

Office of Sen. Manny Villar

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NEWS RELEASE
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Villar to hold hearing on effectiveness of cheaper medicines law Thursday, March 8

Sen. Manny Villar, chairman of the Committee on Trade and Commerce, will hold a public hearing on Thursday, March 8, to check the effectiveness of the law that was envisioned to make affordable essential medicines for the poor.

“Four years after the passage of the law, there is a concern that this law failed to achieve its desired effect, and that is to bring down the prices of medicines needed by poor Filipinos,” Villar said.

Also the chairman of the Oversight Committee on Quality Affordable Medicine, Villar said Republic Act 9502 or the Universally Accessible Cheaper and Quality Medicines Act of 2008, should be amended to serve its original intention to help poor Filipinos get well through medicines they can afford.

The public hearing will be held at the Manila Tytana College, Macapagal Boulevard, Pasay City at 10 am.

Expected to attend the hearing are: Gregory Domingo, secretary, Department of Trade and Industry; Madeleine de Rosa-Vera, assistant secretary, Department of Health; Atty. Emilio Polig, chief legal, Food and Drug Administration; Ma. Lourdes Baua, President and CEO, Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC); and Dr. Rolando Bautista, CEO, PITC-Pharma.

Also invited are: Atty. Paula Tanquieng, program officer, Ayos na Gamot sa Abot-Kayang Presyo; Jocelyn Palacpac, associate professor, College of Pharmacy, University of the Philippines Manila; Dr. Art Catli, director, Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP); Eufe Tantia, assistant vice president, PHAP; Maribel Magsambol, chairperson, national affairs, Drugstore Association of the Philippines; Benjamin Liuson, president, Pacific Pharmaceuticals Generics, Inc.; Ignacio Arnaiz, Botika 1 Corp.; Vanessa Gatdula-Hilvano, Chamber of Herbal Industries of the Philippines; and Grace Galindez-Gupana, founder-vice president, ABS Gen Herbs.

The proposed measures to be discussed are: Senate Bill 5 authored by Sen. Loren Legarda, which seeks to amend the Cheaper Medicines Act; SB 1572 and 2951, both pushing for annual reporting of prescription drugs authored by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Villar, respectively; SB 2960 also by Villar, seeking the creation of the Drug Price Regulatory Board; and Senate Proposed Resolution 730, filed by Villar, calling for an inquiry into the production, storage and distribution practices of herbal and alternative medicines. ###