Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1508

Introduced by Rep. Edgar Mary S. Sarmiento

A RESOLUTION URGING THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK IN INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AND VACCINATION WHICH SHALL BE BASED ON DATA OBTAINED SIXTY-DAYS AFTER THE VACCINE ROLL-OUT IN OTHER COUNTRIES

WHEREAS, over a year into the pandemic, the Philippines has more than 500,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases, including the increasing active cases, with a good recovery rate of more than 400,000 and more than 10,000 deaths;

WHEREAS, the country has been on various forms of community quarantine from March 15, 2020 up to the present or around 309 days as of writing;

WHEREAS, the global pandemic has adversely affected the global economy and our economy as well and it will take time before the projected growth returns;

WHEREAS, to prevent the spread of the disease, the country has adopted effective measures such as community quarantine, increased testing and implementing of minimum health standards;

WHEREAS, various vaccines are currently being released and administered in different countries with the ultimate goal of ending the global pandemic;

WHEREAS, to initiate post-pandemic recovery, the Philippines has also started, through the IATF-EID, to evaluate various vaccines which will eventually be purchased and administered to the public;

WHEREAS, we should take advantage of the current government structure. While we accept the vaccination policies should be set by the National IATF-EID, the implementation and enforcement of the policies of vaccination should be assigned to LGUs through the Local IATF-EID since they have better knowledge over their jurisdiction and more experience in delivering services to their constituents;
WHEREAS, as a reminder, Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991 has already devolved the implementation of health programs and delivery of health services, including the purchase of medicines, medical supplies and equipment, to the Local Government Units (LGUs) The policy behind it is that the LGUs would have a more specific knowledge on the health needs of its constituents;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 11494 or the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act allocated a standby fund amounting to Php 10 Billion for the procurement. In addition to this, the law states that LGUs can continue to exercise their autonomy in matters undefined by the national government or are within the parameters it has set;

WHEREAS, in relation to its duty to implement health programs and deliver health services, some LGUs took the initiative in choosing the preferred brands of vaccine and are currently negotiating with vaccine manufacturers on the purchase of COVID-19 vaccines;

WHEREAS, following strict guidelines on approving any food and drug for public consumption, the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and the Food and Drug Administration of the Philippines (FDA) through National IATF-EID should obtain first from World Health Organization (WHO) a vaccination update from other countries who have started rolling out vaccines, including an update on the different brands being utilized. This information can be used for us to be guided well in choosing the best vaccine while also considering our genetic foundation;

WHEREAS, while other countries are rolling out COVID-19 vaccination, it is prudent and wise for us to wait for sixty-days/two months or an appropriate time provided by health professionals as a basis for us to be guided properly on what vaccine has the highest efficacy and safe on population that belongs to the same genetic component. Experiences of other countries such as the United Kingdom, the first country to roll out the vaccine to the public last January 8, on the vaccines and its distribution would be vital to us;

WHEREAS, the information being obtained relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic should be stored in a central database by the government;

WHEREAS, to support the LGUs in fulfillment of their duties, the National Government through the National IATF-EID, [National Government Department of Health (DOH), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and the Food and Drug Administration of the Philippines (FDA)] should provide and disseminate adequate information to all LGUs regarding the COVID-19 vaccines available and given an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) by the FDA for the LGUs to make an informed decision in its purchase. Other agencies such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) may assist in disseminating information;
WHEREAS, vaccination should be prioritized and focused on LGUs with the highest number of cases and where logistical facilities are available which are urban centers such as Metro Manila, Cebu City, and Davao City. The system of initial roll out in these areas, once perfected, can then be replicated to other LGUs in the soonest time possible. Through this, the LGU can have the specific individuals to be vaccinated based on the vaccination hierarchy of WHO and National Government of the Philippines;

WHEREAS, is not the first time we have rolled out vaccines. We must learn from the experience of the Department of Health and the Local Government Units in the roll out of different vaccines (polio and basic immunization for children). Regional offices have already the specific evaluation of LGUs who have the available resources and the structure needed for vaccination purposes;

WHEREAS, the National Government should also provide additional and adequate support to the LGUs in the roll out of vaccines given an EUA through the provision of approved or accredited cold chain requirements for storage, transport, and handling. Human resources for monitoring the efficacy and the possible adverse effects should be identified as well for a proper monitoring system of the vaccine;

WHEREAS, the current human resources of Local Government Units should be limited only to those who are equipped with proper training in terms of vaccination i.e local doctors, nurses, midwives, veterinarians, and barangay health workers. They should be the ones to administer COVID-19 mass vaccination. We have to avoid utilizing the members of the academe in this program as they have a different expertise. Additional health human resource needed by the LGUs must be adequately trained;

WHEREAS, the government should ask for the private sector’s help in terms of distribution of supply and logistical chains. Multiple businesses in the private sector has branches and operates nationwide. They can assist the government in auditing its current resources and evaluating if their current setup is enough;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives, to urge the National Government, through the National IATF-EID, to implement a comprehensive framework in information dissemination, human resources, and logistical chain needed for vaccination, in preparation for mass vaccination, using as a basis the data obtained from WHO on other countries after sixty days or an appropriate time provided by health professionals from the start of their vaccine roll out;

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