we would be better off with a program which will provide our youth with more focused post-high school technical-vocational training instead of forcing all students, including those who intend to proceed to college, to undergo two more years of high school for the said purpose;

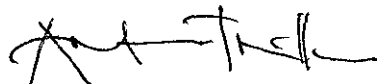
**WHEREAS**, the K to 12 Program has been met with a storm of protests from parents and students as well as teachers and educators despite the DepEd's purported consultations with various stakeholders and the DepEd has been accused to be unfeeling and insensitive to the plight of parents who, under present circumstances, are already hard-pressed and are already struggling to put their children through school and to sustain their needs even without the pressure of two more years of basic education;

**WHEREAS**, some educators in fact claim that the DepEd, in rushing to implement the K to 12 curriculum without the benefit of pilot-testing the same, is engaged in one, big costly experiment and in a "*game of trial-and-error*"<sup>14</sup> which will have a profound effect and far-reaching implications on the youth and the future of our country;

**WHEREAS**, against the aforementioned austere and alarming backdrop, there appears to be a legitimate need and an imperative necessity for the Senate to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the feasibility, viability, practicality and truthfulness of the official justifications advanced by the DepEd for the implementation of the K to 12 Program, as well as to review the socio-economic impact and other implications of the proposed implementation of the K to 12 curriculum by the DepEd on the poor and on the youth and on the country in general;

**NOW WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the Senate Committee on Education and other pertinent committees of the Senate to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the feasibility, viability, practicality and truthfulness of the official justifications advanced by the DepEd for the implementation of the K to 12 Program, as well as to review the socio-economic impact and other implications of the proposed implementation of the K to 12 curriculum by the DepEd on the poor and on the youth and on the country in general with the end in view of enacting remedial legislation to address the inadequacies in the country's public education system.

**ADOPTED,**



**ANTONIO "SONNY" F. TRILLANES IV**  
Senator

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<sup>14</sup> GMA News TV (VVP), 08/10/2010: *Teachers wary of "trial-and-error" 12-year educ program*; Information retrieved from <http://www.gmanews.tv/story/198195/teachers-wary-of-39trial-and-error39-12-year-educ-program> on May 31, 2011.