A RESOLUTION

URGING THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO ACQUIRE AND PURCHASE COVID-19 VACCINES FOR THEIR EMPLOYEES AND THEIR DEPENDENTS

WHEREAS, the 1987 Constitution provides for every Filipino’s right to health and for the recognition and full-protection of labor as a primary social economic force.

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 15 of the 1987 Constitution provides:

Section 15. The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among them.

WHEREAS, Article XIII, Health, Section 11 of the 1987 Constitution provides:

Section 11. The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the under-privileged, sick, elderly, disabled, women, and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers.

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 18 of the 1987 Constitution provides:

Section 18. The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare.

WHEREAS, Article XII National Economy and Patrimony, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution provides:

Section 1. The goals of the national economy are a more equitable distribution of opportunities, income, and wealth; a sustained increase in the amount of goods and services produced by the nation for the benefit of the people; and an expanding productivity as the key to raising the quality of life for all, especially the under-privileged. The State shall promote industrialization and full employment based on sound agricultural development and agrarian reform, through industries that make full and efficient use of human and natural resources, and which are competitive in both domestic and foreign markets. However, the State shall protect Filipino enterprises against unfair foreign competition and trade practices.

In the pursuit of these goals, all sectors of the economy and all regions of the country shall be given optimum opportunity to develop. Private enterprises, including corporations, cooperatives, and similar collective organizations, shall be encouraged to broaden the base of their ownership.
WHEREAS, Article XII, Labor, Section 3 of the 1987 Constitution provides:

Section 3. The State shall afford full protection to labor, local and overseas, organized and unorganized, and promote full employment and equality of employment opportunities for all. It shall guarantee the rights of all workers to self-organization, collective bargaining and negotiations, and peaceful concerted activities, including the right to strike in accordance with law. They shall be entitled to security of tenure, humane conditions of work, and a living wage. They shall also participate in policy and decision-making processes affecting their rights and benefits as may be provided by law.

The State shall promote the principle of shared responsibility between workers and employers and the preferential use of voluntary modes in settling disputes, including conciliation, and shall enforce their mutual compliance therewith to foster industrial peace.

The State shall regulate the relations between workers and employers, recognizing the right of labor to its just share in the fruits of production and the right of enterprises to reasonable returns to investments, and to expansion and growth.

WHEREAS, 2020 has been a challenging year for all Filipinos, especially employees in private institutions who have been laid off, placed on forced leave, and have reduced working hours, resulting to higher unemployment rates and lower income for most Filipino households;

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic and due to varied quarantine restrictions being imposed by the government, many businesses are forced to close down, some temporarily and some permanently, resulting to the slowdown of the Philippine economy;

WHEREAS, the Philippines’ unemployment rate has reached 8.7% percent in October 2020, as reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority, with many more experiencing lower income rates than before the pandemic;

WHEREAS, a crucial part of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic is the vaccination process of a significant part of the population to attain herd immunity;

WHEREAS, as early as November 2020, some foreign companies have announced their success in the efficacy of the first COVID-19 vaccines developed;

WHEREAS, since the development of the COVID-19 vaccines, many countries have already made orders and purchased doses of the vaccine to be administered to their citizens;

WHEREAS, the Philippine government, through the House of Representatives and the Senate, has passed a budget of Php72.5 billion for COVID-19 vaccines to cover 30%-50% of the Philippine population for 2021;

WHEREAS, the 2021 budget set for vaccine acquisition is not enough to reach all Filipinos, if not enough to attain the goal of herd immunity, which is substantially above 50% of the population according to the World Health Organization;

WHEREAS, from the onset of the pandemic, the private sector has played a key role alongside the Philippine government in addressing the social and economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic;
WHEREAS, many companies from the private sector have expressed interest in acquiring and purchasing vaccines for their employees and their dependents to move towards higher productivity, employment and income for employees;

WHEREAS, if allowed, the private sector must continue to abide by the rules and regulations set forth by the Philippine Government in the acquisition of the vaccines and ensure that the vaccines to be acquired have been issued the proper authority or the emergency use authorization approval by the Food and Drug Administration of the Philippines;

WHEREAS, a proper vaccination program for the private sector will significantly aid the government in its pursuit to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects, especially regaining some semblance of normalcy with businesses bouncing back and ultimately placing the economy well on its way back to recovery;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the House of Representatives to urge the Philippine Government to allow the private sector to acquire and purchase COVID-19 vaccines for their employees and their dependents; provided the private sector shall follow the rules and regulations set by the government, for the purposes of aiding in the government's pursuit against the COVID-19 pandemic, alleviating the status of our labor force, and pushing the economy on its track towards a speedy recovery.

Adopted,

[Signature]

RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ