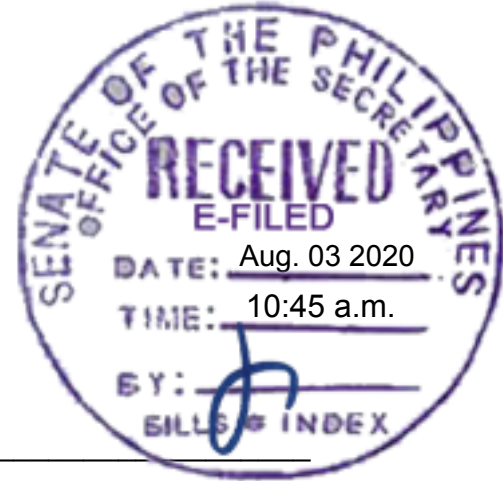


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
*Second Regular Session* )



SENATE  
P.S. Resolution No. 483

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Introduced by **Senator Richard J. Gordon**

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**RESOLUTION**  
**CALLING FOR THE SENATE TO ACT AS A SENATE COMMITTEE OF THE**  
**WHOLE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY REGARDING THE CURRENT STATE OF**  
**THE HEALTH OF THE NATION WITH EMPHASIS ON THE STATUS,**  
**CAPABILITY, AND PLAN TO COMBAT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**WHEREAS**, Presidential Proclamation No. 922, s. 2020, was issued declaring a State of Public Health Emergency throughout the Philippines due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);

**WHEREAS**, despite implementing an enhanced community quarantine for 45 days, which the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) estimates to have cost the economy PHP 1.1 trillion in losses or 5.56% of the country's gross domestic product, and now going 139 days of sporadic community quarantine, the Philippines is still experiencing a frighteningly unabated increase in COVID-19 new cases. As of August 2, 2020, the Department of Health (DOH) reported that we have breached the 100,000 mark. We now have 103,185 positive cases with the additional 5,032 confirmed positive cases, 20 additional deaths, and 301 additional recoveries for a total of 2,059 deaths, and 65,557 recoveries;

**WHEREAS**, the health care system of the Philippines has been dangerously stretched to its limit. Based on the latest data of the DOH, as of August 1, 2020, the health care system in the National Capital Region is in the danger zone. 75% of the total ICU beds dedicated exclusively for COVID-19 patients are occupied, 79% of the isolation beds dedicated exclusively for COVID-19 patients are occupied, 87% of the ward beds dedicated exclusively for COVID-19 patients are occupied; and 49% of the ventilators are occupied;

**WHEREAS**, NATIONWIDE, as of August 1, 2020, 56% of the total ICU beds dedicated exclusively for COVID-19 patients are occupied, 52% of the isolation beds dedicated exclusively for COVID-19 patients are occupied, 56% of the ward beds dedicated exclusively for COVID-19 patients are occupied, and 31% of the ventilators are occupied;

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought our healthcare workers to exhaustion and infection, if not deaths. As of August 1, 2020, there were 5,008 health care workers who tested positive for COVID-19, 2 of which are severe, 38 of which have died, while 4,576 recovered. Our doctors and other healthcare workers have

become extremely burnt out, fearful, stressed out, and anxious and many of them stopped reporting for work;

**WHEREAS**, due to the onslaught of COVID-19 on our health care system, a number of hospitals were forced to suspend their admissions of COVID-19 patients because of full capacity<sup>1</sup> or because of a bigger number of its hospital staff contracting COVID-19<sup>2</sup>;

**WHEREAS**, the current state of our healthcare system is severely challenged and obviously impaired, which necessitates a primordial and urgent need in modernizing our health care systems. To begin with, we already have an insufficient number of doctors and healthcare workers to fight the pandemic, as many of them have already left the country to work abroad. Verily, we must strengthen the ranks of our healthcare workers who have heroically stayed behind to fight. Because any lessening of their numbers will result in more deaths and a devastating diminution of our economy.

**WHEREAS**, in order to fight back effectively in what the Philippine College of Physicians (PCP) describe as a “losing battle”, the PCP on behalf of the Medical Community, in a letter dated August 1, 2020 (the “Letter”), appealed to the President of the Philippines to return to Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in Metro Manila from August 1 to 15 to recalibrate strategies against the COVID-19;

**WHEREAS**, the Letter enumerated the following urgent problems: “(i) hospital workforce deficiency; (ii) failure of case finding and isolation; (iii) failure of contact tracing and quarantine; (iv) transportation safety; (v) workplace safety; (vi) public compliance with self protection; and (vii) social amelioration”;

**WHEREAS**, it behooves the Senate to listen to the plight of our doctors and other frontliners, and consequently to our suffering people, to find out what is wrong so we can alleviate their burden and provide the necessary impetus for all government agencies to work together to implement effective and science-based solutions and interventions and to finally start the rally against the fight with COVID-19;

**WHEREAS**, there is a need to reassess our health situation in the Philippines and develop new strategies, a whole-of-society approach, that will enable us to inform and better equip our citizens for them to be able to more effectively to fight and to provide for themselves and their families, in cooperation with the science provided for by our doctors and healthcare workers;

**WHEREAS**, there is a need for an accounting from the appropriate agencies including but not limited to the Inter Agency Task Force (IATF) and its implementing arm, as well as the other cabinet members involved such as the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Interior Local Government (DILG), and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and other departments, to submit and present a

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<sup>1</sup> <https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/27/ust-hospital-suspends-admissions-to-covid-19-ward/>, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1302538/chinese-gen-to-limit-admission-of-covid-19-patients-as-wards-full-capacity/amp>, <https://www.cnn.ph/news/2020/7/23/PGH-covid-19-wards-full-capacity-.html>, <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1306420/more-hospitals-covid-19-wards-reach-full-capacity>

<sup>2</sup> <https://mb.com.ph/2020/07/30/ospital-ng-maynila-to-be-temporarily-closed-starting-july-31/>

report on the implementation of the expanded COVID-19 testing, to overcome the failure of case finding and isolation and of testing and contact tracing, management of data, proposed new solutions to the problems, issues, and pleas of our health care workers and of our people, especially on the state of the healthcare facilities in Metro Manila and other critical areas. Finally, a master plan and an intelligible road map describing the role of all the parties to ensure our victory over the pandemic;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, to call as it is hereby calls for the Senate to act as a Senate Committee of the Whole to conduct an inquiry on the state of the health of the nation with emphasis on the status of the plans and improving the capabilities of the government and our people, addressing particularly the plight of the healthcare workers so we can prevail against the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Adopted,*



**RICHARD J. GORDON**  
*Senator*