A RESOLUTION
URGING THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, ON THE PRODUCTION AND IMPORTATION STATUS OF POULTRY
COMMODITIES IN THE COUNTRY AMIDST THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE
(COVID-19) PANDEMIC

WHEREAS, Section 1, Article XII of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides, “The
goals of the national economy are a more equitable distribution of opportunities, income,
and wealth; a sustained increase in the amount of goods and services produced by the
nation for the benefit of the people; and an expanding productivity as the key to raising the
quality of life for all, especially the underprivileged.”;

WHEREAS, Section 2 of Republic Act No. 8800 also known as “Safeguard Measures
Act” declares, “The State shall promote the competitiveness of domestic industries and
producers based on sound industrial and agricultural development policies, and the efficient
use of human, natural and technical resources. In pursuit of this goal and in the public
interest, the State shall provide safeguard measures to protect domestic industries and
producers from increased imports which cause or threaten to cause serious injury to those
domestic industries and producers”;

WHEREAS, strict mobility restrictions in the country brought by the coronavirus
disease (COVID-19) pandemic has severely affected the operations of various stakeholders
in the food value chain which includes farmers, fishers, poultry and livestock producers,
processors, manufacturers, among others;

WHEREAS, on May 2020, the United Broiler Raisers Association (UBRA) has urgently
requested the Department of Agriculture (DA) to suspend the importation of poultry meat
and products in the country due to the oversupply of broilers in the local market;
WHEREAS, on June 2020, reports showed that the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) claimed that poultry imports are too "minimal" to hurt Filipino producers and requested for local poultry raisers to limit their production to give market space for these imports;

WHEREAS, in an open letter addressed to DA Secretary William Dar, UBRA negated the statement of BAI and claimed that imports has caused actual damage in the industry for the past 25 years given that a relatively minimal import volume can move farm gate prices from profit to loss;

WHEREAS, DA Secretary William Dar made a clarification that the government only allows importation of mechanically deboned meat that could not be produced locally and that there is no official order stopping local poultry production;

WHEREAS, on June 13, 2020, various groups have collectively requested for DA to temporarily halt the issuance of import permits for chicken meat and processed products until the end of the year to ease the current situation of local producers. These groups include the Philippine Association of Feed Millers, Pork Producers Federation of the Philippines, Philippine Maize Federation, Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food, United Broilers and Raisers Association, National Federation of Hog Farmers, Philippine Egg Board Association and Philippine Veterinary Medical Association;

WHEREAS, the disconnect between the consistent demands of producers and response actions of DA needs to be immediately reconciled to protect the hailing local industry and prepare the country in the impending global food emergency brought by the pandemic;

WHEREAS, a key lesson from the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis is to further increase our own capacity to produce food. This is in line to the statement of DA Secretary Dar during an online committee hearing last May that the Department is gradually shifting its framework from food security to food sovereignty. With this shift, the State will be able to uplift the livelihood of local producers, ensure fair market price of agricultural commodities to the consuming public, and gradually, free the country from the shackles of import dependence; Now therefore, be it

RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Committee on Agriculture and Food of the House of Representatives conducts an immediate investigation, in aid of legislation, on the production and importation status of poultry commodities in the country amidst the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Adopted,

Argel Joseph T. Cabatbat  
MAGSASAKA Partylist

Jose Christopher Y. Belmonte  
6th District, Quezon City
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