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## Solons seek inquiry on Arroyos' SALN

By Carmela Fonbuena, abs-cbnNEWS.com/Newsbreak  
Posted at 09/01/2009 10:10 PM

MANILA - After series of controversies on the wealth of the First Family, party list representatives in Congress urged for an inquiry on the "reliability" of the Statement of Assets and Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) in showing the "real worth" of public officials and employees.

House Resolution 1358 was filed on Tuesday by Bayan Muna representatives Teodoro Casino and Satur Ocampo, and Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza to direct the House committee on good government and public accountability to conduct the inquiry.

"It is high time for Congress to scrutinize the system of reporting of the SALN and to determine whether or not drafting a new law is necessary to ensure that all civil servants stick to the basic rule of utmost transparency when submitting their SALNs," the resolution said.

### Mikey reacts

Presidential son and Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo belittled the initiative.

In a text message to ABS-CBN NEWS, the eldest son of President Arroyo said, "What's there to legislate about a SALN? There is no middle ground. An untrue SALN is illegal unless amended. People might say they will just use this as a forum to grandstand. Besides, why pick on my family? The supposed inquiry must be applicable to public officials," he said.

Rep. Mikey is a subject of HB 1358.

He dismissed the move for a congressional inquiry as just a venue that for the Palace critics to "grandstand."

### SALN of 3 Arroyos

Two back-to-back stories by investigative groups Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) and Vera Files recently alleged irregularities in the SALNs of President Arroyo and his two children who are also in public office: Pampanga Rep. Mikey and Camarines Sur Rep. Diosdado Ignacio "Dato" Arroyo.

**PCIJ reported** on the "glaring discrepancies" in the SALNs of President Arroyo since 1992. It showed that the President grew her net worth from P6.73 million in 1992 to a staggering P60.07 million or an increase of 890% increase.

A recent **Vera Files article** on Arroyo's sons followed weeks after. Vera Files highlighted that Rep. Mikey **failed to declare** a P63.7 million worth of property in San Francisco Bay Area in California, USA. Both Mikeys and Dato's SALNs did not explain how they accumulated their wealth, which grew after they were elected into office.

"The PCIJ and Vera Files reports only emphasize that even with a law on the SALN, public officials, including the President herself and her two congressmen sons, are not inclined to make true and detailed declarations of their assets, liabilities, and net worth," HB 1358 said.

"Such reports emphasize further that the SALNs are highly prone to distortions and, as such, cannot serve as reliable means to find evidences of graft and corrupt practices, and illegal enrichment among public officials and employees," said the resolution. - **by Carmela Fonbuena, abs-cbnNEWS.com/Newsbreak, with a report from RG Cruz, ABS-CBN News**

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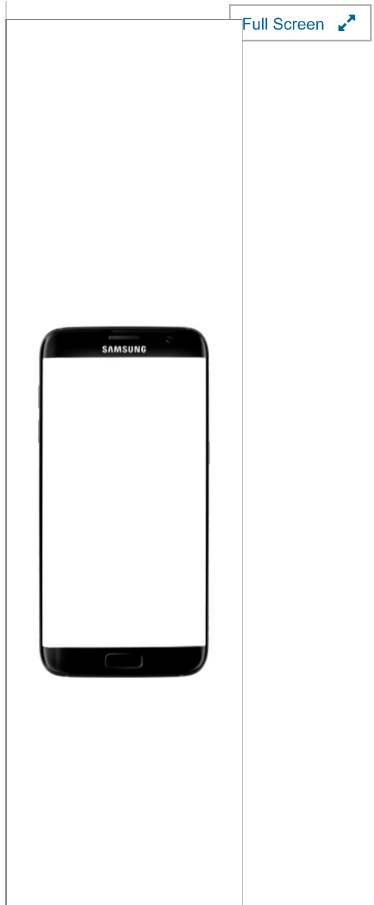
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