

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Resolution No. 940



Introduced by Rep. **CESAR V. SARMIENTO**

RESOLUTION STRONGLY URGING THE CONCERNED TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES TO IMPLEMENT THE PLANS, PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS THAT WILL IMPROVE THE CONNECTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE COUNTRY'S NAUTICAL HIGHWAYS

WHEREAS, as an archipelago of around 7,641 islands, the Philippines depends on inter-island connectivity to support, encourage and/or facilitate trade, tourism, education, employment and provision of essential government services;

WHEREAS, to ensure transportation linkage from Luzon to Mindanao, the nautical highways or the Roll-On Roll-Of (RORO) terminal systems, consisting of roads, ports and sea routes traversing the country in the east, west and at the center, including lateral routes connecting the said highways, were conceptualized and implemented since 2003;

WHEREAS, the RORO system, for 14 years now since its conceptualization, has benefitted the country in terms of reduction of transport costs, increase in business and social activities, growth of local tourism, enhancement of agricultural productivity, faster government services to the countryside and alleviation of rural poverty;

WHEREAS, in view of the benefits the RORO system bring to the Filipinos, the House of Representatives, primarily through the Committee on Transportation, conducted the first-ever inspection of the nautical highways on 17-27 March 2017 to determine the current situation, thresh out pressing issues and find ways to further improve passenger convenience and safety;

WHEREAS, the House expedition saw various issues relating to land transportation connectivity, adequacy of passenger lounges and parking areas, efficiency of port operations, procedures and traffic flow, condition of vessels and presence of other facilities and services that contribute to the overall RORO experience of the passengers;

WHEREAS, these issues or concerns undermine the safety, comfort and convenience of the commuters, discourage others from using the RORO system and prevent us from moving forward and taking advantage of the greater economic activity and increase in tourism traffic;

WHEREAS, the recent maritime incidents involving RORO vessels, including but not limited to, the M/V Rina Hosanna which caught fire last 16 March 2017 en route to Batangas from Mindoro; M/V Divina Gracia which ran aground in the waters near Maricaban Island in Batangas last 17 March 2017; and M/V Maria Oliva whose main engine malfunctioned last 1 April 2017 en route to Surigao from Leyte, further stress the

need to improve the safety and convenience of the Filipinos using our RORO system; and

WHEREAS, under their respective mandates, the Land Transportation Franchising & Regulatory Board prescribes and regulates routes of service and issues the Certificates of Public Convenience for the operation of public land transportation services; the Maritime Industry Authority prescribes and regulate routes of water service and issues Certificates of Public Convenience for the operation of domestic and overseas water carriers; and the Philippine Ports Authority formulates the Port Development Plan and constructs, maintains, operates and provides such facilities or services as are necessary in the ports vested in, or belonging to it.

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives strongly urges the following transportation agencies to implement the needed plans, programs and projects within their respective mandates that will improve the connectivity and efficiency of the nautical highways:

- a) The **Land Transportation Franchising & Regulatory Board** to ensure, among others:
 1. Sufficient, safe and convenient bus terminals/bus stops along the nautical highways, including adequate and defined bus terminals or parking areas especially near or at the ports;
 2. Rationalized routes that will end at or connect to the ports; and
 3. Adequate number of roadworthy bus units to accommodate the volume of passengers per land route, including ensuring local transportation connectivity for passengers whose RORO trips end at the ports.

- b) The **Maritime Industry Authority** to ensure, among others:
 1. Adequate number of seaworthy and passenger-convenient vessels to accommodate the volume of passengers per sea route; and
 2. Lesser procedural requirements or more time-efficient system of ship arrival and departure schedules, manifesting of passengers and other procedures under MARINA's jurisdiction;

- c) The **Philippine Ports Authority** to ensure, among others:
 - 1) Provision of security personnel to protect the port users while inside the port premises;
 - 2) Adequate and convenient facilities such as parking spaces for public and private vehicles, air-conditioned passenger lounges and covered pathways;
 - 3) Lesser procedural requirements or more time-efficient system of payment of fares and fees, traffic flow, loading and unloading of passengers and vehicles and other procedures under PPA's jurisdiction; and
 - 4) Future design, system and facilities of port terminals to be improved or constructed should take into consideration the needs for safety and convenience of the passengers.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the House of Representatives also urges the Department of Finance, Board of Investments, Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs to resolve the delay in the processing of documentation and benefits for new RORO Vessels covered by the Domestic Shipping Act.

RESOLVED FINALLY, that the House of Representatives, through the Committee on Transportation, hereby commits to ensure coordination among the implementing agencies and to oversee such plans, programs and projects with the end goal of improving the connectivity and efficiency of our RORO system.

Approved.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarmiento", with a stylized flourish at the end.

CESAR V. SARMIENTO