

## Senator Pimentel Calls for Stricter Gun Control - MabuhayRadio

Written by Senator Pimentel's Press Office

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Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr. (PDP-Laban) today reiterated the urgency of stricter gun control as one of the measures to curb criminality. He prodded Congress to approve immediately the imposition of stiffer penalties for violators of the gun ban in the wake of the murder of eight bank employees and a customer in the robbery of the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. in Cabuyao, Laguna, and the massacre of eight persons by a farm caretaker in Calamba City.

He rejected a move by some lawmakers for the revival of the death penalty for heinous crimes.

“The death penalty has never been a deterrent to crime. Criminals are not deterred by the severity of punishment. They are deterred by the efficiency of law enforcement and certainty of punishment by the courts,” said Senator Pimentel, who was a principal author of the law that repealed the death penalty and the imposition of life imprisonment as the maximum punishment.

Mr. Pimentel asked the Senate leadership to prioritize Senate Bill 278, he filed since the 13th Congress, which regulates the carrying of firearms outside residences, or military-police camps. The bill penalizes violators with imprisonment for six to 10 years and/or a fine of P20,000 to P100,000.

Senator Pimentel said guns have been used in slaying cases that arose out of the slightest perceived provocation, traffic altercation, parking-space scuffle, gambling dispute or even a conversation gone sour.

Without a valid permit to carry firearms, the bill prohibits any person from carrying the same even if licensed anywhere outside of his residence, military/police camp or station and sports facility.

The bill provides that the carrying of firearms shall be authorized only for those directly and primarily engaged in military, police and law-enforcement functions, and for those specifically authorized under this legislation.

“While the proposal does not intend to prohibit the ownership and possession of licensed firearms by the general public, it limits the circumstances under which a private individual may

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take his or her firearm outside his residence,” Senator Pimentel explained.

The bill takes cognizance of the fact that the firearms held or owned by civilians is for the defense or self-preservation purposes. However, it also stresses that the defense of the life, liberty and property of the public is principally for the State to provide.

The Pimentel bill provides that firearms shall be carried only outside of one's residence by those directly and primarily engaged in military, police and law-enforcement functions, and for those specifically authorized under this legislation. It provides that any police or military officer who holds a firearm shall carry his gun only when he is in full uniform of his position or rank in the military, police or law-enforcement agency; or he is in actual performance of official duty and assignment directly related to his job.

In filing the bill, Senator Pimentel said gun-slating has arisen out of the slightest perceived provocation, traffic altercation, parking space scuffle, gambling dispute or even a conversation gone sour.

“None of these would have led to fatal consequences if none of the parties involved in the dispute or incident carried or possessed a firearm during the precise moment of unrestrained anger or passion,” he said.

In the case of the massacre in Hornalan Village, Calamba City, Sunday, the suspected triggerman, Adan Fiesta, took out his M-16 (Armalite) rifle from the farmhouse and fired upon the victims at their homes out of anger for being the butt of jokes of one of the victims during a drinking spree. # #

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