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BICAMERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETING

| COMMITTEE | MEASURES | | SUBJECT MATTER | ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION |
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| | 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, approved with amendments the Bicameral Conference Committee Report on 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, and Senators Panfilo Lacson, Juan Edgardo "Sonny" Angara, Cynthia Villar, Maria Lourdes Nancy Binay, and Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri.</p> |

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

| COMMITTEE | MEASURES | | SUBJECT MATTER | ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION |
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| | NO. | PRINCIPAL AUTHOR | | |
| Cooperatives Development | HBs 188 & 259 | Reps. Bravo and Loyola | Providing for the mandatory appointment of a cooperatives officer in every local government unit (LGU), amending for the purpose RA 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991 | <p>The Committee, chaired by AGAP Party-List Rep. Rico Geron, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate HBs 188 and 259.</p> <p>The TWG, to be chaired by COOP-NATCCO Party-List Rep. Sabiniano Canama, will include as members the representatives from the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Civil Service Commission (CSC), and Cooperative Development Authority (CDA).</p> |

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| Continuation... Cooperatives Development | | | | CSC Director Prisco Rivera Jr. and CDA Supervising Cooperative Development Specialist Inocencio Malapit expressed support for the bills. |
| Human Rights | HB 2473 | Rep. Geron | Strengthening the right of cooperatives to develop into viable and responsible economic enterprises, amending for this purpose RA 6938, or the Cooperative Code of the Philippines, by adding Section 9-B on cooperative powers and capacities | <p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to study the bill further.</p> <p>Rep. Geron explained that his bill, HB 2473, intends to strengthen farmers' cooperatives by providing them the right to own, purchase, receive, take or retain any public or agricultural land, the size of which shall not exceed 50 hectares. He also underscored the need to make farming activities in the country more viable and farmers more competitive especially with the advent of the ASEAN free trade.</p> <p>Conveying the CDA's support for the bill, Malapit said that the proposed law will strengthen and expand the capabilities of the cooperatives.</p> <p>The TWG will include as members the representatives from the Departments of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Agriculture (DA), and Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and CDA.</p> |
| | HRs 486 & 487 | Reps. Elago and 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 peacefully 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>On the request of ACT TEACHERS Party-List Rep. Antonio Tinio, Police Senior Superintendent Belli Tamayo of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) narrated the chronology of events that led to the violent dispersal of the protesters in front of the US Embassy.</p> <p>Tamayo disclosed that on October 19, a huge number of protesters estimated to be around 1,000 to 1,500 breached the Manila Police District's (MPD) first line of defense, composed of only 60 police personnel. At noontime, the situation worsened and an initial scuffle between the police and the protesters ensued.</p> <p>Police Senior Superintendent Marcelino Pedrozo, MPD deputy director for operations, said that after receiving reports of the tension between the two groups, he immediately called for a meeting with the ground commander, Police Superintendent Albert Barot, to assess the situation.</p> <p>Barot claimed that he did not order the dispersal, but his men only responded to the situation occurring at that time, that is, when the protesters turned violent.</p> |

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| Continuation... Human Rights | | | | <p>He, however, admitted that Pedrozo advised him to disperse the protesters since the police personnel were outnumbered and fire truck was rendered useless in driving the protesters away because the latter took the firehose nozzle with them.</p> <p>ACT TEACHERS Party-List Rep. France Castro tried to seek an explanation from PNP Police Officer Franklin Kho for driving the police vehicle forward and backward amidst a group of protesters, injuring some of them in the process. However, Kho refused to answer citing the cases filed against him before the Office of the Ombudsman and the Manila prosecutor's office.</p> <p>The Committee requested the submission of the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigative report on the incident by the CIDG, PNP Internal Affairs Service (IAS), and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR); • List of PNP officers who were dispatched in the rally; and • A copy of the US Embassy's CCTV footage of the dispersal. |
| Public Information | Consolidated Bill to HBs 32, 63, 75, 77, 112, 120, 127, 161, 224, 237, 251, 330, 334, 463, 560, 903, 973, 1055, 1121, 1251, 1654, 1855, 1873, 2269, 2284, 2309, 2331, 2773, 2853, 3022, 3783, 3950 & 4020, HR 153 & Privilege Speech 23 | Reps. Del Mar, Nograles (K.A.), Vargas, Aglipay-Villar, Baguilat, Tan (A.), Tambunting, Belmonte (J.C.), Roque (H.), Almonte, Bordado, Romualdo, Zarate, Tugna, Castelo, Fortun, Antonino, Alejano, Biazon, Angara-Castillo, Aragones, Montoro, Bagao, Villarin, Cojuangco, Villafuerte, Rocamora, Deputy Speaker Cayetano, Reps. Escudero, Suansing (E.) & Atienza | Strengthening the people's right to information | <p>The Committee, chaired by Party-List ACT TEACHERS Rep. Antonio Tinio, will deliberate further on the consolidated bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>The Committee comprehensively discussed Sections 1 to 15 of the consolidated bill which was crafted by the technical working group (TWG).</p> <p>The stakeholders present were requested to submit to the Committee their comments and recommendations on the consolidated bill for consideration in its next meeting.</p> |
| Public Order and Safety | HB 2952 | Rep. Santos-Recto | Establishing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) help and protection desks in all Philippine National Police (PNP) stations nationwide, amending for the purpose Title VII of RA 8551, as amended otherwise known as the Philippine National Police Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998 | <p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), approved HB 2952, subject to style and amendments.</p> <p>Rep. Vilma Santos-Recto (6th District, Lipa City) said that her bill, HB 2952, seeks to provide mechanisms that will protect the LGBTs from discrimination and violence on account of gender identity or expression. She</p> |

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| Continuation... Public Order and Safety | | | | <p>went on to say that aside from creating LGBT help desks in all PNP stations nationwide, the proposed law also ensures gender neutrality in the PNP's recruitment and promotion process.</p> <p>PNP Police Senior Superintendent Walter Castillejos supports the intention of the bill even as he mentioned that the PNP's existing women's desks already attend to and investigate gender-based complaints.</p> <p>Catillejos proposed that the existing women's desk be renamed as "women, children and gender rights desk" to accommodate the concerns of LGBTs. He further suggested the creation of a Children and Gender Rights Center which shall exercise operational control over these desks; formulate training programs on gender sensitivity; and serve as a one-stop-shop for the investigation and treatment of victims of child abuse, violence against women, and gender-based discrimination in coordination with other government agencies that have a similar mandate.</p> <p>Representing the Lesbian and Gay Legislative Advocacy Network (LAGABLAB), Jet Evangelista said that his organization supports any legislative effort that seeks to address discrimination and violence against Filipino LGBTs.</p> |
| | HB 1341 | Rep. Acop | Renaming the Hilltop Rizal Philippine National Police (PNP) Command in Taytay, Rizal as Camp General Licerio Geronimo | The Committee approved HB 1341. |
| Ways and Means | HB 4054 | Speaker Alvarez | Providing tax incentives to individuals and corporations giving donations, contributions, and grants to Filipino athletes who have won medals in the summer and winter olympics and paralympic games | The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair Rep. Joey Salceda (2 nd District, Albay), approved the tax provision of HB 4054. |
| | HB 4601 | Rep. Cua | Mandating the establishment of electronic linkage between the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and VAT-registered taxpayers utilizing cash-register and/or point-of-sale machines | <p>The Committee approved HB 4601 subject to style.</p> <p>Department of Finance (DOF) Assistant Secretary Ma. Teresa Habitan and Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) legal counsel Atty. Nina Asuncion expressed their support for the bill.</p> <p>Drugstore Association of the Philippines (DSAP) President Alberto Hechanova likewise conveyed his support for the proposed law but requested that in the implementation of the law, ample time be given to DSAP members to comply with the requirements.</p> <p>Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) Project Manager Cesar Vinuya informed the Committee that the DICT is currently putting up the necessary infrastructure that would create electronic linkages among government</p> |

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| Continuation... Ways and Means | | | | <p>agencies. He added that the DICT intends to replicate this system as well in the business sector.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel Zubiri (3rd District, Bukidnon) underscored the need to address issues concerning connectivity, compatibility, and financial costs that are seen to affect the implementation of the proposed law.</p> |
| | HBs 42 & 3675 | Deputy Speaker Quimbo and Rep. Ungab | Removing the conditions for the condonation of all unpaid taxes due from local water districts, amending for the purpose Section 289-A of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) | <p>The Committee approved HB 42 in consolidation with HB 3675.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Romero Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina), author of HB 42, said that his bill seeks to enforce the condonation provided by law and remove any conditions or restrictions made by the BIR.</p> <p>Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. (1st District, Surigao del Sur) said that the United Nations (UN) considers access to water and sanitation as a human right so it is only proper for the government to undertake measures that will ensure that the local water districts are able to deliver better services to the people.</p> |
| Youth and Sports Development | Substitute Bill to HB 3228 | Rep. Pacquiao | Establishing the Sarangani Sports Training Center in the Municipality of Alabel, Province of Sarangani and appropriating funds therefor | The Committee, chaired by Rep. Conrado Estrella III (Party-List, ABONO), approved with amendment the Substitute Bill to HB 3228. |
| | Substitute Resolutions to HRs 337, 342, 349, 355, 361, 378 & 387; 341, 354 & 386; 363, 368 & 379; 381; 388, 395 & 397; 436; & 477 | Reps. Del Rosario, Sambar, Zamora, Olivarez, Bernos, Romero, Roa-Puno, Cortuna, Pichay, and Sy-Alvarado | Congratulating and commending various athletes for their achievements in recent international sports competitions | <p>The Committee adopted the substitute resolutions.</p> <p>The resolutions give recognition to Filipinos who won in prestigious competitions abroad, particularly in such sports as basketball, chess, table tennis, jiu-jitsu, taekwondo, and kayaking.</p> |

| CONSULTATIVE MEETING | | | | |
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| COMMITTEE | MEASURES | | SUBJECT MATTER | ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION |
| | NO. | PRINCIPAL AUTHOR | | |
| Veterans Affairs and Welfare | | | | The Committee, chaired by Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil (2 nd District, Pangasinan), held a consultative meeting with agencies involved in the affairs of Philippine veterans to initially discuss the bills referred to it. |
| | HB 1240 | Deputy Speaker Macapagal Arroyo | Giving juridical personality to the present Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) | <p>The Committee created a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune HB 1240.</p> <p>VMMC Acting Director and Undersecretary Eduardo Del Rosario proposed to include the following provisions in the bill: allocate an initial budget of P1.5 billion to the VMMC; allocate a portion of the income of the Philippine Charity</p> |

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| Continuation... Veterans Affairs and Welfare | | | | <p>Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) and the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR); and exempt the VMCM from government taxes.</p> <p>The Secretariat of the Committees on Ways and Means and on Appropriations, as well as concerned government agencies, will be invited in the meeting of the TWG.</p> |
| HB 1021 | Rep. Bataoil | Providing for the construction of a <i>Libingan ng mga Bayani</i> in Northern and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao and providing appropriations therefor | | <p>The Committee created a TWG to deliberate further on HB 1021.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-Pacman).</p> <p>Atty. Elvira Estanislao, head of the Land Assets and Development of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), informed the Committee that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been executed between the BCDA and the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) for the preparation of a master plan for the establishment of a <i>Libingan ng mga Bayani</i> in Northern and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. They convened a TWG to handle the project.</p> <p>PVAO Administrator Ernesto Carolina added that P10 million has been transferred to BCDA for the development of the said master plan.</p> |
| HR 53 | Rep. Alejano | Review of RA 8220 to resolve the alleged discrepancies in the interpretation of the computation of the pension of retired chief master sergeants and senior master sergeants | | <p>The Committee created a TWG to deliberate further on HR 53.</p> <p>Due to lack of material time, Rep. Bataoil requested Retired Sergeant Nestor Moreto of Fernando Air Base in Lipa City to just submit a copy of his presentation to the TWG.</p> |
| HR 275 | Rep. Roman | Inquiry into the status of the audit on the funds and operations of the Board of Trustees of the Veterans of World War II (BTVWWII) by the Commission on Audit (COA) pursuant to Resolution No. 206 adopted by the House of Representatives in the 16 th Congress | | <p>The Committee will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 275.</p> <p>Among the issues that need to be resolved are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The undistributed shares of stocks of the Philippine Veterans Bank (PVB); • The difficulty of transferring the shares of stocks of the deceased veterans to their heirs; • The non-submission by the BTVWWII of documents required by the Commission on Audit (COA). <p>PVB Board Secretary Federico Manalo confirmed that only 33,000 shares of stocks of the 400,000 total shares were distributed to the veterans. On the other hand, Manalo said that noncompliance with the requirements for the transfer of the shares of stocks to the legal heirs remains to be the main reason for the delay in the transfer.</p> <p>COA Supervising Auditor Preciosa Miranda confirmed that the BTVWWII is subject to audit by COA. She added that COA has not yet</p> |

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| Continuation... Veterans Affairs and Welfare | | | | <p>received any of the required documents from the BTVWWII.</p> <p>Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo) manifested that he will file a bill to amend RA 3518, or the law creating the Philippine Veterans Bank, in order to resolve the issues regarding the BTVWWII.</p> <p>The BTVWWII was requested to submit to the Committee a copy of the minutes of meeting of the Board of Directors when the election of the current officers was held and its composition for the last 10 years.</p> |
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| ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS | | |
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| COMMITTEE | SUBJECT MATTER | DISCUSSIONS |
| Good Government and Public Accountability | Approval of the Committee's Rules of Procedure | <p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Johnny Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur), adopted its Rules of Procedure for the 17th Congress.</p> <p>The Committee has jurisdiction over all matters directly and principally relating to malfeasance, misfeasance and nonfeasance in office committed by officers and employees of the government and its political subdivisions and instrumentalities inclusive of investigations of any matter of public interest.</p> <p>The Committee Secretary, Atty. Ma. Victoria Castillo, reported the Committee's accomplishments for the 16th Congress, which include the conduct of numerous public hearings and the submission of Committee Reports on the results of its inquiries on the following issues: rampant rice smuggling; reported P30 billion missing funds of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH); and the alleged P200 million "scam" in the Bureau of Plant Industry arising from the monopoly in the importation of onion and garlic.</p> <p>PBA Party-List Rep. Jericho Jonas Nograles asked if the Committee has the authority to investigate private organizations that are inappropriately using and dispensing government funds. Rep. Pimentel answered in the negative, but explained that the Committee can investigate or call the attention of the government agency that released the funds to the erring private organization.</p> <p>For the 17th Congress, Rep. Pimentel enumerated the following measures which were referred to the Committee for its consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR 292 - inquiry into the alleged illegal practices in the Bureau of Immigration (BI); • HR 565 - inquiry into the circumstances that compelled Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) Director Francisco Jose Villa Jr. to commit suicide and the alleged corruption behind ERC deals; • HR 566 - inquiry into the alleged midnight deals of the Manila Electric Company (MERALCO)-affiliated generation companies and the ERC which may be disadvantageous to the public and may cause power rate hikes; and • Privilege Speech on the illegality of procurement and misappropriation of public funds relative to the dengue vaccination program of the Department of Health (DOH) amounting to P3.5 billion. |

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| Visayas Development (Special Committee) | Approval of the Committee's Rules of Procedure | <p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Alejandro Mirasol (5th District, Negros Occidental), adopted its Rules of Procedure for the 17th Congress.</p> <p>The Committee has general jurisdiction over all matters directly and principally relating to policies, programs and related initiatives affecting the economic, social, political and cultural development of municipalities, cities and provinces in the Visayas region, including the needs, concerns and issues that impact on the welfare of constituencies therein.</p> |
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| TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING | | | | |
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| COMMITTEE | MEASURES | | SUBJECT MATTER | ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION |
| | NO. | PRINCIPAL AUTHOR | | |
| Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources (Technical Working Group) | HBs 2018, 3320 & 3624 | Reps. Deloso-Montalla, Acosta, and Bravo (M.V.) | Establishing fish ports/cold storage facility/fishery landing sites in various municipalities and cities in Zambales, Puerto Princesa, and Masbate | <p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Committee Secretary Celia Milagros Miciano, will deliberate further on HBs 2018, 3320 and 3624 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Mary Anne Pullilan, Supervising Legislative Staff Officer III of the Bill Drafting Service of the House of Representatives, recommended that HBs 3320 and 3624 be revised to come up with two new bills for each, noting that each bill has more than one subject matter which is not allowed in a legislative measure. She also recommended that the explanatory note of HB 2018 be changed to accurately reflect the rationale for filing the bill.</p> <p>Department Manager Iris de Vera, Corporate Planning and Management Information Services Department (CPMISD) of the Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (PFDA), explained that the PFDA establishes at least one fishport per city or municipality depending on the need and the availability of funds.</p> <p>De Vera committed that the PFDA will conduct ocular inspections of the localities mentioned in HBs 2018 and 3624 to assess the viability of putting up fishports and fishery landing sites in these areas.</p> <p>Commenting on HB 3320, PFDA Planning Officer Gina Reyes said that although there is already an existing fishport in Barangay Mangingisda in Puerto Princesa City, the establishment of another fishport facility in the same city is still possible depending on the need of the area.</p> |

| AGENCY BRIEFING | | |
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| COMMITTEE | SUBJECT MATTER | DISCUSSIONS |
| Globalization and WTO (Special Committee) | Briefing by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) on the international trade policy and overview of the Philippine engagement to | The Committee, chaired by ANGKLA Party-List Rep. Jesulito Manalo, listened to the briefing conducted by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). |

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| <p>Continuation... Globalization and WTO (Special Committee)</p> | <p>the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other regional and bilateral free trade agreements, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Integration</p> | <p>DTI Undersecretary Ceferino Rodolfo presented the country's trade negotiation agenda based on its agreements with the World Trade Organization (WTO), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperative (APEC), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and other bilateral arrangements. He also mentioned the country's top export markets in 2015, naming Japan as the country's top trading partner with 20.9% share, followed by the United States with 15.3% share.</p> <p>Rodolfo likewise discussed the country's strategies to strengthen its trade and investment relations with Europe. These include maximizing the availment of the European Union's (EU) Generalized System of Preferences Plus (GSP+); pursuing the PH-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA); and negotiating with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).</p> <p>Rodolfo said that the EU GSP allows exporting countries to pay less or zero duties on their export products to the EU and removes tariffs on essentially the same product categories as those covered by the general agreement. The Philippines is currently a beneficiary of the EU GSP where 2,442 products from the country are exported at zero duty, while 3,767 are subject to reduced tariffs, Rodolfo added.</p> <p>Rep. Rosanna 'Ria' Vergara (3rd District, Nueva Ecija) inquired why the local automotive manufacturing industry is not included in the list of priorities of the DTI, citing its benefits to the country's economy. She added that there is an increase in demand for motorcycles which can be supplied by local manufacturers, with the help of the government, rather than importing them from India.</p> <p>Rodolfo said that the DTI is focused on promoting micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME). He added that the automotive industry is a "tool and die" industry based on DTI's discussion with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and the Metals Industry Research Development Center (MIRDC). (A tool and die industry is a skill intensive and technology dependent industry that has to remain attuned to the ever changing technologies in design and manufacturing.)</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Fernando Gonzales (3rd District, Albay) if the country is prepared to face the challenges and opportunities that the ASEAN integration will bring, Rodolfo replied in the affirmative.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel 'Chiquiting' Sagarbarria (2nd District, Negros Oriental) urged the DTI to undertake initiatives that will promote and protect the ingenuity of the Filipinos. He added that putting up offices to handle concerns on intellectual property rights in Visayas and Mindanao will be of great help to Filipino inventors in those areas.</p> |
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