

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

Senate
Office of the Secretary

11 NOV 22 25:27

SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 651

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR MANNY VILLAR

RESOLUTION

URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND COMMERCE, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT A STUDY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF CRAFTING A RELEVANT LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE SIMPLE NUTRITION LABELING OF FOOD PRODUCTS INCLUDING THE ADOPTION OF FRONT-OF-PACK AND BACK-OF-PACK LABELING, MAKING THEM EASILY READABLE, COGNIZABLE, AND UNDERSTANDABLE BY ORDINARY CONSUMERS WITH THE END IN VIEW OF FURTHER STRENGTHENING THE RIGHT OF CONSUMERS TO INFORMATION AS MANDATED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7394 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CONSUMER ACT OF THE PHILIPPINES

WHEREAS, under Republic Act No. 7394 also known as the "Consumer Act of the Philippines", it is the 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. Towards this end, the State shall implement measures to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) protection against hazards to health and safety;
- (b) protection against deceptive, unfair and unconscionable sales acts and practices;
- (c) provision of information and education to facilitate sound choice and the proper exercise of rights by the consumer;
- (d) provision of adequate rights and means of redress; and
- (e) involvement of consumer representatives in the formulation of social and economic policies. (Section 2)

WHEREAS, Paragraph (e), Article 77 of Republic Act. No. 7394 states that:

Art. 77. Minimum Labeling Requirements for Consumer Products. - All consumer products domestically sold whether manufactured locally or imported shall indicate the following in their respective labels of packaging:

X X X

- (e) its general make or active ingredients; (f) the net quantity of contents, in terms of weight, measure or numerical count rounded off to at least the nearest tenths in the metric system; (g) country of manufacture, if imported; and (h) if a consumer product is manufactured, refilled or repacked under license from a principal, the label shall so state the fact.

Any word, statement or other information required by or under authority of the preceding paragraph shall appear on the label or labeling with such conspicuousness as compared with other words, statements, designs or devices therein, and in such terms as to render it likely to be read and understood by the ordinary individual under customary conditions of purchase or use.

The above requirements shall form an integral part of the label without danger of being erased or detached under ordinary handling of the product. (Emphasis supplied)

WHEREAS, chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease are the most common cause of death in the world;

WHEREAS, due to these health risks, consumers are increasingly aware of the need to have proper diet and nutrition;

WHEREAS, there is a need to update the current standards on nutrition labeling where simple but factual information of foods easily understandable for the ordinary consumers are placed in order to promote healthier choices;

WHEREAS, in a study conducted by the Philippine Chamber of Food Manufacturers Inc. (PCFMI), it showed that for consumers who read labels, nutrition information is one of the three important things they check and they pay more attention to the front panel than to the back panel;

WHEREAS, there is a move of the food industry to promote front-of-pack and back-of pack nutrition labeling in clear and understandable manner to empower the consumers to make informed choices;

WHEREAS, in a report of the World Health Organization on Global Strategy on Diet and Physical Activity and Health (2004), it is recommended that the food industry adopt measures on simple, clear and consistent food label and provide consumers with adequate and understandable product and nutrition information;

WHEREAS, consistent with the stated policy on consumer protection, it now falls upon the food industry to make simple, clear and consistent food labels to help the consumers make an informed and healthy food choices;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Philippines, to urge the Senate Committee on Trade and Commerce, and other appropriate committees to conduct a study, in aid of legislation, into the possibility of crafting a relevant legislation to require simple nutrition labeling of food products including front-of-pack and back-of-pack labeling, making it easily readable, cognizable and understandable by ordinary consumers with the end in view of further strengthening the right of consumers to information as mandated under Republic Act No. 7394 otherwise known as the Consumer Act of the Philippines.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR