Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 1723

Introduced by
BAYAN MUNA Representatives CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
FERDINAND R. GAITE and EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
ACT TEACHERS Party-List Representative FRANCE L. CASTRO,
GABRIELA Women’s Party Representative ARLENE D. BROSAS
and KABATAAN Party-List Representative SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THROUGH THE
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN
AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED HARASSMENT, PROFILING AND
RED-TAGGING OF COMMUNITY PANTRY VOLUNTEERS AND ORGANIZERS

WHEREAS, amid the economic crisis aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, a privately-initiated community pantry organized by Ana Patricia Non was set-up along Maginhawa Street, Quezon City, with just a bamboo cart and a variety of goods and food stuff. With a slogan “magbigay ayon sa kakayahan, kumuha batay sa pangangailangan,” Non said the concept of community pantry is for anyone to freely donate, or, get from the pantry no matter how small or big it is;¹

WHEREAS, the initiative went viral as different communities and non-government organizations, inspired by the Maginhawa Community Pantry, also set up their own respective community pantries. As of April 21, there are already more than 30 community pantries nationwide;

WHEREAS, the community pantries are mutual aid sustained through community efforts and not by an individual or a certain group or organization. Its existence nationwide manifests the government inaction, lack of aid, widespread poverty and worsening unemployment in the Philippines;

WHEREAS, even the executive department has acknowledged and hailed its existence;

WHEREAS, despite the noble idea of helping the less privileged in their communities, the organizers and volunteers of the different community pantries, however, were subjected to harassment and red-tagging by the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC);

WHEREAS, last April 20, 2021, the Maginhawa Community Pantry temporarily stopped its operations as Ana Patricia Non and the other volunteers were profiled by the PNP. According to

Ana Patricia Non’s Facebook post, three (3) elements of the PNP asked her number and organization affiliation. Moreover, she already feared for her safety due to the baseless accusations against her. She presented screenshots of posts shared by the NTF-ELCAC and the QCPD baselessly linking the community pantries and other organizations with the underground movement;

WHEREAS, while PNP Chief Gen. Debold Sinas denied issuing orders for the police to profile organizers of community pantries, the baseless labelling and red-tagging have already taken a toll on these people-initiated, even temporary, solution to the widespread hunger and poverty currently experienced by many people;

WHEREAS, contrary to Sinas statement, in fact, the post from Peace Philippines and Basika red-tagging the community pantries were widely shared by pages of different police offices such as Moriones-Tondo Police Station National Capital Region Police Office, Muntinlupa City Police Station PS-5, Malate Police Station-National Capital Region Police Office, San Nicolas Municipal Police Station, and many more;

WHEREAS, in a Super Radyo dzBB interview last April 20, 2021, the NTF-ELCAC Spokesperson L. Gen. Antonio Parlade Jr. admitted that they are checking the background of the organizers of community pantries. Parlade baselessly claimed that some leftist groups are copying the community pantry activities from well-meaning individuals for propaganda purposes;

WHEREAS, last April 20, 2021, in response to these latest police profiling, the National Privacy Commission released a statement calling the attention of the PNP Data Protection Office to look into reports and take appropriate measures to prevent acts of its personnel that could potentially harm citizens and violate rights;

WHEREAS, last April 20, 2021, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) also added to these discordant voices of government officials with Undersecretary for Barangay Affairs Martin Diño claiming that a permit is required for the community pantries citing “protocol violations.” USec Diño later backtracted his statement and said coordination is just required with their respective barangay to ensure observance of health protocols;

WHEREAS, members of Congress, as representatives of the people, are duty-bound to ensure the Constitutional right of the people are protected and upheld. The organizers and volunteers who initiate the delivery of aid to the less privilege, do not deserve to be subjected to harassment and baseless accusations from the government itself that failed to deliver such services to the Filipino people;

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2 https://www.facebook.com/PatrengNon/posts/2883888128535551
4 https://www.facebook.com/PeacefulPhilippines/photos/a.124083199388400/287643389699046
5 https://www.facebook.com/Permalink.php?story_fbid=233771155159948&id=110595304144201
6 https://www.facebook.com/MorionesTondoPS5/posts/489402249074845
7 https://www.facebook.com/muntinlupapuris/posts/816961202240974
8 https://www.facebook.com/MalatePS9/posts/513037433408214
9 https://www.facebook.com/SannicolasMunicipalPoliceStationOfficialpage/posts/5469587343114092
10 https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1137328
11 https://twitter.com/News5PH/status/1384344107070406657/photo/1
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives, through the Committee on Human Rights, to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the alleged harassment, profiling and red-tagging of community pantry organizers.

Adopted,

REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. FRANCE L. CASTRO
ACT Teachers Partylist

REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS
GABRIELA Women’s Party

REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Partylist