

<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>		<p>Urdaneta also discussed TESDA's reform and development agenda for the next six years and beyond, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barangay Scholarship Program; • On-line Scholarship Application; • Technical Audit of Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Schools and Programs; • Skills Training Programs for Drug Dependents, for Entrepreneurs and Family Enterprises, and for Inmates and their Families; • Inclusive Training Program for Women; • Continuing Program for TESDA Alumni; • Global Access to/On-line Database of TVET Graduates and Certified Workers; • Linkages with Agro-Industry; • Linkages with State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs); • Linkages with Foreign Skills Training Institutions; • Transparency; and • Moral Renewal. <p>Rep. Rodante Marcoleta (Party-List, SAGIP) inquired about the reason for the delay in the implementation of the TESDA Roadmap, which seeks to advance technical vocational education as an anti-poverty measure and an intervention for employability. Urdaneta replied that there had been problems on coordination among partner agencies and concerned stakeholders in the finalization of the roadmap and constraints in the procurement process. (The TESDA Roadmap covers the period 2014-2016.)</p> <p>On the steps being undertaken by the TESDA relative to the full implementation of the K to12 Program, Urdaneta reported that more schools were accredited by TESDA to accommodate senior high school students who will take the technical-vocational livelihood track. She added that TESDA is also improving its schools' facilities.</p> <p>Urdaneta said that TESDA is working out an agreement with the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) for the conduct of skills training for jail inmates, especially those arrested for illegal drug use or peddling.</p> <p>Rep. Sambar requested the TESDA to submit to the Committee a list of its plantilla positions based on its proposed 2017 budget, and a list of TESDA-accredited schools per district before the deliberation of its budget in the plenary.</p>
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ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	Approval of the Committee's Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), adopted its Rules of Procedure for the 17th Congress.</p> <p>The Committee, presently composed of 113 members, has general jurisdiction over all matters directly and principally relating to the expenditures of the national government including payment of public indebtedness, creation or abolition and classification of positions in government, and the determination of salaries, allowances and benefits of government personnel.</p>
Revision of Laws	Approval of the Committee's Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Marlyn Primicias-Agabab (6th District, Pangasinan), adopted its Rules of Procedure for the 17th Congress.</p> <p>Rep. Primicias-Agabab reported the Committee's accomplishments</p>

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Appropriations	HB 3408	Rep. Nograles (K.A.)	Appropriating funds for the operation of the government of the Republic of the Philippines from January 1 to December 31, 2017	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), approved the Committee Report on HB 3408 (FY 2017 General Appropriations Bill).</p> <p>Rep. Nograles announced that the plenary deliberations on HB 3408 will start on September 26. The Committee's Vice Chairpersons will sponsor the budget of government departments/agencies assigned to them.</p>
Justice	HBs 1, 16, 513, 3237, 3239 3240 & 3418	Reps. Castro (F.H.), Biazon, Barbers & Pacquiao	Imposing the death penalty on certain heinous crimes	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Reynaldo Umali (2 nd District, Oriental Mindoro), agreed to consolidate the seven bills using HB 1 as the working draft.
	HBs 2, 505, 1609 & 2009	Reps. Castro (F.H.), Yap (V.), Cagas & Acop	Amending certain provisions of RA 9344, otherwise known as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006	The Committee agreed to consolidate the four bills using HB 2 as the working draft.
	HR 105	Speaker Alvarez	Investigation into the proliferation of drug syndicates at the National Bilibid Prison (NBP)	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 105 and will present the testimonies of the remaining witnesses relative to the proliferation of drug syndicates at the NBP in its next meeting.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Umali clarified that this inquiry is aimed at addressing the issue on the proliferation of illegal drug syndicates inside the NBP and not about Senator Leila de Lima.</p> <p>Rep. Umali underscored the importance of conducting this investigation in order to gather facts that will guide the Committee in coming up with recommendations that will result in either a remedial or amendatory law. The investigation likewise seeks to determine who are culpable for the proliferation of illegal drug trade and drug syndicates inside the NBP in order "to regain the trust and confidence of the Filipino people in the country's criminal justice system."</p> <p>Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) Director Wilkins Villanueva presented the 2012 United Nations (UN) Drug Report which found that the Philippines has the highest rate of <i>shabu</i> use in Southeast Asia. According to Villanueva, the increase in the number of drug convicts being held in the NBP has also contributed to the proliferation of drug syndicates in the facility.</p> <p>Department of Justice (DOJ) Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II presented a video produced by</p>

Continuation... Justice				<p>Discovery Channel featuring the life of gangs in the Philippines, including that of Jaybee Sebastian, a high-profile inmate at the NBP who was allegedly being protected by Senator De Lima when she was Justice Secretary, as claimed by some witnesses.</p> <p>Four of the six witnesses presented by Aguirre were able to give their testimonies regarding their knowledge of and involvement with the syndicates inside the NBP. They all requested that they be given immunity from any lawsuit in connection with their testimonies and be admitted to the Witness Protection Program (WPP) pursuant to RA 6981 or the Witness Protection, Security and Benefit Act.</p> <p>Former Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Inspector and convicted kidnapper Rodolfo Magleo narrated in detail his involvement in the Sebastian Gang, his knowledge of the real reason behind the transfer of the so-called Bilibid 19 (high-profile inmates in NBP) to the custody of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), and how Ronnie Dayan, Senator De Lima's former bodyguard and driver, allegedly took part in collecting payoffs from Sebastian and the other gang leaders in 2011.</p> <p>NBI Intelligence Officer Jovencio Ablen Jr. revealed that he was, on two occasions, asked by former Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) Officer-in-Charge (OIC) Rafael Ragos to accompany him in delivering bags filled with cash to Senator De Lima's residence. The bags were, on both occasions, allegedly received by Dayan. He also claimed that Ragos once asked him to require gang leaders in the NBP to produce a weekly "quota" of P100,000.</p> <p>Ragos confirmed the statements of Ablen, except the one about the P100,000.00 weekly quota.</p> <p>Herbert Colanggo, another high-profile inmate at the NBP who has been in prison since 2009, recounted his meetings and transactions with a certain Jeonel Sanchez who was allegedly working for Sen. De Lima.</p> <p>On the query raised by Rep. Robert "Ace" Barbers (2nd District, Surigao del Norte) if there are shabu laboratories inside the NBP, Colanggo replied in the negative.</p> <p>Majority Floor Leader Rodolfo Fariñas (1st District, Ilocos Norte) asked the DOJ what it intends to do after gathering the testimonies of the witnesses.</p> <p>Aguirre emphasized that the DOJ will definitely press charges against those involved. He added that the DOJ is also working with the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) for the opening of bank records of the suspects in an effort to gather more evidences to further strengthen the cases.</p> <p>Aguirre recommended the amendment of RA 4200 or the Anti-Wiretapping Law to help the government in its efforts to address the drug</p>
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Revision of Laws	HB 315	Deputy Speaker Garcia	Amending Article 75 of Title IV of Executive Order (EO) 209, as amended by EO 227, otherwise known as the Family Code of the Philippines	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Marlyn Primicias-Agabas (6th District, Pangasinan), approved the 10 bills.</p> <p>Rep. Primicias-Agabas informed the Committee members that all the 10 measures are refiled bills, which were approved on third reading during the 16th Congress.</p>
	HB 335	Rep. Primicias-Agabas	Authorizing the courts to require community service in lieu of imprisonment for the penalty of <i>arresto menor</i> , amending for the purpose Chapter 5, Title 3, Book I of Act No. 3815, amended, otherwise known as the Revised Penal Code	
	HBs 336 & 2212	Rep. Primicias-Agabas and Deputy Speaker Macapagal-Arroyo	Excluding from the application of the Indeterminate Sentence Law those convicted of criminal offenses against a minor, amending for the purpose Act No. 4103, otherwise known as the Indeterminate Sentence Law	
	HB 477	Rep. Sy-Alvarado	Declaring January 23 of every year a special working holiday in the entire country to commemorate the declaration of the first Philippine Republic	
	HB 1344	Rep. Acop	Prescribing for stricter penalties on the crime of delivering prisoners from jail and infidelity in the custody of prisoners, amending for the purpose Articles 156, 223, and 224 Act No. 3815, as amended, otherwise known as the Revised Penal Code of the Philippines	
	HB 1638	Deputy Speaker Garcia	Providing for additional requirements for male citizens or subjects of a foreign country desiring to marry a Filipina thereby amending Article 221 of EO 209, otherwise known as the Family Code of the Philippines	
	HB 2055	Rep. Defensor	Establishing estate settlement courts, granting them exclusive original jurisdiction over cases for settlement of estate of deceased persons, amending Batas Pambansa Bilang 129, as amended	
	HB 2916	Rep. Escudero	Increasing the penalties for the crime of slander by deed and including the intentional filing of a false complaint in	

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	HB 3177	Rep. Escudero	Penalizing influence peddling	
Ways and Means	HBs 20, 39, 57,103, 333, 403, 411, 466, 562, 1536, 1601, 1604, 1656, 1657, 1696, 1945, 2347, 2544 & 3259	Deputy Speaker Quimbo, Reps. Yap (A), Tinio, Tan (A), Zarate, Abellanosa, Tiangco, Dep. Speaker Abu, Reps. Castelo, Herrera-Dy, Baguilat, Angara-Castillo, Rodriguez (M.), Santos-Recto, Deputy Speaker Macapagal-Arroyo, Reps. Pineda and Aglipay-Villar	Restructuring the income tax imposed on individuals, amending for the purpose certain provisions of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997, as amended	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, will deliberate further on the 25 house bills in its next meeting.</p> <p>The Members agreed on the necessity to lower income tax rates, to simplify tax administration, and to capture in the tax net more professionals, self-employed individuals, and micro and small enterprises.</p> <p>Department of Finance (DOF) Undersecretary Karl Kendrick Chua said that the Department's proposal to restructure the country's individual income tax system involves increasing the income tax rate from 32% to 35% for wage earners receiving above P5 million per annum; while exempting low-income earners from the payment of income tax.</p>
	HBs 35, 137, 295, 1950, 2427 & 3360	Reps. Del Mar, Noel, Suansing (H), Santos-Recto, Javier & Dep. Speaker Garin	Restructuring the income taxes imposed on individuals and corporations, amending for the purpose certain provisions of the NIRC of 1997, as amended	<p>Chua explained that this proposed tax structure is meant to compensate for estimated revenue losses of up to P173 billion that the government will incur in the course of the implementation of the tax reform law. The DOF and its attached agencies are also studying other measures to offset the projected revenue losses such as expanding the coverage of the value-added tax (VAT), imposing excise tax on refined fuels, and revisiting the tax incentive programs of the government, he further said.</p> <p>Rep. Prospero Pichay (1st District, Surigao del Sur) expressed his concern about increasing income taxes as it will also increase the prices of commodities thereby affecting the poorer sector of society that the proposed law aims to protect.</p> <p>Expressing the same sentiment, Rep. Luis Raymund "LRay" Villafuerte, Jr. (2nd District, Camarines Sur) said that increasing the taxes will discourage investors from establishing their business in the country.</p> <p>Atty. Benedict Tugonon, president of the Tax Management Association of the Philippines (TMAP), stated that the Philippines imposes the second highest tax rate in the ASEAN region at 32%, next to Vietnam and Thailand at 35%. However, the Philippines' 32% tax rate is drawn from a very low taxable income base of P500,000 per annum, as against Vietnam and Thailand, which apply the 35% tax rate on individuals with an annual income of P2 million and P5.2 million (in equivalent currency), respectively.</p> <p>Tugonon recommends the following income tax</p>

Continuation... Ways and Means				<p>brackets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual income of not over P300,000 - exempted from income tax; • Annual income of over P300,000 to not over P500,000 - 10% tax rate in excess of P300,000; • Annual income of over P500,000 to not over P1 million - 20% in excess of P500,000 plus P20,000 fixed tax; • Annual income of over P1 million to not over P2.5 million - 25% in excess of P1 million plus P120,000 fixed tax; and • Annual income of over P2.5 million-30% in excess of P2.5 million plus P495,000 fixed tax. <p>Supporting the TMAP’s proposal, Rep. Angelina “Helen” Tan (4th District, Quezon) said it reflects the intention of the bills lowering individual income tax rates currently referred to the Committee.</p> <p>TMAP is a group of tax consultants and corporate tax practitioners in the country.</p> <p>Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay), underscored the need to amend the NIRC explaining that the 20-year old law’s income tax brackets are no longer effective considering the increases in wages and salaries of individual earners over time. He added that the unadjusted tax brackets have resulted to a “bracket creep,” wherein middle-income earners are pushed up the bracket for high-income earners resulting in lesser take-home pays for the former.</p> <p>Rep. Cua requested the DOF to submit its tax proposal within the week. The DOF also committed to submit the following information to the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax leakages by source (i.e., value-added tax, customs, legal exemptions); • Projected revenue impact of the tax proposals (including the parameters used in the computation) and the tax incidences; and • Bureau of Internal Revenue data on taxpayers. <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit their respective position papers.</p>
	HB 3187	Rep. Cua	Mandating the government to provide an additional amount of capital gains tax due in the just compensation for the sale of property in the exercise of the State’s power of eminent domain, amending for the purpose Section 24 (D) of Republic Act 8424, as amended	<p>The Committee approved with amendment HB 3187, incorporating therein the suggestion of Rep. Lianda Bolilia (4th District, Batangas) to include the amount of documentary stamp tax due, in addition to the amount of capital gains tax due, in the payment of just compensation to the owner of the expropriated property.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to prepare the substitute bill.</p>