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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
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S E N A T E

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

RESOLUTION

URGING THE COMMITTEES ON TRADE AND COMMERCE AND CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON QUALITY AFFORDABLE MEDICINES, TO CONDUCT AN ASSESSMENT, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE EXISTING PHILIPPINE REGULATIONS AND POLICIES ANENT THE EXPIRATION DATES OF MEDICINES VIS-À-VIS THE VERY RECENT HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL REPORT CITING THE 15-YEAR POTENCY OF MOST EXPIRED DRUGS WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF DETERMINING ITS IMPLICATIONS TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF THE CONSUMING PUBLIC

Whereas, Section 15 of Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that:

“The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them”;

Whereas, The Harvard Medical School Family Health Guide sourced a column published in Psychopharmacology Today stating that medicines are still potent beyond its expiration date¹;

Whereas, in 1979, a law was passed in the United States requiring drug manufacturers to stamp an expiration date which can guarantee the full potency and safety of their products;

Whereas, in the 1980’s, in efforts to increase US military readiness, more than US\$1 billion worth of medicines had been stockpiled and nearing expiration²;

Whereas, the US General Accounting Office audited the Air Force troop hospitals and warned that by the 1990’s, more than US\$ 100 million would have to be spent yearly for replacements;

Whereas, such huge wastage prompted the US military to request the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) to conduct a study on the viability and potency of medicines beyond their expiration dates;

Whereas, this study revealed that 90% of more than 100 drugs, both prescription and over-the-counter, were perfectly good to use even 15 years after their expiration date, provided that they are stored under good conditions like a cool, dark, and dry place;

Whereas, few rare exceptions to this new theory of extended shelf life of medicines would be tetracycline, nitroglycerine, insulin, and liquid antibiotics;

¹ “Do drugs really expire?” by Philip Chua, Cebu Daily News, July 25, 2011

² http://www.endtimesreport.com/Prescription_longevity.html

Whereas, according to Mr. Francis Flaherty, a former director of the USFDA program that tested the expired medicines, expiration dates put on by manufacturers typically have no bearing on whether a drug is usable for a longer time and is only required to prove that a drug is still good on whatever expiration date the company chooses to set but does not mean, or even suggest, that the drug will stop being effective after that nor will it become harmful³;

Whereas, on the other hand, some experts discourage taking expired drugs and medicines because consumers may not be storing these drugs in under ideal cool and dry conditions and may break down into harmful by-products creating greater health risks;

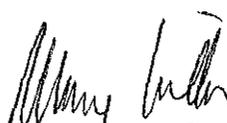
Whereas, these experts state that expiration dates are placed in order to ensure that the drugs and medicines work no matter how they are stored and should still have optimal effects in curing serious illnesses and diseases;

Whereas, it would be a terrible waste if people, especially the marginalized and those in dire need of health-care, dispose and throw out perfectly good medicines just because they are expired;

Whereas, the State, consistent with its policy to promote the right to health of the people, should look into the possibility of utilizing fully-potent expired medicines, to address the need in the sector of public health-care and at the same time potentially saving government funds allocated to medicine and drugs cost;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Committees on Trade and Commerce and Congressional Oversight Committee on Quality Affordable Medicines to conduct an assessment, in aid of legislation, on the existing Philippine regulations and policies anent the expiration dates of medicines vis-à-vis the recent Harvard Medical School Report citing the 15-year potency of most expired drugs with the objective of determining its implications to protect the health of the consuming public.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR
Senador

³ http://www.endtimesreport.com/Prescription_longevity.html