

14 April 2014

Hon. Arturo B. Robes
Chairperson
Committee on Social Services
House of Representatives
Quezon City

Attention : **Ms. Catherine N. Macapagal**
Committee Secretary

Dear Congressman Robes:

Attached is a commentary on House Bill Nos. 2985 and 3255, measures seeking to regulate public solicitation and providing funds therefore, authored by Reps. Giorgidi B. Aggabao and Josephine R. Sato respectively.

PIDS, however, has no recent study on the measures seeking to regulate public solicitation and providing funds.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries.

Thank you and best regards.

Sincerely,

Celia M. Reyes
Fellow II

cc: Dr. Gilberto M. Llanto

Celia M. Reyes
Research Fellow
Philippine Institute for Development Studies
April 14, 2014

Comments on the proposed measures seeking to regulate public solicitation and providing funds therefore (House Bill Nos. 2985 and 3255)

1. Section 4 of both HBs, "Exemption from the Coverage" states that "Organizations and agencies created by laws that specifically confer authority on these organizations and agencies to solicit or conduct fund campaign for charitable or public welfare purposes shall continue to be covered by its charter. Please clarify the specific organizations/agencies that will be exempted from the coverage to avoid differing interpretations on who are exempted.
2. The same section exempts certain activities. We suggest that there should also be no exemption in terms of solicitation activities since such purposes (e.g., Christmas caroling, for religious purposes) could also be a channel for unscrupulous solicitation.
3. Section 6 identifies who can issue permits and they are DSWD, Governor through PSWDO, and Mayors through S/MSWDO. We suggest that national government agencies, which can either be DILG or DSWD, be the authorized bodies to grant permits even in provinces or municipalities. It might be better if granting of permits should not go through the governor or mayor to avoid negative feedback from the vigilant public.
4. Section 13 specifies that DSWD, PSWDO and C/MSWDO are responsible for the monitoring and review of public solicitation activity. This might be too burdensome for DSWD and social welfare officers. Can COA be the one to audit the financial reports since they have the capacity to do this? While the review and audit process might take up resources, not having a prescribed review of the report on the solicitation activity might embolden some groups to submit inaccurate reports.