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SENATE

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P.S. Res. No. 587

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR MANNY VILLAR

RESOLUTION

URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD, AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE STATE OF PHILIPPINE COCONUT INDUSTRY TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE REPORTED AGING AND DYING OF MILLIONS OF COCONUT TREES AND ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS WITH THE END IN VIEW OF PROTECTING THE INDUSTRY AND ITS FARMERS

WHEREAS, it is a policy of State to promote and protect the coconut industry considering the importance of this industry in nation-building, it being one of the principal industries and one of the largest income-earners of the country;

WHEREAS, one third of the country's arable agricultural land or about 3.31 million hectares is planted to coconut sprawling in sixty four (64) out of total seventy eight (78) provinces, and 1,195 out of the 1,554 municipalities in the country¹;

WHEREAS, at present, there are 320 million coconut trees, 44.8 Million coconut trees are classified as old and senile, according to the Philippine Coconut Authority;

WHEREAS, the coconut, also called the "Tree of Life" because of its many uses, is a major source of foreign exchange;

WHEREAS, about 24 million Filipinos or one-third of the Philippine population directly or indirectly benefit from the coconut industry. There are 1.5 million coconut farmers and farm workers²;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is a major producer of coconut oil, copra meal, desiccated coconut, coco shell charcoal, activated carbon and coco chemicals;

WHEREAS, millions of coconut trees are aging and dying due to stresses of weather (such as El Nino phenomenon) and diseases, thus, adversely affecting the capacity of these coconut trees to bear fruits;

WHEREAS, the peak years of coconut trees are between 7 and 25 years, when they bear between 40 and 65 nuts per year. Mature trees bear very few nuts or none at all;

¹ Source: www.da.gov.ph

² Ibid.

WHEREAS, due to drought brought by El Nino two years ago, yields from the plantation decline, volume was reduced by 40.20 percent to 895,215.55 metric tons in the first 7 months of 2011 per PCA data. Notwithstanding the decline in volume, the coconut exports totaled \$1.22 billion this year, 34.74 percent increase compared to 908.72 Million earned in the same period in 2010 due mainly to high global demand and prices in 2011;

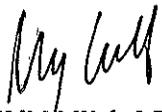
WHEREAS, according to the PCA, these old and senile coconut trees should be cut and sold as coconut lumber;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 8048, also known as "Coconut Preservation Act of 1995", regulates the cutting of coconut trees as well as provides for a sustainable and efficient replanting program;

WHEREAS, considering the huge impact of the coconut industry to the Philippine economy, there is a need to assess the state of this vital industry taking into account the aging and dying of millions of coconut trees;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Philippines to urge the Senate Committees on Agriculture and Food, and Economic Affairs, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the state of Philippine coconut industry taking into consideration the reported aging and dying of millions of coconut trees and its socio-economic implications with the end in view of protecting this major industry and its farmers.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR