EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Third Regular Session

House Resolution No. 2301

Introduced by REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

A RESOLUTION
EXPRESSING PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEMISE OF THE HONORABLE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS CHAIR JOSE LUIS MARTIN “CHITO” C. GASCON

WHEREAS, on October 9, 2021, Commission on Human Rights (CHR) Chairperson, Jose Luis Martin “Chito” C. Gascon, died after a bout with COVID-19. He was 57 years old. He was survived by his wife and daughter.

WHEREAS, CHR Chair Gascon was the youngest delegate to the Constitutional Commission that drafted the 1987 Constitution.

WHEREAS, former Representative Gascon served at the House of Representatives during the 8th Congress during which he authored the law institutionalizing youth participation in local government through the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK). He also co-authored Republic Act 7610, otherwise known as the Anti-Child Abuse Law.

WHEREAS, after the 8th Congress, CHR Chair Gascon served at the Executive Department in different capacities. He was Undersecretary at the Department of Education (DepEd) from 2002 until 2005. Likewise, Chair
Gascon became a Board Member of the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) in 2010 until 2011. A year after until 2014, he served at the Office of the President (Political Affairs) from 2011 up to 2014.

WHEREAS, CHR Chair Gascon took a seat as member of the panel of the Peace Negotiations with the National Democratic Front (NDF) beginning 2001 until 2004. In 2010 to 2014, CHR Chair Gascon served as Chair of the Government’s Human Rights Monitoring Committee (GPhMC) of that peace process within the framework of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). He also assisted in peace negotiations involving the conflict with Muslim rebels in Mindanao as a member of the Technical Working Group on Power Sharing and Alternate Panel Member in peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and with the Ad Hoc High-Level Working Group for the Tripartite Review of the 1996 Final Peace Agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) together with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's Peace Committee for Southern Philippines.

WHEREAS, on June 18, 2015, Gascon was appointed by then President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III as the new Chair of the Human Rights Commission of the Philippines for the next seven (7) years.

WHEREAS, CHR Chair Gascon courageously and steadfastly upheld the constitutional mandate of the Commission. Amidst the unrelenting attacks against the institution and to him personally, he was unwavering and unflinching in fighting for the universal values of freedom, truth, and justice that are essential in the pursuit of human rights. He was undaunting in the fight for human rights, rule of law, and democracy out of deep reverence to the equal rights and dignity of all.

WHEREAS, his leadership in the Commission has inspired and nurtured a culture of enabling, empowering, and safe environment that move CHR personnel to always serve with genuine compassion or “Serbisyong May Malasakit”, utmost integrity, and excellence. He impressed upon the CHR personnel and fellow human rights workers the impact and value of our work especially to those who have it least.
WHEREAS, CHR Jose Luis Martin “Chito” C. Gascon survived by his wife, Melissa P. Mercado, and daughter, Ciara Sophia Gascon.

NOW THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the foregoing facts, we the undersigned members of the House of Representatives hereby RESOLVE to express our deepest condolences for the demise of CHR Chairman Gascon.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that a copy of this Resolution be furnished to the bereaved family of CHR Gascon.

RESOLVED FINALLY, that this Resolution be formed as part of the records of this august body.

ADOPTED.

[Signature]