

# Committee Daily Bulletin

17<sup>th</sup> Congress  
First Regular Session

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Higher and Technical Education	HB 95	Deputy Speaker Sema	Extending the deadline for compliance with the requirements of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for conversion into a state university, thereby amending RA 10585, or the law converting the Cotabato City State Polytechnic College in Cotabato City into a state university to be known as the Cotabato State University and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Ann Hofer (2 <sup>nd</sup> District, Zamboanga Sibugay), approved the Committee Report on HB 95 subject to style and amendment.
	HB 365	Rep. Zamora	Amending Section 26 of RA 10598, or the law establishing the Compostela Valley State College, integrating therewith as regular branches the Bukidnon State University External Studies Centers in the Municipalities of Monkayo, Maragusan, Montevista, and New Bataan, all in the Province of Compostela Valley	The Committee approved the Committee Report on HB 365 subject to style and amendment.
	HB 786	Rep. Gullas	Integrating the Talisay City College in the City of Talisay, Province of Cebu into the Talisay City State College, thereby amending RA 10594, or the law establishing the Talisay City State College and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Committee Report on HB 786 subject to style and amendment.
	HB 3449	Rep. Salceda	Appropriating funds for the establishment of the Bicol Innovation, Research, and Technology Hub (BIRTH) and the construction of the education-school facilities inside the Bicol University East Campus in Legazpi City, Albay	The Committee approved the Committee Report on HB 3449 with amendment.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 216 & 3863	Reps. Matugas & Barbers	Amending RA 10600 or the law establishing the Surigao Del Norte State University by integrating the Surigao State College of Technology in Surigao City, the Siargao National College of Science and Technology in the Municipality of Del Carmen and the Surigao Del Norte College of Agriculture and Technology in the Municipality of Mainit, all located in the Province of Surigao Del Norte, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 216 and 3863 subject to style and amendment.
	Substitute Bill to HB 3190	Rep. Biron	Converting the Iloilo State College of Fisheries in the Municipality of Barotac Nuevo, Province of Iloilo into a state university to be known as the Iloilo State University of Fisheries Science and	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 3190 subject to style and amendment.

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education			Technology, with campuses in the Municipalities of San Enrique, Dingle and Dumangas, and integrating therewith the Barotac Nuevo Polytechnic Institute in the Municipality of Barotac Nuevo, all located in the Province of Iloilo and appropriating funds therefor	
	HB 2316	Rep. Dalog	Extending the deadline for compliance with the requirements of the CHED for conversion into a state university, thereby amending RA 10583, or the law converting the Mountain Province State Polytechnic College in the Municipality of Bontoc, Mountain Province into a state university to be known as Mountain Province State University, with campuses in the Municipalities of Tadian, Bauko, Paracelis and Barlig, all located in Mountain Province and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved HB 2316 subject to style and amendment.
	HB 2737	Rep. Tupas	Amending Section 25 of RA 10597 to extend the deadline for compliance by the Northern Iloilo State University with the requirements of the CHED for its conversion into a state university	The Committee approved HB 2737 subject to style and amendment.
	HB 3179	Rep. Leachon	Amending Section 26 of RA 10596, or the law converting the Mindoro State College of Agriculture and Technology in the Municipality of Victoria, Province of Oriental Mindoro into a state university to be known as the Mindoro State University (MINSU) and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the HB 3179 subject to style and amendment.
	HB 546	Rep. Sambar	Requiring higher education institutions to report their participation and program support expenditures in all college athletic programs	The Committee will deliberate further on HB 546 in its next meeting.  The Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations (COCOPEA) and the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC) were requested to submit to the Committee their position papers on the bill.
Housing and Urban Development	House Joint Resolution (HJR) 3	Rep. Benitez	Ordaining a glossary of significant housing terminologies for adherence by the key shelter agencies, other appropriate agencies of government, and other housing and urban development stakeholders	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Alfredo "Albee" Benitez (3 <sup>rd</sup> District, Negros Occidental), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to further review and update the definition of certain housing and urban development terminologies.  Committee Vice-Chair Rep. Jose Christopher Belmonte (6 <sup>th</sup> District, Quezon City) presided over the meeting to allow the Committee Chair to sponsor his resolution, HJR 3.  Rep. Benitez said that HJR 3 aims to clarify and standardize all the terminologies being used in the housing and urban development sector to avoid confusion among key shelter agencies and to have a smooth and efficient implementation of housing programs. He added that a bill with similar subject matter was approved on third reading during the 16 <sup>th</sup> Congress.

Continuation... Housing and Urban Development				<p>Assistant Secretary Avelino Tolentino of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) proposed that the definition of housing terminologies should conform to RA 10884 or the Balanced Housing Development Program Amendments. He added that as of now, there are 379 terms which are under review and consultation with stakeholders.</p> <p>Economic Development Specialist Xarina Dominique David of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) supports the objective of the HJR.</p> <p>Rep. Benitez asked the stakeholders to submit their official position papers for the consideration of the TWG.</p>
	HBs 130, 157, 2102 & 3736	Reps. Tambunting, Belmonte (J.C.), Villarin & Marcoleta	Prescribing a code of conduct for the eviction of underprivileged and homeless citizens or the demolition of their dwellings	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to study and refine the four bills.</p> <p>The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Education (DepEd), Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP), and the Philippine National Police (PNP) expressed support for the proposed law.</p> <p>Tolentino apprised the Committee that guidelines in the eviction of informal settler-families (ISFs) living in “danger areas” are in place.</p> <p>PCUP Chair Terry Ridon said that his office supports the bills, adding that eviction or demolition should be undertaken upon order by an administrative body or court. He further proposed that a conference with the affected informal settlers should be conducted by the concerned national government agencies or local government units (LGUs) prior to demolition or eviction.</p> <p>Rep. Belmonte said that his bill, HB 157, provides for the conduct of such consultation.</p> <p>The representatives of the Urban Poor Associates called for a moratorium on demolition and eviction pending the approval of the proposed measures. They also suggested that personnel of the PNP should wear their complete uniform when conducting eviction or demolition operations.</p> <p>PNP Police Senior Superintendent Emmanuel Licup commented that in this kind of operation, the police wear their Type C uniform (pants and shirt) with their name tags and badge number pinned on their shirts.</p>
	HB 3269	Rep. Roque	Providing for a mandatory period to relocate squatter, granting disturbance fees to owners of illegally occupied residential land, and penalizing violations thereof	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to study the bill further.</p> <p>HUDCC Project Evaluation Officer Cid Jacobo said that the HUDCC supports the passage of the bill, but suggested that the term “squatters”</p>

Continuation... Housing and Urban Development				<p>as used in the bill be replaced with the term “informal settler families.”</p> <p>KABAYAN Party-List Rep. Harry Roque Jr. accepted the suggestion of Jacobo.</p>
Ways and Means	HB 3719	Rep. Lanete	<p>Amending certain provisions of RA 8424, otherwise known as the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, by imposing excise tax on manufactured goods that have sodium chloride as an ingredient</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. DakilaCarlo Cua, will deliberate further on HB 3719 in its next meeting.</p> <p>HB 3719, authored by Rep. Scott Davies Lanete M.D. (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Masbate), seeks to impose a tax of one peso (P1.00) on every milligram of sodium found in manufactured goods in excess of one third of the allowable daily intake of sodium chloride as prescribed by the Department of Health (DOH).</p> <p>The representatives from the DOH, Department of Finance (DOF), Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), National Tax Research Center (NTRC), Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) expressed their support for the bill, citing its benefit on the health of the public and the additional revenues that it can generate.</p> <p>DOF Undersecretary Bayani Agabin and BIR Legal Counsel Nina Asuncion, however, requested for ample time to study the administrative aspect of the bill, such as the kind of products to be covered and the tax scheme to be imposed.</p> <p>NTRC Executive Director Trinidad Rodriguez said that the allowable daily sodium intake depends on the age of the person so this must be taken into consideration in the bill.</p> <p>Rep. Victoria Noel (Party-List, AN WARAY) proposed the revision of the tax scheme provided for in the bill to make it more flexible and accommodate the suggestion of the NTRC.</p>
	HB 4144	Rep. De Vera	<p>Amending Section 145 (C) of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended, by retaining the two-tiered tax structure and increasing the specific tax rates on cigarettes packed by machine</p>	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 4144 in its next meeting.</p> <p>HB 4144, authored by Rep. Eugene Michael De Vera (Party-List, ABS), seeks to amend Section 145 (C) of the NIRC by retaining the current excise tax system on cigarettes packed by machine to two-tiers instead of shifting to a unitary tax rate in 2017; and raising the tax for the lower tier to P32.00 per cigarette pack and the higher tier to P36.00 per cigarette pack effective January 1, 2017, and thereafter shall be increased to 5% every year starting January 1, 2018.</p> <p>Rep. De Vera emphasized that his bill aims to discourage smoking, increase the revenues of the government, and protect the livelihood of tobacco planters and workers.</p>

Continuation... Ways and Means				<p>Those who manifested their opposition to the bill were the resource persons from the DOH, DOF, BIR, and NTRC; as well as the representatives of Philip Morris Fortune Tobacco Corporation, Inc., JTI Philippines, Associated Anglo-American Tobacco Corp., Action for Economic Reforms (AER), and Action for Smoking and Health.</p> <p>DOF Assistant Secretary Mark Joven argued that a two-tiered tax system would negate the objectives of the Sin Tax Law (RA 10351) such as discouraging the consumption of alcohol and tobacco and simplifying the tax structure of these products.</p> <p>On the other hand, the National Tobacco Administration (NTA) supports the bill; and so is Mighty Corporation, a local cigarette manufacturer, the representative of which argued that imposing a higher tax on higher-priced cigarette brands is more equitable than imposing a uniform tax rate for all brands.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Raneo Abu (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Batangas) urged the Members of the Committee to give priority consideration to the welfare of the small tobacco farmers in making their assessment of the bill.</p>
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<b>ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING</b>		
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>SUBJECT MATTER</b>	<b>DISCUSSIONS</b>
Tourism	Approval of the Committee's Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Lucy Gomez (4<sup>th</sup> District, Leyte), adopted its Rules of Procedure for the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress.</p> <p>The Committee has jurisdiction over all matters directly and principally relating to the development and promotion of tourism both domestic and international.</p> <p>Rep. Gomez said there are now more than 40 House Bills referred to the Committee for its consideration.</p>
	Briefing by the Department of Tourism (DOT) and its attached agencies	<p>The Committee listened to the briefing conducted by the DOT and its attached agencies on the present state of the country's tourism industry and their major accomplishments, and plans, and programs.</p> <p>DOT Undersecretary Benito Bengzon Jr. reported that there has been an increase in inbound visitors from 4.3 million in 2012 to 5.4 million in 2015, which translate to a significant increase in inbound receipts from P195.2 billion to P306.6 billion during the same period. He added that the Philippines is the only country in Asia that has not suffered from a decline in tourist entries. Korea is the Philippines' major foreign tourism market in 2015, followed by the United States, China and Singapore.</p> <p>The DOT aims to develop a competitive, environmentally sustainable and socially responsible tourism industry that promotes inclusive growth through employment generation and equitable distribution of income.</p> <p>Bengzon said the DOT is working on the completion of a tourism master plan for 2017-2022 which will include the upgrading of the facilities of tourism frontiers not just in Metro Manila and Cebu but throughout the country. He also discussed the DOT's targets for 2016 to 2022 in terms of</p>



<p>Continuation... Metro Manila Development (Technical Working Group)</p>		<p>possible harmful effects of these fake and toxic products, at the same time promote the viability of the health and beauty industry. The bill to be crafted will also strengthen and rationalize the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), enhancing its police powers and providing additional manpower, to be able to effectively perform its mandate, including the forfeiture or seizure of fake beauty products, and the apprehension of people or entities engaged in this illegitimate business.</p> <p>Industry representatives present in the meeting claimed that they lose about 2% of their annual revenues because of the proliferation of fake products in the market.</p> <p>Rep. Eric Martinez (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Valenzuela City) requested the submission of the beauty product companies' financial statements.</p> <p>Replying to the query of AKO BICOL Party-List Rep. Rodel Batocabe, FDA's Center for Cosmetic Regulation and Research Director (OIC) Maria Theresa Gutierrez explained that the agency has enforcement power over fake consumer goods such as food and cosmetic products, but cannot readily seize the products because it still needs to secure a court warrant prior to seizure. Gutierrez also explained that "unregistered" products coming from any of the ASEAN member-states can be sold to the local market through a Notification Letter issued by the country of origin informing the other member-states that the product will be marketed in their respective territories.</p> <p>Under the Agreement on the ASEAN Harmonized Cosmetic Regulatory Scheme, of which the Philippines is a signatory, "member-states shall mutually recognize the product registration approvals for cosmetic products issued by a member-state's regulatory authority."</p> <p>Rep. Batocabe also asked the Bureau of Customs (BOC) how imported fake beauty products slip past the customs personnel at the country's ports of entry. Atty. Zaecerie de Guzman, chief of the BOC Intellectual and Property Rights Division, said the BOC immediately apprehends or seizes counterfeit cosmetic products upon identification. However, De Guzman disclosed that most of the fake beauty products being smuggled into the country are "unmarked" or unbranded and they are hidden in the back part of containers along with products labeled "general merchandise." He said the BOC finds it difficult to track down or locate all unmarked beauty products due to lack of manpower.</p> <p>Rep. Batocabe suggested that retailers must also be held liable for selling fake beauty products, instead of limiting the liability to distributors/wholesalers only as stated in the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of RA 9711 or the FDA Charter.</p> <p>When asked by Reps. John Marvin "Yul Servo" Nieto (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Manila) and Batocabe if online selling of beauty products are regulated by the FDA, Gutierrez answered in the negative.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit their respective position papers on the legislative measure addressing the proliferation of fake and toxic beauty products.</p>
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AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Energy	Briefing by the energy sector on the electric power distribution:	The Committee, chaired by Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Jay Velasco, listened to the briefing conducted by the energy sector on the electric power distribution.



<p>Continuation... Energy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Philippine Electric Plant Owners Association (PEPOA)</li>   <li>• Manila Electric Company (Meralco)</li> </ul>	<p>certificates to member-owners;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Properly implement the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) (RA 9136);</li> <li>• For the Joint Congressional Oversight Committee on Cooperatives (JCOCC) to review the CDA charter in terms of its compliance with the required training for officers of cooperatives.</li> </ul> <p>PEPOA President Ranulfo Ocampo focused his discussion on “system loss,” which is an operational cost in power generation that is passed on to consumers. This cost is included in the consumers’ monthly electric bill collected by power utility companies.</p> <p>Ocampo urged the Committee to craft a legislation that will set a cap for system loss in order to lower electricity rates for the benefit of the ECs and the consumers.</p> <p>Meralco Senior Vice President Alfredo apprised the Committee of its accomplishments as well as its electricity rates, comparing them with the rates in other countries.</p> <p>Panlilio reported that, based on the 2012 and 2016 reports of the International Energy Consultants on the regional comparison of retail electricity tariffs, the Philippine tariffs are “fully cost-reflective, which is a sound economic policy.” He added that the rates in other countries are low because they are subsidized by their governments, which according to the study, is “poor economic policy” and “unsustainable.”</p> <p>He also presented the following programs of Meralco:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interruptible Load Program (ILP), which allows customers to operate their generating sets and collectively reduce electricity drawn from the grid during low energy production;</li> <li>• Prepaid electricity or “Kuryente Load” (KLoad), which allows customers to manage their account via cellphones, monitor their consumption daily via short message service (SMS), control usage, and save on electricity expenses;</li> <li>• Orange Tag, which labels appliances or devices with estimated energy consumption and cost of operating, giving consumers the option to choose power-saving appliances or devices; supplements the Department of Energy’s (DOE) yellow tag or energy label; and</li> <li>• Net Metering Program, in which a distribution grid user has a two-way connection to the grid and is either charged or credited the difference between the cost of its import energy and the cost of its export energy.</li> </ul>
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>Briefing by government agencies on issues and concerns relative to the maritime industry</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, listened to the briefing by the maritime agencies of government on their contingency plans and programs during the Christmas season and in times of disasters and calamities.</p> <p>General Manager Jay Daniel Santiago of the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) said he expects no congestion in the ports during the holiday season because the volume of cargoes and containers only slightly increased. He said that PPA will replicate the procedures they have implemented under its “Oplan Undas” in November to facilitate passenger movement and will focus on the improvement of passenger terminals.</p> <p>Asked about the congestion of roads leading to the port, Santiago said that continuous coordination with truck operators and traffic enforcers is being undertaken to address the situation, including the establishment of holding areas for trucks and container vans.</p> <p>Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Administrator Marcial Quirico Amaro III said that under its “Ligtas Biyahe” Program, MARINA</p>

<p>Continuation... Transportation</p>	<p>validates, verifies and inspects vessels to ensure the safety of the passengers. Vessels that do not comply with MARINA's policies are not allowed to sail, he added.</p> <p>Amaro mentioned that MARINA has entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with shipping companies to rationalize the protocol for the sailing of vessels during calamities.</p> <p>Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Commandant William Melad said that during the Christmas season, and even on other days, the PCG, works closely with the PPA in performing certain tasks including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of passenger assistance desks;</li> <li>• Conduct of inspection prior to the departure of the vessel ensuring that all passengers are manifested and properly accounted for;</li> <li>• Deployment of canine units in major ports;</li> <li>• Provision of additional floating assets for use by passengers in case of emergency;</li> <li>• Posting of medical personnel in the ports to attend to emergency medical needs of passengers; and</li> <li>• Deployment of quick response teams.</li> </ul> <p>Rep. Sarmiento requested the PPA, PCG and MARINA to submit a report on the status of their 2015 and 2016 projects.</p> <p>On the status of the lighthouses in the country, Melad reported that 540 of the total 587 lighthouses nationwide are operational. He disclosed that funds for 45 lighthouse projects for year 2013 have been reverted back to the National Treasury due to the absence of sites where the lighthouses will be constructed.</p> <p>Rep. Sarmiento urged the PCG to seek the assistance of the concerned legislators in finding and acquiring appropriate sites for the lighthouses.</p> <p>With regard to the status of the Seafarers Identification (SID) Project, Amaro said the amended design of the SID was approved in June 2016 and the contract's terms of reference was submitted to the Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC), the agency in-charge of this project. SID is the universal identification card of all seafarers in the world, the use of which is required under the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) Convention.</p> <p>Rep. Sarmiento asked the MARINA and PCG on their existing protocol in the detection of dangerous or prohibited drugs aboard vessels. Melad said the PCG uses canine units in the detection of prohibited drugs, but the canines are only trained to detect marijuana and <i>shabu</i> and not the chemicals used in the manufacture of <i>shabu</i>. PCG also conducts intelligence gathering as part of its efforts against the proliferation of illegal drugs.</p> <p>On the part of MARINA, Amaro said it is guided by Memorandum Circular 101, which provides the guidelines in the issuance of special permit to carry dangerous/hazardous cargoes. MARINA is set to issue a new circular on the matter, he added.</p>
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