

Committee Daily Bulletin



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BUDGET BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	<p>Briefing on the proposed FY 2017 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments of the following government agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Agriculture (DA) and its attached agencies and corporations Agencies under the purview of the Cabinet Secretary, namely the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), National Food Authority (NFA), Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), and Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA) Office of the Ombudsman (OMB) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), listened to the presentation on the proposed FY 2017 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and its attached agencies and corporations; agencies under the purview of the Cabinet Secretary; and the Office of the Ombudsman (OMB).</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Magnolia Antonino (4th District, Nueva Ecija) sat as the presiding officer during the deliberation on the proposed budget of the DA and the agricultural bodies being handled by the Cabinet Secretary.</p> <p>Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol said that under the FY 2017 National Expenditure Program (NEP), the DA and its attached agencies and corporations will get a total of P50.55 billion, which is 6.34% lower than their current year's appropriation of P53.97 billion.</p> <p>Piñol underscored that the DA will pursue President Rodrigo Duterte's avowed policy of "providing available and affordable food for the Filipino people." The DA will likewise increase the income of farmers and fisherfolk and increase the resiliency of the agriculture sector to climate change.</p> <p>Among the priority legislative agenda and reform measures that the DA plans to pursue, Piñol said, are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a Free Irrigation Program; Creating the Coconut Industry Trust Fund; Instituting a National Land Use Policy; Institutionalizing an integrated urban agriculture and vertical farming in highly urbanized cities nationwide; Promoting the scientific propagation, processing, utilization and development of Philippine native animals; and Providing for a framework for the right to adequate food. <p>The DA responded to the queries raised by the Members of the Committee and agreed to submit its plans and programs in the Members' respective districts.</p> <p>Undersecretary Maria Clara Valdez presented to the Committee the proposed 2017 budget of the agencies under the purview of the Cabinet Secretary, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIA - P36.4 billion NFA - P5.1 billion PCA – P1.4 billion FPA – P112.3 million <p>She also apprised the Committee of the major accomplishments of these four agencies for the first semester of 2016, and their respective thrusts and priorities for 2017.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Doy Leachon (1st District, Oriental Mindoro) sat as the presiding officer during the deliberation on the budget of the OMB.</p> <p>Under the 2017 National Expenditure Program (NEP), the proposed budget of the OMB is P2.3 billion which is 11.45% higher than its current year's appropriation of P2.06 billion.</p>

<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>		<p>Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales said the proposed FY 2017 budget of the OMB shall be earmarked to finance the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensation adjustment for filled/unfilled positions for the first and second tranche pursuant to Executive Order 201; • Ongoing programs and projects; • Amortization of the land acquired from the National Housing Authority (NHA) amounting to P16.12 million; • Payment of pension of former Ombudsmen, Deputy Ombudsmen, and Special Prosecutors; • Terminal leave benefits of compulsory retirees for FY 2017 amounting to P5.19 million; and • Increase in the hazard duty pay of entitled personnel. <p>Carpio-Morales likewise highlighted the major accomplishments of the OMB in 2015, among which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6,730 criminal and administrative cases resolved from the combined workload of 14,058 cases; and • 821 administrative cases filed resulting in the imposition of penalties ranging from fine to dismissal from the service against erring public officers and employees. <p>Carpio-Morales requested Congress to review and rectify the special provisions in the NEP introduced by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) that tend to undermine the independence of the OMB, particularly on the use of its savings and income. She emphasized that subjecting the appropriations of the OMB to restrictions and limitations would subvert and weaken the very purpose of fiscal autonomy.</p> <p>Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas (1st District, Ilocos Norte) mentioned that the OMB enjoys fiscal autonomy granted to it under the Constitution and its enabling law, the Ombudsman Act of 1989 (RA 6770) and thus Congress cannot reduce its budget below the amount appropriated for the previous years.</p> <p>The OMB gave assurance that it will utilize its budget properly and judiciously as expected of a body serving as the government's watchdog.</p>
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