

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
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**SENATE
P.S. Res. No. 211**

Introduced by Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STATUS OF THE COUNTRY'S SALT SUPPLY AND IMPORTATION WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF INTRODUCING NEW POLICIES AND REVIEWING EXISTING MEASURES AND PROGRAMS TO CREATE SALT SELF-SUFFICIENCY

WHEREAS, Article XII, Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides the goals of the national economy are a more equitable distribution of opportunities, income, and wealth; sustained increase in the amount of goods and services produced by the nation for the benefit of the people; and an expanding productivity as the key to raising the quality of life for all, especially the underprivileged. The State shall promote industrialization and full employment based on sound agricultural development and agrarian reform, through industries that make full and efficient use of human and natural resources, and which are competitive in both domestic and foreign markets. However, the State shall protect Filipino enterprises against unfair foreign competition and trade practices¹;

WHEREAS, in August 2022, the Department of Agriculture (DA) stated that there is a shortage in the supply of salt in the country as this sector has been neglected for fifteen (15) years²;

¹ Section 1, Article XII of the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines.

² DA exec admits salt shortage. Available at

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/08/23/news/national/da-exec-admits-salt-shortage/1855549>

WHEREAS, contrary to the statement of the DA, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) assured the public that the country's salt supply is enough, despite the agency approving a price hike for the commodity³;

WHEREAS, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) serves as the primary coordinative, promotive, facilitative, and regulatory arm of the government for the country's trade, industry, and investment activities. It acts as catalyst for intensified private sector activity to accelerate and sustain economic growth through a comprehensive industrial growth strategy, a progressive and socially responsible liberalization and deregulation program, and policies designed for the expansion and diversification of both domestic and foreign trade⁴;

WHEREAS, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) traces its history back to the creation of the Department of Commerce in 1898. At the time, its primary mandate involved supporting the Department of Agriculture and Commerce towards developing national trade and industry⁵;

WHEREAS, the Department of Agriculture (DA) is the government agency responsible for the promotion of agricultural development by providing the policy framework, public framework, public investments, and support services needed for domestic and export-oriented business enterprises⁶;

WHEREAS, according to Mr. Danilo Fausto, President of the Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food Inc. (Pcafi), the Philippines imports 93 percent of its salt requirement from China and Australia⁷;

WHEREAS, Dr. Fausto attributed the downfall of the local salt industry to Republic Act 8172, otherwise known as Act for Salt Iodization Nationwide (ASIN law) where it required all producers of food-grade salt to iodized salt that they produce, manufacture, import, trade, or distribute for human and animal consumption. As a consequence of the ASIN law, most salt farmers were marginalized and had stopped the salt production because they did not have the means to buy the costly equipment for iodization⁸;

³ CNN News Website, DTI: No salt shortage in PH, <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/business/2022/8/25/dti-no-salt-shortage-.html>

⁴Department of Trade and Industry mandate. Available at https://www.dbm.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/OPCCB/OPIF_2007/dti.pdf.

⁵ Department of Trade and Industry history. Available at <https://www.dti.gov.ph/about/history/>.

⁶ Department of Agriculture mandate. Available at <https://www.da.gov.ph/mandate/>

⁷ PH imports 93% salt needs – Agri group. Available at <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/08/27/news/national/ph-imports-93-salt-needs-agri-group/1856179>.

⁸ Ibid.

WHEREAS, the country's salt imports in the first half increased by 10 percent to \$14.176 million from last year's \$12.903 million. The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) data showed that the country imported 270,535.016 metric tons (MT) of salt products, including table salt, denatured salt, pure sodium chloride, and seawater⁹;

WHEREAS, the PSA data also showed that the Philippines imported salt products from a total of 27 countries during the six-month period. Australia was the top supplier as it counted for 70.3 percent of the total imports during the reference period¹⁰;

WHEREAS, according to Undersecretary Domingo Panganiban, Department of Agriculture (DA), the country is experiencing a shortage of salt and that the department is now working closely with government agencies to enhance the development of the local salt industry and enable the sector to be self-sufficient. The move includes partnership with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to boost production and supply the requirements of both commercial and industrial users¹¹;

WHEREAS, in an interview, Undersecretary Panganiban said, "We really import salt. We have P100 million to start for this season. And we hope and anticipate that we should be able to do something about it"¹²;

WHEREAS, The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Chief Information Officer Nazzer Briguera said the Development of the Salt Industry Project (DSIP) with an allocated fund of ₱100 million is currently in progress to increase salt production and assure sufficient supply in the country;¹³

WHEREAS, under the ASIN law, DENR, along with other appropriate government agencies shall identify areas that are suitable for use as salt farms with the purpose of protecting such areas from environmental risks to ensure the sustainability of iodized salt production. In addition the law also requires DTI to provide local salt manufacturers

⁹ PHL's salt imports rise 10% in H1 –PSA data. Available at <https://businessmirror.com.ph/2022/09/12/phls-salt-imports-rise-10-in-h1-psa-data/>

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Isn't it ironic? PH imports 93% of salt supply. Available at <https://mb.com.ph/2022/08/30/isnt-it-ironic-ph-imports-93-of-salt-supply/>

¹² Salt supply problems due to years of negligence, says DA exec. Available at <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/economy/843389/salt-supply-problems-due-to-years-of-negligence-says-da-exec/story/>

¹³ ₱100M to boost salt production — BFAR. Available at [https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2022/8/30/BFAR-salt-production-development-project.html\)says-da-exec/story/](https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2022/8/30/BFAR-salt-production-development-project.html)says-da-exec/story/)

and producers with assistance and support to upgrade their production methods to include iodization¹⁴;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is an archipelago of 7,107 islands with a total land area, including inland bodies of water, of approximately 300,000 square kilometers. Its 36,289 kilometers of coastline makes it the country with the 5th longest coastline in the world¹⁵ thereby making it capable of producing enough salt supply for the country;

WHEREAS, the country's salt industry needs all the government intervention to keep it sustainable and there is a need to assess the real situation of the current salt supply in the country in order to develop options and possible solutions to the continuing decline of the local salt industry;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Senate directs the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the status of the country's salt supply, with the objective of introducing new policies and reviewing existing measures and programs to create salt self-sufficiency.

Adopted,


MARIA LOURDES NANCY S. BINAY

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Republic of the Philippines general information. Available at <https://parispe.dfa.gov.ph/consularservices/2015-10-07-09-50-05/87-the-philippine/151-general-information>