



PAMBANSANG SAMAHAN NG MGA NARS NG PILIPINAS, INC.

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A MEMO TO P-NOY ON HIS SECOND YEAR FROM HIS 'BOSS' AND PARTNER IN NATION-BUILDING

In your recent SONA, you cited the nurse by exhorting the Filipino patient to thank the home-based nurse for choosing to serve in the country rather than work abroad where the pay is higher and the rewards are more. While heartwarming, we say, nurses who are rendering critical service especially public health nurses who serve the poor and the marginalized, deserve more than a simple thank you. You, in fact, as the highest leader of the land should manifest gratitude for the nurses who stayed put to man the house, so to speak, while the others seek greener pastures abroad. In fact, your kind but patronizing remark subtly deflects state responsibility to promote the general well-being of the nurse in particular and maintain quality health service for the nation, in general, both reeling from declining state support and subsidy.

If we may be candid, along with the rest of the working class whose labor create the nation's wealth, we hardly felt like the "boss" that we supposedly are. Our salaries remained at starvation levels and benefits that are legally mandated are not implemented at all. Health, in fact, has received less and less government subsidy through the years including last year on your first term as president.

You assert to be anything but ... compared with the previous administration, yet we do not feel better off with our wages kept low while prices go up. Even the Nursing Law of 2002 that recognized the important role of the nurse, especially government nurses at the forefront of the health delivery system, by granting the latter a decent entry level salary at Salary Grade 15 equivalent to a little less than P25,000, remain monthballed for 9 years until now. For this gross and willful disregard of a sacred covenant that former PGMA signed with the nurses, must not P-noy exert more political will to right an injustice perpetrated for the longest time to his "partners in nation-building"?

For and in behalf of the Filipino nurses:

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