

Committee Daily Bulletin

17th Congress
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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Basic Education and Culture	HB 3222 in consolidation with HBs 1387 & 2822	Deputy Speaker Cayetano, Reps. Vargas, and Suansing (E.)	Establishing a National Vision Screening Program for Kindergarten Pupils and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon), approved HB 3222 in consolidation with HBs 1387 and 2822.</p> <p>Philippine Eye Research Institute (PERI) Director Leo Cubillan expressed support for the bills and presented a vision chart which PERI currently uses to detect visual disorders in children. According to Cubillan, the use of the chart can easily be taught to school teachers, who may be tapped to undertake the screening of students for any visual disorder.</p> <p>Department of Education (DepEd) Assistant Secretary Tonisito Umali also manifested his support for the bills and suggested that proper training be given to implementors, which would include teachers, and sufficient funding be given to DepEd to effectively implement the proposed law.</p> <p>On the query of Baguio City Rep. Mark Go and Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City) as to why only kindergarten pupils are covered under the vision screening program, Umali replied that aside from funding constraints, DepEd gives priority to children in the kindergarten level since most visual disorders are irreversible after a child reaches seven years old.</p>
	Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 34, 246, 448, 1428, 1558, 1764, 1970, 2616, 2990, 3070, 3276 & 3371	Reps. Del Mar, Angara-Castillo, Belmonte (J.C.), Tupas, Villafuerte, Zarate, Suansing (E.), Umali, Gatchalian, Primicias-Agabas, Roque, and Rodriguez (M.)	Institutionalizing the National School Feeding Program for public kindergarten and elementary pupils and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee will re-draft the substitute bill to incorporate the points agreed upon and will discuss it again in its next meeting.</p> <p>The DepEd, Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Budget and Management's Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB), National Dairy Authority (NDA), and National Nutrition Council (NNC) expressed their support for the bill and promised to submit their respective position papers as soon as possible.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel "Chiquiting" Sagarbarria (2nd District, Negros Occidental) expressed doubt whether the DepEd has the capacity to conduct a nationwide feeding program.</p> <p>Umali said that DepEd already has existing mechanisms to implement the program, but</p>

Continuation... Basic Education and Culture				<p>admitted that it would still require additional funding and personnel.</p> <p>While expressing support for the bills, Rep. Arnolfo “Arnie” Teves Jr. (3rd District, Negros Oriental) insisted that safeguards should be put in place to ensure that funds are properly utilized.</p>
Economic Affairs	HBs 69 & 2510	Reps. Salceda and Cua	Collective Investment Schemes Law	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Arthur Yap (3rd District, Bohol), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to study the bills further.</p> <p>HBs 69 and 2510 seek to harmonize the regulatory and tax framework for all forms of collective investment schemes (CIS). At present, the Philippines has various laws governing investment companies (mutual funds), unit investment trust funds, and separate account funds or variable unit linked insurance products.</p> <p>Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay) explained that establishing a comprehensive regulatory and tax framework for all CIS products will lead to a more competitive environment for the CIS industry and provide enhanced and uniform levels of protection to the investing public.</p> <p>As defined in the bills, a CIS is “any arrangement whereby funds are solicited from the investing public and pooled together for the purpose of investing, re-investing and/or trading in securities or other assets or different classes thereof.”</p> <p>The Insurance Commission (IC), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Philippine Life Insurance Association, Inc. (PLIA), Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP), Fund Managers Association of the Philippines (FMAP), and the Philippine Investment Funds Association (PIFA) supported the bills but pointed out that there are provisions in the proposed law that need to be discussed further.</p>
Legislative Franchises	Substitute Bill to HB 2930	Rep. Umali	Amending and extending for 25 years the franchise granted to Smart Communications, Inc. (formerly Smart Information Technologies, Inc.) under RA 7924, or the law granting Smart Information Technologies, Inc. a franchise to establish, install, maintain, lease and operate integrated telecommunications/computer/electronic services and stations throughout the Philippines for public domestic and international telecommunications	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Franz “Chicoy” Alvarez (1 st District, Palawan), approved the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HB 2930.
	Substitute Bill to HB	Rep. Enverga	Renewing the franchise granted to GMA Network, Inc. (formerly Republic	The Committee approved the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HB 3946.

Continuation... Legislative Franchises	3946		Broadcasting System, Inc.) under RA 7252, or the law granting the Republic Broadcasting System, Inc. a franchise to construct, install, operate and maintain radio and television broadcasting stations in the Philippines for 25 years from the effectivity of this Act	
	Substitute Bill to HB 4110	Rep. Treñas	Granting the Iloilo Baptist Church (Philippines) a franchise to construct, maintain and operate non-commercial radio broadcasting stations in the Philippines.	The Committee approved the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HB 4110.
	HB 1422	Rep. Cosalan	Renewing the franchise granted to Satellite Paging Systems Philippines, Inc. (presently known as Now Telecom Company, Inc.) under RA 7301, as amended by RA 7940, or the law granting the Satellite Paging Systems Philippines, Inc. a franchise to construct, establish, operate and maintain radio paging systems and trunked radio systems within the Philippines for a period of 25 years from the effectivity of this Act	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 1422 in its next meeting.</p> <p>National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) Deputy Commissioner Delilah Deles interposed no objection to the bill.</p> <p>Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Legal Counsel Ela Padilla said that the agency is still in the process of checking whether the company has fully complied with SEC requirements and promised to submit to the Committee its position paper next week.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Romero "Miro" Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City) inquired if the grantee has complied with Section 8 (Ownership) of RA 7301 that requires the grantee to make a public offering of at least 30% of its common stocks in any stock exchange in the Philippines within three years from the commencement of its operation.</p> <p>Now Telecom Company Corporate Secretary Angeline Macasaet said that the company has already made a public offering of about 19% of its common stocks to the public. She also mentioned that of the P1.45 billion authorized capital stock of the company, P1.39 billion has already been subscribed which is way over the 25% requirement of the SEC.</p>
	HB1941	Rep. Espino	Granting the Gulf Waves Communications Corporation (GWCC) a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain radio and television broadcasting stations throughout the Philippines	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 1941 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Replying to the query of CIBAC Party-List Rep. Sherwin Tugna, GWCC President and Chairman of the Board Nelson Gayo said that GWCC has an authorized capital stock of P5 million, with a subscribed capital stock of P125 million and paid-up capital of P312,000.</p> <p>Noting that GWCC has insufficient paid-up capital, Rep. Tugna requested for the submission of a roll out plan and marketing strategy to assess the Corporation's capacity to operate nationwide.</p> <p>Deles manifested NTC's support for the passage of the proposed law. On the other hand, Padilla promised to submit SEC's position paper on the bill by next week.</p>

People's Participation	HBs 1166 & 1615	Reps. Acosta-Alba and Salon	Institutionalizing industry cluster-based programs and projects through inter-local cooperation and people's participation	The Committee, chaired by Dinagat Island Rep. Kaka Bag-ao, approved the consolidation of HBs 1166 and 1615.
	HBs 191 & 3862	Reps. Bravo and Bag-ao	Institutionalizing citizens' participation in the budget process	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to craft a Substitute Bill to HBs 191 and 3862.</p> <p>On the request of Siquijor Rep. Ramon "RAV" Rocamora to include his bill, HB 3429, which has the same subject matter, in the deliberation of the Committee, Rep. Bag-ao said that the Committee already coordinated with the Committee on Rules for a change of referral of HB 3429 from the Committee on Appropriations.</p> <p>The stakeholders present were requested to submit to the Committee their position papers on the bills for the TWG's consideration.</p>
Revision of Laws	HBs 878, 972, 3398, 3478 & 3498	Reps. Lopez (B.), Fortun, Brosas, Escudero, and Vargas	Granting additional benefits to solo parents, amending for the purpose RA 8972, otherwise known as the Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Marlyn Primicias-Agabas (6th District, Pangasinan), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the six bills.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair and Benguet Rep. Ronald Cosalan presided over the meeting in behalf of Rep. Primicias-Agabas who had to attend to an urgent meeting.</p> <p>Department of Justice (DOJ) Legal Counsel Maria Lorena Calo said that DOJ supports the bills, including the creation of an inter-agency unit that will monitor and implement the law. She, however, objects to the inclusion of "divorced solo parents" in the coverage of the proposed law stressing that the Philippines has no law allowing divorce in the country.</p> <p>Social Welfare Officer Elgin Mazo of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) concurred with the view of Calo.</p> <p>GABRIELA Party-List Rep. Arlene Brosas, author of HB 3398, explained that the divorced solo parents referred to in her bill are those who obtained divorce from the <i>sharia</i> courts and abroad.</p> <p>With the clarification made by Rep. Brosas, Mazo changed her position on the matter but suggested that the term "divorce" as used in HB 3398 should be defined accordingly.</p> <p>Dr. Anthony Calibo, medical specialist at the Department of Health (DOH), said that the proposed law should already provide certain benefits and assistance to female solo parents starting from their pregnancy, especially women who are victims of abuse or rape.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bills for the consideration of the TWG.</p>
	HB 4112	Rep. Lazatin	Granting additional benefits to solo parents, repealing for the purpose RA 8972	

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
People's Participation	Approval of the Committee's Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Dinagat Island Rep. Kaka Bag-ao, adopted its Rules of Procedure for the 17th Congress.</p> <p>The Committee has general jurisdiction over all matters directly and principally relating to the role, rights and responsibilities of people's organizations, non-government and civic organizations, and other similar groups, and the establishment of mechanisms for consultation with and participation of the people in governance and in legislation, including the establishment and maintenance of a databank on all such organizations.</p> <p>The Subcommittees created and their respective chairpersons are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcommittee on Politics and Governance – Rep. Florida “Rida” Robes (San Jose del Monte City); • Subcommittee on Oversight – Rep. Bag-ao; and • Subcommittee on Government-People's Organization/Non-Government Organization (PO/NGO) Partnership – (chairperson to be named at a later date.)

OTHER MATTERS

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Foreign Affairs	Inquiry into the reported delay in the processing of passports by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)	<p>The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair Rep. Manuel “Chiquiting” Sagarbarria (2nd District, Negros Oriental), agreed to discuss in an executive session the reported delay in the processing of passports by the DFA.</p> <p>DFA Undersecretary Ariel Abadilla and Assistant Secretaries Frank Cimafranca (Office of Consular Affairs) and Leo Tito Ausan (Office of Legal Affairs), were present to answer the queries of the Committee members.</p>