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

5 **EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS**
6 Third Regular Session

7
8 **HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 2196**
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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 CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF**
20 **LEGISLATION, AND ISSUE CONDEMNATION ON THE ABDUCTION,**
21 **DISAPPEARANCE, AND DEATH OF CEBU-BASED DEVELOPMENT WORKER**
22 **ELENA TIJAMO**
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25 **WHEREAS**, on June 13, 2020, development worker Elena Tijamo was reportedly abducted from
26 her home in Brgy. Kampingganon, Bantayan Island, Cebu Province by six (6) suspected state
27 agents. According to rights group Karapatan, Tijamo was abducted at around 11 PM by 4 men
28 and 2 women in civilian clothes and bearing long firearms who broke into her home and took her
29 from her family;
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31 **WHEREAS**, prior to Tijamo’s abduction, her sister Violeta disclosed hearing reports from
32 neighbors that police officers were asking if Tijamo family members were native to Bantayan
33 island. On June 2020, individuals claiming to be from the DSWD and DILG, reportedly took
34 photos of Elena and her family for a house-to-house survey allegedly for the Emergency Subsidy
35 Program. The Tijamo family later found that the surveyors only visited their residence and that of
36 their nearest neighbor;
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38 **WHEREAS**, Elena Tijamo, 58 years old, was the Sustainable Agriculture program coordinator of
39 the Farmers Development Center (FARDEC), a non-government organization (NGO) founded
40 in 1989 by religious and lay persons, the organization provides agriculture education and legal aid
41 to farmers in Central Visayas. Tijamo has been with FARDEC since 2005;
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43 **WHEREAS**, FARDEC has been red-tagged by the National Task Force to End Local
44 Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC). On November 2019, FARDEC along with 17 other
45 NGO’s and church groups, was tagged by the Armed Forces of the Philippines as a communist
46 front;
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48 **WHEREAS**, Tijamo was missing since her abduction on June 13, 2020. Her family was able to
49 contact her intermittently through 5-minute phone calls. Her abductors demanded that news

1 reports on Tijamo’s abduction be taken down;
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3 **WHEREAS**, on August 30, 2021, on the International Day of the Disappeared, reports surfaced
4 regarding Tijamo’s death. According to initial reports from rights group Karapatan-Central
5 Visayas, Tijamo was able to contact her brother and informed him that she would be undergoing
6 an operation at a hospital in Mandaluyong. After a few minutes, a certain “Michael” called Tijamo’s
7 brother asking to meet up with him outside the hospital. Upon meeting, Michael reportedly
8 informed Tijamo’s brother that Elena had passed away following an operation for goiter and that
9 the hospital bill had already been paid;
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11 **WHEREAS**, according to Karapatan-Central Visayas, Tijamo’s body was not released to her
12 brother as her remains were registered under a different name. A man who introduced himself as
13 a certain Neil Reyes, and claimed to be Tijamo’s nephew, brought her remains to the funeral home;
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15 **WHEREAS**, on September 1, 2021, relatives of development worker Elena Tijamo confirmed
16 that the remains were that of Elena Tijamo, after viewing the remains at St. Peter Memorial Chapel
17 in Quezon City;
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19 **WHEREAS**, according to rights group Karapatan who assisted Tijamo’s family along with the
20 Commission on Human Rights, in a death certificate issued by an attending physician at the VRP
21 Medical Center in Mandaluyong City, a certain Ava Perez Reyes reportedly died due to cardio
22 pulmonary arrest and aspiration. The said death certificate was handed by a certain Michael to a
23 sibling of Tijamo on August 30, along with Tijamo’s belongings. The sibling said Tijamo called
24 him on August 27 to inform him that she will undergo an operation at the said hospital;
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26 **WHEREAS**, the circumstances surrounding Elena Tijamo’s abduction in Cebu, disappearance,
27 and sudden death in a hospital all the way in Quezon City, are highly questionable. A thorough
28 and impartial probe on Tijamo’s case is urgently needed on Tijamo’s case;
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30 **WHEREAS**, it is imperative for members of Congress, as representatives of our people, to defend
31 the rights of our people and check on excesses and violations, especially in this time of crisis. It
32 must bring perpetrators to account to put a stop to the killings and rights violations against its
33 people. Laws and rules should serve the interest of our people, and should not be weaponized to
34 suppress their rights and oppress them;
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36 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the
37 House of Representatives, through the Committee on Human Rights, issue condemnation and
38 conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the abduction, disappearance, and death of Cebu-
39 based development worker Elena Tijamo.
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6 **REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT**

7 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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12 **REP. CARLOS ISAGAN T. ZARATE**

13 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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18 **REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE**

19 *Bayan Muna Partylist*

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24 **REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS**

25 *GABRIELA Women's Party*

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29 **REP. FRANCE L. CASTRO**

30 *ACT Teachers Partylist*

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34 **REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**

35 *Kabataan Partylist*