



Legislation Text

File #: Res 32113, Version: 1

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION endorsing the Philippine Human Rights Act.

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2017, the Seattle City Council unanimously passed Resolution 31730, affirming

The City of Seattle as a Welcoming City that promotes policies and programs to foster inclusion for all, and serves its residents regardless of their immigration or refugee status, race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity, political ideology, disability, homelessness, or low-income or veteran status, and reaffirming the City’s continuing commitment to advocate and support the well-being of all residents; and

WHEREAS, on July 3, 2020, then-President of the Philippines Rodrigo Duterte signed the Anti-Terrorism Act (“Act”) into law; and

WHEREAS, the Act gives authority to the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to extrajudicially conduct arrests without warrants and detain suspects for 14 days, which can be extended by ten more days, and to place suspects under surveillance by the police or military for 60 days, which can also be extended by up to 30 days; and

WHEREAS, Section 49 of the Act outlines the scope of extraterritorial applications of the Anti-Terrorism Act by stating that it applies to “a Filipino citizen or national who commits any of the acts defined and penalized under ... this Act outside the territorial jurisdiction of the Philippines” and “individual persons who, although physically outside the territorial limits of the Philippines, commit any of the crimes mentioned ... inside the territorial limits of the Philippines”; and

WHEREAS, the extraterritorial applications of the Act define “foreign terrorist” as anyone who travels to the

Philippines and is suspected by the Anti-Terror Council of the intent to commit “terrorist acts”; and

WHEREAS, the Philippine Government has employed red-tagging, a term used to describe accusing individuals and/or organizations of being left-leaning, subversives, communists, or terrorists, to target individuals or groups such as activists, critics, and political opponents and resulted in surveillance, detention, torture, and killings after targets were labeled as “terrorists”; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 and 2020 Philippines and United States dual citizen Maria Ressa, Rappler CEO, Fulbright Scholar, 2018 *Time* magazine Person of the Year, and 2021 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, was accused of and convicted for cyber libel and supporting independent journalism on then-President Duterte’s War on Drugs; and

WHEREAS, on August 6, 2019, U.S. citizen Brandon Lee, an indigenous and environmental activist from San Francisco, was shot in front of his family’s home in the Philippines during an exposition to defend indigenous land; and

WHEREAS, the Act threatens the safety of residents and families here in Seattle, both Filipino and non-Filipino, who exercise their constitutionally protected freedom of speech and speak out against these injustices; and

WHEREAS, since the beginning of President Duterte’s administration in 2016, over \$700 million of U.S. tax dollars was sent as monetary aid to the Philippines according to the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C., with part of the funding going directly to Philippine security forces; and

WHEREAS, the Duterte administration’s allocation of those funds resulted in systemic human rights violations on the War on Drugs, and expanding the National Task Force to End the Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) which is used to systematically red-tag, target, arrest, and kill political opponents, political dissidents, and those critical of the government; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Representative Susan Wild (PA-07) sponsored House Bill 1433, the Philippine Human Rights Act, which will suspend the U.S. security assistance to the Philippines until human rights violations by

Philippine security officials have ceased and responsible state forces are held accountable; and WHEREAS, according to Amnesty International, the Act “contains dangerous provisions and risks further undermining human rights in the country” and defines, by law, acts of dissent and opposition to the Philippine government as acts of terrorism; NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR
CONCURRING, THAT:**

Section 1. The Seattle City Council stands in solidarity with Filipino human rights defenders and their supporters, both in the Philippines and here in Seattle, and seeks to uphold their constitutionally protected right to freedom of speech.

Section 2. The City of Seattle acknowledges the ethnic, cultural, socioeconomic, religious, and political diversity of Seattle and upholds its protections to its citizens and their political liberties.

Section 3. The City of Seattle urges each member of the United States House of Representatives representing Seattle and the United States Senators from Washington to stand in solidarity with the Filipino people by co-sponsoring House Bill (H.R.) 1433, the Philippine Human Rights Act.

Section 4. The City of Seattle respectfully requests that Congress pass and the President sign H.R. 1433 or similar legislation.

Section 5. The City Council requests that the Office of Intergovernmental Relations convey this resolution to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the state of Washington.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2023, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2023.

President _____ of the City Council

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2023.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

(Seal)