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INTRODUCED BY: SEN. ANA THERESIA HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL

RESOLUTION

URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY AND ON URBAN PLANNING, HOUSING AND RESETTLEMENT TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE KEY ISSUES AFFECTING THE TACLOBAN PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT SITES (PRS), WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE HEALTH AND SANITATION CONDITIONS OF SAID RESETTLEMENT AREAS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF PROPOSING APPROPRIATE INTERVENTIONS AND REMEDIAL ACTIONS.

WHEREAS, almost three years have passed since the onslaught of Typhoon Yolanda in the Eastern Visayas Region, particularly in Tacloban City, which left thousands of families homeless;

WHEREAS, the National Economic and Development Authority, which took over the task of overseeing rehabilitation efforts, has stated that despite positive strides in the Yolanda rehabilitation works, resettlement of survivors from the danger zones continue to be the most challenging among the recovery efforts;

WHEREAS, it was reported that among the issues slowing the building of resettlement sites are policies on procurement and land acquisition, including the required permits and clearances needed for certain projects;

WHEREAS, the National Housing Authority (NHA) administered the construction of 14,433 permanent housing units, and the Tacloban City LGU intends to relocate over 16,000 families or around 80,000 individuals from hazard areas within the Tacloban City proper to newly developed resettlement sites in the Northern areas of Tacloban City over the 2015-2018 time period;

WHEREAS, this number, constitutive of 40% of Tacloban's total population will be based in this area, which is 15km away from downtown Tacloban;

WHEREAS, aside from the limited job opportunities in the resettlement areas, issues such as lack of basic facilities and improper sanitation and waste management have already cropped up as early as the second quarter of 2015, resulting to widespread incidences of sickness and contamination in the area;

WHEREAS, in a study on PERCEIVED HEALTH RISKS IN TACLOBAN CITY PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT SITES conducted in the last quarter of 2015, it was discovered that 3 out of 4 permanent resettlement sites in the Northern Barangays, with a total population of 2,082, are in close proximity to the dumpsite;

WHEREAS, the per capita volume of available water for domestic use is 72.04 liters per week or around 10 litres per day, which is way below the suggested volume of water to sustain an individual's basic needs recommended at 50-100 litres per day;

WHEREAS, as a result of the ineffective sewerage system, the effluent from the septic tank goes out to the drainage system of the subdivision which in turn flows into the nearby creeks/river without any form of secondary treatment. The creeks/river is a tributary of the San Juanico Strait, which is a vibrant Mariculture area, supplying the greater areas of Tacloban and Eastern Samar with aquamarine products;

WHEREAS, the current sewage output of the population from the existing barangays and PRS communities in the area is still viable for mariculture habitation. However, if the population increases to its projected number with the completion of 12,000 housing units, an increase of about 25 times the current population, the San Juanico Strait will be severely polluted and will cease to be a viable and sustainable source of aquamarine products, if no intervention will be taken to properly manage the wastewater of the PRS;

WHEREAS, the Tacloban City Health Office conducted wastewater sampling from the drainage outfall of the permanent resettlement sites in Ridgeview Park I (NHA) and Tacloban North Villages housing project and found out that total coliform count exceeded thousand times above the allowable limit of Effluent Standard of DENR administrative order No. 35;

WHEREAS, the Regional Development Council passed a resolution requesting the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) to lead the validation of the study results conducted by Tacloban City Health Office on the effluent discharged from the drainage outfall of Permanent Resettlement Sites. The result validated the initial findings of Tacloban City Health office;

WHEREAS, despite several appeals to the NHA, DOH, DENR, LGUs and other key offices, to address the issues on health and sanitation, these remain to be the biggest concern among the families in the permanent resettlement sites;

WHEREAS, a joint inquiry to look into the situation and determine whether interventions done by various stakeholders, such as the NHA, DOH, NEDA, DENR and local officials, are sufficient is a necessary action to address these existing health and sanitation issues and to prevent similar occurrences with the incoming population targeted for relocation;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved to urge the Senate Committees on Health and Demography and on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the key issues affecting the Tacloban permanent resettlement sites with special attention to the health and sanitation conditions of the resettlement areas.

Adopted,


ANA THERESIA HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL
Senator