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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Agrarian Reform	Substitute Bill to HBs 229 & 2177	Deputy Speaker Singson and Rep. Santos-Recto	Authorizing the grant of a full crop insurance coverage to all qualified agrarian reform beneficiaries of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), amending for the purpose Sec. 14 of RA 9700, otherwise known as the "CARP Extension with Reforms"	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Rene Relampagos (1 st District, Bohol), approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 229 and 2177.
Good Government and Public Accountability	HR 654	Rep. Gonzales (A.)	Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the sale of <i>Paskuhan</i> Village in Pampanga by the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) to SM Development Corporation (SMDC) reportedly under the former's Asset Privatization Program	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur), will deliberate further on the issues raised relative to HR 654.</p> <p>Rep. Aurelio "Dong" Gonzales Jr. (3rd District, Pampanga), author of HR 654, suspects that there may have been collusion among the four prospective bidders for the sale of <i>Paskuhan</i> Village, after knowing that they have the same incorporators and share the same office address. He also noted that Premier Central, Inc., which was the winning bidder, could not have afforded the bid amount of P939.66 million since its authorized capitalization is only P20 million.</p> <p>Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) General Counsel Camilo Correa disclosed that the four bidders - SMDC, Premier Central, Inc., SAJ North Premier Holding Corp., and SM Prime Holdings, Inc. - are affiliated companies, adding that only the latter is registered with the SEC.</p> <p>TIEZA Chief Operating Officer Guiller Asido averred that TIEZA has complied with the requirements of the procurement process in the sale of <i>Paskuhan</i> Village, pursuant to RA 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Law.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn Garcia (3rd District, Cebu) stressed that TIEZA should have adhered to Commission on Audit (COA) Circular No. 86-264 governing the disposition of government assets through public auction. RA 9184 applies to the procurement of goods and services and lease of real property, she added.</p> <p>SAGIP Party-List Rep. Rodante Marcoleta</p>

<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability</p>				<p>maintained that TIEZA is not authorized to sell the <i>Paskuhan</i> Village pursuant to RA 9593 or the Tourism Act of 2009. He also emphasized that the local government concerned should be given the right of first refusal before selling the property to other parties.</p> <p>San Fernando City Mayor Edwin Santiago denied receiving any notice on the planned sale of <i>Paskuhan</i> Village which should have given the city the option of whether to buy the property or not, in line with the "right of first refusal" rule.</p> <p>In relation to the query of ABS Party-List Rep. Eugene Michael de Vera, Commission on Audit (COA) Supervising Auditor Teresita Guevarra said that prior to the sale of the <i>Paskuhan</i> Village, COA has recommended the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitate the said property; • Opt for a long-term lease; and • Devolve the operation and supervision of the <i>Paskuhan</i> Village to the city government. <p>Register of Deeds of the City of San Fernando, Atty. Lorna Dee, informed the Committee that the title of the property has not been transferred to the buyer (SMDC) pending the issuance of the Certificate Authorizing Registration (CAR) by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).</p> <p>On the request of the Committee to withhold the issuance of CAR, BIR San Fernando Regional Director Jethro Sabariaga said that the BIR cannot do so once the taxes due have been fully paid.</p> <p>Speaker Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez (1st District, Davao del Norte) said that the testimony of former TIEZA Chief Operating Officer Mark Lapid, who was the signatory in the Deed of Sale between TIEZA and Premier Central Inc. relative to the <i>Paskuhan</i> Village, is vital in this inquiry. Thus, he said, Lapid's presence in the hearing should be required.</p> <p>Speaker Alvarez also remarked that if the OSG cannot file a case against TIEZA, the Committee should consider getting the position of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) on the possible filing of criminal charges against those involved in the questionable sale of the <i>Paskuhan</i> Village.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to invite Lapid and a representative of the VACC in its next meeting.</p> <p>On the recommendation of Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City) to seek the</p>
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Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability				opinion of the Department of Justice (DOJ) on the issues at hand, Asido volunteered that TIEZA will take the initiative to write a letter to the DOJ.
Government Enterprises and Privatization	HB 4709	Rep. Antonino	Establishing a single retirement and separation benefit system for government employees, including members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP), amending for the purpose PD 1146, as amended by RA 8291, otherwise known as the Government Service Insurance Act of 1997	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Jesus Nonato Saccalan (1st District, North Cotabato), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to deliberate further on HB 4709.</p> <p>The Committee will invite the law enforcement agencies of the government to be part of the TWG.</p> <p>The PNP Pension and Gratuity Division Chief, Superintendent Rosalyn Cabrigas, briefed the Committee on the retirement and separation benefit system of the PNP.</p> <p>PNP Retirement and Benefits Administration Service (PRBS) Deputy Director, Senior Superintendent Rafael Santiago Jr., said that the PNP already submitted its position paper on HB 4709, which includes its proposal to retain the retirement age of 56 for all uniformed personnel.</p> <p>Norman Legaspi, president of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Retirement and Separation Benefits System (AFP-RSBS), suggested to the Committee to include the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), and Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) in the coverage of the proposed law.</p> <p>Philippine Air Force (PAF) Lt. Colonel Vilorna Cabral said that the AFP is yet to finalize its position paper on the bill.</p> <p>The PNP was requested to submit to the Committee a comparative data on the retirement benefits of government employees, the PNP and the AFP.</p>
	HBs 59, 136, 361, 471, 734, 871, 1017, 1087, 1097, 1608, 1671, 1780, 1880, 1989, 2569, 3127, 3453, 4205, 4641, 4732, 4733 & 4746	Reps. Tinio, Batocabe, Zamora (M.C.), Escudero, Espina, Bataoil, Lanete, Castelo, Cagas, Revilla, Catamco, Treñas, Ting, Rodriguez (M.), Primicias-Agabas, Villarín, Panotes, and Salceda	Proposing amendments to RA 8291 or the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) Act of 1997, such as: lowering the retirement age, increasing the pension and benefits of GSIS members, and strengthening the GSIS	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to craft a substitute bill to the 22 bills proposing amendments to certain provisions of the GSIS Charter.</p> <p>GSIS OIC-President and General Manager Nora Saludares and Senior Vice President of the Actuarial and Risk Management Group Severina Resurreccion cited the negative implications of lowering the compulsory retirement age of government employees to 60 years old from 65 years old, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will reduce the current actuarial life of GSIS fund by 18 years; • It will shorten the period of contributions of GSIS members while lengthening the period of

Continuation... Government Enterprises and Privatization				<p>benefit payments;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will allow the simultaneous exit of retirees from ages 60 to 65 years during the first year of implementation that will greatly impact on GSIS funds; and • It will pass on the burden of augmenting the GSIS fund to the active paying members. <p>Resurreccion added that upon the enactment of the proposed law, an expected 20% of GSIS members would avail themselves of the “early retirement” package, which would require the GSIS to re-evaluate the contribution rate of its members.</p> <p>Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay), author of HB 4732, disagrees with the position of the GSIS, asserting that not even 10% of the GSIS members would opt to retire early based on empirical evidence.</p> <p>Rep. Antonio Tinio (Party-List, ACT TEACHERS), author of HB 471, and Davao del Sur Rep. Mercedes “Didi” Cagas, author of HB 1608, asked the GSIS to submit to the Committee its study showing the decline in the actuarial life of the GSIS fund when the compulsory retirement age will be reduced to 60.</p> <p>On the other hand, Rep. France Castro (Party-List, ACT TEACHERS) asked the GSIS to provide the Committee with data on the number of GSIS members who retired in the last three years.</p> <p>Benjamin Valbuena, president of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT), favors the lowering of the retirement age to allow the GSIS members, particularly teachers, to enjoy the fruits of their hard work at an earlier period.</p>
	HB 2565	Rep. Palma	Seeking to include barangay officials in the compulsory membership of the GSIS, amending for the purpose RA 8291	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to discuss HB 2565 further.</p> <p>GSIS chief legal counsel Lucio Yu Jr. explained that a separate law is needed to create a barangay insurance fund that will cover the retirement benefits of barangay officials. He made this comment in reference to an earlier proposal that HB 2565 be discussed by the TWG together with the 22 bills stated above, which also propose amendments to RA 8291.</p>
Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples	Substitute Bill to HB 2886	Rep. Macapagal- Arroyo	Strengthening the healthcare system in cultural and indigenous cultural communities (ICC) by institutionalizing the training and employment of tribal health workers	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Nancy Catamco (2nd District, North Cotabato), approved the Substitute Bill to HB 2886.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p>

<p>Continuation... Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples</p>	<p>HR 409</p>	<p>Rep. Villanueva</p>	<p>Investigation into the harassment of Aeta indigenous peoples (IPs) by members of the 710th Special Operations Wing (SPOW) of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) by prohibiting the ingress of construction materials to be used by the Aeta IPs for house repairs and the egress of forest and agricultural products bound for the market, and other unlawful acts such as erecting permanent structures within the area covered by the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADC)</p>	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 409. It also agreed to hold a public hearing in Tarlac on April 19-20, 2017.</p> <p>Rep. Noel Villanueva (3rd District, Tarlac), author of HR 409, informed the Committee of the condition of the Aetas living in Capas, Tarlac made difficult by the restrictions imposed on them by the PAF unit based in the same area.</p> <p>Capas Mayor Reynaldo Catacutan confirmed the plight of these ICs as he also presented the present situation in the area.</p> <p>Both Rep. Villanueva and Mayor Catacutan urged the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) to be more aggressive in fulfilling its mandate of protecting the rights of the IPs, knowing that the area in question is covered by Certificates of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT). They also called on the leadership of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to protect the interest of the IPs in the area.</p> <p>The AFP Real Estate Office Chief, Col. Jose Bonifacio Calub, denied that the IPs are being harassed by the PAF, adding that no report or complaint has been received by the AFP or the PAF on the matter. But he admitted that the ingress of construction materials inside the military camp in Capas is subject to inspection to prevent the entry of informal settlers and illegal construction in the area. As to the egress of forest and agricultural products, Calub said that only illegally cut logs and illegally produced charcoal are being apprehended.</p> <p>Col. Agustin Matavia, chief of the AFP Judge Advocate General Office, clarified that the legal basis for the continued use of the area as military base, specifically by the PAF 710th SPOW, is Proclamation 163 issued by then President Fidel Ramos in 1993. Only when this proclamation is revoked will the PAF transfer to a different location, Matavia stressed.</p> <p>NCIP Region III Director Ronaldo Daquioag disclosed that the NCIP has already submitted its report on the status of the IPs' claims over the contested area to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). He underscored the need to hold a dialogue among the stakeholders in order to hasten the resolution of the issue.</p> <p>DENR Assistant Secretary Kris Baleva promised to submit a report to the Committee once they are done studying the</p>
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Continuation... Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples				<p>report forwarded to them by the NCIP.</p> <p>The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) was requested to submit to the Committee its position paper on HR 409.</p>
	HB 5106	Rep. Nieto	Extending the period for ICC/IPs to exercise the option to secure certificates of title to their ancestral lands under Commonwealth Act 41, as amended, or the Land Registration Act 496, amending for the purpose Section 12 of RA 8371, otherwise known as the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997	The Committee acted on the request of Rep. John Marvin "Yul Servo" Nieto (3rd District, Manila) and Rep. Edward Vera Perez Maceda (4 th District, Manila), authors of HB 5106, to include their bill in the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HBs 2572, 2697 and 3221, as it has similar provisions to the previously approved substitute bill.
Legislative Franchises	Substitute Bill to HB 4290	Rep. Tejada	Renewing for another 25 years the franchise granted to Notre Dame Broadcasting Corporation (NDBC) under RA 8109 or the law granting NDBC a franchise to construct, install, operate and maintain radio broadcasting stations in the Philippines for religious, educational, and cultural as well as for commercial purposes	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Franz "Chicoy" Alvarez (1st District, Palawan), approved the Substitute Bill to HB 4290 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	Substitute Bill to HB 4849	Rep. Belmonte (R.)	Renewing for another 25 years the franchise granted to Omninet Philippines, Inc. under RA 7298, or the law granting Omninet Philippines, Inc. a franchise to establish, install, maintain, lease and operate wire and/or wireless telecommunication systems, lines, circuits and stations within and outside the Philippines	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 4849 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HB 4136	Rep. Salimbangon	Renewing for another 25 years the franchise granted to Manila Broadcasting Company (MBC) under RA 7816, or the law granting the MBC a franchise to construct, operate and maintain commercial television and radio broadcasting stations within the Philippines	<p>The Committee approved HB 4136.</p> <p>Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil (2nd District, Pangasinan), who sponsored the bill on behalf of the author, highlighted the contributions made by MBC when its radio stations became the government's partner in disseminating information and in mobilizing relief efforts for the victims of super Typhoon Yolanda which hit Eastern Visayas in November 2013.</p>
	HB 4515	Rep. Oaminal	Granting Ignite Telecommunications, Incorporated a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain telecommunications system throughout the Philippines	<p>The Committee approved HB 4515.</p> <p>Some Members of the Committee questioned the financial capability of Ignite Telecom to sustain its operations and its ability to compete with giant telecommunication companies (telcos).</p> <p>Ignite Telecom Managing Director Dorothy Tanedo Jao assured the Committee that the company is committed to put up additional capital in the next six to 12 months once its franchise is approved. Jao likewise informed the Committee that the company plans to deploy underground fiber optic technology that will provide better service to its consumers at lesser cost, thus help</p>

Continuation... Legislative Franchises				improve the current state of the telecommunications industry.
	HB 4657	Rep. Lobregat	Granting the Golden Nation Network Inc., a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain radio and television broadcasting stations within the Philippines	The Committee approved HB 4657.
	HB 4658	Rep. Lobregat	Renewing for another 25 years the franchise granted to Ermita Electronics Incorporated (presently known as G. Telecoms Inc.), amending for the purpose RA 8196, or the law granting the Ermita Electronics, Incorporated a franchise to construct, install, establish, maintain and operate radio communications systems in the Philippines	The Committee approved HB 4658.
	Substitute Bill to HB 2617	Rep. Umali	Renewing for another 25 years the franchise granted to Isla Communications Co., (Islacom) presently known as Innove Communications, Inc., amending for the purpose RA 7372, or the law granting the Islacom a franchise to install, operate and maintain telecommunications services within the territory of the Republic of the Philippines and international points	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the Substitute Bill to HB 2617 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Asked by COOP NATCCO Party-List Rep. Anthony Bravo Ph.D. on the reason for the change of name of Islacom to Innove Communications, Inc., Manny Casiño, Globe/Innove Advocacy Division vice president, said that it was deemed necessary when Globe acquired Islacom in 2001 which became its wholly owned subsidiary.</p> <p>Rep. Rodrigo Abellanosa (2nd District, Cebu City) sought an explanation of what he called a “grossly deceptive facebook campaign” of Globe which blames the poor internet service to the difficulty in building additional cell sites due to bureaucratic processes and exorbitant fees imposed by concerned local governments.</p> <p>Globe/Innove Legal Counsel. Derek Lim commented that Globe was not aware of such a campaign. He promised to look into the issue raised by Rep. Abellanosa.</p> <p>National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) Deputy Commissioner Edgardo Cabarios underscored the need to build more cell sites to improve connectivity and provide better service to the public.</p> <p>ACTS-OFW Party-List Rep. Aniceto "John" Bertiz III questioned the inaction of Globe on the complaints filed years ago by overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) relative to the Globe SIM cards they purchased supposedly for use in the country of their destination but failed to function.</p> <p>Casiño promised to personally look into the matter.</p>

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Subcommittee on Judicial Reforms (Justice)	HBs 167, 1513, 2308&5215	Reps. Velasco-Catera, Loyola and Velasco	Amending Batas Pambansa 129, or the law reorganizing the Judiciary, appropriating funds therefor, creating positions for judges-at-large	<p>The Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso (3rd District, Leyte), approved the bills in principle, subject to consolidation, style and amendment.</p> <p>Supreme Court (SC) Associate Justice Presbitero Velasco Jr. expressed his support for the proposed law. He underscored the need to create positions for judges-at-large who will be assigned temporarily to courts with heavy case backlog or with absent or unavailable presiding judges. Justice Velasco added that the ideal number of judges-at-large would be 100 for Regional Trial Courts (RTCs) and 50 for Municipal Trial Courts (MTCs).</p> <p>Acceding to the suggestion that his bills, HBs 2308 and 5215, should be harmonized in terms of the number of positions to be created, Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Jay Velasco said that his bills may be amended to set the number of RTC judges-at-large to 100, while maintaining the number of MTC judges-at-large at 50.</p>
	HB 2683	Deputy Speaker Abu	Providing support for the surviving spouse and children of slain judges, justices, and other judiciary officials	<p>The Subcommittee approved HB 2683, subject to style.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Raneo Abu (2nd District, Batangas) said that at least 24 judges have been killed since 1999, and most of them were killed in the line of duty. He stressed the need to provide benefits to the families of slain judges that would at least approximate the value of their "ultimate sacrifice."</p> <p>SC Court Administrator Jose Midas Marquez expressed support for the bill, adding that most judges were killed due to their decisions involving drug-related offenses.</p>
	HBs 286, 652, 2830 & 3492	Reps. Dalog, Oaminal, Deputy Speaker Abu, and Rep. Bondoc	Creating additional branches of Regional Trial Courts in certain parts of the country, amending BP 129, as amended, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Subcommittee approved the four bills subject to style.</p> <p>Marquez expressed his support for the bills.</p>
	HBs 3566 & 3749	Reps. Dalipe, and Lobregat	Creating four (4) additional branches of the Regional Trial Court in the ninth judicial region to be stationed in Zamboanga City	The Subcommittee decided to consolidate the two bills.
	HBs 5233, 350, 547, 3275, 4748& 5216	Speaker Alvarez, Deputy Speaker Quimbo, Reps. Escudero,	Further strengthening the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG), amending for the purpose RA 9417 or the law strengthening the OSG, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Subcommittee will deliberate further on the six bills.</p> <p>The Office of the Solicitor General (OSG), Office of the Government Corporate Counsel</p>

Continuation... Subcommittee on Judicial Reforms (Justice)		Roque (H.),Alejano, and Chipeco		<p>(OGCC), and the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) were asked to submit their respective position papers on the proposed law.</p> <p>Rep. Joaquin Chipeco, Jr. (2nd District, Laguna) said that his bill (HB 5216) and HB 5233, principally authored by Speaker Pantaleon “Bebot” Alvarez (1st District, Davao del Norte), are substantially similar as they both call for the merging of OGCC and PCGG with the OSG. Accordingly, he manifested his willingness to defer to the version submitted by the Speaker.</p> <p>OSG Assistant Solicitor General Rex Pascual expressed support for the proposed law.</p> <p>On the other hand, OGCC Deputy Government Corporate Counsel Elpidio Vega objects to the proposed merger of the OGCC and the OSG, explaining that if it will be done, a possible conflict of interest may arise.</p> <p>Vega cited as an example the role of OGCC in defending two government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) – the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) -- in cases involving income tax deficiencies. The cases against them were filed by the government, through the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), which was represented by the OSG. He pointed out that in such a case, conflict of interest will arise should the OSG, as merged with the OGCC, will serve as counsel for both the government and the GOCCs.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources (Technical Working Group)	HBs 2178 & 4015	Reps. Santos-Recto and Romero	Establishing the National Mariculture Program, providing funds therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Wilter “Sharky” Wee Palma II (1st District, Zamboanga Sibugay), will deliberate further on the two bills in its next meeting.</p> <p>Among the agreements reached during the meeting were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include hatcheries in the list of support infrastructures that will be established once the proposed law is passed; • Delete the provision designating a one-hectare research and development area within a province, city or municipality; • Adopt Section 13 (Financing Scheme) of HB 4015, with amendments.

<p>Continuation... Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources (Technical Working Group)</p>				<p>Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) lawyer Kristine Tendencia suggested the inclusion in the proposed law of the definition of "ecosystem-based management approach" as defined in the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of RA 8550 or the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998, as amended.</p> <p>Priscilla Regaspi, head of BFAR's Mariculture Section, informed the TWG that BFAR has established multi-species hatcheries, a project that provides sustainable aquaculture resources for socio-economic activities, in almost all regions in the country.</p> <p>She also pointed out that not all areas can yield mariculture products all-year round, hence strategic locations and climatic conditions must be considered in identifying where to put up mariculture parks. She went on to say that BFAR has already set the guidelines and criteria to validate whether the proposed hatcheries are appropriate and feasible for propagation.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Wilfredo Yap, executive director of Sante Aquaculture Science and Technology Foundation, Inc., suggested that "ownership" of mariculture parks should be clearly defined in the proposed law, adding that it should only pertain to infrastructure and facilities. The right to use the area should be time-bound and not indefinite, he further said.</p> <p>Rep. Palma asked the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) if there is an available financing scheme for marginalized fisherfolk who are in need of financial support for their mariculture projects.</p> <p>Junior Management Associate Reivin Jed Ambojia of LBP's Corporate Planning and Economics and Policy Studies Department explained that the LBP extends financial assistance to qualified cooperatives or associations based on their leadership and management capability, members' patronage of business, capital build-up, and an established book of accounts, among others.</p> <p>Rep. Raul "Boboy" Tupas (5th District, Iloilo) manifested that the small fishermen may not be able to comply with LBP's stringent criteria.</p>
<p>Government Reorganization jt. w/ Science and Technology (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 3637, 4275, 4367 & 4623</p>	<p>Reps. Aumentado, Nieto, Salceda, and Rodriguez (M.)</p>	<p>Establishing the Philippine space development and utilization policy and creating the Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA) and defining the purpose and scope of its activities</p>	<p>The joint technical working group (TWG), co-chaired by Rep. Christopher "Toff" Vera Perez de Venecia (4th District, Pangasinan) for the Committee on Government Reorganization, and BUHAY Party-List Rep. Mariano Michael Velarde Jr. for the Committee on Science and Technology, will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Juan Antonio Tuazon, senior science research</p>

<p>Continuation... Government Reorganization jt. w/ Science and Technology (Technical Working Group)</p>				<p>specialist of the Department of Science and Technology's Science Education Institute (DOST-SEI), recommended that the DOST be included in the list of agencies that will craft the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the proposed law.</p> <p>Director Prisco Rivera Jr. of the Civil Service Commission's (CSC) Secretariat and Liaison Office proposed to delete the provision in the bill that requires the confirmation of the appointment of the PhilSA director general by the Commission on Appointments (CA). He explained that the position has the rank equivalent to an undersecretary, the appointment of which does not go through CA approval.</p> <p>Rivera likewise suggested that the DOST be designated as the primary agency in-charge of crafting the IRR and that the CSC may be consulted on matters relating to human resource.</p> <p>Relative to the proposed transfer of the Philippine Aerospace Development Corporation of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and DOST's SEI to PhilSA, Rivera proposed that a provision be inserted in the bill requiring compliance with RA 6656, or the law protecting the security of tenure of civil service officers and employees in the implementation of government reorganizations.</p> <p>However, upon recommendation of Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay), author of HB 4367, the TWG agreed to delete this particular provision (Section 13) to avoid "regulatory uncertainties."</p> <p>On the part of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), Jose Angelo Cunanan, development management officer from the Legal Services Department, expressed reservation on the provision identifying the BCDA as one of the sources of funds for the proposed Philippine Space Development Fund. He said that the BCDA may not be able to raise the required amount with its present mandate.</p> <p>The representatives from the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Department of Finance (DOF) expressed full support to the bill; while the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) promised to submit its position paper by next week.</p> <p>The TWG agreed to invite the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) in its next meeting.</p>
<p>Public Order and Safety (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>Substitute Bill to HBs 589, 896, 1146, 1475,</p>	<p>Reps. Bataoil, Tan (A.), Alejano, Abayon,</p>	<p>Strengthening the regulation of the manufacture, sale, distribution and use of firecrackers and pyrotechnic devices, repealing for the purpose RA7183 and</p>	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil (2nd District, Pangasinan), will deliberate further on the substitute bill in its next meeting.</p>

<p>Continuation... Public Order and Safety (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>1626, 1892, 3690 & 4556</p>	<p>Castelo, Defensor, Macapagal- Arroyo, and Gatchalian</p>	<p>providing penalties for violation thereof</p>	<p>Replying to the query of Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Superintendent Cesar Binag said that the basic difference between the existing law (RA 7183) and the substitute bill is the provision in the bill, particularly Section 9 (Regulation on the Use of Firecrackers), which prescribes the factors to consider in identifying the areas where the use of firecrackers and pyrotechnic devices shall be allowed.</p> <p>Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) Senior Inspector Brando Balledo added that the provisions in the bill are aligned with the safety standards of the Fire Code of the Philippines of 2008 (RA 9514). However, Balledo maintains the BFP's position of a total ban on the manufacture and sale of firecrackers and pyrotechnic devices.</p> <p>Dennis Aquino from the Occupational Safety and Health Center of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) emphasized that a total ban on the manufacture and sale of firecrackers and pyrotechnic devices will cause the displacement of many Filipino workers who rely on the fireworks industry as their main source of livelihood.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Bataoil on the steps being undertaken by the Bureau of Customs (BOC) to abate the smuggling of firecrackers, Jonathan Belmonte, Special Agent I of the BOC's Environmental Protection Unit replied that modern x-ray machines are now available to easily detect contraband or smuggled products like firecrackers. He added that the Bureau is empowered to conduct raids of warehouses believed to be used as storage of smuggled products even without a warrant.</p> <p>Engr. Ariel Deinla of the Bureau of Product Standards, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), suggested that manufacturers of firecrackers and pyrotechnic devices should be duly licensed by the DTI and the labelling of such products should be in accordance with the Philippine National Standards (PNS).</p> <p>The representatives of the Departments of Science and Technology (DOST), Health (DOH), and Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) conveyed the support of their respective offices for the proposed law.</p> <p>Philippine Fireworks Association (PFA) President Jovenson Ong proposed the imposition of stiffer penalties against those who would violate the provisions of this proposed legislative measure.</p>
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Youth and Sports Development (Technical Working Group)	HB 4052	Rep. Relampagos	Youth Empowerment Act	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Kalinga Rep. Allen Jesse Mangaoang, will deliberate further on HB 4052.</p> <p>Rep. Rene Relampagos (1st District, Bohol), author of HB 4052, said that his bill, which seeks to establish Youth Development Councils (YDCs) in each barangay, city, municipality and province all over the country, will empower the youth to participate and be more involved in governance even without going through an electoral process.</p> <p>When asked by Rep. Mangaoang if HB 4052 intends to repeal RA 10742 or the <i>Sangguniang Kabataan</i> (SK) Reform Act of 2015, Rep. Relampagos replied in the affirmative.</p> <p>National Youth Commission (NYC) Commissioner James Ceasar Ventura opined that a new law on youth empowerment is not needed since RA 10742 already provides for such. He added that the existing law also promotes anti-political dynasty and addresses corruption and nepotism that have been ingrained in the SK system. He went on to say that instead of repealing RA 10742, it should be fully implemented, and the NYC's powers and functions should be strengthened and expanded.</p> <p>The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), through Social Technology Bureau Director Thelsa Biolena, echoed NYC's stand.</p> <p>The following government agencies support the bill with a few recommendations: Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and Public Attorney's Office (PAO).</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bill.</p>
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AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Transportation	<p>Briefing by concerned agencies on the following railway projects in the country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 1 Cavite Extension Project (LRT1-CEP) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, listened to the briefing conducted by the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Philippine National Railways (PNR), Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA), and Metro Rail Transit (MRT) on the railway projects in the country.</p> <p>LRTA Board Secretary Hernando Cabrera reported that the LRT1-CEP involves the construction of three LRT stations which will be located along Redemptorist Road in Baclaran, Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Road (former MIA Road), and at the vicinity of Asia World in Parañaque City. Ground breaking for the project will be held on April 4, 2017, Cabrera added.</p>

<p>Continuation... Transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common station for LRT and MRT lines 	<p>Reps. Sarmiento and Suarez questioned the DOTr why it had to enter into a contract with Busan for the replacement of the signaling system when this component is already part of the contract with Dalian Locomotive and Rolling Stock Corporation. Chavez explained that the existing signaling system of the MRT-3 is incompatible with the new LRVs supplied by Dalian, hence the need to replace it.</p> <p>PBA Party-List Rep. Jericho Jonas Nograles sought for an explanation as to why the government took over the maintenance program of the MRT-3 when it is still owned by the Metro Rail Transit Corporation (MRTC) until 2025, pursuant to a build-operate-transfer (BOT) agreement with the government.</p> <p>Chavez said that the MRT rails are still the property of the MRTC. An equity rental in the amount of US\$12 million is being paid for the use of the rails and rolling stocks. Batan added that under the BOT agreement, the right of the MRTC to appoint a maintenance provider only covered a period of 10 years from the signing of the contract. This responsibility is now with the government, Batan stressed.</p> <p>Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Center Executive Director Ferdinand Pecson assured the Committee that the contracts involving the MRT-3 operations are all aboveboard.</p> <p>The Committee created a TWG to discuss all matters pertaining to railway projects and other concerns of the sector.</p> <p>Chavez apprised the Committee Members that the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed by concerned government agencies and private corporations for the establishment of the common station was already ratified by the LRTA Board last March 10. The Board also decided to submit it to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) for its review and approval.</p> <p>Rep. Sarmiento said that the DOTr should have reviewed the MOA's disadvantageous provisions first before endorsing it to NEDA.</p> <p>Speaker Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez (1st District, Davao del Norte) said that the government is duty-bound to build a common station along EDSA-North Avenue in Quezon City pursuant to a MOA entered into by the government with private parties as early as 2009. If this project is not implemented by 2019, the government will be forced to pay the penalties on a daily basis, he stressed.</p>
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