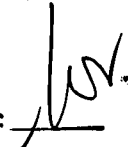




SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

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SENATE

P.S. Resolution No. 230

Introduced by Senator Cynthia A. Villar

A RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD, ON HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY AND ON TRADE AND COMMERCE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE FAILURE OF THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS TO DISPOSE OF THE ALMOST FOUR MILLION KILOS OF FROZEN MEAT THAT THREATENS THE FOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY, HEALTH AND SANITATION OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND STRENGTHENING THE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT WITH THE END VIEW OF PROPOSING APPROPRIATE REMEDIAL INTERVENTIONS AND LEGISLATION

WHEREAS, In December, 2014 around four million kilos of meat, in the form of pork jowls, bellies, diaphragm and belly fat, were found in 203 refrigerated vans stationed at the Manila International Container Port (MICP) amounting to Php248 million. The containers were held due to lack of required permit from the National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS). ⁽¹⁾ The identified consignees of the cargoes are the Lucky Sisters Trading, Lean Trading and Jcore Enterprises. ⁽²⁾

WHEREAS, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) and the International Container Terminal Services Incorporated (ICTSI) have waived the wharfage and storage fees respectively and has allowed the disposal of the frozen meat. A decree of abandonment has since been issued to the remaining 77 containers. According to the Officer-in-charge of the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service, Mr. Roberto Salvacion, the mode of disposition of the meat could be either grinded or buried to the ground.

WHEREAS, the meat has now become rotten and classified as animal by-product and is no longer fit for human consumption.

WHEREAS, the meat may be disposed through destruction or condemnation. It is noteworthy to say that the raw meat in issue are packed in plastic wrapper and it is necessary to remove the packaging first before the processing of its destruction.

WHEREAS, the enormous volume of this waste makes the safety associated with its disposal as an immediate and serious concern. The potential for pathogen and chemical contaminants being transferred to humans directly or through animals by scavengers is a big possibility. The meat can also find its way into the food chain. Other major risks include the potential for pollution of air, soil, surface water and ground water.

WHEREAS, there are scientific and safe methods of destroying the meat. This includes rendering, composting, and by disposal to landfill, among others. Rendering is the process of destroying that involves the cooking and the removing of moisture and separating the material into sterile animal protein meals and fat products such as meat and bone meal. However, because of the huge volume of meat to be rendered, the process may not be easy to do.

WHEREAS, another alternative would be the use of landfill. The leachate from landfills makes it a non-viable or a poor choice because of its serious public health implications. The essence of decomposition proceeds very slowly. There are potential for ground and surface water contamination is high.

WHEREAS, the transporter that will carry the cargo to the landfill will need to ensure that the material is clearly labelled "not fit for human consumption" and is carried in leak proof containers or vehicles.

WHEREAS, the integrity of the process from the Bureau of Customs to its destination for proper disposal must be maintained.

WHEREAS, disposal is an inherent aspect of public health protection.

WHEREAS, the review of existing waste management controls relating to waste products should be done by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to assure the public of their safety and protection.

WHEREAS, concrete steps for disposal should be in place for placing accountability to those who bring about environmental risk such as importers. Specific steps should be formulated and defined by the Department of Agriculture, Department of Health, the NMIS, the Bureau of Customs and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources among others, to prevent the repetition of this grave occurrence.

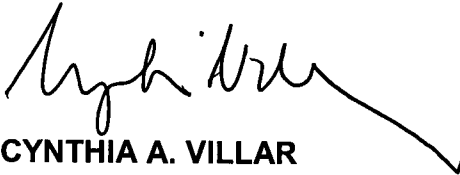
WHEREAS, the abandonment of cargoes by importers without recourse for government to recover the cost of wharfage, storage fees and disposal must also be addressed.

WHEREAS, the fundamental right to a healthy environment is enshrined in Section 16, Article II of the Constitution of the Philippines which explicitly provides that the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.

WHEREAS, the State also recognizes that a clean and healthy environment is for the good of all and should, therefore, be the concern of all.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, *as it is hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate*, to direct the Senate Committee on Environment, among others, to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation on the method of disposing the rotten meat at the Bureau of Customs/Manila International Container Terminal Services Incorporated (ICTSI) that may cause detrimental effects to human health and the protection of the air and water systems in violation of our right to a healthy food and environment, with the end in view of enacting remedial legislation.

Adopted,



CYNTHIA A. VILLAR
Senator

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