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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Health	HBs 104, 233, 504, 1505 & 1968	Reps. Tan (A.), Marcoleta, Yap (V.), Alejano & Suansing	Establishing a free basic medicine assistance program in all government health facilities nationwide and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan M.D., approved the consolidation of HBs 104, 233, 504, 1505 & 1968 and subsequently approved the corresponding Committee Report, subject to style and amendments.</p> <p>Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City) expressed doubt on the pronouncement of the Department of Health (DOH) that there are enough medicines available in all district hospitals that can be offered for free to qualified recipients.</p> <p>DOH Assistant Secretary Francia Laxamana maintained that free medicines are available and accessible especially for the marginalized sectors. However, according to Laxamana, there are some criteria that need to be met in order to qualify for the free basic medicine assistance of the DOH.</p> <p>On the query of Biliran Rep. Rogelio Espina M.D. if patients in provincial hospitals can also avail themselves of the free medicine assistance and other health services provided by the DOH, Laxamana said that they can as long as the recipients belong to the marginalized sector based on the survey of poor households conducted by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).</p>
	HBs 1530, 2064 & 3157	Reps. Gonzales (A.), Villar & Alejano	Requiring government agencies to indicate the blood type of individuals in the identification cards, certificates and licences	The Committee approved the consolidation of HBs 1530, 2064 & 3157 and subsequently approved the corresponding Committee Report, subject to style and amendments.
	HBs 760, 761, 765, 875, 888, 899, 1340, 1662, 1805, 2512, 2928, 3105, 3358, 3564, 3643 & 3967	Reps. Aglipay-Villar, Espina, Tan (A.), Villaraza-Suarez, Villafuerte, Angara-Castillo, Eriguel, Montoro, Deputy Speaker Garin, Reps. Baguilat, Rodriguez (M.) & Antonio	Institutionalizing the first 1,000 days intervention package under the Universal Health Care Program and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the 16 bills.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Sandra Young Eriguel M.D. (2nd District, La Union).</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Acop if the DOH can comply with the required interventions under the proposed law to protect mothers and children from malnutrition during the first 1,000 days, Laxamana admitted that the DOH cannot do these things alone and needs the help and support of the stakeholders.</p> <p>On the scope of coverage of the proposed law, DOH Nutrition Officer Ma. Lourdes Vega said the DOH will give priority to provinces with the highest poverty incidence.</p>

Continuation... Health	HBs 338 & 447	Reps. Villarín & Belmonte (J.C.)	Increasing the penalties for the refusal of hospitals and medical clinics to administer appropriate initial medical treatment and support in emergency or serious cases, amending for the purpose BP 702, or the law prohibiting the demand of deposits or advance payments for the confinement or treatment of patients in hospitals and medical clinics in certain cases, as amended by RA 8344	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to consolidate HBs 338 and 447.</p> <p>Reps. Tom Villarín (Party-List, AKBAYAN) and Jose Christopher Belmonte (6th District, Quezon City), authors of HBs 338 and 447, respectively, explained that despite the passage of BP 702, there are still patients who are denied emergency medical care by hospitals or clinics on account of their inability to pay for the hospital deposit.</p>
	HBs 349, 584, 844, 1040, 1698, 3796 & 4101	Deputy Speakers Quimbo & Cayetano, Reps. Villarica, Salo, Nograles (K.A.), Baguilat and Roa-Puno	Promoting/advocating mental health, promulgating a national mental health policy towards the enhancement of integrated mental health services, promotion and protection of persons utilizing mental health services, and establishment of a Philippine Mental Health Council	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to consolidate the seven bills.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Biñan City Rep. Len Alonte-Naguilat.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit to the Committee their respective position papers on the bills.</p>
Government Reorganization jt. w/ Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources	HBs 426, 821, 1427, 1612, 1925, 2465, 2659, 2842, 3370 & 3860	Deputy Speaker Macapagal-Arroyo, Reps. Batocabe, Tupas, Villarín, Salimbangon, Yap (A.), Ramos, Baguilat, Rodríguez (M.), & Bag-ao	Creating the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DFAR), providing for its powers and functions	<p>The Joint Committee, co-presided by Rep. Virgilio Lacson (Party-List, MANILA TEACHERS), Vice Chair of the Committee on Government Reorganization, and Rep. Raul “Boboy” Tupas (5th District, Iloilo), Chair of the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to harmonize the 10 bills and to discuss issues and concerns relative to the creation of the DFAR.</p> <p>Rep. Benhur Salimbangon (4th District, Cebu), author of HB 1925 and former chair of the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources in the 16th Congress, recalled that in the public hearings his Committee conducted in Visayas and Mindanao, there were no objections raised relative to the proposed creation of the DFAR, except for the Department of Agriculture (DA). He said DA opined that detaching the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) from the DA would redound to billions of pesos in revenue losses for the DA, citing the fishing industry as a primary income source.</p> <p>Presidential Legislative Liason Office (PLLO) head, Atty. Adelino Sitoy, informed the Committee that consultations will be made with the DA, DBM, and the PNP Maritime Group before the PLLO comes up with its official position on the bills.</p> <p>On the budgetary requirement for the creation of the proposed department, DBM Bureau Director Ryan Lita said that the Joint Committee should consider the following factors in the deliberation of the bills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFAR has just recently been reorganized and new positions were created to strengthen the functions of the Bureau; • The proposed law would run counter to the new administration’s policy of streamlining the bureaucracy; and • The budgetary requirement for the creation of a new department would impact on the annual national budget.

Continuation... Government Reorganization jt. w/ Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources				<p>The DBM requested the Committee to give it ample time to study the budgetary implication of the proposed law and come up with its official stand on the matter.</p> <p>PNP Maritime Group Deputy Director for Administration Senior Superintendent Constantino Barot expressed his support for the bills but requested that the proposed creation of the DFAR will not diminish the powers of the PNP Maritime Group in the area of maritime security.</p>
Government Reorganization jt. w/ Overseas Workers Affairs	HBs 192, 227, 288, 543, 822, 1936, 2334 & 3255	Deputy Speaker Singson, Reps. Romero, Arenas, Yap (A.), Cojuangco, Bertiz & Aglipay- Villar	Establishing the Department of Overseas Filipino Workers (DOFW), defining its powers and functions, appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Joint Committee, co-presided by Rep. Virgilio Lacson (Party-List, MANILA TEACHERS), Vice Chair of the Committee on Government Reorganization, and Rep. Mariano Michael Velarde Jr. (Party-List, BUHAY), Chair of the Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to harmonize the eight bills and to discuss issues and concerns relative to the creation of the DOFW.</p> <p>The Joint Committee requested all stakeholders present to submit their position papers on the bills.</p> <p>Rep. Aniceto "John" Bertiz III (Party-List, ACTS-OFW) said that his bill, HB 192, seeks to build on President Duterte's campaign promise for a separate department for OFWs in order to ensure accountability and transparency, promote speedy, effective and more convenient services, and boost development through cohesive reintegration programs and family-oriented services for the OFWs.</p> <p>Presidential Legislative Liason Office (PLLO) head, Atty. Adelino Sitoy, reported that the executive department will convene a separate TWG to study the bills and come up with a report which will be submitted to the Joint Committee for consideration. The TWG shall be composed of representatives from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).</p> <p>DFA Office of Migrant Workers Executive Director Raul Dado said that the creation of the DOFW will diminish the powers of the DFA and may cause an overlapping of functions between the two departments.</p> <p>DOLE Secretary Silvestre Bello III said that his Department will first conduct consultations with stakeholders before it comes up with its official position on the proposed law.</p>

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Justice (Subcommittee on Judicial Reforms)	HB 3443	Rep. Primicias- Agabas	Creating an additional branch of the Regional Trial Court (RTC) in the First Judicial Region to be stationed in the Municipality of Asingan, Province of	The Subcommittee on Judicial Reforms, chaired by Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso (3 rd District, Leyte), agreed to report out HB 3443 to the mother Committee for its consideration

Continuation... Justice (Subcommittee on Judicial Reforms)			Pangasinan, further amending for the purpose Section 14, Paragraph (A) of BP 129, otherwise known as the Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980, as amended, and appropriating funds therefor	and approval. The bill shall also be referred to the Committee on Appropriations for review of its funding provision. A bill with similar subject matter was approved on Third Reading during the 16 th Congress.
	HB 4	Majority Leader Fariñas	Creating circuit criminal courts (CCCs), granting them exclusive original jurisdiction to try and decide certain criminal cases, amending BP 129, as amended, and appropriating funds therefor	The Subcommittee will deliberate further on HB 4 in its next meeting. Rep. Rodante Marcoleta (Party-List, SAGIP) proposed to revisit BP 129 issued in 1981, which abolished the CCCs. Rep. Rodel Batocabe (Party-List, AKO BICOL) underscored the need to revive the CCCs to declog the overloaded dockets of the RTCs, specifically cases involving illegal drug trade and drug use which are alarmingly increasing in number. The CCC proposed to be created under the proposed law shall have jurisdiction on cases involving violations of RA 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002. Asked by Rep. Batocabe on the number of drug-related cases that were filed with the RTCs, Atty. Alma Corazon Puncia of the Office of the Court Administrator of the Supreme Court (SC) said that there are 52,524 drug-related cases nationwide, with 24,193 cases filed in the National Capital Region (NCR). The SC and the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) were requested to submit to the Committee their position papers on the bill.
	HBs 1, 16, 513, 3237, 3239, 3240 & 3418	Deputy Speaker Castro, Reps. Biazon, Barbers & Pacquiao	Imposing the death penalty on certain heinous crimes, repealing for the purpose RA 9346, or the law prohibiting the imposition of death penalty in the Philippines and amending Act 3815, as amended, otherwise known as the Revised Penal Code and other special penal laws	The Subcommittee will deliberate further on the seven bills in its next meeting. The Secretary of the Department of Justice (DOJ), Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP), Chair of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), President of the Violence Against Crime and Corruption (VACC), and representatives from the Catholic Bishop Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG), Amnesty International, and other concerned non-government organizations (NGOs) will be invited in the Committee's next meeting on November 15, 2016.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)	Approval of the Committee's Rules of Procedure	The Committee, chaired by Mountain Province Rep. Maximo Dalog, adopted its Rules of Procedure for the 17 th Congress. The Committee has general jurisdiction over all matters directly and principally relating to policies and programs concerning the development of municipalities, cities, provinces and other local communities in the northwest Luzon area; and other actions to

<p>Continuation... North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)</p>		<p>promote growth and expand avenues of economic cooperation with contiguous areas.</p> <p>The Committee also created four subcommittees and designated the respective chairpersons, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcommittee on Region I – Rep. Pablo Ortega (1st District, La Union); • Subcommittee on Region II – Rep. Baby Aline Vargas-Alfonso (2nd District, Cagayan); • Subcommittee on CAR – Rep. Teddy Brawner Baguilat Jr. (Lone District, Ifugao); and • Subcommittee on Oversight – Rep. Christopher “Toff” Vera Perez De Venecia (4th District, Pangasinan). <p>The Members of the Committee agreed to file a resolution that will make district representatives of Regions I and II and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) automatic members of the Committee.</p>
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AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
<p>Labor and Employment</p>	<p>Briefing by the following agencies on the present state of Philippine labor, key issues in the implementation of labor laws, and policy proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Randolph Ting (3rd District, Cagayan), listened to the presentations of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).</p> <p>NEDA Deputy Director General Rosemarie Edillon reported the current employment status in the country and the results of the Labor Force Survey. She said that while unemployment rate targets set in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2011-2016 were achieved, the country still missed its targets with regard to reducing underemployment.</p> <p>Edillon went on to say that there is a need to reduce youth unemployment and underemployment rate in the agriculture sector; increase investments that will generate more jobs; and encourage more labor participation of women.</p> <p>On the issue of wage increase, Edillon apprised the Committee that based on NEDA’s study, the proposals for wage adjustments and making the minimum wage uniform across regions would adversely affect the economy, with the expected increase in inflation and unemployment rates, and decrease in gross domestic product (GDP). He said various economic managers have also expressed the same view as the NEDA.</p> <p>The agency instead recommended to strengthen the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board (RTWPB) and improve the process of wage-setting; promote the two-tiered wage system; encourage wage negotiations between labor and management; and avoid the politicization and arbitrariness in wage setting.</p> <p>NEDA also believes that the issue of contractualization should be viewed in the context of the overall challenges in the labor and business sectors.</p> <p>On the business side, Edillon said some jobs require contractual arrangement, particularly those that are seasonal/temporary and are on fixed-term project basis, where employment is time-bound. Outsourcing of non-core functions through contracts with service providers should likewise be seen as valid efficiency measures that boost the viability and competitiveness of firms. On the labor supply</p>

Continuation... Labor and Employment		The DOLE was requested to submit to the Committee an assessment of the top 1,000 employers to determine their level of compliance with the Philippine labor laws.
Legislative Franchises	<p>Briefing by the following agencies on their respective mandates, corporate trends and challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Franz “Chicoy” Alvarez (1st District, Palawan), listened to the presentations of the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).</p> <p>NTC Deputy Commissioner Edgardo Cabarios presented NTC’s mandates under the Radio Control Law (Act No. 3846, as amended), Public Service Act (Commonwealth Act 146), Public Communications Policy Act of 1995 (RA 7925), and Executive Order 546 series of 1979, among which are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage the radio spectrum; and Regulate and supervise the installation, operation and maintenance of radio and television broadcast stations, cable television (CATV), public telecommunications networks and services, direct-to-home/user (DTH), and pay television networks and services. <p>The NTC is attached to the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), a newly-created department in-charge of the overall development of ICT in the country.</p> <p>Cabarios explained that technological developments have led to the convergence of networks, wherein broadband networks carry all messages that used to be carried separately by telecommunications, broadcast and CATV and DTH networks. As a result, it is uncertain whether the broadband networks operated by public telecommunications entities (PTEs) can carry and offer all types of messages including the traditional broadcast messages (programs and contents).</p> <p>He also mentioned that the <i>Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas</i> (KBP) expressed strong objection to the use of the TV frequency bands by PTEs, but is open to the use of the TV white spaces (radio frequencies that are not used for few hours, days, weeks, months or years) for the free Wi-Fi project of the DICT.</p> <p>To ensure the quality of service provided by the telecommunications companies (telcos), Cabarios reported that the NTC conducts “mobile quality of service tests,” and a monthly measurement of internet or broadband speed delivered by the internet service providers using a rented speed test software agent.</p> <p>Based on the results of the broadband speed test, the average download speed for PLDT is 87.36% with 40 test locations, while Globe is 75.75% with 38 test locations. However, Cabarios disclosed that the results generated are not conclusive since the speed test software is just being tested and only few homeowners are willing to have their internet subscription connection tested.</p> <p>Sought to comment on the perceived slow internet connectivity provided by the telcos, NTC Commissioner Gamaliel Cordoba said it is due to the inadequate tower networks or cell sites, with only 15,000 all over the Philippines as compared to the 1.18 million in China; and the difficulty of telcos in securing permits from local government units (LGUs). Cordoba added that in the construction of one cell site, the telcos need 25-30 permits, which would usually take eight months to process.</p> <p>AKO BICOL Party-List Rep. Rodel Batocabe asked the NTC to conduct a study on the budget and the return of investment (ROI) for constructing government-owned cell sites, following the statement of Cordoba that in other countries, cell sites are owned by the government.</p>

<p>Continuation... Legislative Franchises</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) 	<p>The NTC was requested to submit a list of all the networks given authority to operate and their compliance status, and the result of the mobile quality of service test.</p> <p>SEC Legal Counsel Glysa Padlan discussed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of the primary and secondary franchise, mergers, consolidations, holding companies, and parent and subsidiary corporate relationship; • Effects of merger and consolidation; • Sale of companies with legislative franchises without Congress' approval; • Compliance with the required Filipino ownership of corporations; • Basis for determining the nationality of a corporation; and • Mandatory public offering of stocks of corporate grantees. <p>SEC is the national government regulatory agency mandated to supervise the corporate sector, capital market participants, securities and investment instruments market, and the investing public.</p>
<p>North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)</p>	<p>Briefing by the Road Board on its plans and programs for Regions I, II and III, and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Mountain Province Rep. Maximo Dalog, listened to the briefing conducted by the Road Board on its plans and programs for Regions I, II and III, and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR).</p> <p>Road Board Project Manager Ruby Socorro Romero apprised the Committee of the management and utilization of the motor vehicle user's charge (MVUC) fund.</p> <p>Pursuant to RA 8794, Romero said the MVUC Fund, which is collected from the owners of all types of motor vehicles including tricycles, motorized pedicabs and <i>trisikads</i>, is intended for road maintenance and improvement of road drainage; installation of adequate traffic light and road safety devices; and air pollution control. The MVUC Fund is placed in four special trust accounts, namely: Special Road Support Fund, 80%; Special Road Safety Fund, 7.5%; Special Vehicle Pollution Control Fund, 7.5%; and Special Local Road Fund, 5%.</p> <p>The Road Board is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring and overseeing the prudent and efficient management and utilization of these special funds. It is composed of seven members: the Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) as ex-officio head; the secretaries of the Departments of Finance (DOF), Budget and Management (DBM), and Transportation and Communications (DOTC) as ex-officio members; and three representatives from the transport and motor organization.</p> <p>Romero explained that the Board is currently being reorganized and so it is in the process of identifying the programs and projects that will be funded and implemented in 2017.</p> <p>On the suggestion to use solar street lights for its National Road Lighting Program (NRLP), Romero said that the Road Board is studying their sustainability, citing the pilferage of solar batteries in such street lighting projects of some local government units (LGUs).</p> <p>The Road Board was requested to submit to the Committee the list of programs and projects that will be funded using the MVUC Fund as soon as it is completed.</p>
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>Update by concerned government agencies on the air traffic situation at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA)</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, discussed the plans and programs of concerned government agencies designed to address air traffic congestion at the NAIA terminals and on the roads going to and from the airports especially during the Christmas season.</p>

<p>Continuation... Transportation</p>		<p>Rep. Sarmiento said the meeting aims to ensure that overbooking, delayed and canceled flights that were subject of numerous complaints from local and foreign passengers will not happen again.</p> <p>Octavio Lina, Assistant General Manager for Operations of the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA), assured the Committee that with MIAA's Oplan Pasko 2016, which will be enforced from December 19, 2016 to January 6, 2017, problems that will result from the substantial increase in the volume of passengers at the NAIA during the holiday season including possible security threats or terror attacks and the heavy vehicular traffic on the roads to and from the airports will be addressed. He added that the NAIA Expressway, which is now fully accessible and functional except for some additional ramp link projects, will also help decongest traffic in the areas near NAIA.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Sarmiento, Atty. Eldric Paul Peredo, chief of the Air Operating Rights Division of the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), said that out of 412 complaints filed with the Board, 156 have been resolved, 68% of which were decided in favor of airline passengers. He added that most of the complaints were about cancellation of flights and refund of airline tickets.</p> <p>Referring to the issuance of Department of Transportation (DOTr) Order No. 2016-019, Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City) inquired if the transfer of operations of small private aircraft to alternate gateways such as the Clark International Airport (CIA) and Sangley Airport in Cavite will make a dent in the effort to decongest NAIA considering that these aircraft only comprise 2% of the entire flight operations at the NAIA.</p> <p>DOTr Undersecretary Raoul Creencia said that it will help improve air traffic in NAIA because small private aircraft with six to 10 - passenger capacity observe the same flight queuing requirement as the commercial airlines serving 300 to 400 passengers.</p> <p>Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) Deputy Director General Manuel Antonio Tamayo supported Creencia's claim adding that since the implementation of the department order, flight delays have been minimized.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit their suggestions, statistics, and documents relevant to the issues and concerns raised.</p> <p>They were likewise requested to submit their respective position papers on the proposed "Traffic Crisis Act," which the Committee is also deliberating on.</p>
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