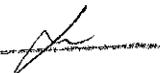


FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

8 AUG 12 P 2 30

SENATE
P.S.R. No. 560

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED DISTURBING GROWTH IN THE
RATE OF LAND SUBSIDENCE IN METRO MANILA

WHEREAS, a Filipino scientist has reportedly expressed alarm at the rate Metro Manila is sinking, saying that the over extraction of groundwater is to blame for land subsidence and other negative effects;

WHEREAS, according to Dr. Fernando Siringan of the University of the Philippines' Marine Science Institute, one effect is the reactivation of old faults, for example in Muntinlupa. In an interview after a presentation held at the Communication Foundation for Asia (CFA) in Sta. Mesa, Manila, he allegedly said that the consequence of the lowering of land over very large areas is that floods are getting worse, and the major indicator is that large portions of Metro Manila, especially in the Camanava area, are now experiencing floods even just during high tides;

WHEREAS, Siringan also allegedly said that the rate of land subsidence is already alarming and noted that some parts of the country, such as some areas in Bulacan, have become somewhat like Venice, Italy, where the area is perennially underwater. According to him, it is alarming in the sense that we now have municipalities experiencing floodwaters for several weeks or even months even without rains, adding that these areas were allegedly not as flood-prone as they are now;

WHEREAS, Siringan also alleged that global warming does not cause the increasing rate of land subsidence, because the global sea level rise brought about by melting ice caps is very, very small—two millimeters per year at most;

WHEREAS, it was reported that one proof that groundwater extraction has supposedly caused land subsidence at the rate of "several centimeters per year" is by correlating the "sea level rise and groundwater withdrawal, sea level rise record in Manila Bay, in the South Harbor area, and the rate of groundwater withdrawal;

WHEREAS, another piece of evidence, according to Siringan, is that flood-prone regions are also those with high groundwater extraction rates. He said that where the water table lowered about 100 meters, those are also allegedly the regions experiencing high rates of land subsidence, which are also regions now experiencing floods;

WHEREAS, it is alleged that while land subsidence cannot be reversed, people can slow it down by reducing groundwater extraction;

WHEREAS, Siringan said he and his colleagues have allegedly presented the data on land subsidence and flooding to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) for the Camanava flood control project, which started in 2003. Siringan also lamented that their study was not allegedly considered by the government, and stressed

that data presented by the government on the Camanava project was allegedly not accurate;

WHEREAS, he said the engineers and consultants hired for the Camanava project supposedly designed the project for a lower rate of subsidence, “because they think the area is practically not subsiding”;

WHEREAS, he called on the government, including those involved in the Camanava flood project, to “open their eyes to what’s happening in the environment”;

WHEREAS, the government should not simply dismiss such a report, but should instead conduct further studies on the report done by these academicians;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the alleged disturbing growth in the rate of land subsidence in Metro Manila.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/fldp