HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1332

Introduced by PRINCESS RIHAN M. SAKALURAN

RESOLUTION
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO PREPARE A VACCINATION PROGRAM PLAN AHEAD OF THE PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION OF VACCINES IN THE PHILIPPINES AND MAKE SURE THEY ARE EQUITABLY DISTRIBUTED TO LOWER INCOME GROUPS AND TO THE MOST VULNERABLE (Health Workers, Senior Citizens) TO COMBAT THE 2019 CORONAVIRUS DISEASE

WHEREAS, Article II Section 15 of the 1987 Constitution states that “[t]he State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.”

WHEREAS, Article XIII Section 11 of the 1987 Constitution also states that “[t]he State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged
sick, elderly, disabled women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers."

WHEREAS, Title IX, Chapter 1, Section 2 of Executive Order No. 292 or the Administrative Code of 1987 (the "Administrative Code") provides that "the Department [of Health] shall be primarily responsible for the formulation, planning, implementation, and coordination of policies and programs in the field of health. The primary function of the Department is the promotion, protection, preservation or restoration of the health of the people through the provision and delivery of health services and through the regulation and encouragement of providers of health goods and services."

WHEREAS, under Executive Order No. 168 series of 2014, the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases in the Philippines ("IATF") was created and such task force was headed by a representative of the Department of Health ("DOH") as chairperson.

WHEREAS, one of the powers and function of the DOH under the Administrative Code is to Define the national health policy and formulate and implement a national health plan within the framework of the government's general policies and plans, and present proposals to appropriate authorities on national issues which have health implications.

WHEREAS, the effects of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease ("COVID-19") pandemic have been massive, having reported more than 45 million cases resulting to more than 1.18 million deaths worldwide as of October 30, 2020. This pandemic has led to several lockdowns across the globe which unfortunately, includes the Philippines.

WHEREAS, several companies are already in the final stages of their research and clinical trials of the vaccine against COVID-19, have expressed their intent to seek approval to hold COVID-19 vaccine trials in the Philippines, and have said that as early as the first or second quarter of 2021, the said vaccines could be ready for public distribution and vaccination.
WHEREAS, reports indicate that rich countries have already signed contracts and even invested to this big pharmaceutical companies during the development stages of the COVID-19 vaccines to assure their supplies once the vaccine get ready for distribution;

WHEREAS, studies made by OXFAM (Oxford Committee for Famine Relief) also reveals that, “even if all five of the most-advanced vaccine candidates succeed, there will not be enough vaccine for most of the world’s people until 2022,” thus, pretty alarming for countries like the Philippines scrambling for access to this COVID-19 vaccine;

WHEREAS, we should also prepare for a situation that prices this pharmaceutical companies may set for these vaccines may be out of reach for countries like the Philippines, thus ending up waiting and queuing for the life-saving vaccine;

WHEREAS, we need a coordinated strategy to ensure that vaccine procured by the government be used and distributed to the fullest to the most vulnerable sectors of the society such as the Senior Citizens, Medical and Essential Workers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives, urge the DOH to create and establish an Inter-Agency Task Force to formulate, develop, map out and lay down the policies for a Philippine COVID 19 Vaccination Program Plan to ensure an orderly, peaceful, fair, equal and just system for the distribution of the vaccines taking into account the most vulnerable sectors of our society, and our frontliners, in the medical field and Senior Citizens.

Approved,

PRINCESS RIHAN M. SAKALURAN
Representative,
1ST District, Sultan Kudarat