Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Eighteenth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1134

Introduced by Representative JAKE VINCENT S. VILLA

RESOLUTION
URGING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION TO INSTITUTIONALIZE A NATIONWIDE MECHANISM THAT ADDRESSES PANDEMICS AND ITS EFFECTS TO THE GENERAL HEALTH OF THE PUBLIC AS WELL AS ITS ECONOMIC REPERCUSSIONS

WHEREAS, ARTICLE II, Section 15 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that, the State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them;

WHEREAS, further, ARTICLE XII, Section 17 provides, in times of national emergency, when the public interest so requires, the State may, during the emergency and under reasonable terms prescribed by it, temporarily take over or direct the operation of any privately-owned public utility or business affected with public interest. Furthermore, Section 18 provides, the State may, in the interest of national welfare or defense, establish and operate vital industries and, upon payment of just compensation, transfer to public ownership utilities and other private enterprises to be operated by the Government;

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization (“WHO”) defined pandemic as a worldwide spread of a new disease\textsuperscript{1}. WHO further defined an influenza pandemic as a new influenza virus emerges and spreads around the world, and most people do not have immunity. Viruses that have caused past pandemics typically originated from animal influenza viruses\textsuperscript{2};

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020 WHO characterized the corona virus as a pandemic. WHO’s press release regarding this provides, "WHO has been assessing this outbreak around the clock and we are deeply concerned both by the alarming levels of spread and severity, and by the alarming levels of inaction. We have therefore made the

\textsuperscript{1}https://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/frequently_asked_questions/pandemic/en/.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid.
assessment that COVID-19 can be characterized as a pandemic. Pandemic is not a word to use lightly or carelessly. It is a word that, if misused, can cause unreasonable fear, or unjustified acceptance that the fight is over, leading to unnecessary suffering and death. Describing the situation as a pandemic does not change WHO’s assessment of the threat posed by this virus. It doesn’t change what WHO is doing, and it doesn’t change what countries should do. We have never before seen a pandemic sparked by a coronavirus. This is the first pandemic caused by a coronavirus. And we have never before seen a pandemic that can be controlled, at the same time.”\(^3\)

WHEREAS, world economies referred to the effect of the pandemic to its economies as Corona Shock\(^4\);

WHEREAS, it is worthy to note the efforts of the national government, despite of its downsides, to address and combat the effects of COVID-19. Taking this into consideration and once everything subsides and normalizes there should be an assessment of all the efforts that the national government implemented and its effectivity to address the situation;

WHEREAS, from said assessment to health as well as economic measures implemented by the national government, best practices should be identified, adopted and established comparing them to the best practices of other countries that were successful or somewhat successful in addressing and combating with the effects of Covid-. After careful assessment, institutionalize, as far as practicable, such best practices;

WHEREAS, it bears emphasis that speed and timing in the implementation and comprehensiveness of measures and action plans in times of crisis such as pandemics is paramount and key in managing the situation;

WHEREAS, there is an undeniable need to address the alarming lack of mechanisms in place in addressing and combating a pandemic crisis in our country. Readiness of established mechanisms provides for a fighting chance to the government to be more pro-active and less reactive to these types of situations;

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BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, urging the appropriate Committees of the House of Representatives to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation to institutionalize a nationwide mechanism that addresses pandemics and its effects to the general health of the public as well as its economic repercussions.

Adopted

JAKE VINCENT S. VILL