Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Resolution No. 1361

INTRODUCED BY
REP. ALFRED VARGAS

A RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REFORESTATION TO
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE STATUS OF
THE GOVERNMENT’S NATIONAL GREENING PROGRAM (NGP) AND
OTHER PROGRAMS INTENDED TO PROTECT FOREST RESOURCES
AND WATERSHEDS

WHEREAS, the 1987 Constitution provides that “the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature” (Article II, Section 16);

WHEREAS, in order to realize this, Executive Order No. 26, declaring the implementation of the National Greening Program (NGP) was issued on February 24, 2011 to reforest 1.5 million hectares of public domain with 1.5 billion trees for a period of six years from 2011 to 2016;

WHEREAS, the Expanded National Greening Program under Executive Order No. 193 was also signed on November 12, 2015 to reforest and rehabilitate all remaining unproductive, denuded, and degraded forestlands estimated at 7.1 million hectares from 2016 to 2028;

WHEREAS, the NGP is a Convergence Initiative among the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Agrarian Reform, anchored on the government’s goal of poverty reduction, food security, climate change adaptation, and mitigation;

WHEREAS, as of October 2020, DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu has reported during the proposed 2021 budget hearings in the Senate that the DENR has so far planted 1.7 billion trees on approximately 2 million hectares area, yet our country’s forests have diminished and now covers
only 23 percent of our land area, resulting to the Philippines being the lowest forest cover in Asia;

WHEREAS, data from the latest Global Forest Resources Assessment report of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization showed that the Philippines has a total forest cover of 7,014,156 hectares, or 23.4 percent of the country's total area of 30 million hectares, based on the land cover data in 2015;

WHEREAS, environmental groups like the Asean Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) have called for greater protection for forest areas and watersheds that serve as protection against floods and other adverse climate impacts following the onslaught of consecutive typhoons in the past few weeks, most recently Typhoon “Ulysses” (international name “Vamco”);

WHEREAS, natural forest areas and watersheds like the Sierra Madre and the Upper Marikina River Basin remain heavily under threat of land conversion, illegal logging, mining activities, and quarrying, despite its protected status;

WHEREAS, the National Greening Program and other programs intended to protect forest resources and watersheds must uphold not only the country's commitment to combating the adverse effects of the climate crisis but should also serve as the core of the country's disaster risk reduction plans, and must greatly explore its potential for the production of jobs for Filipinos and the preservation of our biodiversity;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, that the Special Committee on Reforestation be directed to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the status of the Government's National Greening Program (NGP) and other programs intended to protect forest resources and watershed.

Adopted,

REP. ALFRED VARGAS
Fifth District, Quezon City