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BICAMERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Bicameral Conference Committee	HB 3408	Rep. Nograles (K.A.)	Appropriating funds for the operation of the Government of the Philippines from January 01 to December 31, 2017	<p>The Bicameral Conference Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, and Senator Loren Legarda, Chair of the Senate Committee on Finance, suspended its deliberation on HB 3408 to give the House conferees more time to review the Senate's proposed amendments. The two chairpersons were authorized by both the House and Senate conferees to reconcile the proposed amendments with HB 3408.</p> <p>Other conferees who were present during the bicameral conference committee meeting were the following: On the part of the House, Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas (1st District, Ilocos Norte), Minority Leader Danilo Suarez (3rd District, Quezon), Reps. Maria Carmen Zamora (1st District, Compostela Valley), Federico "Ricky" Sandoval II (Malabon City), Dakila Carlo Cua (Quirino), Elenita Milagros "Eileen" Ermita-Buhain (1st District, Batangas), Juan Pablo "Rimpy" Bondoc (4th District, Pampanga), and Reynaldo Umali (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro); on the part of the Senate, Senate President Pro-Tempore Franklin Drilon, Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III, Minority Leader Ralph Recto, and Senators Juan Edgardo "Sonny" Angara, Panfilo Lacson, Cynthia Villar, and Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri.</p>

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Health	HRs 444 & 480	Reps. Tan (A.) & Suansing (E.)	Inquiry into the school-based immunization of tetravalent dengue vaccine of the Department of Health (DOH) for the purpose of protecting the health and welfare of the public	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan M.D. (4th District, Quezon), will continue its inquiry relative to issues raised in the two resolutions in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Tan, author of HR 444, emphasized the need to protect the health and welfare of the public, particularly the children, from the possible adverse effects of this dengue vaccine, after hearing public health advocates question the government's approval of the</p>

<p>Continuation... Health</p>				<p>dengue vaccination program amidst the pendency of the vaccine's pre-qualification and completion of the study on patients.</p> <p>On the other hand, Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), author of HR 480, underscored the need to determine if the P3 billion fund that was used to procure the dengue vaccines was efficiently and judiciously utilized by the government, noting that said fund was not included in the 2015 national budget.</p> <p>DOH Undersecretary Gerardo Bayugo explained that the school-based dengue immunization program of the DOH involves the vaccination of Grade 4 pupils aged nine years old and above in all public schools of Regions III and IV-A and the National Capital Region (NCR), which have the highest number of dengue cases, in three doses at six months interval.</p> <p>Bayugo reported that 491,811 pupils from 6,167 schools in the three regions were vaccinated with the first dose during the period April to June 2016, while 127,365 pupils received the second dose of the vaccine as of November 28, 2016.</p> <p>Sanofi Pasteur Philippines External Affairs Director Gerald Paez averred that the dengue vaccine developed by Sanofi Pasteur is safe, following more than 20 years of scientific research and development and clinical trials involving more than 40,000 people in 25 studies across 15 countries worldwide. (Sanofi Pasteur is the vaccines division of Sanofi, which is considered the largest company in the world that produces human vaccines.)</p> <p>Dr. Anthony Leachon, an internist at the Manila Doctors Hospital and PhilHealth independent director, strongly recommends the suspension of the DOH' dengue vaccination program.</p> <p>Leachon pointed out the uncertainty of the long-term safety effect of the dengue vaccine, citing a study involving Asian children aged two to 14 years old where the vaccination increased the incidence of severe dengue by 400% on the 3rd year after the fist vaccination.</p> <p>Leachon added that the dengue vaccination program of the DOH is not a feasible strategy to address the spread of the disease knowing that the program cost the Philippine government P3.5 billion for just one million children in only three regions, which represents a mere one percent of the country's total population.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City) on the source of the P3.5 billion budget for the dengue vaccination,</p>
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Continuation... Health				<p>Department of Budget and Management (DBM) legal counsel Paula Domingo said that the funding came from the 2015 savings of the Miscellaneous Personal Benefits Fund (MPBF) of the DOH.</p> <p>On whether there is an informed consent given by parents for their children to be vaccinated, Bayugo said a consent form is given to the parents for their signature together with information about the vaccine.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn Garcia (3rd District, Cebu) inquired if the DOH recommended that the dengue vaccination program be put on hold. Bayugo replied in the affirmative, adding that the DOH will hold another round of medical review of the dangerous effect of the vaccine on children.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit to the Committee their official position paper on the matter.</p> <p>The DOH was requested to submit the timeline for the implementation of the dengue school-based immunization program.</p> <p>The Committee Secretary informed the body that the former DOH Secretary Janette Garin promised to attend the next meeting of the Committee on December 12, 2016.</p>
Human Rights	HRs 486 & 487	Reps. Elago & Zarate	Condemning the violent dispersal of national minorities and supporters holding a peaceful protest in front of the United States Embassy and calling for an immediate investigation into the brutal police dispersal of people exercising their right to peaceably assemble and air their grievances	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Cheryl Deloso-Montalla (2nd District, Zambales), will continue its inquiry relative to the issues raised in HRs 486 and 487 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Sarah Jane Elago (Party-List, KABATAAN), author of HR 486, recounted how a peaceful demonstration by the minority and peasant groups in front of the US Embassy in Manila on October 19, 2016 turned violent as police from the Manila Police District (MPD) violently dispersed and fired teargas at these protesters after the latter managed to go near the US Embassy.</p> <p>BAYAN MUNA Party-List Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate, author of HR 487, underscored the need to revisit the Public Assembly Act of 1985 (Batas Pambansa Blg. 880), which is apparently being used by police authorities as basis for the violent dispersal of a peaceful demonstration, citing the no permit, no rally provision in the law.</p> <p>BP 880 ensures the free exercise by the people of their right to peaceably assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances. But this law also requires that a written permit be secured before holding any public assembly in a public place except in duly designated freedom parks.</p> <p>Following the violent dispersal by the MPD, at</p>

<p>Continuation... Human Rights</p>				<p>least 50 protesters were injured and hospitalized, three of whom were seriously injured after being ran over by a police vehicle; and at least 29 people, including peasants, doctors, students, and members of the media, were arrested.</p> <p>Atty. Ephraim Cortez, secretary general of the National Union of People's Lawyers, and Jerome Succor Aba, head of SANDUGO, a newly-established movement of national minorities, condemned the violent dispersal of the protesters just because of the absence of a rally permit. Aba added that the rally was peaceful until MPD Deputy Director Senior Superintendent Marcelino Pedrozo ordered the dispersal.</p> <p>Aba explained that the Moros and Lumads who joined the rally were part of the "<i>Lakbayan ng Pambansang Minorya para sa Sariling Pagpapasya at Makatarungang Kapayapaan</i>," a travelling protest caravan that seeks to assert their right to self determination and push for just and lasting peace.</p> <p>Dr. Julie Caguiat, executive director of the Community Medicine Development Foundation that administers medical assistance to the members of the caravan, said that members of her medical team were ordered arrested by Pedrozo.</p> <p>Nicole Soria, one of the injured protesters, testified before the Committee that she was dragged under the police mobile car driven by PO3 Franklin Kho and sustained multiple wounds in the different parts of her body.</p> <p>Philippine National Police (PNP) Legal Assistance Division Chief Police Superintendent George Almaden said that the PNP Internal Affairs Service (IAS) and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) are currently investigating the police officers involved in the incident.</p> <p>Commission on Human Rights (CHR) National Capital Region (NCR) Director Gilbert Boiser said that the CHR strongly condemns the October 19 violent dispersal as it is a clear violation of human rights. According to Boiser, the CHR is conducting its own investigation of the incident.</p> <p>The CHR was requested to submit to the Committee the result of its investigation.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to subpoena Pedrozo and Superintendent Albert Barot, the ground commanders responsible for the October 19 violent dispersal, and Kho, if they again fail to attend the next meeting of the Committee.</p> <p>The PNP was requested to submit the following documents:</p>
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Continuation... Human Rights				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Operation Procedures Manual; • PNP Human Rights Manual; and • Names of PNP personnel who were dispatched in the rally.
Public Information	HRs 348, 362, 373 & 405	Reps. Violago, De Venecia, Atienza, Nieto and Maceda	Congratulating and commending Lavrente Diaz, the director, screenwriter, cinematographer, and editor of the movie "Ang Babaeng Humayo," as well as the actors and producers thereof for winning the Golden Lion for Best Film Award in the 73 rd Venice International Film Festival	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Antonio Tinio (Party-List, ACT TEACHERS), directed the Secretariat to prepare the substitute resolution to the four measures.
	HB 1295	Rep. Robes	Declaring the City of San Jose Del Monte, Province of Bulacan as a broadcasting hub	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to study further HB 1295.</p> <p>The TWG shall be chaired by San Jose Del Monte City Rep. Florida "Rida" Robes, author of HB 1295.</p> <p>Rep. Robes explained that declaring the City of San Jose Del Monte as a broadcasting hub will sustain the city's tourism industry as well as create employment opportunities for the thousands of relocated people coming from the different parts of Metro Manila who are now residing in her district.</p> <p>National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) Deputy Commissioner Edgardo Cabarios and Department of Tourism (DOT) Undersecretary Falconi Millar expressed their support for the bill.</p>
Public Order and Safety	HBs 589, 1146, 1475, 1892 & 3690	Reps. Bataoil, Alejano, Abayon, Defensor & Deputy Speaker Macapagal-Arroyo	Regulating the manufacture, sale, distribution, and use of firecrackers	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the seven bills and come up with a substitute bill.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil (2nd District, Pangasinan).</p>
	HBs 896 & 1626	Reps. Tan & Castelo	Banning the manufacture and/or use of firecrackers	<p>The authors present said that their bills aim to ensure the safety of the people by further regulating the manufacture, sale, distribution, and use of firecrackers.</p> <p>Rep. Acop underscored the need to amend RA 7183 or the law regulating the sale, manufacture, distribution and use of firecrackers and other pyrotechnic devices, to provide stiffer penalties to violators and address the gaps in the law's enforcement.</p> <p>Rep. Raul "Boboy" Tupas (5th District, Iloilo) suggested that graphic warnings should also be printed in the packaging of firecrackers and pyrotechnics just like tobacco products. (Pursuant to RA 10643 or the Graphic Health Warnings Law, all tobacco products manufactured or imported for sale in the Philippines are required to carry graphic health warnings on the lower portion of a</p>

<p>Continuation... Public Order and Safety</p>				<p>cigarette pack.)</p> <p>Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Superintendent Cesar Hawthorne Binag of the Firearms and Explosive Office said that firecrackers should have a Philippine standards certification mark by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to assure the consumers that the products they are buying are safe.</p> <p>Celso Cruz, chairman emeritus of the Philippine Pyrotechnics Manufacturers and Dealers Association Inc., said that the labelling of firecrackers and pyrotechnic products, including instructions on how to use them, are already required under the revised implementing rules and regulation (IRR) of RA 7183.</p> <p>Philippine Fireworks Association (PFA) President Jovenson Ong, citing a report from the Department of Health (DOH), said that 57% of firecracker-related injuries are due to smuggled firecrackers which are of poor quality and therefore unsafe. He called on the government to stop the smuggling of firecrackers to save the people from harm.</p> <p>Rep. Edgar Erice (2nd District, Caloocan City) said that there are enough laws regulating the firecrackers industry, but the problem lies on the enforcement. He also said that firecracker manufacturers must have adequate financial capital to be able to comply with all the quality and safety standards. Backyard firecrackers production must be stopped, he stressed.</p> <p>When asked by Rep. Gary Alejano (Party-List, MAGDALO) on the size of the workforce in the country's firecracker industry, Ong answered that there are about 150,000 families benefiting from this industry.</p> <p>Rep. Jose Antonio "Kuya Jonathan" Sy-Alvarado (1st District, Bulacan), however, disputed Ong's figure saying that according to Labor Undersecretary Joel Maglunsod, a total of 400,000 workers are in the firecrackers industry in Bulacan alone.</p> <p>Several House Members, along with the stakeholders present in the meeting, agreed that stricter regulations should be adopted to ensure the safety of the consumers, as well as the welfare of the industry and its workforce. They stressed that a total ban on the use of firecrackers is not necessary.</p> <p>The concerned government agencies were requested to submit their respective recommendations on the bills for the TWG's consideration.</p>
<p>Public Works and Highways</p>	<p>HBs 7, 833, 1992, 2194,</p>	<p>Deputy Speaker Quimbo, Reps.</p>	<p>Naming/renaming of roads/highways in certain parts of the country</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Celso Lobregat (1st District, Zamboanga City),</p>

Continuation... Public Works and Highways	3045, 3047, 3703, 4053, 4189 & 4190	Zamora (M.), Tolentino, Ferrer (L.), Acop, Sy- Alvarado, Relampagos & Revilla		approved the 10 bills.
	HBs 364, 640, 1188, 2052, 2104, 2438 & 2552	Reps. Zamora (M), Unico, Dimaporo (M.), Amatong, Tejada, Ramos & Roque (R.N.)	Establishing district engineering offices in certain parts of the country and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the seven bills. The bills will be referred to the Committee on Appropriations for review of their funding provisions.
Revision of Laws	HBs 878, 972, 3398, 3478 & 3498	Reps. Lopez (B.), Fortun, Brosas, Escudero & Vargas	Granting additional benefits to solo parents, amending for the purpose RA 8972, otherwise known as the Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Marlyn Primicias-Agabas (6th District, Pangasinan), will deliberate further on the six bills in its next meeting. On the suggestion of Rep. Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon) to consolidate the bills, Rep. Primicias-Agabas explained that the Committee will first allow its Members to assess the merits of the proposed law and to hear the views of the stakeholders. The following resource persons will be invited in the next meeting of the Committee to present their comments on the bills: Departments of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Education (DepEd), Health (DOH), Labor and Employment (DOLE), Trade and Industry (DTI), and Budget and Management (DBM); Commission on Higher Education (CHED); Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA); National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA); Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA); National Housing Authority (NHA); Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR); National Council of Women in the Philippines (NCWP); National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP); Civil Service Commission (CSC); Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP); and Solo Parents Association of the Philippines, Inc.
	HB 4112	Rep. Lazatin	Granting additional benefits to solo parents, repealing for the purpose RA 8972	

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Subcommittee on Judicial Reforms (Justice)	Substitute Bill to 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 RA 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002 and Act No. 3815, as amended, otherwise known as the Revised Penal Code	The Subcommittee on Judicial Reforms, chaired by Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso (3 rd District, Leyte), approved the Substitute Bill to the seven bills. Rep. Robert "Ace" Barbers (2 nd District, Surigao del Norte) suggested that the illegal possession of 10 grams of <i>shabu</i> should already be punishable by death, instead of 50 grams as stated in Section 11 (Possession of Dangerous Drugs) of the substitute bill.

Continuation... Subcommittee on Judicial Reforms (Justice)				<p>Siquijor Rep. Ramon "Rav" Rocamora and Rep. Lawrence "Law" Fortun (1st District, Agusan del Norte) were concerned about the implications of the proposed law.</p> <p>Rep. Rocamora said that having been a public prosecutor for 24 years, he had seen how the country's criminal justice system worked, claiming that 60% or more of drug cases are fabricated.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Suffrage and Electoral Reforms (Technical Working Group)	HBs 15, 519, 902, 1712, 1917, 2925, 3249, 3380 & 3411	Rep. Belmonte (F.), Deputy Speaker Castro, Reps. Fortuno, Oaminal, Ocampo, Villanueva, Primicias-Agabas, Panganiban, and Unabia	Increasing the authorized campaign expenses of candidates and political parties, amending for the purpose RA 7166 or the law providing for a synchronized national and local elections and for electoral reforms, appropriating funds therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by CIBAC Party-List Rep. Sherwin Tugna, will deliberate further on the nine bills in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Tugna directed the Secretariat to consolidate the nine bills.</p> <p>The Commission on Elections (COMELEC) was requested to submit its official position paper on the bills for the consideration of the TWG.</p>
	HBs 522, 697 & 1695	Deputy Speakers Castro and Macapagal-Arroyo, and Rep. Rodriguez (M.)	Strengthening the political party system and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The TWG will deliberate further on HBs 522, 697, 1695, and 4351 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Tugna directed the Secretariat to consolidate the four bills.</p>
	HB 4351	Rep. Roque	Subsidizing public campaign expenses of qualified electoral candidates, and defining its coverage and restrictions thereof	<p>The COMELEC was requested to submit its official position paper on the bills for the consideration of the TWG.</p>

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development	<p>Briefing by the following agencies on their plans and programs for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Peter "Sr. Pedro" Unabia (1st District, Misamis Oriental), listened to the briefing conducted by the DSWD, DOST and DOLE on their plans and programs for MSMEs.</p> <p>DSWD Program Manager Amada Pornaras discussed the DSWD's Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) for MSMEs which aims to improve the socio-economic condition of the participants through micro-enterprise development and employment facilitation activities.</p> <p>Pornaras said that the program covers the household beneficiaries of the <i>Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program</i> (4Ps), other poor families based on the National Household Targeting System (NHTS) for Poverty Reduction or <i>Listahanan</i>, those with certificate of indigency from local government units (LGUs), and members of the vulnerable sector.</p> <p>The SLP is composed of four modalities, namely: skills training grant (P20,000); pre-employment assistance fund (P5,000); cash for</p>

