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BUDGET BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	<p>Briefing on the proposed FY 2017 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments of the following government agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and its attached agencies and corporations 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), listened to the presentations on the proposed FY 2017 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Education (DepEd).</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay) sat as the presiding officer during the DTI's budget briefing.</p> <p>DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez said that under the FY 2017 National Expenditure Program (NEP), the DTI and its attached agencies and corporations will get a total budget of P7.95 billion, which is 20% higher than their 2016 budget of P6.64 billion.</p> <p>The DTI budget for 2017 is distributed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of the Secretary (OSEC) – P4.25 billion; Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) – P2.76 billion; Board of Investments (BOI) – P401 million; Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (CITEM) – P220 million; Construction Industry Authority of the Philippines (CIAP) – P111 million; Design Center of the Philippines (DCP) – P96 million; Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority (APECofA) – P59 million; and Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC) – P58 million. <p>Under the slogan “<i>Trabaho at Negosyo</i>,” the DTI 2017 proposed budget is geared towards boosting employment and entrepreneurship in the country as a means to uplift the quality of life of Filipinos and alleviate poverty.</p> <p>Party-List Reps. Anthony Bravo (COOP-NATCCO) and Ron Salo (KABAYAN) questioned the P1.68 billion unused funds of DTI from its 2014 budget.</p> <p>DTI Assistant Secretary Ireneo Vizmonte explained that the DTI failed to utilize much of the funds mentioned due to certain difficulties it encountered in the implementation of the bottom-up budgeting (BUB). He added that the DTI had to make certain adjustments in its structure and manpower in line with its rationalization plan.</p> <p>BUB is a participatory budgeting approach where the development needs of cities/municipalities, as identified in their respective local poverty reduction plan (LPRAT), are considered in the budget proposal of national agencies such as the DTI. The people’s organizations (POs) and other civil society organizations (CSOs) participate in the formulation of the LPRAT. (Source: DTI official website)</p> <p>To improve the service delivery of DTI, the Members of the Committee recommended the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the budget of the CITEM; Improve the country’s competitiveness by reviewing its tax regime as well as the imposition of non-tariff barriers; Include the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in the coverage of DTI’s Assistance to Disadvantaged Municipalities Program; Bring the “<i>negosyo</i>” centers to the barangay level; and Improve or create a feedback mechanism that would effectively address consumer complaints.

<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education (DepEd) and its attached agencies 	<p>The Committee requested DTI to submit a detailed report on the status of the barangay micro business enterprises (BMBEs) as well as pertinent documents that would clarify the adverse findings of the Commission on Audit (COA) as stated in its audit report on the DTI. The DTI was also asked to conduct a study on the advantages and disadvantages of joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, a trade agreement among 12 Pacific Rim countries.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Maria Carmen Zamora (1st District, Compostela Valley) sat as presiding officer during the budget briefing of the DepEd.</p> <p>Secretary Leonor Briones presented the 2017 proposed budget of the DepEd and its attached agencies amounting to P567.56 billion, which increased by 31% compared to its 2016 budget of P433.38 billion. The increase in the budget of the DepEd will be used to provide additional classrooms, seats, computers, instructional and other learning materials, and teaching personnel relative to the full implementation of the K to 12 Program.</p> <p>The proposed 2017 budget of the DepEd is broken down by agency as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DepEd Proper, P566.24 billion; National Museum, P657.77 million; Early Childhood Care and Development Council, P480.37 million; Philippine High School for the Arts, P132.57 million; National Book Development Board, P37.57 million; and National Council for Children's Television, P14.28 million. <p>Briones was happy to note that the anticipated large number of drop-outs and massive displacement of teachers for college freshmen did not happen when the Senior High School (SHS) Program was implemented this year. She said there were over 1.5 million SHS enrollees this year, of which about 914,000 or 60% pursued the academic track, 594,000 or 39% were enrolled in the technical-vocational livelihood, and the rest took Arts and Design and Sports. Likewise, there were 36,461 teacher-item positions created under the DepEd, she added.</p> <p>The following major reforms in the education sector are being undertaken by the DepEd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-year review of the Project Procurement Management Plans (PPMPs); Creation of key positions, such as Undersecretaries for Budget and Performance Monitoring, for Disbursements and Accounting, and for Administration; and Assistant Secretary for Procurement; Establishment of a Financial Management Information System (FMIS) that will track the Department's budget releases and disbursements in real time; Reconstitution of the joint-technical working group on basic education facilities with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to address prompt construction of school buildings; Strengthening of the curriculum on drug education, gender and development, and disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation and mitigation; and Expansion of the coverage of the Alternative Learning System (ALS). <p>Citing the country's possible shift to a federal form of government, Rep. Celso Lobregat (1st District, Zamboanga City) asked the DepEd regarding the extent of devolution of governmental powers to the federal states, specifically in the education sector. Briones opined that there should still be a national policy for education. She cited the case of the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) which has its own secretary of education, who still coordinates with the DepEd.</p> <p>Responding to the query of Rep. Sarah Jane Elago (Party-List, KABATAAN) on how the budget of the Government Assistance for Students and Teachers in Private Education (GASTPE) is being utilized, Briones said she already directed the DepEd Undersecretary for Finance to review the system of allocating this budget to private schools. She promised to provide Rep. Elago with a report on the matter.</p>
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