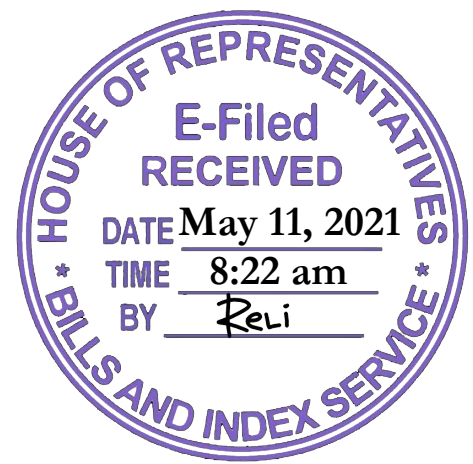


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2 Republic of the Philippines
3 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
4 Quezon City

5 **EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**
6 Second Regular Session

7
8 **HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 1759**
9



10 **Introduced by**

11 **BAYAN MUNA Representatives EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,**
12 **CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE and FERDINAND R. GAITE,**
13 **GABRIELA Women's Party Representative ARLENE D. BROSAS,**
14 **ACT TEACHERS Party-List Representative FRANCE L. CASTRO,**
15 **and KABATAAN Party-List Representative SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**
16

17 **RESOLUTION**

18 **URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THROUGH THE COMMITTEE**
19 **ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDEMN AND INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF**
20 **LEGISLATION, THE ARREST OF PEASANT LEADER JOSEPH CANLAS AND**
21 **LABOR LEADER POL VIUYA IN CENTRAL LUZON**
22

23 **WHEREAS**, on March 30, 2021, elements of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and Criminal
24 Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) conducted a series of arrests against peasant leader
25 Joseph Canlas and labor leader Pol Viuya in Pampanga and Tarlac, respectively;
26

27 **WHEREAS**, at around 6:40 AM on March 30, 2020, joint operatives of PNP and CIDG-
28 Pampanga raided the office of peasant organization Alyansa ng mga Magbubukid ng Gitnang
29 Luzon (AMGL) in Sapang Maisac, Mexico, Pampanga. Following the raid, police arrested peasant
30 leader Joseph Canlas who serves as the Chairperson of AMGL and Vice-chairperson of Kilusang
31 Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP). Police allegedly found a .45 caliber pistol, ammunition, and a
32 grenade in his house. KMP strongly believes that these weapons were planted to justify Canlas'
33 arrest;
34

35 **WHEREAS**, on the same day, police arrested labor leader Pol Viuya in his rented house in
36 Barangay Anapul, Bamban, Tarlac. Viuya is the Chairperson of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan
37 Gitnang Luzon (Bayan GL) and the regional labor center Worker's Alliance in Region III. He also
38 serves as a national council member of labor organization Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU). Viuya was
39 active in campaigning against the Joint Industrial Peace Concerns Office created by the PNP and
40 Philippine Economic Zone Authority. Police allegedly recovered a .45 caliber pistol, ammunition,
41 and a hand grenade in Viuya's rented place. According to reports, witnesses saw CIDG operatives
42 leave a gun at the place where Viuya was arrested;
43

44 **WHEREAS**, according to news reports, the search warrant used against Canlas was issued only a
45 day earlier by Judge Ma. Angelica Paras-Quiambao, executive judge of Angeles City Regional Trial
46 Court (RTC). The warrant however identified him as Jose Teria Canlas. Meanwhile, the arrest

1 warrant used by the police was for a malicious mischief case in December 2020 issued by Judge
2 Theodorick Ayungco, presiding judge of Municipal Circuit Trial Court in Nampicuan, Nueva
3 Ecija;

4
5 **WHEREAS**, on May 7, Canlas exhibited physical weakness, needing help in eating and walking.
6 In a call with relatives, Canlas exhibited stuttering in speech and by night time he had difficulties
7 in breathing. It was only on May 8 in the evening when Canlas was rushed to the hospital in
8 Angeles City due to a possible stroke and low oxygen level. Early morning the next day on May 9,
9 he was transferred to the Intensive Care Unit due to acute respiratory failure. Canlas also tested
10 positive for Covid-19. On May 10, he slipped into a coma and was intubated and connected to a
11 mechanical ventilator. Before his arrest, Canlas had comorbidities such as hypertension and
12 diabetes. Peasant organization KMP believes that Canlas was likely infected with the Covid-19
13 virus while in jail and under the custody of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP).
14 KMP has demanded his immediate release and the immediate dismissal of the trumped-up charges
15 against him;

16
17 **WHEREAS**, the Philippines has one of the most congested jails in the world with a congestion
18 rate of 534 percent according to the BJMP. Poor jail conditions put detainees at great risk of
19 contracting different illnesses. The congestion especially makes them highly vulnerable to the
20 spread of the Covid-19 virus. The Department of Justice (DOJ) has previously implemented
21 measures to reduce congestion and prevent the spread of the virus in detention facilities, such as
22 the proposal to release 10,000 inmates;

23
24 **WHEREAS**, before their arrest, Canlas and Viuya were tagged as terrorists on social media and
25 in posters and flyers dropped from government-owned helicopters. Viuya was red-tagged by the
26 PNP and by the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC);

27
28 **WHEREAS**, the NTF-ELCAC, created through EO 70 by the Duterte administration, has been
29 condemned by rights groups and by the people for its vilification and red-tagging campaigns
30 against activists, critics, and even celebrities who were merely airing out their political opinions.
31 The extremely well-funded task force has also been called out for spreading fake quote cards online
32 and false allegations against media outlets. Various complaints have already been filed against the
33 Executives of the NTF-ELCAC. Red-tagging often lays the ground for further human rights
34 violations such as illegal detention and extrajudicial killings against activists and critics;

35
36 **WHEREAS**, the questionable arrest and detention of leaders of progressive organizations over
37 trumped-up charges not only violates their democratic rights but also needlessly places their lives
38 at great risk by the increased vulnerability of contracting the Covid-19 virus in highly congested
39 jails. It is imperative for members of Congress, as representatives of our people, to defend the
40 rights of our people and check on excesses and violations, especially in this time of crisis. It must
41 bring perpetrators to account to put a stop to the killings and rights violations against its people.
42 Laws and rules should serve the interest of our people, and should not be weaponized to suppress
43 their rights and oppress them;

1
2 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the
3 House of Representatives, through the Committee on Human Rights, issue condemnation and
4 conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the arrest in Central Luzon of peasant leader
5 Joseph Canlas and labor leader Pol Viuya.

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8 *Adopted,*

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12 **REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT**
13 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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17 **REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**
18 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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22 **REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE**
23 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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27 **REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS**
28 *GABRIELA Women's Party*

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32 **REP. FRANCE L. CASTRO**
ACT Teachers Partylist

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36 **REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**
37 *Kabataan Partylist*