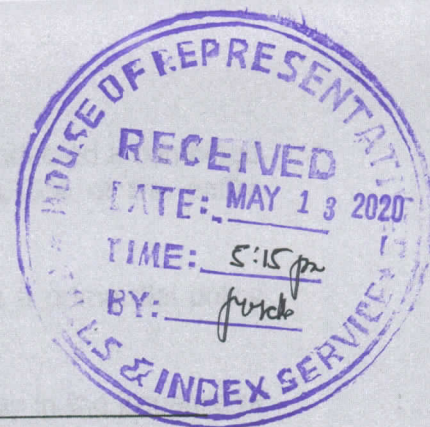


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 864



Introduced by **HON. JOSEPH "JOJO" L. LARA**

**A RESOLUTION
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) TO PRIORITIZE, HASTEN AND
FACILITATE THE ACCREDITATION OF THE CAGAYAN VALLEY MEDICAL
CENTER (CVMC) AS LICENSED COVID-19 TESTING CENTER AND ALL
GOVERNMENT TERTIARY HOSPITALS IN THE COUNTRY INCLUDING OTHER
PUBLIC HEALTH FACILITIES THAT ARE CAPABLE AND/OR QUALIFIED TO
ADMINISTER COVID-19 TESTING**

Whereas, a pneumonia of unknown cause was detected in Wuhan, China and was reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) in December 31, 2019;

Whereas, on February 11, 2020 the WHO announced the name for the coronavirus disease as COVID-19 and was assessed as a global pandemic on March 11, 2020;

Whereas, the past few months bore witness to the effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic. To date, there are more than 4.34 million confirmed cases worldwide with 292,000 plus recorded deaths. It has literally put worldwide economy on a standstill and displaced millions of workers;

Whereas, the Philippines, a country with an estimated population of 109 million, currently has 11,350 confirmed cases, 751 of whom have died with only 2,106 recoveries. With the numbers climbing daily, the clamor and need for mass testing is becoming very adamant if we want to flatten the curve and contain the virus;

Whereas, the Department of Health (DOH) currently has 26 laboratories across the country, (17 in the National Capital Region and 9 in the provinces) that are now licensed to perform the reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) tests while 33 other laboratories are nearing full compliance of the requirements;

Whereas, Northern Luzon, which consists of three (3) large regions namely Regions I, II and CAR, has only one (1) existing testing center which is located in Baguio City;

Whereas, Cagayan Valley Medical Center (CVMC) is a government tertiary hospital in Region II. CVMC has applied as a COVID-19 testing center and is now in STAGE 3 of the accreditation process. Currently, all swab tests done in said hospital has to be brought to the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center, where turn-around time for results is around 7 days. The CVMC Testing Center can cater the testing requirements of the entire Region II, and nearby provinces of Kalinga, Apayao, and most parts of Ifugao;

Whereas, the long period of wait for results translate to longer time in identifying cases, increase risk of spread of disease and delayed treatment for patients not to mention the unnecessary expense of already depleted resources, medical equipment and supplies;

Whereas, as of May 10, 2020, the 26 licensed laboratories have conducted a combined 173,144 RT-PCR tests. The said figure translates to about only 0.16% of the entire population of the country;


Whereas, aggressive mass testing nationwide should now become a primordial policy and a matter of crucial strategy to contain COVID-19;

Whereas, it has been reported that the common reason for the delay in the issuance of the needed license is the seeming lack of prioritization and support on the part of the DOH;

WHEREFORE, the national government through the DOH should put premium attention and prioritization to the requirements of hospitals and institutions seeking COVID-19 testing accreditation. Towards this end, the DOH must provide technical assistance and whenever necessary, promptly provide resources or funds in order for the health institutions to immediately comply with all the needed requirements. Importantly, accreditation process should be simplified and facilitated and that priority should be given to provinces that do not have accredited testing centers.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives strongly urge the DOH to prioritize, hasten and facilitate the accreditation of the Cagayan Valley Medical Center (CVMC) as licensed COVID-19 testing center and all government tertiary hospitals in the country including other public health facilities that are capable and/or qualified to administer COVID-19 testing.

Adopted,



JOSEPH "JOJO" L. LARA