SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES Third Regular Session

2

3

4

5

6

7

9

10

11

12

13

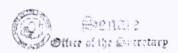
14

15

16

17

18



SENATE P.S. Res 878

18 SEP -5 P4:56



Introduced by Senator Poe

RESOLUTION

URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC OFFICERS AND INVESTIGATIONS (BLUE RIBBON) TO CONDUCT A FULL-BLOWN INQUIRY ON THE PURPORTED ANOMALIES IN THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES-HEALTH SERVICE COMMAND (AFPHSC), WITH THE END IN VIEW OF REFORMING THE ORGANIZATION AND WEEDING OUT CORRUPTION IN THE MILITARY

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 5 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that "[t]he maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty and property, and promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy";

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 9 mandates that "[t]he State shall promote 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 provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all";

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 15 provides that it is the duty of the State to "protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them";

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 27 directs the State to "maintain honesty and integrity in the public service and take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption";

WHEREAS, Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution also recognizes "the right of the people to information on matters of public concern," including "access to official records, and to documents, and papers pertaining to official acts,

transactions, or decisions, as well as to government research data" which can be used as "basis for policy development...";

WHEREAS, Article XI, Section 1 states that "[p]ublic office is a public trust. Public officers and employees must, at all times, be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency; act with patriotism and justice, and lead modest lives";

WHEREAS, Article XIII, Section 11 mandates the State to "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. There shall be priority for the needs of the under-privileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers";

WHEREAS, consistent with these constitutional precepts that mandate the State to provide easier access to medical care, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Medical Center, also known as the V. Luna Medical Center (VLMC) located in Quezon City, was established as early as 1935 which now serves as the lifeblood of the military who are wounded in action or those suffering from illnesses, as well provides immediate medical care to their immediate dependents;

WHEREAS, recently, there were supposed anomalies in the VLMC concerning the alleged malversation of funds, unregulated admission of civilian patients and procurement anomalies;

WHEREAS, certain departments in the VLMC are allegedly colluding with proponents or suppliers and do away with some pre-procurement activities required under the law such as the technical working group's (TWG's) market and technical research, which result in unauthorized procurements, ghost projects, accumulated debts, unregulated suppliers and bidders, cash gifts and incentives to doctors and medical professionals, and overpricing of items;

WHEREAS, other corrupt practices in the VLMC point to excessive and unconscionable professional fees of doctors as if they are employed in a regular private hospital, overpricing of medicines and supplies used by patients, and consultants bringing in patients;

WHEREAS, in the Neurosurgery Department, where a locked room serves as a mini-pharmacy of the Neurosurgery resident doctors, medicines and medical supplies are compulsory sold to civilian patients;

WHEREAS, prior to the surgery, allegedly overpriced medicines are prepared and bundled to civilian patients, who have to fork out at least P30,000 for the medicine package;

WHEREAS, high-ranking members of the AFP Health Service Command (AFPHSC) and other members of the TWG purportedly received P1 million pocket money from a supplier when they went to China, France and the Netherlands as a requirement for the procurement of three high-value equipment;

WHEREAS, corruption issues like these must not be tolerated, especially at a time when the VLMC's facilities were ill-equipped and need upgrading and that the military hospital have to spend at least P160 million just to transfer sick military personnel to other hospitals for treatment¹;

WHEREAS, it is, at the very least, unfair, iniquitous and venile for the AFPHSC personnel and a dishonourable act to engage in corrupt practices on the backdrop of the supreme sacrifice of military men who offer their lives to protect the country;

WHEREAS, officials involved in the alleged irregularities must be fully investigated, and concerned probe bodies shall conduct lifestyle checks on them;

WHEREAS, alleged corrupt practices in the VLMC continue up to this day even after the AFP has conducted a probe into the purchase of medicines fraught with irregularities in 2014 and sacking of the AFP Medical Center chief who was later on reinstated²;

WHEREAS, it is necessary that the whole and bigger picture of the corrupt practices in the AFPHSC and the VLMC be uncovered at the soonest so as to protect public funds from being wantonly spent;

BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES, to urge the Senate Committee on National Defense and Security to conduct an inquiry on the purported anomalies in the Armed Forces of the

¹ Commission on Audit report. 2018, July 2. Politics.com.ph. Retrieved from http://politics.com.ph/v-luna-facilities-so-bad-afp-paid-p160m-to-have-other-hospitals-take-care-of-soldiers/

² Mangosing, F. 2014, Jan. 14. "Relieved AFP hospital chief reinstated." Inquirer.net. Retrieved from http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/664464/relieved-afp-hospital-chief-reinstated

- 1 Philippines-Health Service Command (AFPHSC), with the end in view of reforming
- the organization and weeding out corruption in the military.

4 Adopted,

. . .

3

GRACE POE