



SENATE
P.S. Res 984

'19 JAN 14 P3:06

Introduced by Senator Poe

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC SERVICES AND PUBLIC WORKS TO CONDUCT A FULL ASSESSMENT, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE INTENDED CLOSURE AND RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ESTRELLA-PANTALEON BRIDGE, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF REVISITING THE MERITS OF REPLACING A PERFECTLY-WORKING BRIDGE EVEN AMID ALLEGATIONS THAT SUCH WILL NOT BRING RELIEF TO MOTORISTS FOR THE ULTIMATE BENEFIT OF PROTECTING THE PUBLIC

1 **WHEREAS**, Article II, Section 9 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the
2 State shall promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and
3 independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that
4 provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living,
5 and an improved quality of life for all;

6 **WHEREAS**, Article II, Section 9 of the Constitution also provides that the State
7 shall pursue an independent foreign policy. In its relations with other states, the
8 paramount consideration shall be national sovereignty, territorial integrity, national
9 interest, and the right to self-determination;

10 **WHEREAS**, Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution recognizes the "right of
11 the people to information on matters of public concern," as wells as "access to official
12 records, and to documents, and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or
13 decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy
14 development...";

15 **WHEREAS**, the Estrella-Pantaleon Bridge was initially closed last September
16 23, 2018 for a 30-month reconstruction and widening project¹ but was reopened again

¹ <https://news.abs-cbn.com/business/09/24/18/build-build-build-needs-12-bridges-to-beat-metro-traffic-dpwh>

1 after the Department of Public Works and Highways was constrained to defer the
2 implementation of the project to January 2019 due to intense public pressure that
3 cited the possible huge economic losses from the closure of the bridge;²

4 **WHEREAS**, the bridge, also known as the Rockwell Bridge, was inaugurated
5 only in 2011 as one of the 19 weather-resistant bridges in the Philippines constructed
6 through the generosity of the Austrian government, and there are no studies or
7 declarations from the proponent agencies that the bridge is structurally unsound;

8 **WHEREAS**, there is no clear effective traffic mitigation plan during the 30
9 months-closure which is seen to coincide with the scheduled rehabilitation of the
10 Guadalupe Bridge;

11 **WHEREAS**, it is unclear how the proposed widening to a 4-lane bridge will
12 increase the road network capacity when both ends of the bridge lead to two-lane
13 roads;

14 **WHEREAS**, the bridge is one of the two covered by a P5.4 billion China grant
15 which will be undertaken by CCCC Highway Consultant Ltd. (CCCC Highway) and China
16 Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC)³, both subsidiaries of the China Communications
17 Construction Company Ltd., (CCCC), which was blacklisted by the World Bank in 2009
18 after it was found in an investigation that it colluded with several other local and
19 international companies on the bidding for the first phase of the Philippine National
20 Roads Improvement and Management Program (NRIMP 1)⁴;

21 **WHEREAS**, CRBC was also reportedly used for reclamation activities in the
22 disputed Spratly Islands⁵;

23 **WHEREAS**, the implementing agencies' approach to the project gives the
24 impression that we are pursuing the closure and reconstruction of these bridges
25 without proper studies and regardless of impact to the public, for the sake of doing
26 something with the grant rather than as part of a clear plan to create an efficient road
27 network;

² <https://news.abs-cbn.com/business/09/25/18/construction-of-estrella-pantaleon-bridge-deferred-to-january-2019-dpwh>

³ <http://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1041752>

⁴ <https://business.inquirer.net/217467/chinese-company-banned-by-world-bank-bags-ph-infrastructure-project>

⁵ *Ibid.*

1 **WHEREAS**, there is a need to closely scrutinize the plan of our government
2 agencies with respect to public infrastructure to give due consideration to the
3 motorists and residents in the affected area;

4 **WHEREAS**, the government should ensure that the interest of the public, first
5 and foremost, is safeguarded and protected, and as such should exercise due
6 diligence, conduct viability studies, and exhaust all possible alternatives prior to the
7 development of any infrastructure project that will paralyze traffic and business in
8 high-density areas;

9 **WHEREAS**, there is a need for the government to ensure that its projects in
10 its Build, Build, Build Programs be holistic solutions which actually improve mobility
11 and connectivity, and not be the cause for paralysis in urban areas;

12 **BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, by the Senate of the
13 Philippines, to direct the Senate Committees on Public Services and Public Works to
14 conduct a full assessment, in aid of legislation, on the intended closure and
15 reconstruction of the Estrella-Pantaleon Bridge, with the objective of revisiting the
16 merits of replacing a perfectly-working bridge even amid allegations that such will not
17 bring relief to motorists for the ultimate benefit of protecting the public.

18 *Adopted,*


GRACE POE