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SENATE  
P.S. Res 934

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Introduced by Senator Poe

**RESOLUTION**

**URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE TOTAL BAN AGAINST THE USE OF THE MODIFIED DANISH SEINE OR HULBOT-HULBOT METHOD OF FISHING RESULTING TO FISH SHORTAGE IN THE DOMESTIC MARKET**

- 1           **WHEREAS**, Article XII, Section 2 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the  
2 State shall protect the nation's marine wealth in its archipelagic waters, territorial sea,  
3 and exclusive economic zone, and reserve its use and enjoyment exclusively to Filipino  
4 citizens;
- 5           **WHEREAS**, the same section also allows Congress to allow small-scale  
6 utilization of natural resources by Filipino citizens, as well as cooperative fish farming,  
7 with priority to subsistence fishermen and fish workers in rivers, lakes, bays, and  
8 lagoons;
- 9           **WHEREAS**, Article XIII, Section 7 further provides that the State shall protect  
10 the rights of subsistence fishermen, especially of local communities, to the preferential  
11 use of the communal marine and fishing resources, both inland and offshore; provide  
12 support to such fishermen through appropriate technology and research, adequate  
13 financial, production, and marketing assistance, and other services; protect, develop,  
14 and conserve such resources; extend protection to offshore fishing grounds of  
15 subsistence fishermen against foreign intrusion; and ensure that fishworkers shall  
16 receive a just share from their labor in the utilization of marine and fishing resources;

1           **WHEREAS**, Fisheries Administrative Order (FAO) No. 246 that the Department  
2 of Agriculture, through the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources has totally  
3 banned the use of the Modified Danish Seine (MDS) method of fishing, also known as  
4 "hulbot-hulbot" for being destructive to coral reefs, sea grass beds, and other marine  
5 fish habitats;

6           **WHEREAS**, to supplement FAO No. 246, the Department also issued recently  
7 FAO No. 246-1 to consider the possession of "hulbot-hulbot" nets and other  
8 implements as prima facie evidence of violation of FAO No. 246;

9           **WHEREAS**, since the enforcement of the total ban on "hulbot-hulbot," more  
10 than 100,000 tubs or "banyeras" of fish nationwide, weighing about 33 kilos per tub  
11 or about 3.3 million kilos in total, have not been brought to fish markets daily,  
12 reportedly causing a shortage and/or high prices for different species of fish that such  
13 boats used to catch;

14           **WHEREAS**, the importation of fish, mainly frozen ones, has apparently not  
15 solved the lack of fish or the rise in its prices in the local markets and seems to have  
16 misled the fish consumers into thinking that the only fish that should be made available  
17 to them are those "imported" ones, such as "galunggong," "tamban," and "tulingan,"  
18 when there are other at least fifty (50) species of tastier and less expensive fish that  
19 "hulbot-hulbot" used to catch and sell in the local markets;

20           **WHEREAS**, Republic Act No. 8550 and R. A. No. 10654, amending certain  
21 provisions of R. A. No. 8550, do; not expressly or directly ban the "hulbot-hulbot"  
22 method of fishing but classifies it as "muro-ami" in the Implementing Rules and  
23 Regulations;

24           **WHEREAS**, "hulbot-hulbot" is totally different from the prohibit "muro-ami"  
25 that is destructive to marine fish habitats, such as coral reefs and sea grass beds since  
26 the fishing boats using the first method deliberately avoid coral reefs that can  
27 potentially destroy their nets;

28           **WHEREAS**, fishing boats using modified Danish seine operated in Philippine  
29 marine waters at the depth of 20 fathoms or more, which makes it both much more  
30 economical and less destructive than using a trawl fishing boat, since "hulbot-hulbot"  
31 consumes only about 100 liters of diesel per day, because it is stationary while  
32 catching fish, while a trawl fishing boat consumes more than 1,000 liters of diesel a

1 day, as it continues to run for six miles every two hours, dragging the sea bottom with  
2 its board and net;

3 **WHEREAS**, despite the fact that trawl fishing is allowed by the BFAR, "hulbot-  
4 hulbot" fishing boat owners have decided not to convert to trawl fishing, since the  
5 latter method is a thousand times more environmentally destructive;

6 **WHEREAS**, an internal study<sup>1</sup> conducted by BFAR itself has shown that the  
7 "hulbot-hulbot" method of fishing is not environmentally destructive to coral reefs, sea  
8 grass beds, and other marine fish habitats, and also found that MDS fishing is  
9 important to Philippine fisheries production and should be preserved with necessary  
10 modifications;

11 **WHEREAS**, fears abound that the total ban on "hulbot-hulbot" is intended to  
12 create the current shortage of fish and to benefit certain businessmen engaged in the  
13 importation of frozen fish;

14 **WHEREAS**, by reason of such total ban on the "hulbot-hulbot" method, more  
15 than 4,000 fishing boats using it have ceased operations all over the country and more  
16 than 200,000 marginalized fishermen, their families, and other allied fish workers have  
17 been unemployed and may face hunger soon;

18 **BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, by the Senate of the  
19 Philippines, to urge the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food to conduct an  
20 inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the total ban against the use of the Modified Danish  
21 Seine or "hulbot-hulbot" method of fishing resulting to fish shortage in the domestic  
22 market.

23 *Adopted,*

  
**GRACE POE**

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<sup>1</sup> Belga, Jr. et al, *Study of Danish Seine "Holbot-Holbot" In Relation to the Effect on Marine Habitat and Fisheries Resources.*