

Committee Daily Bulletin



17th Congress
First Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. I No. 124
June 20, 2017

COMMITTEE MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Good Government and Public Accountability	HR 882	Majority Leader Fariñas	Inquiry into the use by the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte of its shares from the excise taxes on locally manufactured Virginia-type cigarettes or the Special Support Fund under RA 7171 for a purpose other than those provided for by the said law, in its highly irregular purchase of motor vehicles made through cash advances without the benefit of public biddings for the total amount of P66.45 million	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur), will continue its inquiry relative to HR 882 in another meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Pimentel read the letter of Rep. Imelda Marcos (2nd District, Ilocos Norte) who appealed on humanitarian grounds for the temporary release of the six employees of the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte from detention in a facility in the House of Representatives. The six were detained after being cited for contempt for their refusal to answer properly the queries of the House Members during the May 29 meeting of the Committee.</p> <p>Rep. Pimentel maintained that the six employees would only be released once they are ready to give truthful answers to questions in connection with the alleged misuse of tobacco funds and irregularities in the purchase of several vehicles amounting to P66.45 million.</p> <p>In today's hearing, the detained employees continued to keep mum about the issues raised, invoking their right against self-incrimination and requesting that they be represented by a counsel of their choice.</p> <p>Commission on Audit (COA) Supervising Auditor Cornelio Viernes said that based on the audit observation memorandum (AOM) he submitted to the Committee, the copies of disbursement vouchers, purchase requests and checks are "faithful reproduction" of the original documents he reviewed in connection with his audit of the purchase of five buses, 40 minicabs, and 70 mini trucks made by the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte in 2011-2012.</p> <p>Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas (1st District, Ilocos Norte) asserted that the six Ilocos Norte employees will remain in detention at the House until they cooperate with the lawmakers, notwithstanding the ruling of the Court of Appeals (CA) granting the employees' petition for bail.</p>

Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability				<p>Reps. Reynaldo Umali (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro) and Doy Leachon (1st District, Oriental Mindoro) stressed that the CA has no jurisdiction over the decision of the House to detain the six employees, citing the principle of separation of powers between Congress and the Judiciary. They also emphasized that Congress is coequal with the Supreme Court and not the CA, which is lower in the hierarchy.</p> <p>The Committee unanimously approved the motion to issue a show cause order against the three CA justices - Stephen Cruz, Erwin Sorongon and Nina Antonino-Valenzuela - who ruled favorably on the petition filed by the six detained employees, to explain why they should not be cited for contempt for issuing the order to release the detainees.</p> <p>The CA granted the detained employees' petition for bail after the House of Representatives ignored the <i>writ of habeas corpus</i> and show cause order issued by the CA. It also ordered House Sergeant-at-Arms Roland Detabali to explain why he should not be cited for contempt for ignoring the CA's June 9 ruling to present the detained employees before the court.</p> <p>The Committee also decided to issue a subpoena <i>duces tecum</i> to the manager of the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) branch in Laoag, Ilocos Norte and to the Philippine Clearing House Corporation (PCHC) to compel them to submit copies of the checks involved in the legislative inquiry.</p>
--	--	--	--	--

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Health (Technical Working Group)	Substitute Bill to HBs 225, 1975, 5120 & 5560	Reps. Roque, Santos-Recto, Salo, and Tan (A.)	Providing universal healthcare for all Filipinos, and appropriating funds therefor, repealing for the purpose all laws on the national health insurance program	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Committee Secretary Ma. Lourdes Sanchez, will deliberate further on the substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>The TWG had an extensive discussion of all the provisions of the bill.</p> <p>Among those who presented their recommendations to the proposed law were Dr. Beverly Lorraine Ho, chief of the Department of Health's (DOH) Research Division on Health and Policy Development and Planning; Nerissa Santiago, OIC-Senior Vice President for Actuarial Services and Risk Management Sector and concurrent Vice President of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth); Lemuel Untalan, senior manager of the Corporate Planning Department of PhilHealth; and Attorney Renato Cameron III, supervising bill drafter of</p>

Continuation... Health (Technical Working Group)				<p>the Reference and Research Bureau (RRB) of the House of Representatives (HRep).</p> <p>However, as for some provisions of the bill, the representatives of the DOH and PhilHealth asked for more time to submit their recommendations as they need to discuss them first with their respective principals.</p> <p>The TWG acceded and gave the DOH and PhilHealth not later than June 28, 2017 to submit their comments and recommendations.</p>
Natural Resources (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to HB 678	Rep. Eriguel	Allowing the titling of alienable and disposable lands within the strip of land five kilometers from either side of the Aspiras Highway, formerly known as Marcos Highway, from Agoo, La Union to Baguio City, amending for the purpose Proclamation 1754	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by LPGMA Party-List Rep. Arnel Ty, agreed to deliberate further on the draft substitute bill.</p> <p>The regional offices of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Region I and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) were requested to conduct a protected area suitability assessment (PASA) of the subject alienable and disposable lands and submit the same to the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), a staff bureau under the DENR.</p> <p>PASA is a screening and evaluation process which determines the suitability or unsuitability of areas for inclusion in the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS). It involves the gathering, compilation and analysis of relevant information on the biophysical and socio-economic characteristics and other environmental features of the protected area. (Source: DENR website)</p>
	HB 2573	Rep. Rodriguez (M.)	Declaring certain portions of Cagayan de Oro City, to be known as the Cagayan de Oro-Iponan watershed, as a protected area under the category of protected landscape and its peripheral areas as buffer zone, providing for its management	<p>The TWG deferred its deliberation on HB 2573.</p> <p>Rep. Ty requested the BMB to submit its position paper on the bill.</p>
	HBs 143 & 3486	Reps. Acosta-Alba and Escudero	Providing for the delineation of the specific forest limits of the public domain	The TWG agreed to adopt the Senate bill with a similar subject matter filed during the 16 th Congress as the Substitute Bill to HBs 143 and 3486.

OTHER MATTERS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Sustainable Development Goals (Special Committee)	Knowledge exchange visit regarding the experience of the Philippines in mainstreaming the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in the legislative arena	The Special Committee on Sustainable Development Goals hosted the knowledge exchange visit of the delegates from the Ministry of Planning and Finance of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with a briefing on the Philippine Congress' experience in mainstreaming the SDGs in the legislative arena as part of the exchange program.

<p><i>Continuation...</i> Sustainable Development Goals (Special Committee)</p>		<p>Director Lina Mortega of the Committee Technical Support Service (CTSS) I of the Committee Affairs Department (CAD), House of Representatives, welcomed the delegates to the House.</p> <p>CAD Executive Director Violeta Veloso discussed the efforts being undertaken by the Philippine House of Representatives in mainstreaming the SDGs. She specifically mentioned the workshop conducted by the House Secretariat in 2016, wherein experts from various fields were invited as resource speakers to present policy recommendations relevant to the 17 SDGs set by the United Nations.</p> <p>The output of the workshop was a book entitled “Development to Broaden Freedom in Philippine Society: Strengthening the Policy Infrastructures for Communal Peace and Security, National Productivity, and Social Justice.” This book is a useful guide for incoming legislators of the 17th Congress as it contains evidence-based information on legislative measures that are deemed more responsive to the needs of the people.</p> <p>Veloso also cited several laws that were passed by Congress which were in keeping with the SDGs. She also discussed the function of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC) in determining the priority agenda for both the legislative and executive branches of the government and in facilitating the realization of the country’s goals.</p> <p>On the part of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Planning and Finance, its representative Wai Wai Shein presented the Ministry’s functions and organizational structure.</p> <p>UNDP Economic Specialist for Asia and the Pacific Scott Standley expressed his gratitude to the House of Representatives for hosting the exchange visit.</p> <p>The delegates, with the support of UNDP, will also be visiting other government agencies as part of their knowledge exchange visit to the country.</p>
---	--	---