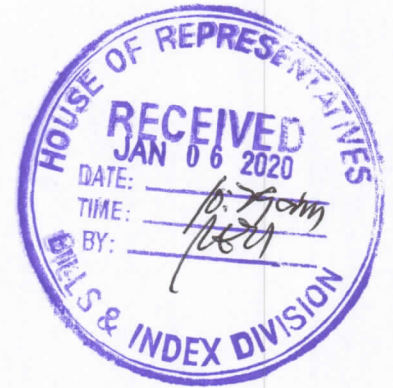


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Philippines

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 638



Introduced by REP. ELPIDIO F. BARZAGA, JR.

**A RESOLUTION
COMMENDING HON. JOCELYN SOLIS-REYES OF
QUEZON CITY REGIONAL TRIAL COURT, BRANCH 211
AND URGING THE LEGAL COMMUNITY AND FILIPINOS
TO CONTINUE TO UPHOLD THE RULE OF LAW**

WHEREAS, the rule of law, for the United Nations system and our Department of Justice, is a “principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. It requires, as well, measures to ensure adherence to the principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness and procedural and legal transparency.”

WHEREAS, after 3,678 days, the verdict on the murder of 58 people in the single most gruesome political massacre in Maguindanao was finally resolved and rendered in a seven hundred sixty-one (761) page *Decision* penned by Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes of Quezon City Regional Trial Court, Branch 211.

WHEREAS, among those convicted, Datu Andal Ampatuan, Jr. and Zaldy Ampatuan were sentenced to fifty-seven (57) counts of murder with a penalty of *reclusion perpetua* without parole.

WHEREAS, the mass murder is considered as the worst political massacre in the Philippines where, on November 23, 2009, thirty-two (32) media personnel, twenty (20) family members of 2nd District Representative of Maguindanao, Hon. Esmael “Toto” Mangudadatu and six (6) other individuals were slaughtered and dumped into pits by a backhoe on their way to file Toto Mangudadatu’s certificate of candidacy for the governorship of Maguindanao.

WHEREAS, after a decade where a guilty verdict was rendered, three hundred fifty-seven (357) witnesses have testified, numerous pleadings were filed, changes in lawyers for the defendants, alleged attempts of bribery, murder of witnesses including Suwaib "Jessie" Upham and Esmael Enog, the death of the principal accused Datu Andal Ampatuan, Sr. and with the case record reaching up to two hundred thirty-eight (238) volumes.

WHEREAS, despite the guilty verdict of Andal Jr. and Zaldy Ampatuan, there are still eighty (80) accused individuals who still remain at large.

WHEREAS, the judgment of the Ampatuan case in the lower court is just one step in our legal system that has often been criticized in terms of integrity, credibility and speed.

WHEREAS, the Ampatuan case highlights the right of every Filipino to a judiciary that is independent, legally excellent and humane and access to legal advice and services.

WHEREAS, the judiciary is urged to adopt urgent measures to (1) address the speedy administration of justice, (2) institutionalize independence, integrity, credibility and legal prowess of the bench and the bar, (3) ensure fairness, openness and quality of trials and (4) access to the legal services and advice as well as the enforcement of judgments to the most vulnerable and marginalized sector in our society.

WHEREAS, despite the challenges in our legal system and in view of the recent decision on the Ampatuan case, the legal prowess, commitment and bravery of **HON. JOCELYN SOLIS-REYES of Branch 211 of Quezon City Regional Trial Court** is highly commended.

WHEREAS, the shining light of Hon. Jocelyn Solis-Reyes's recent decision on the Ampatuan case should pave the way for the legal community as well as our fellow Filipinos to continue to uphold the rule of law.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved for the House of Representatives to congratulate and commend Hon. Jocelyn Solis-Reyes.

Done this 20th of December 2019, Quezon City, Philippines.


REP. ELPIDIO F. BARZAGA, JR.
Lone City of Dasmariñas, Cavite