

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Resolution No. 1953



Introduced by **Rep. LAWRENCE LEMUEL H. FORTUN**

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE DEATH OF PHILIPPINE MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY CADET 4TH CLASS JONASH BONDOC UNDER QUESTIONABLE CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE PREMISES OF THE ACADEMY AND THE INITIATION AND TRAINING POLICIES, PRACTICES, PROCESSES AND TRADITIONS OFFICIALLY OR UNOFFICIALLY OBSERVED AMONG OFFICIALS AND/OR CADETS THEREIN

WHEREAS, the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy is the pioneer and premier merchant marine academy in the Philippines funded and operated by the Philippine government whose graduates are commissioned as ensigns in the Philippine Navy Reserve and have the option to join the merchant marine, the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Coast Guard;

WHEREAS, the PMMA has been known domestically and internationally as a proud producer of the finest Filipino merchant marine officers who have become among the world's best master mariners, chief engineers, shipping executives, educators and trainers;

WHEREAS, it is the duty of the Philippine Government to ensure that the excellence and distinction of the country's premier merchant marine institution are preserved and enhanced through a constant and close review and reform of its education and training curriculum, policies, procedures, processes and practices;

WHEREAS, at 6:30 in the morning of the 6th of July 2021, PMMA Cadet 4th Class Jonash Bondoc was found unconscious in a restroom in the Alpha Company Barracks of the Academy and later pronounced dead at the San Marcelino District Hospital where he was rushed;

WHEREAS, the death of Cadet 4th Class Bondoc was attended by suspicious circumstances requiring an in-depth and exhaustive investigation that should cover not only the crime itself but also the environment and systems that may have countenanced certain practices and traditions that led to its commission;

WHEREAS, while a purported lone culprit, Cadet 3rd Class Jomel Gloria, has been identified, arrested and charged, his incomplete and selective admission has turned out to be inconsistent with the autopsy report released by the Zambales City Crime Laboratory;

WHEREAS, contrary to the statement of Cadet 3rd Class Gloria that he simply punched Cadet 4th Class Bondoc in the chest casually terming the same as "*lambing*," the autopsy report revealed that the cause of the latter's death was "*blunt traumatic injury in the head*" and showed several other injuries including various contusions, abrasions and hematoma in the chest, abdomen, neck, head and extremities and intracerebral hemorrhages in the lobes of the brain that

all point to a probability that the incident was a case of hazing participated in not by only one person;

WHEREAS, in a report aired on GMA's 24 Oras, PNP Zambales Provincial Director Romano Cardino was quoted to have considered the case closed only two days after the incident, thus, quite hastily and prematurely removing from the picture such angles as the participation of other conspirators, the negligence of certain officials and the incident being part of some tradition unofficially and clandestinely practiced in the Academy;

WHEREAS, such declaration by the Provincial Director only two days after the incident without the conduct of a thorough, detailed and comprehensive investigation, is not only premature, but also irregular and questionable;

WHEREAS, this incidence of violence in the Academy is not the first time as accounts of similar incidents have been reported and recorded in the past;

WHEREAS, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) had issued Memorandum Order No. 4, s. 1995 entitled, "*Preventive Measures against Violence and Sanctions on Fraternities and Other Student Organizations*," which mandates all educational institutions of higher learning "*to promote programs and projects that will produce responsible students and will instill the value of human life for a productive future*;"

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 11053, otherwise known as the Anti-Hazing Act of 2018, prohibits "*any act that results in physical or psychological suffering, harm, or injury inflicted on a recruit, neophyte, applicant, or member as part of an initiation rite or practice made as a prerequisite for admission or a requirement for continuing membership in a fraternity, sorority, or organization*;"

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon Congress to conduct an independent, fair and impartial investigation on the death of Cadet 4th Class Bondoc to ferret out the truth, serve justice for the fallen fine young and promising Filipino and his bereaved family, and introduce the necessary legislative measures to put an end to any culture of violence not only in the PMMA but all other learning and training institutions in the country;

WHEREAS, the House of Representatives must immediately take action to address this urgent and critical issue and ensure that all schools remain safe, secure, and conducive spaces for young Filipinos where they can freely nourish and enhance their vast potentials and pursue their dreams and aspirations, especially as the country gradually gears up for the resumption of face-to-face classes as it recovers from the harsh consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the Committee on Higher and Technical Education to investigate, in aid of legislation, the death of Philippine Merchant Marine Academy Cadet 4th class Jonash Bondoc under questionable circumstances in the premises of the Academy and the initiation and training policies, practices, processes and traditions officially or unofficially observed among officials and/or cadets therein.

Adopted.


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