

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 674



Introduced by Rep. Edgar Mary S. Sarmiento

A RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STANDARD PROCEDURE AND OTHER PROCESSES ON BORDER CONTROL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEPARTMENT ON HEALTH IN CASES OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN (PHEIC)

WHEREAS, there has been an ongoing disease outbreak that originated in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, caused by the novel coronavirus (nCoV), with a death toll of at least eighty (80) people and infecting more than two thousand (2,000) individuals;

WHEREAS, the China's National Health Committee has confirmed that there are 461 severe cases of the disease outbreak while the cause of the virus remain unknown and there is no specific treatment or cure for the disease;

WHEREAS, medical experts have verified that nCoV can be transmitted from human to human causing a great concern among the members of the global community as reported cases of infection have been increasing since the first reported case last December 2019;

WHEREAS, despite the government-imposed travel ban and lockdown in Hubei Province in order to contain the nCov outbreak, the disease continue to spread internationally and has affected United States, France, Australia, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, Vietnam, South Korea, Macau and Japan;

WHEREAS, while the World Health Organization (WHO) has not declared the novel coronavirus outbreak as a "public health emergency of international concern" (PHEIC) as there is no evidence of human-to-human transmission outside China, the WHO said it does not mean it would not happen;

WHEREAS, the Department of Health has declared that there are investigations in the Philippines involving eleven (11) potential cases of the said disease;

WHEREAS, the ease of travel in today's global community brought by the interconnectivity of cities and countries across the globe has also allowed the rapid spread of diseases which calls for prioritization of health security and disease prevention;

WHEREAS, it is undeniable that airports and other ports of entry serve as gateways that play critical roles in preventing the spread of communicable diseases that can endanger the public health of our county;

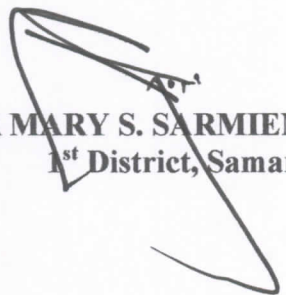
WHEREAS, there were direct international flights carrying passengers from Wuhan City that have arrived in the Philippines last week although eventually repatriated to China following the imposition of the travel ban,

WHEREAS, the above-mentioned incident requires an independent and urgent assessment by our own transport and health authorities based on standard protocol and procedure for disease prevention and control as well as for future reference;

WHEREAS, effectiveness of disease prevention and control processes entail sufficiency and availability of thermal scanners for the surveillance of incoming passengers and pre-identified isolation rooms for quarantine purposes in all our airports;

WHEREAS, the recent airport situation involving health risks should serve as a reminder to airport authorities not only in the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) but also in other airports in the country as well as the Department of Transportation and Department of Health to remain extremely vigilant in the implementation of communicable disease preparedness procedures;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House Committee on Transportation conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the standard procedures and other processes on border control to be implemented by the Department of Transportation and Department of Health in cases of public health emergency of international concern.


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