SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE	
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES	;
Third Regular Session	:

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SENATE P.S. Res. No. 800 18 JUL 24 P4:36

## Introduced by Senator Grace Poe

## **RESOLUTION**

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC INFORMATION AND MASS MEDIA AND PUBLIC ORDER AND DANGEROUS DRUGS, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST MEDIA WORKERS IN IMPLEMENTING ITS MANDATE UNDER ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 1, S. 2016, IN LIGHT OF THE REPORTED HIGH INCIDENCE OF KILLINGS, VIOLENCE, ATTACKS, AND THREATS TOWARDS MEDIA WORKERS UNDER THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION, PARTICULARLY THE RECENT DEATH OF MR. JOEY LLANA, A LOCAL JOURNALIST BASED IN DARAGA, ALBAY, LAST 20 JULY 2018

WHEREAS, Article III, Section 4 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that no law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances;<sup>1</sup>

WHEREAS, commenting on the above Constitutional provision, the Supreme Court through the *ponencia* of Chief Justice Reynato Puno in the case of *Chavez v Gonzales* (G.R. No. 168338) stated:

"In this jurisdiction, it is established that freedom of the press is so crucial and so inextricably woven into the right to free speech and free expression, that any attempt to restrict it must be met with an examination so critical that only a danger that is clear and present would be allowed to curtail it."

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Constitutional provisions cited above, President Rodrigo Duterte issued Administrative Order No. 01, which established a Presidential Task Force on Violence Against Media Workers ("Task Force");

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Emphasis supplied.

WHEREAS, the Task Force is mandated to conduct an inventory of all cases of violence against Media Workers, receive reports of such incidents from citizens, investigate and prosecute those culpable, aid in the protection of witnesses, and monitor and report on the cases filed;

WHEREAS, last 20 July 2018, Mr. Joey Llana, a local radio broadcaster for DWZR 828 KHz Zoom Radio Legazpi, in Daraga, Albay, was declared dead after being shot at by unknown assailants while en route to his show;

WHEREAS, according to various reports, Mr. Llana sustained multiple gunshots and was declared dead at around 6:05 in the morning;

WHEREAS, Mr. Llana's death is a tragic blow to those working in the media, as it marks the loss of another talented and passionate member of the radio broadcasting profession;

WHEREAS, Mr. Llana's death is but the latest in a long spate of media-related killings, attacks, violence and threats under the present administration, as he was the was the thirteenth journalist to be killed under the present administration, according to a report by the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP);

WHEREAS, also according to the NUJP, Mr. Llanas death was the fifth journalist to be killed this year, following the deaths Edmund Sestoso, Carlos Matas, Dennis Denora, and Manuel Lacsamana;

WHEREAS, in addition, there have been at least 85 cases of killings, violence, attacks and threats against journalists since 2016, according to a report by the NUJP with the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR), and the Philippine Press Institute (PPI);

WHEREAS, the freedom of the press is a sacred part of democracy, and is enshrined as a basic guarantee under the Bill of Rights of our Fundamental Law;

WHEREAS, an independent media serves as the main conduit of information on the government, its performance, and on the issues of the day, thereby aiding in the formation of a well-informed public, which is an indispensable component of a functioning democracy;

WHEREAS, the government must thus exert all efforts to prevent and/or punish attempts by various parties to stifle the freedom of the press through

violence and coercion, as these attacks threaten the very core of democratic governance;

WHEREAS, the performance of the Task Force must thus be reviewed, especially in light of the death of Mr. Llana and the high incidence of killings, violence, attacks, and threats towards media workers under the present administration;

WHEREAS, the Task Force has been given sufficient time to perform its mandate, and must now report to the people on its efforts;

NOW THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of the Philippines, to direct the Senate Committees on Public Information and Mass Media and Public Order and Dangerous Drugs, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the performance of the Presidential Task Force on Violence Against Media Workers in implementing its mandate under Administrative Order No. 1, s. 2016, in light of the reported high incidence of killings, violence, attacks, and threats towards media workers under the present administration, particularly the recent death of Mr. Joey Llana, a local journalist based in Daraga, Albay, last 20 July 2018.

Adopted,

grace Poe GRACE POE