



**UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS
ASSOCIATION
COUNCIL**
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**A Resolution to Call for a Congressional Hearing on
Human Rights Violations in the Philippines**

SPONSORS:

Kimberly Bonifacio, Internal Vice President
Eduardo Velazquez, General Representative
Johana Guerra, External Vice President

WHEREAS according to the 2005 census, the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) hosts more than 1,178¹ Filipino undergraduates and graduates. In 2019, the numbers have doubled, not including the service workers of Filipino descent, many of whom continue to have family and maintain close ties with the Philippines; and

WHEREAS the registered student organization Anakbayan UCLA, a Filipino youth and student organization that aims to educate, organize, and mobilize Filipino students, workers, national minorities, and women towards genuine freedom and democracy; and

WHEREAS there is a long history of solidarity and intersectionality between the Filipino community and student groups and allies including international students, residents on the hill, and many Filipino students that are either directly impacted or concerned about the plight of those victims of the Philippine government's drug war and martial law in Mindanao; and

WHEREAS students are impacted by this issue from the hundreds of millions of U.S. tax dollars supplied to the Philippine government's human rights violations, instead of students education; many working Filipino students and international students are devastated from the high cost of tuition and student loan debt, causing anxiety and other mental health issues due to the precarious financial instability as well as the constant fear for the safety and security of their

¹ Susan Kim, "Academic Achievement of Second Generation Filipino and Korean Americans: A Look at Immigrant Families and Communities" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2006), 10.

family members in the Philippines, ultimately affecting their retention and overall well-being;
and

WHEREAS Filipino working students and their families are dismayed by the United States inauguration of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte’s war on drugs by giving \$26.5 million U.S. taxpayer money to the Philippine police in the name of “counter-terrorism” and “anti-narcotics” activities; the amount has exceeded \$108.2 million for fiscal year 2019 through a program called Operation Pacific Eagle that is exempt from congressional limits on spending²;
and

WHEREAS U.S. taxpayer money to the Philippines should be spent on social services, housing, education, and healthcare rather than military aid, including weapons and aerial surveillance, to the Philippine military and police; and

WHEREAS The Trump administration supports the strong-arm rule of Philippine President Duterte, whose brutal drug war and other anti-people campaigns have taken the lives of over 29,000 urban poor, workers, indigenous and environmental activists, human rights defenders, religious leaders, and peace advocates³; and

WHEREAS Philippine government agencies themselves report 4,948 suspected drug users and dealers, including 60 children, died during police operations from July 1, 2016, to September 30, 2018, and, according to the Human Rights Watch, the Philippine National Police (PNP) has reported that a total of 22,983 deaths have been classified as “homicides under investigation,” since the “war on drugs” began⁴; and

WHEREAS the language for Foreign Military Financing to the Armed Forces Philippines (AFP) in the House Appropriations Bill of 2019 states that “Extrajudicial killings in the Philippines, including those committed in the conduct of the anti-drug campaign, erode confidence in the Government of the Philippines’ commitment to human rights, due process, and the rule of law”⁵;
and

WHEREAS Maria Ressa, a U.S.-born Filipina journalist and one of *Time* magazine’s Persons of the Year in 2018, has been continually harassed and arrested for her continued critical reporting

² <https://fpif.org/its-time-to-end-u-s-military-aid-to-the-philippines/>

³ <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/philippines-duterte-data/>

⁴ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/philippines>

⁵ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/philippines>

on Duterte’s drug war and the breakdown of democracy in the Philippines, and who recently met with Facebook and Twitter regarding the use of their platforms by the Duterte regime to spread misinformation and harass critics⁶; and

WHEREAS on April 23, 2019, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously passed the resolution to support this campaign on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 190423⁷.

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED That the 2019-20 Undergraduate Students Associated Council (USAC) urges Representative and UCLA alumni Brad Sherman—who sits on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and is the Chair of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and Nonproliferation—to call for a congressional hearing on the human rights situation in the Philippines and the impact of U.S. aid to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Philippine National Police (PNP).

LET IT BE RESOLVED That the USAC supports the usage of U.S taxpayer money to the Philippines on social services, housing, education, and healthcare instead of military aid, including weapons and aerial bombs and surveillance, to the Philippines military and police.

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED That the USAC unequivocally condemns Duterte’s Drug War in all forms and stands with the Filipino community on and off campus.

LET IT BE FINALLY RESOLVED That the USAC reiterates its commitment to fighting against imperialism, extrajudicial killings, and intolerance at UCLA and beyond, through convening with Anakbayan and the masses, in order to build solidarity and discuss the human rights violations in the Philippines.

Resolution passed 5/28/2019.

⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/28/business/media/maria-ressa-arrested-philippines-rappler.html>

⁷ <https://sfgov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3924965&GUID=51A9F2A2-61E6-4F6C-8968-6ECBAEB5F3FC>