Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City
EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 974

Introduced by Representative MICAELA S. VIOLAGO

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO
CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED
OVERPRICED FERTILIZERS THE FARMERS RECEIVED FROM THE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (DA) AS PART OF THE GOVERNMENT’S
COVID-19 ASSISTANCE

WHEREAS, Farmers William Laureta of Tarlac and Ernesto Agustin Domingo
of Nueva Ecija said on Wednesday, 10 June 2020 that DA stimulus program — Ahon
million bags of urea fertilizer, for a total price of P1.8 billion, or around least P1,000
per bag;

WHEREAS, however, both said that the average retail price of urea fertilizer
was only P850 per bag; an overprice of around P271.6 million;

WHEREAS, "Farmers could barely survive this crisis, and even the
government is virtually scraping the bottom of the barrel now just to look for funds to
help the most vulnerable sectors, including farmers, and to keep the economy
afloat," Laureta said in Filipino;

WHEREAS, "These Agriculture officials should be taken to task for knowingly
entering into an anomalous and overpriced contract. They have betrayed us farmers
who need all the help we can get and have defrauded the government of millions of
pesos of crucial funds," Domingo added;

WHEREAS, it was claimed that in Tarlac, a bag of urea fertilizer is sold for
P850, while the same bag can be bought at P860 In Nueva Ecija;

WHEREAS, both agreed though that the savings that DA could have garnered
could have been used to fuel the government’s COVID-19 response — given that
President Rodrigo Duterte himself said that the country was running out of funds;

WHEREAS, a December 2019 report from the Philippine Statistics Authority
(PSA) showed that the average price of urea fertilizers in the country was then at
P1,121.57 per sack, but the PSA was seeing a downward trend in the price of
fertilizers before the COVID-19 pandemic hit Philippine shores;

WHEREAS, DA had the leverage to appeal for lower prices of fertilizers because it was engaging in a wholesale purchase of the fertilizers;

WHEREAS, it was also alleged that fertilizers distributed to other regions was also overpriced, at P990 in Calabarzon (Region 4-A) and Central Visayas (Region 7), and P995 for Western Visayas and Central Luzon (Regions 6 and 3);

WHEREAS, the farmers urged President Duterte to act on the issue, as he had promised in one of his speeches that he would order the arrest of government officials who would use the COVID-19 problem to their advantage;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that the Committee on Agriculture and Food conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the alleged overpriced fertilizers the farmers received from the Department of Agriculture as part of the government's COVID-19 assistance.

Adopted,

MICAELA S. VIOLAGO