INTRODUCED BY
REP. ALFRED VARGAS

A RESOLUTION
STRONGLY URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY TO
STRICTLY MONITOR PRICES OF NOCHE BUENA GOODS AND APPEAL
TO MANUFACTURERS AND SELLERS TO MAINTAIN PRICES OF BASIC
COMMODITIES FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE DURING
THE HOLIDAYS AMIDST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

WHEREAS, the government has always strongly implemented price
freezes albeit temporarily and other price regulation measures in response to
the country’s state of calamity\(^1\) to help alleviate the economic burden of the
COVID-19 pandemic to the Filipino people;

WHEREAS, at the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, citing the
Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act (Republic Act No.
10120) and the Price Act (Republic No. 7581, as amended), the Department
of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Agriculture (DA), and the
Department of Health, have issued Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2020-01
titled “Price Freeze under a State of Calamity throughout the Philippines
due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019” as part of the government’s COVID-19
remedial measures;

WHEREAS, in September 2021, DTI Undersecretary Ruth Castelo
revealed that the agency was able to convince manufacturers last year to
maintain the 2019 prices for noche buena products to ease the impact of the
COVID-19 pandemic on ordinary Filipinos;\(^2\)

WHEREAS, on 8 November 2021, DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez reported
that many manufacturers made assurances that they won’t increase the
prices of holiday goods such as ham, quezo de bola, fruit cocktails, pasta,
sauce, and other noche buena items;\(^3\)

\(^1\) Proclamation No. 929, s. 2020 and Proclamation No. 1218, s. 2021
\(^2\) https://www.onenews.ph/articles/dti-to-promote-noche-buena-goods-maintaining-prices
\(^3\) Ibid.
WHEREAS, the DTI is set to release the suggested retail price (SRP) list for noche buena products by the end of October to early November, while the SRP list for basic necessities and prime commodities for groceries and supermarkets has been published last 29 August 2021;

WHEREAS, since the beginning of the pandemic, the DTI has been consistent in extending assistance to pandemic-displaced individuals, entrepreneurs, and businesses, and has shown its unwavering commitment to helping the Filipino people amidst these challenging times;

WHEREAS, as we expect the increase in demand for noche buena goods and basic necessities due to the holiday season, it is imperative that prices of such commodities are regulated under the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, to help Filipino consumers while also protecting the rights and income of manufacturers and sellers;

WHEREAS, amidst the aggravated challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the government must ensure the just regulation of prices of goods to alleviate the burden of Filipinos especially during the holidays and in the spirit of bayanihan and malasakit;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, to strongly urge the Department of Trade and Industry to strictly monitor prices of noche buena goods and appeal to manufacturers and sellers to maintain prices of basic commodities for the benefit of the Filipino people during the holidays amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Adopted,

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4 Ibid.