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SENATE
Senate Resolution No. 622

RECEIVED BY: 

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY TO LOOK INTO THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR COUNTRY'S POWER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND NATIONAL ENERGY PLAN UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7638, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ACT OF 1992, IN RELATION TO OTHER EXISTING LAWS, AND TO CONVENE THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL POWER COMMISSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPORTING TO THE FILIPINO PEOPLE ABOUT THE OVERALL STATE OF THE ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEM OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

WHEREAS, since 1992, it has been the expressed policy of the State: (a) to ensure a continuous, adequate, and economic supply of energy with the end in view of ultimately achieving self-reliance in the country's energy requirements through the integrated and intensive exploration, production, management, and development of the country's indigenous energy resources, and through the judicious conservation, renewal and efficient utilization of energy to keep pace with the country's growth and economic development and taking into consideration the active participation of the private sector in the various areas of energy resource development; and (b) to rationalize, integrate, and coordinate the various programs of the Government towards self-sufficiency and enhanced productivity in power and energy without sacrificing ecological concerns (**Republic Act No. 7638, otherwise known as the "Department of Energy Act of 1992"**);

WHEREAS, the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Republic Act No. 9136), enacted in 2001, effectively restructured the power sector or industry, for the

attuned purpose of achieving the objectives of ensuring and accelerating the total electrification of the country, and ensuring the quality, reliability, security and affordability of the supply of electric power;

WHEREAS, the Renewable Energy Act (Republic Act No. 9513) was enacted in 2008 likewise for the consistent purpose of achieving energy self-reliance, "through the adoption of sustainable energy development strategies to reduce the country's dependence on fossil fuels and thereby minimize the country's exposure to price fluctuations in the international markets, the effects of which spiral down to almost all sectors of the economy";

WHEREAS, more than a decade after the passing of the EPIRA, the Philippines is currently experiencing an energy crisis, as evidenced by the rising consumer demand for electricity, dwindling electricity supply and increasing rates of electricity, the collective effects of which are being felt by the consumers in the form of power outages and rotational blackouts in Mindanao, and, most notably, higher-than-ever monthly electricity bills, which incidentally also ranks as the highest in Southeast Asia, and fifth highest in the world;

WHEREAS, the service of providing electric power being a "public service" (Commonwealth Act No. 146)—and a most pervasive and ubiquitous one at that—the Filipino people, through Congress, has the right to know the state of our national energy infrastructure system, and what the Executive Department is doing and is planning to do in order to address our current energy situation and power crisis—thirteen (13) years into the implementation of the EPIRA and five (5) years into the implementation of the Renewable Energy Act, which were envisioned to improve our national energy outlook and bring down our electricity costs;

WHEREAS, as suggested by some quarters, our energy crisis is of "paramount concern" and there is a need for us to call for a national summit (**Tiglao, Rigoberto, "High Electricity Costs Root of our Backwardness", 9 January 2014, website: <http://www.manilatimes.net/high-electricity-costs-root-of-our-backwardness/66574> [accessed on 28 April 2014]), at which representatives from the government, business, academe, energy experts and technocrats, and other interest groups and key stakeholders shall be involved, in order to allow for**

a complete, comprehensive and all-inclusive approach, as in fact the President himself had said: *"If anyone has a good suggestion [on our energy situation], we are ready to listen...All I am really saying is this: Let us help each other find a solution."* (**The President's State of the Nation Address [SONA], 22 July 2013**);

WHEREAS, with the threat of the crisis worsening in the years to come, this is no longer the time to continue to disavow and dismiss these as mere "inherited problems" (**2013 President's SONA**), or to claim that the President "has no magic wand to wave" on this matter (**Deputy Presidential Spokesperson Abigail Valte, Malacañang Press Conference, 3 January 2014**), and yet, at the same time, manage to blame the same on past administrations;

WHEREAS, the Joint Congressional Power Commission was created in 2001 for a term of ten (10) years, to primarily oversee the implementation of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (EPIRA), and likewise the Renewable Energy Act of 2008;

WHEREAS, in 2011, the term of the Joint Congressional Power Commission has been extended for another ten (10) years, or until 2021, in recognition of its continued relevance and importance in reviewing, evaluating and addressing structural weaknesses in the power sector through remedial legislation and policies, as well as recommendations of "executive measures", and to ensure that the objectives of our energy laws are fully achieved;

WHEREAS, the Joint Congressional Power Commission can ably serve as and provide the much-needed avenue for an honest, impartial, complete, all-inclusive and consultative dialogue on this very important and urgent issue, as reports from the Executive Department have been rather vague, sugarcoated, incomplete, misleading and evasive and mere passing the buck;

WHEREAS, there is also an urgent need to convene the Joint Congressional Power Commission to inquire about the overall state of the energy infrastructure system of the Philippines, the status of implementation of Republic Act No. 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 and Republic Act No. 9513 or the Renewable Energy Act of 2008, in relation to our national power development program and energy plan under Republic Act No. 7638 or the

Department of Energy Act of 1992, and also to hold and conduct a national summit with all key stakeholders from the government and private sector, experts and technocrats, in attendance and in consultation, with the objectives of making an honest report to the Filipino people, mapping out the weaknesses and problems in the structure or system and formulating the necessary remedial actions to address them, whether in the form of legislation or executive measures, and, ultimately, improving our national energy infrastructure and outlook for the long-term or for the next 15, 20 or 30 years;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Senate direct the Committee on Energy to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation to look into the status of implementation of our country's power development program and national energy plan under Republic Act No. 7638, otherwise known as the Department of Energy Act of 1992, in relation to other existing laws, and to convene the Joint Congressional Power Commission for the purpose of reporting to the Filipino people on the overall state of the energy infrastructure system of the Philippines.

Adopted,


FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.