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S E N A T E
Senate Resolution No. 174

RECEIVED BY: *[Signature]*

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

RESOLUTION

URGING THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO DEVELOP NEW INDICATORS THAT WILL REFLECT THE HAPPINESS AND WELL-BEING OF FILIPINOS, ADOPTING THE GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS CONCEPT OF THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN, WITH THE END VIEW OF PURSUING THE HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY AMID THE THREATS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

WHEREAS, Article II Section 9 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living and an improved quality of life for all;

WHEREAS, improving quality of life goes beyond economic growth and includes equally important factors such as good governance, equitable and sustainable socio-economic development, environmental sustainability, cultural preservation and disaster resilience;

WHEREAS, the quality of life of Filipinos remains poorly understood due to the absence of measures that will reflect their happiness and well-being;

WHEREAS, statistics such as gross domestic product and gross national product which only indicate the value of goods and services turned out by our market economy are not designed to measure the quality of life of Filipinos;

WHEREAS, these economic yardsticks foster policies that place too much emphasis on economic growth at all costs;

WHEREAS, our extractive and consumptive model for progress, which conveniently factors out the impact of economic activities on the natural environment and on the well-being of people, increasingly reveals our vulnerability to disasters and climate change and puts our sustainable development goals in peril;

WHEREAS, there is a need for a comprehensive approach to measure the happiness and well-being of Filipinos in order to review the impact of existing policies and introduce corrective measures;

WHEREAS, the Gross National Happiness (GNH) concept used by the Royal Government of Bhutan measures progress by giving equal importance to non-economic aspects of well-being;

WHEREAS, as explained by its four pillars: the promotion of equitable and sustainable socio-economic development, the preservation and promotion of cultural values, the conservation of the natural environment, and the establishment of good governance;

WHEREAS, the four pillars have been further classified into nine domains: psychological well-being, health, education, time use, cultural diversity and resilience, good governance, community vitality, ecological diversity and resilience, and living standards;

WHEREAS, Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Prize winner in Economics, supported the concept of GNH asserting that "What you measure affects what you do. If you don't measure the right thing, you don't do the right thing";

WHEREAS, various countries have adopted this Bhutanese concept. In May 2011, a happiness index that seeks to complement the GDP and other indicators was launched by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Meanwhile, the governments of Japan, France and the United Kingdom are planning to develop a happiness index in their respective countries. In 2005, an unofficial Department of Happiness was created by then-Prime Minister Tony Blair to explore how findings from the "science of happiness" can help shape policy;

WHEREAS, on July 29, 2011, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution inviting Member-States to "pursue elaboration of additional measures that better capture the importance of the pursuit of happiness and well-being in development with a view to guiding their public policies";

WHEREAS, to ensure an improved quality of life for our people, it is imperative for the government to measure and pursue the kind of progress that is founded on good governance, sustainable and equitable socio-economic development, ecosystems protection, cultural preservation and disaster resilience;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the National Economic and Development Authority to develop new indicators that will reflect the happiness and well-being of Filipinos, adopting the Gross National Happiness concept of the Royal Government of Bhutan, with the end view of pursuing the holistic development of the country amidst the threats of climate change.

Adopted,


LOREN LEGARDA
Senator