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SENATE
P.S. RES. NO. 645

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Introduced by Senator Manny B. Villar

RESOLUTION

URGING THE COMMITTEES ON TRADE AND COMMERCE AND THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT CORPORATIONS AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SECURITY AND RELIABILITY OF LETTERS, PARCELS OR BALIKBAYAN BOXES BEING SENT TO THE PHILIPPINES AND THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES AND INDUSTRY STANDARDS OF HANDLING THE SAME AND THE REGULATION THEREOF IN ORDER THAT THESE MAY BE BENCHMARKED, APPLIED AND IMPLEMENTED LOCALLY BY THE GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE COURIERS AND FREIGHT FORWARDERS.

Whereas, Article III Section 3 of the Bill of Rights recognizes the inviolability of privacy of communication and correspondence;

Whereas, Article XVI Section 9 of the Constitution states that “[t]he State shall protect consumers from trade malpractices...”;

Whereas, Article 2 of Republic Act (RA) 7394 otherwise known as the Consumer Act of the Philippines declared that it is a policy of the State “to protect the interests of the consumer, promote his general welfare and to establish standards of conduct for business and industry”;

Whereas, as of 2007, there are at least 290 million letters and parcels that the Philippine Postal Office (PhilPost) handle yearly; while there is an estimated 300,000 balikbayan boxes that are being sent to the Philippines through private freight forwarders;

Whereas, last September of this year, the PhilPost was marred by a scandal wherein an office personnel of the said post office and a customs employee were caught on a CCTV camera opening a parcel and allegedly stealing money contained in the package;

Whereas, similarly, in the second quarter of this year, there are at least 500 reported complaints of pilferage, loss or non-delivery and delay of balikbayan boxes by the recipients thereof;

Whereas, internet forums and blogs are filled with complaints against the PhilPost saying that the office is unreliable and if sending mail or parcel is necessary, that the sender instead send the mail or package through private couriers;

Whereas, despite the warnings from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) that the public should not transact with certain freight forwarders, there are still a number of recipients of balikbayan boxes whose boxes are allegedly pilfered as expensive items supposedly shipped therein are found to be missing upon delivery;

Whereas, considering that it is already the “ber” month and that Christmas season is slowly being felt in the country, the number of *Overseas Filipino Workers* sending letters, parcels, and balikbayan boxes, containing Christmas gifts for family members left in the Philippines, are likewise picking up;

Whereas, due to the increasing reports of theft and/or pilferage of letters, parcels and balikbayan boxes sent to the Philippines involving public and private enterprises alike, it is imperative that a study be conducted in order to minimize the same;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Committees on Trade and Commerce and the Committee on Government Corporations and Public Enterprises to conduct an *inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the security and reliability* of letters, parcels or balikbayan boxes being sent to the Philippines and the assessment of the current international best practices and industry standards of handling the same and the regulation thereof in order that these may be benchmarked, applied and implemented locally by the government, private couriers and freight forwarders.

Adopted,


Manny Villar