Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1344

Introduced by Representatives
MACNELL M. LUSOTAN and RAYMOND DEMOCRITO C. MENDOZA

RESOLUTION
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD, MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY, PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ADMINISTRATION, OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE ADMINISTRATION, AND RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, THROUGH THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS AFFAIRS, TO CREATE A TASK FORCE RESPONSIBLE FOR CONDUCTING SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS DURING SEA MISHAPS OCCURRING IN TERRITORIAL WATERS, FOREIGN WATERS AND THE OPEN SEA AND ENSURING THAT THE FAMILIES OF SURVIVING, MISSING OR DEAD FILIPINO CREW MEMBERS WILL RECEIVE APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE AND LEGAL CLAIMS FROM PRIVATE ENTITIES

WHEREAS, the yearly average loss of ships with tonnage over 100 GT during the last 10 years stands at 95 ships. The Philippines, joined by the South China, Indochina and Indonesia maritime regions, remain as the main loss hotspot for ship losses, accounting for almost 30% of losses over the past year with 12 vessels;

WHEREAS, despite the decline in average ship losses in the recent years, the number of reported shipping casualties in 2019 actually increased by 5% to 2,815;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is the top supplier of seafarers globally, supplying 449,463 competent seafarers in 2017, accounting for approximately 25% of the world’s crewing requirement;

WHEREAS, the most recent sea tragedy involving the Panamanian livestock carrier Gulf Livestock 1, which allegedly sank west of Amami Oshima island in Japan on 02 September 2020, involves 43 crew members, 39 of which are Filipino seafarers;

WHEREAS, the Japanese Coast Guard, the maritime entity with jurisdiction over the area, launched a search and rescue operations immediately after receiving the distress call. The Japanese Coast Guard rescued two Filipino survivors and retrieved the body of a Filipino crew member;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to conduct search and rescue operations immediately after a sea mishap, owing to the fact that the drift scenario, in which the search and rescue operations will be conducted, expands as time progresses, and that
manpower and resources readily available for the conduct search and rescue operations are usually limited;

WHEREAS, during the hearing of the Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs dated 29 October 2020, Representative Macnell M. Lusotan of MARINO Party-list raised a motion for the filing of a House Resolution urging the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Labor and Employment, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Philippine Coast Guard and Maritime Industry Authority to create a task group which will initiate and conduct Search and Rescue Operations for the 36 missing Filipino crew members of Gulf Livestock 1, which was duly approved by the said Committee and strongly supported by all present government agencies of the executive department;

WHEREAS, the families of Filipino seafarers, including those of the crew members of M/V Gulf Livestock 1, are heavily dependent on the remittances from their relative crew, which is cut short after the discovery of a ship’s sinking. These families have no available alternative source of income to finance their expenses;

WHEREAS, seafarers’ or their families’ claims for disability or death benefits of seafarers takes time to process, especially when contested or neglected by the manning agency and/or the principal/shipowner;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the House of Representatives urges the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Transportation, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Justice, Philippine Coast Guard, Maritime Industry Authority, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and relevant government agencies, through the Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs, to create a task force responsible for conducting search and rescue operations during sea mishaps occurring in territorial waters, foreign waters and the open sea and ensuring that the families of surviving, missing or dead Filipino crew members will receive appropriate government assistance and legal claims from private entities.

Adopted,

MACNELL M. LUSOTAN  
Representative  
MARINO Party-list

RAYMOND DEMOCRITO C. MENDOZA  
Representative  
TUCP Party-list