

8 SEP 23 2013

SENATE
P.S. RES. NO. 664

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator M.A. Madrigal

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STEPS BEING TAKEN BY THE BUREAU OF FOOD AND DRUGS AND OTHER HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO MONITOR AND ENSURE THE PRODUCT QUALITY AND SAFETY OF FOOD IMPORTS AND LOCAL PRODUCTS IN THE LIGHT OF THE MASS RECALL OF CONTAMINATED CHINESE MILK PRODUCTS, INCLUDING THE NESTLÉ DAIRY FARM MILK BRAND IN HONG KONG

WHEREAS four babies have died while nearly 53,000 children in China are now known to have been made ill by milk powder contaminated with the industrial chemical melamine;

WHEREAS melamine, which is used in making plastics and is high in nitrogen, makes products appear to have a higher protein count. Health experts say that ingesting small amounts does no harm but sustained use can cause kidney stones and renal failure, especially among the young;

WHEREAS the Bureau of Customs said the Philippines imported 2.14 million kilos of milk from China for the first eight months of 2008;

WHEREAS milk products – including powdered and liquid milk, ice cream and yoghurt products – made by 22 Chinese firms have been recalled from supermarket shelves in China as well as other countries, including the Philippines;

WHEREAS in Hong Kong, the two main supermarket chains, Wellcome and Park'n'Shop, are now recalling products made by Nestlé, Dutch Lady and Mr. Brown. In Taiwan, the Mr. Brown coffee brand of “three-in-one” (coffee mixed with sugar and milk) was cleared from shops;

WHEREAS a Chinese daily newspaper in Hong Kong had conducted an unofficial test on Nestlé Dairy Farm brand milk and found traces of melamine;

WHEREAS the result was later confirmed by tests conducted by the Hong Kong government's Centre for Food Safety which said that, “Based on the low level detected, normal consumption will not pose major health effects. However, it is not advisable for small children to consume the milk product”;

WHEREAS in reaction to the mass recalls in China, Philippine health agencies have announced they are now randomly testing milk products from China for melamine contamination;

WHEREAS in view of the Hong Kong test results of tainted milk from international food giant Nestlé, there is an apparent need to widen the testing of milk products to include all other imported products, including processed foods, for contamination of melamine and other toxic substances;

WHEREAS it is instructive to note that in June 2007, the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) ordered the recall of Wyeth milk products – Bona, Promil Kid, Promil and Progress Gold – manufactured from May 23 to July 26, 2006 only after breastfeeding advocates blew the whistle on the US multinational firm's attempts to conceal reports about the milk contamination after exposure to the elements in local warehouses;

WHEREAS it is of paramount public health interest to find out how the BFAD and other health and government agencies are able to closely monitor and ensure the product quality and safety of food imports as well as of the entire food industry at all times;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the Committee on Health and Demography to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the steps being taken by the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) and other health and government agencies to monitor and ensure the product quality and safety of food imports and local products in the light of the mass recall of contaminated Chinese milk products, including the Nestlé Dairy Farm milk brand in Hong Kong.

Adopted,


M.A. MADRIGAL