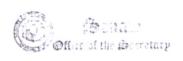
SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session	í



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SENATE

P. S. Res. No. 1000



Introduced by Senator Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III

A RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE(S) TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE FAILURE OF MOST LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS TO BUILD "BAHAY PAG-ASA" CENTERS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE JURISDICTIONS AND ON REPORTS THAT EXISTING CENTERS ARE "WORSE THAN PRISONS" AND OPERATED UNDER "SUBHUMAN CONDITIONS" DESPITE ADEQUATE FUNDING UNDER THE LAW

WHEREAS, Article XV, Section 3(2) of the Constitution mandates the State to defend "[t]he right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development";

WHEREAS, in Article II, Section 13 of the Constitution, "[t]he State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building xxx";

WHEREAS, under Republic Act No. 10630, the 2013 amendatory law that strengthened the Juvenile Justice System in the Philippines, each of our 81 provinces and 143 highly urbanized cities is required to build, fund, and operate a "Bahay Pag-Asa" within their jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, a "Bahay Pag-Asa" is referred to under the law as a 24hour child-caring institution providing short-term residential care for children in conflict with the law (CICL) who are above fifteen but below eighteen years of age who are awaiting court disposition of their cases or transfer to other agencies or jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, every "Bahay Pag-Asa" under the law must have an intensive juvenile intervention and support center and must be operated by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals composed of a social worker, a psychologist or mental health professional, a medical doctor, an educational

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22 23 or guidance counsellor, and a Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) member who will work on an individualized intervention plan with the child and the child's family;

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WHEREAS, the law appropriated P400 Million Pesos for the construction of "Bahay Pag-Asa" centers in provinces or cities with high incidence of CICL to be identified by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC) on a priority basis and authorized the national government to make available P5 Million Pesos per rehabilitation center while the local government units (LGUs) concerned were required to match the P5 Million Pesos counterpart share of the national government;

WHEREAS, despite the law providing for adequate funding to ensure "Bahay Pag-Asa" centers are built, there are reportedly only 58 facilities nationwide, miserably below the requirement of the law that all 81 provinces and 143 highly urbanized cities must have at least one "Bahay Pag-Asa" center each;

WHEREAS, in the course of Congressional hearings on the proposed lowering of the minimum age of criminal responsibility, reports came out about the alleged "subhuman conditions" in "Bahay Pag-Asa" centers with some resource persons describing them as "worse than prisons"; and

WHEREAS, before Congress discusses a measure that will lower the minimum age of criminal responsibility and potentially rob Filipino children of their youthful innocence, it is urgent and important that Congress first conducts an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the failure of government, as a whole, to ensure that there are "Bahay Pag-Asa" centers in every province and highly urbanized cities in the Philippines where CICLs and their respective families are given the appropriate care, intervention, and support that they need;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the Senate of the Philippines direct its appropriate committee(s) to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the failure of most local government units to build "Bahay Pag-asa" centers in their respective jurisdictions and on reports that existing centers are "worse than prisons" and operated under "subhuman conditions" despite the law providing for adequate funding for the purpose of building and operating these centers.

Adopted,

AQUILINO "KOKO" PIMENTEL III