

# Committee Daily Bulletin

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Health	HRs 444 & 480	Reps. Tan (A.) and 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. (4<sup>th</sup> District, Quezon), terminated its inquiry relative to HRs 444 and 480. The Committee will start drafting its report on the two resolutions.</p> <p>Dr. Hilton Lam, director of the Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies of University of the Philippines Manila discussed the findings of his study entitled "Economic Evaluation of Dengue Vaccination in the Philippines," which was funded by the Sanofi-Aventis Singapore Pte. Ltd., the supplier of the dengue vaccine in question. Lam asserted that his team's findings were consistent with other studies proving that the dengue vaccine is cost-effective (priced at P1,000 or USD 21 per dose) and reduces the prevalence of dengue cases.</p> <p>Sanofi Executive Affairs Director Gerard Paez affirms the safety and efficacy of the dengue vaccine. Dr. Maria Rosario Capeding, head of Microbiology, Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (RITM) concurred with Sanofi's statement.</p> <p>On the other hand, Health Secretary Paulyn Jean Rosell-Ubial described the processes that led to the procurement of the dengue vaccine and implementation of the program as "unusual" and done with haste. She said she was expressing her own opinion and not of the DOH.</p> <p>Former Health Secretary Janette Garin stressed that there were no irregularities attendant to the implementation of the dengue immunization program during her term. She denied that hasty decisions were made, claiming that discussions relative to the program have started since 2012. She also explained that the decision to implement the program was based on the advice of the DOH program directors.</p> <p>Nelson de Guzman, father of a girl who was immunized on April 6 but still contracted severe dengue that led to her death on October 15, blames the death of her daughter to the dengue vaccine. He said her daughter died four days after experiencing headache and fever, which are alleged to be the side effects of the vaccine.</p>

Continuation... Health				<p>However, Philippine Children's Medical Center (PCMC) Executive Director Julius Lecciones and even Sec. Rosell-Ubial said that Christine's case could neither be labeled as an "adverse drug effect" nor an "adverse event following immunization" since the death happened beyond the established one month surveillance period after immunization.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Executive Vice President Froilan Bagabaldo of the Philippine Pharmacists Association, Inc. (PPHA) claimed that the dengue vaccine used by the DOH has not been properly tested. He stressed that Sanofi should be required to have a risk management plan approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn Garcia (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Cebu) asked the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) if it was proper to source the P3.5 billion funding for the dengue immunization program from the 2015 savings of DOH, particularly from its Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund.</p> <p>DBM Bureau-B Director Cristina Clasara replied that the said transaction was in order.</p> <p>Informed by Rep. Sandra Eriguel, M.D. (2<sup>nd</sup> District, La Union) about Sanofi's advertisements on television promoting dengue awareness, FDA Director General Nela Puno said that her office has already issued an order stopping Sanofi from further airing the said TV advertisement.</p>
Higher and Technical Education	HB 546	Rep. Sambar	Requiring higher education institutions (HEIs) to report their participation and program support expenditures in all college athletic programs	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Ann Hofer (2 <sup>nd</sup> District, Zamboanga Sibugay), approved HB 546 and the corresponding Committee Report subject to style and amendment.
	HBs 1553 & 2313	Reps. Abayon and Escudero	Granting discounts to underprivileged higher and technical education students	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to harmonize HBs 1553 and 2313.</p> <p>The TWG will be co-chaired by Rep. Evelina Escudero (1<sup>st</sup> District, Sorsogon), author of HB 2313, and AANGAT TAYO Party-List Rep. Harlin Neil Abayon III.</p> <p>Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Senior Education Specialist Nena Asingjo interposed no objection to the proposed law. However, Asingjo proposed the following in order to extend full support to the students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scope of the proposed law should be expanded to include underprivileged students enrolled in the elementary, secondary, technical-vocational, and tertiary levels, and those in the post-graduate studies;</li> <li>• There should be no age limit for students wanting to avail of the discount on basic education services such as food, books, and school supplies;</li> </ul>

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The discount privilege should be granted to students during the entire school year, including summer breaks and holidays;</li> <li>• An online information technology system should be established to provide real-time data on the grantees of the discount as well as on potential beneficiaries.</li> </ul> <p>Asingjo likewise suggested that a separate office be created to carry out the functions specified under Section 6 (Roles of the CHED and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) of HB 2313, namely: to plan, implement and monitor yearly work programs and submit annual reports; screen applicants and identify those who are eligible for the discount; and closely coordinate with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) in determining the income brackets of families for the purpose of identifying qualified students.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit to the Committee their respective position papers on the bills.</p>
	HR 407	Rep. Bataoil	Investigation into the alleged anomalous acts and practices being implemented by Dr. Dexter Buted, president of the Pangasinan State University (PSU), Lingayen Campus	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 407 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Asked on the steps undertaken by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) relative to the accusations against Buted, CHED Commissioner Alex Brillantes said that several meetings were convened by the Commission and the PSU Board to allow Buted to explain his side. Brillantes said that they were satisfied with Buted's explanations and the reforms he committed to institute.</p> <p>Brillantes promised to submit to the Committee a copy of documents pertinent to the investigation of the case against Buted.</p> <p>ABONO Party-List Rep. Conrado Estrella III belied the allegations that his party-list had been using the PSU campus as venue for its political activities since the assumption of Buted as PSU president.</p> <p>Rep. Bataoil said that he will file a bill that will disallow both private and public schools from being used as venue for political campaigns.</p> <p>The Committee required the witnesses to submit their respective sworn affidavits in support of the complaint against Buted; and for Buted to submit his counter affidavit on or before January 16, 2017.</p> <p>The Committee likewise requested the CHED to submit its own affidavit within the same period.</p>

**TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING**

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Economic Affairs (Technical Working Group)	HBs 69 & 2510	Reps. Salceda and Cua	Collective Investment Schemes Law	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1<sup>st</sup> District, Lanao Del Norte), will deliberate further on HBs 69 and 2510 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Atty. Joanne Frances Castro of the Insurance Commission (IC) commented that variable unit life insurance (VUL) contract should not be deemed as a “security” and therefore should be excluded from among the collective investment schemes (CIS) covered by the bill. She stressed that VUL insurance contract is an insurance product, hence it should be governed by the Insurance Code (PD 612).</p> <p>Representatives from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), <i>Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas</i> (BSP), and Fund Managers Association of the Philippines (PMAF) recommended either the definition of certain terms used in the bill or the revision of terms already defined under Section 5 (Definition of Terms) of the bill.</p> <p>For one, SEC Director Justina Callangan recommended the definition of the term “subsidiary” to mean as “an entity, including an unincorporated entity such as partnership that is controlled by another entity known as the parent.”</p> <p>Likewise, <i>Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas</i> (BSP) Supervision and Examination Sector Director (OIC) Mary Jane Chiong suggested the revision of the definition of “bank” to conform to the General Banking Law (RA 8791). This law defines “bank” as referring to “an entity engaged in the lending of funds obtained in the form of deposits and duly authorized to operate as a bank by the BSP.”</p> <p>Angel Marie Pacis, President of the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP), suggested that the provision in Section 28 (Tax Treatment of the CIS) imposing documentary stamp tax (DST) on CIS should be deleted. She explained that the underlying investments of the CIS are already subjected to DST, thus imposing the tax again on the CIS will result in double taxation.</p> <p>Rep. Dimaporo requested the stakeholders to submit their additional comments and recommendations for consideration by the TWG, including the proposed wordings on some of the provisions of the bill.</p>

Comments, suggestions and requests for copies may be sent to the Editorial Unit, Committee Administrative Support Service, 3rd Floor, Ramon V. Mitra, Jr. Bldg., Batasan Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City. Tel. Nos. 9326118; 9315001 local 7122.

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