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Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

476

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. _____



Introduced by

BAYAN MUNA Representatives EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE, and FERDINAND R. GAITE,
ACT TEACHERS Party-List Representative FRANCE L. CASTRO,
GABRIELA Women's Party Representative ARLENE D. BROSAS
and KABATAAN Party-List Representative SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

RESOLUTION

URGING THE COMMITTEE ON INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMMUNITIES
AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE TO
CONDEMN AND INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE CLOSURE
ORDER OF 55 LUMAD SCHOOLS OF SALUGPONGAN TA'TANU IGKANOGON
COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER (SALUGPONGAN) ISSUED BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DEPED) REGION XI

WHEREAS, On October 8, 2019 the Department of Education Region XI ordered the closure of 55 Lumad Schools operated by the Salugpongan Ta'Tanu Ignakonogon Community Learning Center, Incorporated (STITICLCI or Salugpongan for brevity), a community school for Lumad children;

WHEREAS, the Salugpongan School is a non-stock, non-profit community-based school that aims to enhance the life skills and knowledge of the indigenous people. One of its primary purposes is to "enhance and develop the awareness of the children and youth to make them act and participate in the protection of the ancestral domain so as to develop and maintain bounty of the environment toward ecological preservation";

WHEREAS, the schools run by Salugpongan have long been the target of red-tagging and vilification by military. On July 10, 2019, the Deped issued a suspension order following a supposed report from Secretary Hermogenes Esperon Jr., National Security Adviser and Vice Chair of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC). Esperon accused the school of not teaching in accordance with guidelines set forth by the DepEd, and for allegedly "teaching students to rebel against the government";

WHEREAS, the DepEd suspension order was issued without proper investigation as it relied merely on the report and self-serving affidavits submitted by the NTF-ELCAC. It was in violation of the due process rights of Salugpongan, its administrators, teachers, staff and students;

WHEREAS, while Salugpongan was contesting the suspension order issued by the DepEd, the local government units, government agencies and the military already started implementing the suspension order;

WHEREAS, On July 24, in Lawaan, Davao Oriental, the military went to the Salugpongan school to serve the Deped suspension order and told the teachers and students to vacate the

1 school. A few days after, representatives from the DSWD came to the school telling the parents
2 that they will be removed from the list of Pantawid Pamilya beneficiaries if they continue
3 enrolling their students at Salugpongan;

4 **WHEREAS**, In Sibulan, Davao del Sur, on July 22, 2019, the DSWD went to the Salugpongan
5 school and pressured the students to be enrolled at the nearest DepEd campus, a two-hour walk
6 from the community, lest they be delisted as beneficiaries of the government's poverty alleviation
7 programs;

8 **WHEREAS**, In Masicareg, Compostela Valley, the parents were forced to enrol their children at
9 the DepEd school because according to DSWD representatives they will not honor the learner
10 certifications of Salugpongan as requirement for the government's poverty alleviation programs;

11 **WHEREAS**, the closure order was released by the DepEd on October 7, but Salugpongan was
12 notified only on October 10. The closure order was based on a report submitted by an ad-hoc
13 fact-finding team formed by the DepEd to investigate the allegations against the Salugpongan
14 schools. However, according to the Save Our Schools Network, no investigation took place as
15 the fact-finding team did not even visit any of the Salugpongan schools, merely setting foot on
16 Nasilaban, Talaingod but not proceeding to the school grounds;

17 **WHEREAS**, the administrators, students, teachers, and staff of Lumad schools, especially the
18 Salugpongan schools, have been continuously subjected to red-tagging, vilification, and
19 harassment according to the Save Our Schools Network. The threat arising from the red-tagging
20 and military occupation of its school buildings caused its intermittent closures in the past years;

21 **WHEREAS**, there have been documented cases of military and paramilitary groups forcing
22 communities at gunpoint to destroy school buildings in several villages in Davao del Norte and
23 Compostela Valley. One of the highlight cases is the killing of Lumad leaders Dionel Campos
24 and Juvello Sinzo, and Executive Director of Alternative Learning Center for Agricultural and
25 Livelihood Development (ALCADEV), a Lumad school in Lianga, Surigao del Sur. The two
26 Lumad leaders were slain in front of community members and students, while Samarca was slain
27 inside the school compound, by paramilitary group Magahat-Bagani, linked with the Armed
28 Forces of the Philippines, on September 1, 2015;

29 **WHEREAS**, according to the local government of Compostela Valley, in place of the
30 Salugpongan Schools, the provincial government along with the Department of Education built
31 schools with funding from mining and agri-business companies such as: Hexat Mining, APEX
32 Mining, and Sumifru, a Japanese Multinational Company operating 12,000 hectares of
33 plantations in Mindanao;

34 **WHEREAS**, Since the schools were effectively closed prior to a credible hearing and upon the
35 basis of the unverified claims of the NTF-ELCAC, the closure violated due process, contrary to
36 the general guidelines of DepEd on the regulation of private schools and specific guidelines on
37 IP education;

38 **WHEREAS**, the National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework which the DepEd
39 adopted on August 8, 2011, directs the DepEd as a matter of policy to: "implement stronger
40 affirmative action to eradicate all forms of discrimination against IPs in the entire Philippine
41 educational system". DepEd's closure order citing Salugpongan's failure to comply with its
42 requirements, goes against this policy of affirmative action;

43 **WHEREAS**, Article 14, Sec 1 of the Philippine Constitution guarantees all citizens the right to
44 education stating that: "The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality

1 education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all”;

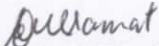
2 **WHEREAS**, Article 14, Sec 17 of the Philippine Constitution states that “the State shall
3 recognize, respect, and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and
4 develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions. It shall consider these rights in the formulation
5 of national plans and policies”;

6 **WHEREAS**, The closure of the schools is in itself a violation of the right of indigenous people
7 as guaranteed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP)
8 Article 14 stating that “Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their
9 educational systems and institutions providing educational systems and institutions providing
10 education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching
11 and learning.”

12 **WHEREAS**, the documented cases of harassment, EJKs, and attacks against the school and its
13 students, parents, teachers, and administrators, have been occurring long before the closure of
14 the Salugpongan Schools. The closure of the Salugpongan schools appears to be part of the
15 systemic attacks against the effort of the Lumad people to protect their ancestral lands and to
16 uphold their right to education and self-determination;


17 **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the
18 House Committee on Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples and Basic
19 Education and Culture, declare a condemnation and conduct an investigation into the closure
20 order of the 55 Lumad Schools of Salugpongan Ta’Tanu Igkanogon Community Learning Center
21 issued by the Department of Education Region XI.


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23 *Approved,*
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28 **REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT**
29 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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33 **REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**
34 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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38 **REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE**
39 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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43 **REP. FRANCES I. CASTRO**
44 *ACT Teachers Partylist*

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46 
REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS
GABRIELA Women's Party


REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Partylist