


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S E N A T E

RECEIVED: 

Senate Resolution No. 673

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE TO LOOK INTO THE CONDITIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2011 AND 2012 CALAMITY FUND, IN LIGHT OF THE NEED FOR IMPROVED DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AMID WORSENING IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

WHEREAS, Article II Section 5 of Constitution declares as State principle, the maintenance of peace and order, protection of life, liberty, and property, and promotion of the general welfare which are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy;

WHEREAS, disasters are getting bigger, deadlier and worse. Our cities are burgeoning and climate change impacts are intensifying along with disaster risks. Globally, economic losses from disasters had increased drastically by more than eighteen times since 1970;

WHEREAS, in 2009, the lessons of Typhoons Ondoy (Ketsana) and Pepeng (Parma), which required US\$4.42 Billion for recovery and reconstruction efforts, elicited the need to mainstream disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into our national development plans, policies and programs;

WHEREAS, in October 2009, Congress passed Republic Act 9729, otherwise known as the Climate Change Act, which provides the strategic framework for a comprehensive program and action on climate change at national and local levels;

WHEREAS, in May 2010, Republic Act 10121 or the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Act, a law that strengthens our institutional mechanisms for disaster risk reduction and management and lends great importance to disaster prevention and mitigation, was also legislated.

WHEREAS, a salient feature of the DRRM Act is the shift from reactionary to a proactive and preventive approach in addressing disasters;

WHEREAS, under the DRRM Act, the present Calamity Fund appropriated under the annual General Appropriations Act shall be known as the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (NDRRM) Fund and it shall be used for disaster risk reduction such training of personnel, procurement of equipment, and capital expenditures;

WHEREAS, of the amount appropriated for the NDRRM Fund, thirty percent shall be allocated as Quick Response Fund or standby fund for relief and recovery programs;

WHEREAS, under President Benigno S. Aquino III's veto message on Republic Act 10147 or *General Appropriations Act (GAA) for Fiscal Year 2011*, he cautioned the inclusion of pre-disaster activities such as preparation of relocation sites/facilities and training of personnel engaged in direct disaster in the use of the PhP5-billion Calamity Fund;

WHEREAS, President Aquino stated that the use of Calamity Fund for pre-disaster activities "must be weighed against the imperious need of maintaining sufficient provision under the Calamity Fund for actual calamities and prevent its full utilization for pre-disaster activities." He further noted that "the provision for pre-disaster activities are embedded and subsumed in the programs and projects of various implementing agencies";

WHEREAS, similarly, under Republic Act 10155 or *GAA for Fiscal Year 2012*, the PhP7.5-billion Calamity Fund will be made available for relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and other works or services in connection with natural calamities;

WHEREAS, the conditional implementation on the use and release of the Calamity Fund violates the *DRRM Act*;

WHEREAS, following the onslaught of Tropical Storm Sendong (Washi) which killed 1,257 persons and left PhP 1.39 billion in damages to agriculture and infrastructure, concerns were raised on the prioritization of disaster prevention and mitigation in the national budget;

WHEREAS, while disaster prevention and mitigation are integrated in the agency budgets, existing resources must be strongly augmented to better prepare our vulnerable communities amid the threats of climate change;

WHEREAS, investments in disaster risk reduction (DRR) such as flood control, forest management, hazard identification, mapping and assessment, research and development, preparedness and risk financing must be increased, made more effective and must show results;

WHEREAS, there are country experiences proving the cost-effectiveness of DRR. China spent US\$3.15 billion on flood control between 1960 and 2000, which is estimated to have averted losses of about US\$12 billion. A mangrove-planting project in Vietnam aimed at protecting coastal populations from typhoons and storms yielded an estimated benefit/cost ratio of 52 over the period of 1994 to 2001. In Bangladesh, the death toll after Cyclone Sidr only reached 3,400 people in contrast to the 138,000 and 300,000 casualties when similar cyclones struck the country in 1970 and 1991, respectively. The huge decrease in casualties is attributed mainly to the 42,000 volunteers (called megaphones on bicycles) who helped evacuate millions of residents before the cyclone struck land;

WHEREAS, the use of Calamity Fund for pre-disaster activities presents an increased opportunity to immediately equip local governments with improved disaster preparedness;

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon Congress to ensure faithful implementation of our climate change and disaster risk reduction laws in order to achieve a disaster-resilient nation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the Senate Committee on Climate Change to look into the conditional implementation of the 2011 and 2012 Calamity Fund, in light of the need for improved disaster preparedness amid worsening impacts of climate change.

Adopted,



LOREN LEGARDA
Senator