

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City, Metro Manila



**Eighteenth Congress**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 243**

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Introduced by **Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento**

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**A RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY AND INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE ALARMING NUMBER OF KILLINGS IN CALBAYOG CITY AND TO ENSURE THE PRESENCE AND ASSIGNMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS IN THE AREA**

**WHEREAS**, senseless killings have been rampant in the First District of Samar for such a long time;

**WHEREAS**, from January 2010 to May 2019 alone, there have been an alarming number of shooting incidents and ambushes, most resulting in deaths and serious injuries. Some of those murdered were incumbent barangay captains and government employees;

**WHEREAS**, based on police records, the number of killing and violence increases at least 6 months before any and every election. With the uniformity of how the killings are done, it is deducible that these are mostly perpetrated by the gunmen – Private Armed Groups (PAGs) – whom everybody seemed to know about but are also deemed untouchable. They escape prosecution because of political patronage and lack of complainants due to fear;

**WHEREAS**, Joint Task Force CAGASMAS (Calbayog, Gandara, San Jorge, Matuguinao and Sta. Margarita), a composite team of AFP and PNP, was launched on October 2016 mainly because of my pleadings to address the rampant killings in the district perpetrated by PAGs. However, after almost three (3) years, I cannot say that we are truly satisfied with the results. No PAGs have been declared officially dismantled in our district. Furthermore, Joint Task Force CAGASMAS has been disbanded without prior notice or explanation;

**WHEREAS**, last May 11, 2019, Manuel Sajul, the son-in-law of Calbayog City Vice Mayor Diego Rivera, was ambushed by unidentified suspects along Maharlika Highway in Barangay Marcatubig. He survived the gunshots fired at him. However, his companion Joseph Ortega, who was driving the car, was killed in the attack;

**WHEREAS**, the increase in law enforcement during the 2018 Barangay Elections led to a successful and peaceful democratic exercise in the district, for which we thanked both the PNP and AFP. However, it was not replicated in the recently concluded Midterm Elections. This May 2019 Elections, checkpoints and law enforcement personnel were practically non-existent. As observed by the residents and barangay officials themselves, this lack of checkpoints and uniformed personnel allowed PAGs to get away with their criminal activities. I personally even witnessed during my ocular inspection of the district the absence of the required checkpoints;

**WHEREAS**, based on police records, from March 29 to May 13, 2019 alone, there have been a total of 25 shooting incidents with 14 dead victims in the district. Despite all these killings, no checkpoints were put up in Calbayog City and other parts of the district;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the House of Representatives is urged to conduct an inquiry and investigate, in aid of legislation, the alarming number of killings and violence in Calbayog City;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives is likewise urged to ensure the presence and assignment of law enforcement officers in hot spot areas such as Calbayog City.

Adopted,

  
**REP. EDGAR MARY S. SARMIENTO**  
First District of Samar