

# Committee Daily Bulletin



17<sup>th</sup> Congress  
First Regular Session

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Games and Amusements	HB 299	Rep. Suansing (H.)	Granting health care, retirement and death benefits to professional Filipino athletes who won world championship titles in international professional sports competitions or in other equally prestigious international championship games and providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Gus Tambunting (2nd District, Parañaque City), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune HB 299.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City).</p> <p>Rep. Horacio Suansing Jr. (2nd District, Sultan Kudarat), author of HB 299, said that his bill recognizes world-class professional Filipino athletes for giving honor, glory and pride to the country and ensures that they are provided some assistance at their twilight years.</p> <p>Games and Amusements Board (GAB) Chair Abraham Khalil Mitra, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) Chair Jose Jorge Corpuz, and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) Senior Manager Narissa Sugay all expressed support for the bill.</p> <p>Majority of the Members of the Committee present recommended that the scope of the proposed law be expanded to include even those athletes who did not win but have competed in international sports competitions.</p> <p>GAB was requested to provide the Committee with data on the number of Filipino athletes who participated in international sports competition in order to determine the amount of funding that will be required to implement the proposed law.</p>
	HB 431	Rep. Escudero	Institutionalizing a just and equitable disposition of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) Charity Fund, amending for the purpose Section 6 of RA 1169, or the law providing for charity sweepstakes horse races and lotteries, as amended	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to deliberate further on HBs 431, 2594 and 4760.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by AKO BICOL Party-List Rep. Rodel Batocabe.</p> <p>Rep. Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon), author of HB 431, said that her bill seeks to amend Section 6 of RA 1169 by identifying specific programs or services that will receive funding from the PCSO's Charity Fund, thus removing the discretionary power of the PCSO Board to disburse this fund.</p>
	HB 2594	Rep. Santos-Recto	Providing funding support for universal health care coverage and improving PhilHealth benefit packages by allocating 70% of the PCSO charity fund for such purpose, thereby amending RA 1169, as amended	<p>On the other hand, Rep. Micaela Violago (2<sup>nd</sup></p>

Continuation... Games and Amusements	HB 4760	Rep. Violago	Amending Section 6 (b) of RA 1169, as amended, requiring PCSO to provide ambulances to state universities and colleges (SUCs)	<p>District, Nueva Ecija), author of HB 4760, said that her bill makes it mandatory for PCSO, through its Ambulance Donation Program, to provide ambulances to all SUCs to ensure that immediate medical care is available to students and school personnel should there be accidents in the university or college.</p> <p>PCSO's Charity Fund, which constitutes 30% of its net receipts, is being used to finance and support health programs, medical assistance and services, and charities of national character. (Source: PCSO website)</p> <p>Corpuz expressed PCSO's objection to HB 431, saying that the proposed law may hamper existing programs of the government being funded by the Charity Fund.</p> <p>As regards HB 2594, PCSO Assistant General Manager for Charity Assistance Larry Cedro informed the Committee that a TWG, composed of the PCSO, Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), has been convened to come up with a single universal health care program.</p> <p>Commenting on HB 4760, PCSO General Manager Alexander Balutan said that the PCSO already provides ambulances to universities which have the facility and medical staff to handle and maintain the unit. Balutan added that the PCSO cannot provide ambulances to all SUCs nationwide due to limited funds and considering that the priority under this program are government hospitals.</p> <p>The PCSO was requested to provide the Committee with a list of people or entities provided with ambulances.</p> <p>Southern Leyte Rep. Roger "Oging" Mercado urged the PCSO to reconsider its position on the three bills and requested it to provide alternative solutions to the problems which the bills intend to address.</p>
	HB 811	Rep. Batocabe	Abolishing the regular mandatory contributions imposed on the PCSO, modifying for the purpose Section 11 (a) of RA 7835, also known as the Comprehensive and Integrated Shelter Financing Act of 1994	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG, to be chaired by Rep. Mercado, to study further HB 811.</p> <p>Rep. Batocabe, author of HB 811, said that his bill seeks to abolish the mandatory 10% annual contributions imposed on the PCSO for national shelter program, arguing that such is beyond the PCSO's mandate and charter and that the funds should be redirected towards improving the country's health and charity services.</p> <p>The PCSO was requested to provide the Committee with a copy of executive issuances or laws that require it to contribute funds beyond its mandate, for reference by the TWG.</p>

Higher and Technical Education	Substitute Bill to HBs 873 & 3066	Rep. Espina	Changing the name of Naval State University (NSU) in the Municipality of Naval, Province of Biliran to Biliran Island State University, and removing the prohibition in the appointment of NSU president and Board members, amending for the purpose RA 9718 or the law converting the Naval Institute Technology to NSU	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Ann Hofer (2 <sup>nd</sup> District, Zamboanga Sibugay), approved the substitute bill, subject to style and amendment, and the corresponding Committee Report.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 2771, 5073, 1583, 1942, 2635, 3427, 3452, 4800, 4825, 4902, 4944, 1195, 1433, 3388, 4298, 5066, 33, 806, 813, 1089, 1091, 1228, 1367, 1432, 1445, 1590, 1810, 2472, 2596, 2984, 3149, 3193, 3704, 3708, 3852, 3959, 4146, 4147, 4226, 4256, 4341, 4483 & 5015	Reps. Salceda, Belaro, Vargas, Santos-Recto, Gatchalian, Tan (S.), Villarin, Elago, Cua, Tupas, Nograles (K.A.), Loyola, Deputy Speaker Macapagal-Arroyo, Reps. Cortuna, Go (M.), Del Mar, Batocabe, Lanete, Umali, Tan (A.), Fuentebella, Geron, Antonio, Alejano, Espino, Romualdez, Bolilia, Salon, Lazatin, Villanueva, and Castelo	Promoting universal access to quality tertiary education by providing for free tuition and other school fees in state universities and colleges and state-run technical-vocational institutions and strengthening the Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST), amending for the purpose Republic Act 10687, otherwise known as the UniFAST Law, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved in principle the substitute bill subject to amendment based on recommendations to be submitted by the members of the Committee and resource persons. Thereafter, the bill will be transmitted to the Committee on Appropriations for approval of its funding provision.
	HB 367	Deputy Speaker Hernandez	Establishing the South Cotabato State College in the Municipality of Surallah, Province of South Cotabato, integrating therewith the Surallah National Agricultural School, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved HB 367 subject to style and amendment.  A bill with similar subject matter was approved on third reading by the House during the 16 <sup>th</sup> Congress.
	HB 2311	Rep. Escudero	Converting the Sorsogon State College in the Province of Sorsogon into a state university to be known as the Sorsogon State University and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved HB 2311 subject to the result of the evaluation of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).  A bill with similar subject matter was approved on third reading by the House during the 16 <sup>th</sup> Congress.
	HB 3929	Rep. Lobregat	Converting the Zamboanga City State Polytechnic College into a state university to be known as Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University	The Committee approved in principle HB 3929 subject to compliance with the requirements set by CHED.  The Committee agreed to conduct an ocular inspection of Zamboanga City State Polytechnic College jointly with officials from CHED next month.
	HB 4218	Rep. Almario	Converting the Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology in the City of Mati and all its satellite campuses located in the Province of Davao Oriental into a state university to be known as the Davao Oriental State University, integrating therewith the Governor	The Committee approved HB 4218 subject to compliance with the requirements set by CHED.

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education			Generoso College of Arts, Science and Technology in the Municipality of Governor Generoso, Province of Davao Oriental and appropriating funds therefor	
	HR 611	Rep. Yap (V.)	Commending Richard Cabuay Macapulay and Mark Penuliar Castillo of Tarlac State University for topping the September 2016 licensure examination for teachers in the secondary and elementary levels, respectively	The Committed adopted HR 611 subject to style.
Ways and Means	HBs 4688 & 4774	Reps. Salceda and Cua	Amending certain sections of RA 8424, otherwise known as the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997, as amended	The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, will deliberate further on the 28 bills which seek to amend certain sections of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997 (RA 8424) in its next meeting.
	HB 2168	Rep. Santos-Recto	Increasing the threshold for certain non-VAT taxpayers, amending for the purpose Sections 109 and 236 of RA 8424, as amended	Department of Finance (DOF) Secretary Carlos Dominguez III presented to the Committee what he described as the Philippine economy's "Cinderella moment." With increased public spending on infrastructure projects, Dominguez said the country may be able to sustain a 7% gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate that will bring about the country's high-middle income status as well as reduce poverty from the current rate of 21.6% to 14% in the next five years or by 2022.
	HBs 20, 35, 39, 57, 103, 137, 295, 333, 403, 411, 466, 562, 1536, 1601, 1604, 1656, 1657, 1696, 1945, 1950, 2347, 2427, 2544, 3259 & 3360	Deputy Speaker Quimbo, Reps. Del Mar, Yap (A.), Tinio, Tan (A.), Noel, Suansing (H.), Zarate, Abellanosa, Tiangco, Deputy Speaker Abu, Reps. Castelo, Herrera-Dy, Baguilat, Angara-Castillo, Rodriguez (M.) Santos-Recto, Deputy Speaker Macapagal-Arroyo, Reps. Javier, Pineda, Aglipay-Villar, and Deputy Speaker Garin	Restructuring/adjusting the income tax rates imposed on individuals, amending certain sections of RA 8424, as amended	<p>Citing the comprehensive tax reform package under HB 4774, called the "Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) System," Dominguez said the government is assured of an additional revenue of P366 billion by 2019 which would enable the country to invest more in infrastructure, education, health, and other social protection programs.</p> <p>Dominguez also emphasized that in making the tax system simpler, fairer and more efficient, the following objectives will be achieved: lower the personal income tax, broaden the value-added tax (VAT) base, adjust excise taxes on petroleum and automobiles, and reduce estate and donor's taxes.</p> <p>Speaker Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez (1st District, Davao del Norte) urged the DOF to revisit the tax-exempt policy covering non-stock, non-profit educational institutions, saying that most of them are in fact also engaged in profitable activities other than educational in nature. He requested the DOF to submit a report on the matter.</p> <p>Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur) asked the DOF to reconsider its proposal of increasing the excise tax on automobiles, saying that it will adversely affect Filipinos belonging to the middle income group as well as pose negative effects on the automobile industry.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn Garcia (3rd</p>

Continuation... Ways and Means				<p>District, Cebu) does not favor the proposal to increase taxes on petroleum products which she described as “regressive” and will only add to the government’s operational costs.</p> <p>Likewise, George San Juan, president of the <i>Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahang Tsuper at Operator Nationwide</i> (PISTON), said that any increase in taxes on petroleum products will be a burden to the riding public, as the costs will just be passed on to them.</p> <p>Asked by Minority Leader Danilo Suarez (3rd District, Quezon) on the absorptive capacity of government agencies to implement additional projects, Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Undersecretary Laura Pascua reported that the Bureau of Treasury (BTr) has recorded a double-digit growth rate of 14% in terms of government spending since 2015, with an overall rate of 46% as of November 2016. The Duterte administration plans to hit the 80% target for government spending by the end of President Duterte’s term, Pascua said.</p> <p>Dominguez added that the government needs to speed up spending, particularly on much needed infrastructures, to bridge the “infrastructure gap” during the last administration.</p> <p>Cabinet secretaries and other high-ranking officials comprising the Executive Department’s Economic Cluster who were present during the meeting expressed their support to the proposed tax reform law.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Basic Education and Culture (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to HB 2950	Rep. Santos-Recto	Ensuring access to free secondary education by converting the public elementary schools into integrated schools and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Rep. Lianda Bolilia (4th District, Batangas), terminated its deliberations on the draft Substitute Bill to HB 2950. The bill will be submitted to the Mother Committee for its consideration and approval.</p> <p>As defined in the bill, an integrated school refers to a public school that offers kindergarten, elementary and junior high school education and has unified instructional programs. It may be expanded to include a senior high school education to be determined by the Department of Education (DepEd).</p> <p>DepEd Assistant Secretary Tonisito Umali pointed out that the conversion of public elementary schools into integrated schools usually gives rise to the problem of difficulty in hiring teachers with specialization in subjects like Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geometry,</p>

Continuation... Basic Education and Culture (Technical Working Group)				<p>and Trigonometry, who are willing to teach in rural areas.</p> <p>Umali also suggested the rewording of the bill's Section 4 (Integrated School Development Plan) to make it consistent with the provisions of RA 9155 or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001.</p> <p>With regard to the infrastructure requirements of the bill, Engineer Noel Rosales of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) informed the Committee that the Department is now using a climate change-resilient design for new school building projects.</p> <p>Rep. Bolilia requested DepEd to submit the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of barangays with public elementary schools and high schools;</li> <li>• List of public elementary schools to be converted to integrated schools (IS); and</li> <li>• List of public elementary schools that have been converted to IS.</li> </ul>
Health (Technical Working Group)	HBs 349, 584, 844, 1040, 1698, 3796, 4101, 4184, 4301 & 4686	Deputy Speakers Quimbo & Cayetano, Reps. Villarica, Salo, Nograles (K.), Baguilat, Roa-Puno, Villarin, Zarate, and Nieto	Promoting/advocating mental health, promulgating a national mental health policy towards the enhancement of integrated mental health services, promotion and protection of persons utilizing mental health services, and establishment of a Philippine Mental Health Council	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Biñan City Rep. Marlyn Alonte, will deliberate further on the 10 bills in its next meeting.</p> <p>The TWG discussed Sections 1 to 6 of the bills, dealing with the Title, Declaration of Policy, Objectives, Definition of Terms, Right to Mental Health, and Rights of Persons with Mental Illness.</p> <p>The resource persons from the Department of Health (DOH), Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB), Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) expressed their support to the bills.</p> <p>Dr. Ma. Luz Querubin of the Philippine Psychiatric Association suggested that the bills be reconciled, incorporating therein provisions addressing the problem on drug abuse or dependence while ensuring the protection of human rights.</p>

PUBLIC HEARING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Globalization and WTO (Special Committee)	HR 797	Rep. Casilao	Inquiry into the effects to the local vegetable industry of the implementation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade - World Trade Organization's (GATT-WTO) policies and programs	<p>The Committee, chaired by ANGKLA Party-List Rep. Jesulito Manalo, held a public hearing in La Trinidad, Benguet on March 3, 2017 in relation to HR 797.</p> <p>The hearing aims to get the sentiments of vegetable farmers in Benguet Province on how the GATT-WTO policies on agriculture, including the reduction of tariffs on imported</p>

<p>Continuation... Globalization and WTO (Special Committee)</p>				<p>agricultural products, have affected them.</p> <p>ANAKPAWIS Party-List Rep. Ariel “Ka Ayik” Casilao, author of HR 797, laments that following the membership of the Philippines to the GATT-WTO, imported vegetables, which are cheaper than the local produce, started to flood the local market threatening the livelihood of poor Filipino farmers.</p> <p>Rep. Casilao stressed that his measure seeks to discuss problems associated with the liberalized trade in agriculture and determine the solutions to address the plight of the local farmers.</p> <p>Aside from Reps. Manalo and Casilao, other House Members who attended the public hearing were Benguet Rep. Ronald Cosalan, Rep. Wilfredo Caminero (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Cebu), and KABATAAN Party-List Rep. Sarah Jane Elago.</p> <p>The farmers who attended the public hearing expressed their concern on the dwindling vegetable industry in Benguet.</p> <p>The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and Department of Agriculture (DA) were requested to submit a study on the state of Benguet’s agricultural sector, outlining the level of its competitiveness under a liberalized agricultural trade.</p>
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PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Constitutional Amendments	Public consultation on constitutional reforms	<p>The Committee, chaired by Southern Leyte Rep. Roger “Oging” Mercado, held a public consultation in Davao City on March 3, 2017 for the purpose of determining the sentiments of the public on proposals to amend the Constitution.</p> <p>Discussions revolved around three questions which the Committee asked the attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whether it is necessary to amend or revise the Constitution;</li> <li>• The preferred mode of amendment or revision; and</li> <li>• Specific proposals, if any.</li> </ul> <p>House Members present in the said consultation were: Deputy Speaker Mylene Garcia-Albano (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Davao City), and Reps. Corazon Nuñez-Malanyaon (1<sup>st</sup> District, Davao Oriental), Vicente “Ching” Veloso (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Leyte), Ana Cristina Siquian Go (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Isabela), Ruwel Peter Gonzaga (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Compostela Valley), and Karlo Alexei Nograles (1<sup>st</sup> District, Davao City).</p> <p>Other attendees to the consultation were local officials and representatives from multi-sectoral groups in the area.</p>