

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Second Regular Session

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SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 728

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR MANNY VILLAR

RESOLUTION

URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO CONDUCT A STUDY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE COFFEE INDUSTRY TO CONTINUE AND INSTITUTIONALIZE THE COFFEE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM FOR THE ROBUST PROMOTION OF CAFÉ BARAKO, ALAMID, AND OTHER PHILIPPINE COFFEE VARIETY IN THE WORLD MARKET

WHEREAS, under Section 5, Article XII of the 1987 Constitution, it provides that: "The State shall recognize the right of farmers, farmworkers, and landowners, as well as cooperatives, and other independent farmers' organizations to participate in the planning, organization, and management of the program, and shall provide support to agriculture through appropriate technology and research, and adequate financial, production, marketing, and other support services";

WHEREAS, in the Philippines, the coffee industry began in 1740 during the Spanish regime. The first coffee tree was introduced in Lipa, Batangas by a Spanish Franciscan monk, and thereafter, it spread in other parts of the country;

WHEREAS, coffee is considered one of the high-value crops in the local and foreign markets. It is among the top ten agricultural crops in terms of value. Coffee registered a total production of 123,934 metric tons valued at P6,818.84 million in 1995;¹

WHEREAS, the country has two most prevalent varieties of coffee: *Coffea arabica*, otherwise known as arabica, and *Coffea canephora*, or robusta. According to statistics from the International Coffee Organization, robusta accounts for 75% of the country's total production and arabica, 5-10%. Other varieties such as excelsa and liberica, likewise thrive in the country and accounts for 15-20% of the country's coffee produce. Interestingly, the country is one of the few countries in the world where all these four coffee varieties exist² for the reason that the climactic and soil conditions in the country – from the lowland to mountain regions – make the country suitable for all four varieties;

WHEREAS, while most of the coffee farms are situated in Mindanao, the most productive area is in Cavite, in terms of volume and quality, averaging 840 kg/ha, according to statistics from Nestle Philippines. However, from 1987 to 1996, the total hectarage planted to coffee decreased, from 149,657 hectares to 138,830 or an average of 1% reduction per year;

WHEREAS, specifically, in Amadeo, Cavite alone, there are about 4,000 coffee farmers. It used to have as much as 15,000 hectares of land devoted to

¹ Department of Agriculture Website

² BAR Digest, Bureau of Agricultural Research, Official Quartely Publication, July-September 2001

the bean before the pest and low coffee prices brought down the coffee industry in the 80s. Today, only 3,600 hectares are planted with coffee, 90 percent of which is devoted to the Robusta variety;

WHEREAS, according to reports, world consumption of coffee continues to increase. Experts predict that the level of consumption will follow population growth. Moreover, domestic consumption also increases by 2.25% per year. This could be attributed to the proliferation of coffee specialty shops, catering to a wider and younger clientele. There is likewise a clamor to produce more of the arabica variety, mostly grown in Benguet Province;

WHEREAS, industry players have identified several factors that hindered the growth of the coffee industry despite the increase in demand for coffee from the world market, to wit: poor technical knowledge, lack of farm-to-market roads to transport harvested beans, low volume production and poor quality of coffee beans. The low yield was attributed to limited knowledge of farmers on appropriate production technologies such as fertilization, pruning technologies, cropping systems, post harvest handling, and primary processing. Old coffee trees also contribute to low productivity;

WHEREAS, today, we are exporting to ICO and non-ICO member countries which include Japan, Singapore, West Germany, Netherlands, Malaysia, Muscat Oman, United Arab Emirates, Pakistan and U.S.A. These countries alone account for 97 percent of the total Philippine coffee export;³

WHEREAS, to help the coffee farmers in Cavite, the government have come up with grants to procure roasting machine under a farm program in order to boost their income;

WHEREAS, the government may also include in the National Convergence Initiative (NCI) Program, areas for coffee production. The said program has allotted 10 large tracks of agricultural lands with high production potential;

WHEREAS, coffee production needs the continued support from the government for it to become competitive in the growing international specialty coffee market;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Philippines, to urge the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food to conduct a study, in aid of legislation, into the coffee industry to continue and institutionalize the coffee modernization program for the robust promotion of café barako, alamid, and other Philippine coffee variety in the world market.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR

³ Ibid.