

# Committee Daily Bulletin



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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Games and Amusements	HR 546	Minority Leader Suarez	Investigation into the proliferation of illegal gambling	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Gus Tambunting (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Parañaque City), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to deliberate further on the issues raised in the three resolutions.</p> <p>Minority Leader Danilo Suarez (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Quezon), author of HR 546, emphasized that this inquiry is timely, following the issuance of EO 13 by President Rodrigo Duterte on February 2, 2017 which intensifies the government's campaign against illegal gambling.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Tambunting on the basis of the issuance of franchise to STL's authorized agent corporations (AACs), PCSO Chair Jose Jorge Corpuz replied that the same is provided for under RA 1169 or the PCSO Charter.</p> <p>Speaker Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez (1<sup>st</sup> District, Davao del Norte), who was present in the meeting, asserted that there is no provision in the PCSO Charter authorizing it to issue AACs a franchise to operate. He urged the PCSO to cancel the franchises granted to these AACs since their operations are considered illegal.</p> <p>Rep. Deogracias Ramos Jr. (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Sorsogon) called for the indefinite suspension of the operations of the 56 AAC's until such time that a new set of implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of RA 1169 has been crafted and approved.</p> <p>Corpuz sad that the PCSO will submit to the wisdom of Congress.</p> <p>AKO-BICOL Party-List Rep. Rodel Batocabe questioned PCSO's delegation to independent agents of the collection of bets for STL games, saying that the agency is not authorized to do so under its Charter. He was reacting to PCSO Legal Department Manager Annaliza Inchong's statement that while the PCSO's representatives conduct the draw, independent agents collect the bets.</p> <p>Asked by ANGKLA Party-List Rep. Jesulito</p>
	HRs 712 & 715	Reps. Manalo and Batocabe	Inquiry into the alleged failure of the small town lottery (STL) operations of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) in generating its projected income resulting in the loss of billions of pesos in revenues on the part of the national government and the possible use of STL operations as fronts for <i>jueteng</i> and other illegal numbers game in the country	

Continuation... Games and Amusements				<p>Manalo on the basis of the P27 billion projected income for 2017 from STL operations, Corpuz explained that the projected income is based on the monthly quota of the 56 AACs.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Games and Amusement Board (GAB) Chair Abraham Khalil Mitra informed the Committee that the GAB has created an anti-gambling unit that is tasked to go after illegal gambling operators in professional sports and amusement games.</p>
Ways and Means	HB 4688	Rep. Salceda	Amending Sections 22, 24, 31, 32, 34, 35, 79, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 148 and Title VI of RA 8424, otherwise known as the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, will deliberate further on HBs 4688 and 4774 in its next meeting.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Cua clarified that the discussion in today's meeting will focus on the excise tax on automobiles which both bills propose to increase.</p> <p>Department of Finance (DOF) Secretary Carlos Dominguez III, Bureau of Customs (BOC) Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon, Department of Transportation (DOTr) Undersecretary Garry de Guzman, and National Tax Research Center (NTRC) Executive Director Trinidad Rodriguez expressed their support for the bills.</p> <p>Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (CAMPI) President Rommel Gutierrez and Association of Vehicle Importers and Distributors (AVID) President Maria Perez-Agudo said that while they support the intention of the bills, they are worried about the negative effects of a higher excise tax on the automobile industry.</p> <p>According to Perez-Agudo, the proposed law may compel the industry to pass on to the consumer the cost of tax levied on automobiles. She also warned that the increase in excise tax on automobiles will result to decreased sales, derailment of the industry's growth, and possible displacement of workers.</p> <p>To counter these negative effects, Perez-Agudo proposed to either lower the taxes or increase the number of tiers used to classify automotive vehicles from four to seven, and give the industry ample time to make the necessary adjustments (six months from the enactment of the law).</p> <p>Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Surigao del Sur) objected to the bills saying that they will adversely affect Filipinos belonging to the lower income group.</p> <p>The DOF was requested to conduct a study on possible effects of the proposal on the automobile industry, and to submit relevant data that can be used by the Committee in its deliberations on the proposed law.</p>
	HB 4774	Rep. Cua	Amending Sections 6, 22, 24, 25, 31, 33, 34, 79, 84, 86, 99, 106, 107, 108, 109, 113, 116, 148, 149, 155, 232, 237 and 288; creating new Sections 148-A, 237-A, 264-A and 264-B; and repealing Sections 35 and 62 of RA 8424	

Welfare of Children	Substitute Bill to HB 516	Rep. Herrera-Dy	Promoting positive and non-violent discipline of children and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Divina Grace Yu (1 <sup>st</sup> District, Zamboanga del Sur), deferred the approval of the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HB 516 to incorporate additional amendments introduced by the Members of the Committee and the resource persons present during the meeting.
	HBs 13, 1280, 2345, 3050 & 4676	Reps. Belmonte (F.), Belmonte (J.C.), Dalipe, Tambunting, and Nieto	Providing for the special protection of children in situations of armed conflict and providing penalties for violations thereof	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the five bills in its next meeting, and agreed to use HB 13 as its working draft.</p> <p>Rep. Jose Christopher Belmonte (6th District, Quezon City), author of HB 1280, and Rep. Manuel Jose "Mannix" Dalipe (2nd District, Zamboanga City), author of HB 2345, said that the proposed law affords full protection to children exposed to armed conflicts from any form of abuse.</p> <p>Majority of the resource persons present during the meeting manifested their support to the bills.</p> <p>Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Assistant Secretary Hope Hervilla proposed the inclusion in the bill of a provision that will define the functions of the inter-agency committee on children in armed conflict (IAC-CIAC) created by virtue of Executive Order 138 or the Comprehensive Program Framework for Children in Armed Conflict.</p> <p>Grace Alejandrino, head of the Policy and Planning Division of the Council for the Welfare of Children, recommended the involvement of non-government organizations, while Janelle Rabe of the Childs Right Network (CRN) suggested the inclusion of the Department of Education (DepEd) as among those that will be involved in the implementation of the proposed law.</p> <p>Julien Hayois of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) recommended that the proposed law should not allow the arrest, detention or prosecution of children involved in or associated with any armed group.</p> <p>The Salinlahi Alliance for Children's Concern and the Child Rehabilitation Center (CRC) objected to the passage of the proposed law. They stressed that while they support the bills' intent to protect children in situations of armed conflict, the inclusion of the Paris Principle as the bills' basic framework make them oppose the proposed law. They added that the Paris Principle, particularly referring to the broadened definition of "children associated with armed groups," has been used as justification by government state forces and paramilitary groups in their anti-insurgency campaign, giving them license to perpetuate human rights violation against children and</p>

Continuation... Welfare of Children				<p>residents of areas “controlled” by lawless armed groups.</p> <p>On the other hand, Atty. Ma. Rameliza Dial-Quigao of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) opined that the BJMP has no authority to detain or jail children involved in armed conflict, just like children in conflict with the law, pursuant to RA 9344 or the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit their position papers on the bills.</p>
Women and Gender Equality	Substitute Bill to HBs 219, 374, 375, 1159, 2386, 3263 & 3951	Reps. Villarica, Brosas, Acosta- Alba, Abad, Deputy Speaker Cayetano, and Rep. Aglipay- Villar	Ensuring the fundamental equality of men and women under the laws on marriage and family relations, amending for the purpose articles 14, 96, 124, 211 and 225 of Executive Order 209, otherwise known as the Family Code of the Philippines	The Committee, chaired by DIWA Party-List Rep. Emmeline Aglipay-Villar, approved the substitute bill to the seven measures, subject to style and amendment, and the corresponding Committee Report.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Higher and Technical Education (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to HBs1583, 1942, 2635, 2771, 3427, 3452, 4701, 4800, 813, 4341, 2596, 33, 1091, 3149, 181, 1228, 3704, 4256, 4483, 578, 290, 2458, 2472, 1590, 2984, 3193, 3852, 2137, 4146, 4147, 1089, 1432, 1445, 3708, 1486, 1956, 2138, 2590, 3959, 898, 2166, 2951, 3472, 3586, 1367, 806, 1810, 1195, 1433, 2819, 3388, 4298, 4825, 4944, 4226, 1067, 1447 & 3707	Reps. Vargas, Santos-Recto, Gatchalian, Salceda, Tan (S.), Villarin, Revilla, Elago, Batocabe, Villanueva, Del Mar, Lanete, Alejano, Crisologo, Umali, Romualdez, Belaro, Castelo, Panganiban, Romero, Yap (A.), Geron, Fuentebella, Antonio, Espino, Salon, Barbers, Lazatin, Bolilla, Abayon, Tambunting, Lacson, Tan (A.), Herrera-Dy, Deputy Speaker Macapagal- Arroyo, Reps. Loyola, Suansing (E.), Cortuna, Cua, Nogralles (K.A.), and Roman	Providing for free higher and technical education in state universities and colleges (SUCs) and state-run technical-vocational institutes, and a loan program voucher system in private higher and technical education, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Ann Hofer (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Zamboanga Sibugay), will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Hofer said that the draft substitute bill exempts students enrolled in SUCs or any state-run technical-vocational institutes from paying tuition and other school fees.</p> <p>Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Chair Patricia Licuanan informed the TWG that the draft guidelines in the implementation and utilization of the P8.3 billion funding allocated to CHED was already submitted to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for the latter’s review.</p> <p>The P8.3 billion, which is part of the 2017 General Appropriations Act (GAA), will fund the government’s free tuition program for undergraduate students in SUCs.</p> <p>DBM Chief Budget and Management Specialist Joy Villanueva said that DBM has already returned the guidelines to CHED with its comments, such as the inclusion of the University of the Philippines (UP) in the program.</p> <p>Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Albay) suggested that since UP will be included in the program, it should be granted an additional subsidy commensurate to the total proceeds from tuition fees that it collects. He said UP’s collections from tuition fees amount to about P1.1 billion.</p>

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education (Technical Working Group)				<p>Rep. Celso Lobregat (1<sup>st</sup> District, Zamboanga City) asked about the status of implementation of RA 10687 or the Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) which was passed during the 16<sup>th</sup> Congress.</p> <p>CHED Deputy Executive Director Napoleon Imperial reported that CHED has already formulated the law's implementing rules and regulations (IRR) last March 2016.</p> <p>Imperial added that the UniFAST secretariat, which harmonizes, consolidates, and assesses current programs of the 19 government agencies that are implementing the student financial assistance program, has already lined up its programs for 2017 and 2018.</p>
Public Order and Safety (Technical Working Group)	HBs 421, 1393, 3699 & 4882	Deputy Speaker Quimbo, Reps. Amante, Antonio and Sy-Alvarado	Prohibiting the malicious and willful dissemination of false information on the presence of bombs, explosives and other incendiary devices in high density or sensitive places and providing penalties therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Manuel Luis Lopez (1<sup>st</sup> District, Manila), agreed to consolidate HBs 421, 1393, 3699, and 4882.</p> <p>Rep. Lopez asked the Philippine National Police (PNP) why false bomb threats keep on occurring despite the existence of Presidential Decree 1727 or the law declaring the said act as unlawful, which should already serve as a deterrent.</p> <p>PNP Police Chief Superintendent Eric Serafin Reyes explained that people who make false threats through calls, texts or e-mails know that they can get away with it because the authorities cannot just track them down.</p> <p>Reyes added that last year, 55% of reported threats were sent through short messaging service (SMS) using prepaid cards, while the rest were made through calls using public payphones and social media using fake accounts.</p> <p>Muntinlupa City Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon said the PNP lacks the technical capability to curb the dissemination of false bomb threats.</p> <p>PNP Police Senior Superintendent Marni Marcos Jr. mentioned that the Data Privacy Act of 2012 or RA 10173 also constrains the PNP from accessing relevant data on a suspect's cell phone.</p> <p>Rep. Lopez proposed that the following provisions be included in the consolidated bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require the registration of subscriber identity module (SIM) cards and social media subscribers; and</li> <li>• Require the dealers or direct sellers of SIM cards to submit the registration documents of cell phone subscribers to the telecommunications companies (telcos) and the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC).</li> </ul>

Suffrage and Electoral Reforms (Technical Working Group)	HB 45	Deputy Speaker Quimbo	Amending Section 9 of RA 10366, or the law authorizing the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) to establish precincts assigned to accessible polling places exclusively for persons with disabilities (PWDs) and senior citizens	The technical working group (TWG), presided by Committee Chair and CIBAC Party-List Rep. Sherwin Tugna, terminated its deliberation on the eight bills. The Secretariat was directed to draft a substitute bill, incorporating therein the pertinent recommendations of the resource persons.
	HB 743	Rep. Aglipay-Villar	Providing for qualified early voting for senior citizens, PWDs, and workers required to work on election day	The draft substitute bill and the corresponding Committee Report will be transmitted to the mother Committee for consideration and approval.
	HBs 1371, 1372, 1373, 2486 & 2487	Reps. Tan (A.) and Suansing (E.)	Providing for local absentee voting for lawyers, PWDs, and senior citizens	COMELEC Director Allen Francis Abaya opined that the proposed early voting or absentee voting for senior citizens and PWDs may no longer be necessary if only the provisions of RA 10366 are fully implemented, particularly on the establishment of accessible polling places (APPs) for these sectors.
	HB 4539	Rep. Rodriguez (M.)	Providing for early voting for the national and local elections	Abaya clarified that early voting shall be an option for senior citizens and PWDs such that the provisions of RA 10366 relative to the establishment of accessible polling places shall not be deemed superseded.  However, Dir. Teopisto Elnas Jr. of the COMELEC's Election and Barangay Affairs Department warned of huge logistical problems should senior citizens and PWDs decide to register for early voting then opt to vote on election day itself.  Eric Jude Alvia, secretary general of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Election (NAMFREL), recommended that the APPs should have their own vote counting machines (VCMs) and Special Board of Election Inspectors (SBEIs) to assure ballot secrecy and security, instead of transporting the ballots from the APP to the designated polling precincts.  He added that COMELEC should ensure that the accessible polling places comply with the requirements under the law, citing the problems encountered by senior citizens and PWDs in these areas during the past elections.  The COMELEC was requested to submit a report on the impact of the information and dissemination campaign it conducted for senior citizens and PWDs in the previous elections on the voter turnout.