

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

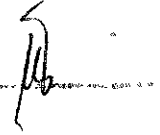
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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SENATE

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 5

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Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

RESOLUTION

URGING THE PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF VOLCANOLOGY AND SEISMOLOGY, THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF SCHOOLCHILDREN FROM EARTHQUAKES

Whereas, a study by the World Bank and the Columbia University entitled, "Natural Disaster Hotspots: A Global Risk Analysis," identified countries which are at high risk from six major natural hazards: earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, floods, drought, and cyclones - with the Philippines pegged as one of the riskiest countries in the world;

Whereas, the Metro Manila Earthquake Impact Reduction Study conducted by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in 2004 showed that a 7.2-magnitude earthquake could damage 38 percent of residential buildings, 38 percent of buildings between 10 and 30 stories high, 14 percent of buildings between 30 and 60 stories high, and 30 to 35 percent of all public buildings. Such an earthquake could cause 33,500 deaths, an additional 18,000 deaths from fire, and 114,000 injuries;

Whereas, in the recent Haiti quake, a school in Petionville collapsed during classes, trapping about 500 students. In China, a 7.9-magnitude earthquake that shook Sichuan in 2008 killed 15,000 schoolchildren and teachers and destroyed 7,000 classrooms. In the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan, about 17,000 children died in more than 7,000 schools that collapsed. In the 1990 Luzon earthquake, 154 schoolchildren were killed in the collapse of the 6-story Christian College in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija;

Whereas, another study from the Columbia University revealed that compared to the rest of the world, the Philippines has the biggest number of schoolchildren at risk from earthquakes - with 15.6 million school-age children in earthquake zones - the highest exposure cited by the study;

Whereas, international studies reveal that the cost of disaster-proofing which a school would add is only four percent to the cost of construction, which is insignificant compared to the risk of destruction and death of schoolchildren during a disaster, and the equally high health, economic and development impacts in the aftermath;

Whereas, it is the mandate of the State to save and protect lives from destructive earthquakes through disaster risk reduction strategies and practices;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, Department of Public Works and Highways and the Department of Education to ensure the safety of schoolchildren from earthquakes, as follows:

1. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) - to identify earthquake hazard areas within the country;

2. The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) - to immediately conduct a nationwide structural evaluation of all schools, enhance the structural integrity of public schools and help private-run schools improve on their structural integrity; and

3. The Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) - to ensure that schools are structurally and organizationally resilient to earthquakes.

Adopted,


LOREN LEGARDA
Senator