A RESOLUTION
URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO INCREASE THE FUNDS TO BE APPROPRIATED TO THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

WHEREAS, Article XI, Section 12 of the 1987 Constitution provides:

SECTION 12. The Ombudsman and his Deputies, as protectors of the people, shall act promptly on complaints filed in any form or manner against public officials or employees of the Government, or any subdivision, agency or instrumentality thereof, including government-owned or controlled corporations, and shall, in appropriate cases, notify the complainants of the action taken and the result thereof.

WHEREAS, Article XI, Section 14 of the 1987 Constitution provides:

SECTION 14. The Office of the Ombudsman shall enjoy fiscal autonomy. Its approved annual appropriations shall be automatically and regularly released.

WHEREAS, Republic Act 6770 entitled "An Act Providing for the Functional and Structural Organization of the Office of the Ombudsman, and for Other Purposes" provides:

Section 38. Fiscal Autonomy. — The Office of the Ombudsman shall enjoy fiscal autonomy. Appropriations for the Office of the Ombudsman may not be reduced below the amount appropriated for the previous years and, after approval, shall be automatically and regularly released.

WHEREAS, for 2020, the Office of the Ombudsman was allocated a Php 4.105 billion budget;

WHEREAS, for 2021, the Office of the Ombudsman, had initially proposed a Php 4.678 billion budget;
WHEREAS, unfortunately, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) approved a budget for 2021 of only Php 3,263 billion, which is lower than the Php 4,105 billion 2020 budget;

WHEREAS, the approved 2021 budget of only Php 3,263 billion is 39.09% lower than the proposed budget of Php 4,678 billion submitted by the Office of the Ombudsman;

WHEREAS, the approved 2021 budget of only Php 3,263 billion and is 22.07% lower than the Php 4,105 billion 2020 budget;

WHEREAS, the Office of the Ombudsman needs the additional budget in the amount of Php 1,258,241,000, which was slashed by the DBM, for the following:

1. Php 1,048,241,000 for Office of the Ombudsman authorized positions and field offices;
2. Php 210,000,000 for desktops and laptops for work from home arrangements in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

WHEREAS, this is a violation of the Constitution and Republic Act 6770 which provides that, “Appropriations for the Office of the Ombudsman may not be reduced below the amount appropriated for the previous years...”;

WHEREAS, aside from a lower budget, the DBM also removed the special provisions that would allow the Office of the Ombudsman to utilize its savings and income that were generated from previous appropriations to augment its expenses, which special provisions were already previously given;

WHEREAS, considering the very vital role that the Office of the Ombudsman plays in the fight against corruption, it is important that they are given the proper appropriations in their budget.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the House of Representatives to urge the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations to increase the funds to be appropriated to the Office of the Ombudsman by an additional amount of Php 1,258,241,000

Adopted,

[Signature]

Rufus B. Rodriguez