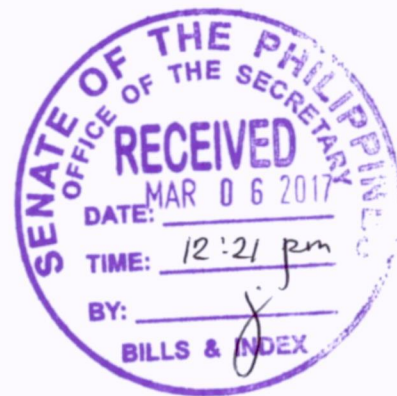


SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
FIRST REGULAR SESSION)



SENATE
P.S.R NO. 310

INTRODUCED BY: SEN. ANA THERESIA "RISA" HONTIVEROS BARAQUEL

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC ORDER AND ON HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE KILLING OF FORMER DOCTOR-TO-THE BARRIO AND CURRENT MUNICIPAL HEALTH OFFICER OF SAPAD, LANA DEL NORTE, DR. DREYFUSS BOLIVAR PERLAS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ENACTING MEASURES TO ENSURE THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF PHYSICIANS AND OTHER MEDICAL PERSONNEL IN RURAL AREAS.

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 11 of the Constitution provides that "[t]he State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights";

WHEREAS, Article VIII, Section 11 of the Constitution also provides that "[t]he State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost" and that "[t]here shall be priority for the needs of the under-privileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children.";

WHEREAS, the current state of health human resources in the Philippines is characterized by the maldistribution of health professionals, particularly doctors, which are concentrated in urban centers, leaving a number rural areas doctor-less which in turn leads to inadequate health care services and poor health outcomes in these areas;

WHEREAS, the Doctors-to-the-Barrios Program is a program of the Department of Health established in 1993 that seeks to deploy young and promising physicians to doctor-less municipalities for 2 years to serve as rural health physicians catering to the health needs of the population;

WHEREAS, Dr. Dreyfuss Bolivar Perlas, a 31-year old native of Aklan province who, after finishing his medical studies in Western Visayas State University and obtaining his medical license in 2012, was deployed as a physician in Sapad, Lanao del Norte, a fifth-class municipality, as part of the Doctors-to-the-Barrios Program (DTTB) of the Department of Health and subsequently assumed the position of Municipal Health Officer of Sapad after the end of his 2-year participation in the DTTB Program out of a genuine desire to continue serving the community that he had come to love;

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2017, Dr. Dreyfuss Perlas was gunned down by an unidentified assailant while riding his motorbike on his way home from a medical mission and was declared dead-on-arrival at the Lanao del Norte Provincial Hospital where he was immediately rushed after the shooting;

WHEREAS, we should condemn the killing of Dr. Perlas, whose selfless commitment to rural health should be emulated, and call on the appropriate agencies to swiftly bring the perpetrators of this reprehensible act to justice;

WHEREAS, the killing of Dr. Perlas represents an attack on the public health community and threatens to seriously undermine the efforts of government to provide access to health care services in rural areas particularly in poor and marginalized areas communities as it may dissuade physicians and other health workers from pursuing a rural health practice;

WHEREAS, as it is, the current state of health human resources in the Philippines is already characterized by an urban-centric concentration of medical personnel, leaving a number of rural areas doctor-less -- in turn leading to inadequate health care services and poor health outcomes in these areas;

WHEREAS, this incident also further highlights the climate of impunity and violence engulfing the country, and the urgent need to enact measures against acts of lawlessness perpetrated by those emboldened by a growing culture of disdain for human rights;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved to direct the Senate Committees on Public Order and on Health and Demography to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, with the end view of enacting measures to ensure the safety and well-being of physicians and medical personnel in rural areas.

Adopted,


ANA THERESIA "RISA" HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL
Senator