

SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 570

RECEIVED BY: 

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR MANNY VILLAR

RESOLUTION

URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH, WOMEN AND FAMILY RELATIONS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE PROGRAMS AND APPROACHES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT TO SWEEP AND CLEAR THE METROPOLIS OF STREET CHILDREN WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF CRAFTING A LEGISLATION THAT PROMOTES LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM

WHEREAS, The 1987 Constitution states that: "*The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.*" (Section 13, Article II)

WHEREAS, children are the most vulnerable sector of the society and they need special protection;

WHEREAS, the Philippines has one of the world's largest populations of street children;

WHEREAS, it is estimated that there are 1.5 Million street children in the country and in 1998, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) "Ahon sa Lansangan" (Rescue Operation/Program of DSWD) document reported an estimate of 222,417 street children in 65 major cities in the country. Action International Ministries approximates that there are 50,000 to 70,000 street children in Manila. The highest number of highly visible children in the streets are in the following cities: Manila (3,266), Quezon (2,867), Kalookan (1,530), and Pasay (1,420);¹

WHEREAS, studies have consistently pointed to poverty in the family, physical or sexual abuse and peer-gang influence as major factors that push children to stay or live on the streets;

WHEREAS, in Metro Manila, children are often forced by circumstances to augment their family income or are left alone to fend for themselves on the streets. Most of them are the children of poor parents who migrated from rural areas hoping to find better jobs in the city but whose lack of education rendered them ill-equipped to survive and thus confined to a life of abject poverty;

WHEREAS, the prevalence of children on the streets remains unabated;

¹ A Situationer of Street Children in the Philippines, (Presented at the Civil Society Forum on Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Street Children in Southeast Asia), Bangkok, Thailand, March 2003

WHEREAS, to address the issues and concerns of street children, Social and Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman recently announced that her department, in cooperation with local government units and other government agencies, will launch a program aimed at providing street children and families with permanent homes, education and livelihood opportunities in order to make these children off the streets permanently;

WHEREAS, accordingly, certain areas in Metro Manila were identified as priority, these areas are considered as having the highest number of street children, to wit: Roxas Boulevard in Manila and Pasay City; Kalayaan Road, Barangay E. Rodriguez and Quezon Avenue in Quezon City; Balintawak in Calocan; Greenhills in San Juan; Kapisigan area in Pasig City; Madrigal Avenue in Muntinlupa City; the road leading to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Paranaque;

WHEREAS, the program includes: putting up of activity centers, creating activities that will help encourage character building, value formation and life skills training; establishing 24-hr center where parents could leave their young children when they go to work; livelihood opportunities for sampaguita garland sellers; and providing low-cost housing to street children and their families;

WHEREAS, in order to ensure the effectiveness of these programs, there is a need to review the programs and approaches of the Department of Social Welfare and Development insofar as the street children are concerned;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Philippines, to urge the Senate Committee on Youth, Women and Family Relations to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the programs and approaches of the Department of Social Welfare and Development to sweep and clear the metropolis of street children with the objective of crafting a legislation that promotes long-term solution to the problem.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR