

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 38

Introduced by Representatives **EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA**
and **BIENVENIDO M. ABANTE, JR.**

A JOINT RESOLUTION REVOKING EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 128 WHICH TEMPORARILY MODIFIES THE RATE OF IMPORT DUTY ON FRESH, CHILLED OR FROZEN MEAT OF SWINE UNDER SECTION 1611 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10683, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “CUSTOMS MODERNIZATION AND TARIFF ACT” AND CALLING FOR THE ADOPTION, IMPLEMENTATION AND PURSUIT OF A MORE PRO-FILIPINO HOG RAISERS POLICY IN VIEW OF THE AFRICAN SWINE FEVER OUTBREAK IN THE INDUSTRY

WHEREAS, on the 7th day of April 2021, Executive Order (EO) 128 was signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte which temporarily modified the rate of import duties on fresh, chilled or frozen meat of swine under Section 1611 of Republic Act No. 10683, otherwise known as the “Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA),” for a period of one (1) year;

WHEREAS, EO 128 will reduce in tranches within one (1) year the tariff rates on different parts of pork meat from the current 40% level to 5% among in-quota imports while 30% to 15% for out-of-quota imports;

WHEREAS, EO 128 claims that the purpose of such reduction of tariff is to stabilize prices of pork meat and address the shortage of pork supplies in the country in lieu of the damaging effects of African Swine Fever which has damaged the local hog industry starting 2019;

WHEREAS, by virtue of EO 128, the government has also allowed the astronomical increase of 350,000 metric tons in Minimum Access Volume (MAV), or the allowed volume of pork imports, from the current 54,210 metric tons;

WHEREAS, data from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) disclosed that the average annual pork consumption of Filipino from 2018-2020 is pegged at 1.85 million metric tons which is considerably lower than the average annual production of pork by Filipino hog raisers which is around 2.25 million metric tons;¹

WHEREAS, granting that there is an existing shortage in pork meat supply in the country due to ASF disease, local hog industry associations and groups claim that EO 128 is not the best solution to address such crisis because it only considers the inflationary effect of pork shortage and takes out of the equation the would-be plight of local producers with the implementation of the order;

WHEREAS, the local hog industry player is unanimous in the clamor and position that EO 128 is not the most appropriate policy solution to the on-going situation because it will adversely affect, if not “kill”, the local hog production as such reduction of tariff rates will pave the way for the unhampered entry of imported pork meat to the detriment of the local industry;

WHEREAS, the Department of Agriculture reported that there are more than 68,000 hog farmers in 40 provinces, 12 regions and 2,402 barangays that were displaced by the ASF malady;²

¹ Data presented during the Senate hearing on the P.S. Resolution No. 685, held last April 12, 2021

² <https://mb.com.ph/2021/03/09/da-insists-in-importing-400000-metric-tons-of-pork/>. Accessed April 13, 2021.

WHEREAS, local hog industry players claim that the most sensible policy and government support to address the issue is to indemnify local hog raisers who will report to the government their ASF-infected swine, because in doing such, they will be able to eradicate the ASF disease from the local swine and at the same enable hog raisers to repopulate their stocks;

WHEREAS, it is apparent that instead of aggressively initiating policy interventions to repopulate and resuscitate the local hog industry amidst the African swine fever malady, the government did not carefully assess the situation and potential points of intervention, but hastily resorted to allow the increased importation to address the issue of pork shortage due to ASF outbreak;

WHEREAS, the issuance of such EO 128 also raises some suspicions, due to the allegedly fictitious nature of leading companies of pork importers as raised during the Senate hearing on the matter,³ and it seems indicative that this is done in connivance with scrupulous individuals in the government;

WHEREAS, it seems that the move to substantially reduce the tariff rates on pork imports and increase the allowable volume of swine meat to be brought in from abroad is driven by certain scrupulous individuals in the pork importation sector in connivance with certain government officials to rake profits for themselves at the expense of local hog producers;

WHEREAS, the issuance of EO 128 will serve as a window for corruption and will cost the government around P3.6 billion foregone revenues⁴ that should go to fund the ASF-infested local hog industry, as well as government response efforts against the on-going COVID-19 pandemic;

³ Senate hearing on the P.S. Resolution No. 685, held last April 12, 2021

⁴ Estimates by the Bureau of Customs presented during the Senate hearing held last April 12, 2021

WHEREAS, instead of implementing EO128, the government must immediately revoke the same and, in its place, adopt, implement and pursue a more sensible, data-based and reasonable policy and provide solutions that will strike balance in serving and protecting both the interests of public as well as the welfare of the local hog industry;

WHEREAS, a Joint Resolution approved and adopted by both Houses of the Philippine Congress will have an effect of law that can modify, amend or repeal any law or executive act which is contrary to its provisions;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Philippines, through this Joint Resolution, revoke Executive Order No. 128 and demand for adoption, implementation and pursuit of a more pro-Filipino hog raisers policy in view of the African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreak in the industry

Adopted,


HON. EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA


HON. BIENVENIDO M. ABANTE, JR.