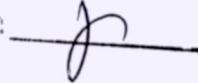




SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

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SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

P.S. Resolution No. 340

Introduced by: Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

**A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEES TO
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE INCREASED
IMPORTATION OF HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP (HFCS) IN THE COUNTRY AND
ITS IMPACT ON THE DOMESTIC SUGAR INDUSTRY AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

WHEREAS, early January this year, the Sugar Alliance of the Philippines (SAP) called on the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) to exercise its mandate by regulating the importation of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) in the country. SAP insisted that there is a need to maintain a balanced and rationalized supply of sugar in the domestic market for the long-term interest of the sugar industry;¹

WHEREAS, according to the Sugar Solidarity Against HFCS (SSSA-HFCS), from 2011-2016, beverage makers and food processors imported almost 800,000 metric tons of HFCS into the country, displacing the demand for 23 million 50-kilo bags of locally-produced sugar and depriving the sugar industry of P35.2 billion in potential income;²

WHEREAS, for the current crop year alone, HFCS importation has pulled down sugar prices from a high of P1,800 per 50-kilo bag to P1,400 per 50-kilo bag, translating to potential revenue losses of about P20 billion;³

WHEREAS, last 20 February 2017, the SRA issued Sugar Order No. 3 (SO No. 3) or the Guidelines on the Issuance of Clearance for Release of Imported High Fructose Corn Syrup and Chemically Pure Fructose. SO No. 3 seeks to regulate the importation of HFCS through the issuance of import clearances;⁴

WHEREAS, early in March, Coca-Cola FEMSA Philippines submitted a bid for a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) on the enforcement of SO No. 3, which was later denied by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 98;⁵

¹ <http://www.philstar.com/region/2017/01/01/1658473/sugar-industry-group-urges-sra-regulate-hfcs-import>

² <http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=Agribusiness&title=sra-cites-industry-calls-to-regulate-corn-syrup&id=140393>

³ <http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/03/24/1684130/da-coke-reach-solution-sweetener-imports>

⁴ <http://www.sra.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2016-2017-SO3-GUIDELINES-ON-THE-ISSUANCE-OF-CLEARANCE0001.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.visayandaily.com/2017/March/14/topstory1.htm>

WHEREAS, despite the denial of a TRO, Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol requested for a deferment on the implementation of SO No. 3 pending consultations with stakeholders;⁶

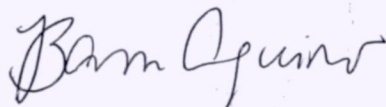
WHEREAS, Negros Occidental is the lifeblood of the country's sugar industry as it alone supplies half of the Philippines' sugar production,⁷ which accounts for no less than P70 billion of our economy annually;⁸

WHEREAS, a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition reported that "consumption of high-fructose corn syrup in beverages may play a role in the epidemic of obesity."⁹ This is likewise supported by "data from a short-term study comparing consumption of beverages sweetened with fructose, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, and sucrose," which showed that consumption of 100%-based fructose products alone led to an increase in postprandial triacylglycerol compared to those made from a variety of sweeteners. Such study found that increased consumption of fructose-sweetened beverages coincided with increased prevalence of obesity, metabolic syndrome, and type 2 diabetes;¹⁰

WHEREAS, HFCS has many advantages compared to sucrose that make it attractive to food manufacturers. These include its sweetness, solubility, acidity and its relative cheapness.¹¹ However, these advantages must not take precedence over the health of Filipino consumers as well as the livelihood of the 700,000 farmers and 14,000 sugar mill workers who depend solely on the sugar industry for income;¹²

RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, by the Philippine Senate to direct the appropriate Senate Committees to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the increased importation of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) in the country and its impact on the domestic sugar industry and public public.

Adopted,



⁶ <http://www.businessmirror.com.ph/pinol-sra-must-suspend-new-rules-on-fructose-imports>

⁷ <http://www.rappler.com/views/imho/155823-negros-sugarcane-industry-bittersweet-christmas-symphony>;
<http://www.negros-occ.gov.ph/development-agenda/negros-first-development-agenda/negros-first-economic-development>

⁸ <http://www.sra.gov.ph/the-philippine-sugarcane-industry-challenges-and-opportunities/>

⁹ <http://ajcn.nutrition.org/content/79/4/537.short>

¹⁰ <http://ajcn.nutrition.org/content/88/6/1733S.short>

¹¹ <http://www.academicjournals.org/journal/BMBR/article-abstract/41CAC0411547> Department of Biology, College of Science and Technology, North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC 27707, USA

¹² <http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=Agribusiness&title=sra-cites-industry-calls-to-regulate-corn-syrup&id=140393>