

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**  
Second Regular Session

**HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1443**



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**Introduced by BAYAN MUNA Partylist Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE, Rep. FERDINAND GAITE, Rep. EUFEMIA CULLAMAT, Gabriela Women's Party Rep, ARLENE BROSAS, ACT Teachers Partylist Rep. FRANCE CASTRO, Kabataan Partylist Rep. SARAH JANE ELAGO**

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE DEFEAT COVID-19 AD HOC COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S VACCINATION PROGRAM AND PLANS AGAINST THE SARS-COV-2 VIRUS THAT ULTIMATELY CAUSES COVID-19**

**WHEREAS**, it has been almost a year since the first cases of COVID-19 was discovered in Wuhan, China and the said disease has caused catastrophic waves as it spread throughout the whole world until it officially became a pandemic. Economies grounded to a halt, millions lost their jobs, on top of the millions of lives lost due to the said disease;

**WHEREAS**, the first COVID-19 case in the Philippines was suspected to have appeared on 22 January 2020, but, due to the lack of prompt action of the government to track, test and isolate the first few cases the virus spread like wildfire and increased a hundred-fold in just a few weeks;

**WHEREAS**, it was only on 8 March 2020 when President Rodrigo Duterte issued Proclamation No. 922 declaring a state of public health emergency for the country, which was followed by Proclamation No. 929 issued on 16 March 2020 declaring a nationwide state of calamity, which allows the National Government and the Local Government Units to access funds and mobilize resources to continue efforts on containing the spread of the virus;



**WHEREAS**, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) who is on the helm of handling the pandemic response has enforced different levels on Community Quarantines in the country since 16 March 2020, and the said Community Quarantine, or lockdown is enforced up until today, costing billions to the Philippine Economy which is exemplified by the -11.5% contraction of the Annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

**WHEREAS**, Congress passed Bayanihan 1 and 2 legislations to provide additional funding to help with our response against the pandemic, and to provide aid for those who are in need of financial aid. However, as of the president's last report to Congress at the start of November, it appears that at most just Php28.4 billion has been spent so far. With only a few months left before the law expires, the spending only amounts to 20.3% of Bayanihan 2's Php140 billion in appropriations and just 17.1% of its Php165.5 billion including its standby fund. The report mentioned Php76.2 billion in allotments and releases which appears relatively large;

**WHEREAS**, according to the data released by the Department of Health as of 19 December 2020 there are 458,044 total COVID-19 cases in the country, 28,047 of which remains to be active and there are some regions in the country whose hospitals' Intensive Care Units (ICU) are nearing full capacity, with Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) at 71.4% occupancy rate, Region 2 at 63% and Region 11 at 61.7% having additional cases will surely strain the capacities of the hospitals of the said regions;

**WHEREAS**, several countries and the pharmaceutical companies in which they are based therein are in a race to produce a vaccine to provide immunity against the SARS-nCOV-2 virus. Leading the race is US-based Pfizer-BioNTech, and Moderna whose vaccines are already approved for emergency use in the US and the UK, first inoculating the highly vulnerable sections of their populations to the virus, namely the frontline healthcare workers and the elderly, following them are China-based Sinovac and Sinopharm which already have their vaccines approved for limited use in the healthcare workers of China, UAE and Bahrain;

**WHEREAS**, there are already reported negotiations to procure the vaccines for the country, with a private-sector initiated effort closed a deal with UK's AstraZeneca to avail 2.6 million shots of their vaccine in development, to be delivered in May or June 2021. Vaccine Czar Ret. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr., on



the other hand said that they are finalizing a deal with China's Sinovac to deliver 25 million doses targeted for distribution in March 2021;

**WHEREAS**, there has been, however, an apparent conflict seemingly even from within the Duterte administration as to the procurement of the vaccine. In a tweet first posted last 15 December 2020, the Foreign Affairs Secretary Teddy Locsin Jr., said that together with PH Ambassador to the US Amb. Babe Romualdez, they were in talks with US-based Pharmaceutical Company Pfizer-BioNTech for 10 million doses to be delivered to the country in January 2021 but he remarked that someone has "dropped the ball" which caused the negotiations to be delayed, with the Philippines missing out on the first batch of the vaccines, while our neighboring country Malaysia is set to receive its first batch of Pfizer vaccines come January 2021, which is the first in the ASEAN region;

**WHEREAS**, even before the first government officially-procured doses of vaccine arrived, controversies has already hounded the procurement process, with alleged issues of supposed conflict of interest, corruption and profiteering surfacing;

**WHEREAS**, even if the vaccines are procured in time, there are still several issues to be clearly resolved such as the supply chain and cold storage capacity of the country, as Pfizer's vaccine needs to be stored in a temperature of -70 degrees Celsius, and the other vaccines needed to be refrigerated at the very least. Furthermore, even before the COVID-19 pandemic struck the country, the Department of Health is currently lagging behind in its immunization programs, with only 10.6 percent of the population fully vaccinated according to data from the 2017 National Demographic and Health Survey which is only an indicator of the problem of distributing the vaccine all over the country. Finally, it is still a major issue for many the conduct of a truly free mass testing among vulnerable individual and sectors all over the country, as well the conduct of effective tracing, isolation and treatment, especially for the marginalized and poor Filipinos. ;

**NOW, THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Defeat COVID-19 Ad-Hoc Committee conduct an investigation in aid of legislation into the national government's vaccination program and plans against the SARS-COV-2 virus that ultimately causes COVID-19.

*Adopted,*

  
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