



SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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SENATE
P.S. Res. No. 679

Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON TRADE, COMMERCE, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP, ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, AND LABOR, EMPLOYMENT, AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, TO LOOK INTO THE IMPLICATIONS AND EFFECTS OF THE INCREASE IN PRICES OF CANNED GOODS AND BASIC COMMODITIES VIS-A-VIS THE MINIMUM WAGE AND PURCHASING POWER OF THE FILIPINOS WITH THE INTENTION OF FORMULATING APPROACHES TO ASSIST THE CITIZENS INCLUDING SUBSIDIES, FINANCIAL AID, NON-MONETARY SUCCOR, AND OTHERS

WHEREAS, the Philippine Constitution, Section 9, Article 2, declares that the "State shall protect a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that will provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all";

WHEREAS, under Section 1, Article 13, provides that the "Congress shall give highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the right of all the people to human dignity, reduce social, economic, and political inequalities, and remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power for the common good";

WHEREAS, it is clear that among the primary duties of the government is to maintain price stability of basic commodities and ensure the protection of Filipino consumers from unscrupulous trade practices;

WHEREAS, a month earlier in January, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Secretary Ramon Lopez assured the public that there will only be minimal price increase on basic goods and commodities once the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law takes effect;¹

¹ CNN Philippines. (January 5, 2018). Trade chief: Effect of tax reform on basic goods' prices 'minimal.' Retrieved from <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2018/01/04/trade-chief-tax-reform-basic-goods-prices-minimal.html>

WHEREAS, DTI Secretary Lopez mentioned that basic goods such as instant noodles, regular canned sardines, a 25-gram sachet of coffee, a can of meat loaf, and detergent soap will see a three or four-centavo increase in prices;²

WHEREAS, 24 Oras reported last March 3, 2018 that canned sardines manufacturers will ask the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) for an increase of Php1.00 and Php2.00 per can of sardines;³

WHEREAS, spikes in the prices of imported raw materials, petroleum products, and electricity due to the TRAIN Law are said to be the reasons behind the price hike petition of manufacturers;

WHEREAS, a regular canned sardines currently costs between Php13.00 to Php14.00;

WHEREAS, canned is the type of fish that is mostly consumed by the poor;⁴

WHEREAS, an increase of Php2.00 in canned sardines would be too much of a burden for ordinary Filipino households;

WHEREAS, Rappler reported on March 5, 2018 that according to the dean of the UP Diliman School of Statistics Dennis Mapa, the Filipino households are already suffering from a high inflation rate due to the increase in prices of fuel and food which is expected to continue in the next two (2) months;

WHEREAS, the inflation experienced by the bottom 30 percent households surged to 4.80% in January this year, from 3.60% last December 2017;

WHEREAS, rising food prices have devastating impacts on the bottom 30 percent of Filipino households who spend as much as 70 percent of their income on food;

WHEREAS, the minimum wage in Metro Manila is pegged at Php512.00, while in the other locales is pegged at Php310.00 in Region I, Php285.00 in Region VIII, and Php265.00 in Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM);⁵

WHEREAS, there is a need to act urgently to ensure the welfare of the 23 million Filipino households over the coming months;

² Ibid.

³ GMA News. (March 3, 2018). Manufacturers to ask for canned sardines' price increase due to TRAIN. Retrieved from <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/companies/645343/manufacturers-to-ask-for-canned-sardines-price-increase-due-to-train/story/>

⁴ Dela Paz, Chrisee. (March 5, 2018). Inflation seen to continue hitting poor Filipinos hard. *Rappler News*. Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/business/197390-inflation-poor-filipinos-tax-reform-poverty-reduction>

⁵ Department of Labor and Employment. (February 2018). Summary of Current Regional Daily Minimum Wage Rates Non-Agriculture, Agriculture. Retrieved from http://www.nwpc.dole.gov.ph/pages/statistics/stat_current_regional.html

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of the Philippines, to direct the Senate Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship, Economic Affairs, and Labor, Employment, and Human Resources Development, in aid of legislation, to look into the implications and effects of the increase in prices of canned goods and basic commodities vis-a-vis the minimum wage and purchasing power of the Filipinos with the intention of formulating approaches to assist the citizens including subsidies, financial aid, non-monetary succor, and others.

Adopted,


GRACE POE