

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 488

Introduced by
ACT Teachers Party-List Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO,
GABRIELA Women's Party Rep. ARLENE D. BROSAS,
and **KABATAAN Party-List Rep. RAOUL DANNIEL A. MANUEL**

RESOLUTION

**CALLING FOR AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, BY THE
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE INTO THE OPERATIONAL
STANDARDS AND ACTUAL PRACTICES OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL
POLICE, PHILIPPINE DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY, AND OTHER
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN THE HANDLING AND TREATMENT
OF SUSPECTS, ARRESTEES, AND DETAINEES, IN LIGHT OF THE
INDICATIONS OF SPECIAL TREATMENT ACCORDED TO JUANITO JOSE
REMULLA III, IN CONTRAST TO WHAT USUALLY HAPPENS WHEN
THOSE INVOLVED ARE ORDINARY CITIZENS**

WHEREAS, on October 11, 2022, members of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) arrested Juanito Jose Remulla III, son of Department of Justice (DOJ) Secretary Boying Remulla, in connection with the illegal shipment of around ₱1.3 million worth of “kush” or high-grade marijuana which was intercepted at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport;

WHEREAS, in a statement, Secretary Remulla said, “I will not intervene in nor influence my son’s predicament, and I have not done so in any way”;

WHEREAS, nevertheless, several indications of special treatment were revealed in several reports on the case: Authorities immediately informed his father Secretary

Remulla, who was then abroad, of the arrest, while it was publicized after almost two days. Among the information released to the public were blurred mug shots of the younger Remulla;

WHEREAS, Remulla was also apparently protected from taking the drug test required in certain cases under Republic Act 9165 or the *Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act*, as amended, after his lawyer “immediately intervened” and upon the insistence of PDEA that the drug test is “not material” to the case, as alleged by the agency’s spokesperson. A positive result would have added a charge of and penalty for illegal drug use against Remulla;

WHEREAS, there would be no issue had much of this kind of treatment also been accorded by law enforcement agencies such as PDEA and the Philippine National Police (PNP) to other suspects and arrestees who are wealthy and/or prominent. However, this is not the case, as evident from numerous reports of violations of the procedural and substantive rights of suspects, arrestees, and detainees who are ordinary individuals, including drug users and low-level drug offenders;

WHEREAS, practices of parading or showcasing arrestees in a “media firing line,” the publication of unaltered mugshots, and having them interviewed by the media, especially in the case of drug suspects and arrestees, or activists and alleged members or leaders of the CPP or NPA. Both are contrary to the PNP Manual of Operations and related and similar guidelines yet usually committed. Such practices expose the suspects and arrestees to making admissions under circumstances outside of the protection of the right against self-incrimination, violate their constitutional right to be presumed innocent, and unduly subject them to higher liabilities under penal laws, among others;

WHEREAS, furthermore, there are oft-reported cases of rough handling of the persons of the suspects and arrestees. The worst treatment is the extrajudicial killings of the persons involved—who are alleged to be merely “drug personalities” or “suspects” at most—as what happened with the thousands said to have fought back (“*nanlaban*”) in *tokhang* operations under the bloody so-called war against drugs;

WHEREAS, other violations include the immediate hauling of suspects and arrestees in jails—often accompanied by manhandling of their persons—as well as enforced disappearance; incommunicado detention; deprivation of access by kin, counsel, and paralegals; and similar practices. All are considered as torture under Republic Act 9745 or the *Anti-Torture Act of 2009*;

WHEREAS, while such violations are made more glaring with the arrest of Remulla III, they are cited not to imply that he should also be made to suffer the same treatment. Rather, these violations against suspects, arrestees, and detainees who are ordinary citizens must be seen as indications of the dearth of operational standards in the treatment of all persons regardless of their economic or political status, as well as lack of accountability for violations thereof;

WHEREAS, there exists a glaring need to review both standards and actual practice in the treatment of all suspects, arrestees, and detainees to prevent discrimination, and for the protection of their rights, while ensuring the proper administration of justice.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives, through the Committee on Justice, investigate, in aid of legislation, into the operational standards and actual practices of the Philippine National Police, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, and other law enforcement agencies in the handling and treatment of suspects, arrestees, and detainees, in light of the indications of special treatment accorded to Juanito Jose Remulla III, in contrast to what usually happens when those involved are ordinary citizens;

BE IT LIKEWISE RESOLVED that the House look into the said operational standards and actual practices in order to formulate legislated standards that will protect the rights of all suspects, arrestees, and detainees—without distinction—while ensuring the proper administration of justice.

Adopted,



Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO
ACT Teachers Party-List



Rep. ARLENE D. BROSAS
GABRIELA Women's Party



Rep. RAOUL DANNIEL A. MANUEL
KABATAAN Party-List