

Committee Daily Bulletin

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BUDGET BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	<p>Briefing on the proposed FY 2018 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments of the following government agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Tourism (DOT) and its attached agencies 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), listened to the presentation on the proposed FY 2018 budget, plans and programs and major accomplishments of the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and their attached agencies.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Michael John “Jack” Duavit (1st District, Rizal) sat as the presiding officer during the budget briefing of the DOT.</p> <p>Presenting the DOT’s proposed budget, Undersecretary Rolando Cañizal said that under the National Expenditure Program (NEP), the DOT and its attached agencies are set to receive P3.38 billion, which is 49% higher than its current budget of P2.27 billion. Of this amount, P3.04 billion goes to the Office of the Secretary (OSEC); P284.24 million to the National Parks Development Committee (NPDC); and P52.49 million to the Intramuros Administration (IA). Cañizal explained that the increase in the budget of the DOT will be used to finance its Market and Product Development Program which involves the use of social media in showcasing the Philippines as a top travel destination.</p> <p>Cañizal cited three indicators in evaluating the performance of the tourism sector and these include inbound receipts, employment generation, and visitor’s arrivals. He cited the following statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For 2016, inbound tourism generated a revenue of P353 billion which represents about 8.3% share of the total export earnings of the country; The tourism industry created a total of five million jobs in 2016 which accounted for 13% of the total national employment; In 2016, total inbound visitors were recorded at 5.9 million. For the current year, inbound visitors continue to show robust performance with almost 3.4 million foreign visitors as of June 2017. <p>Other major accomplishments of the DOT are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosted various international events, the most recent of which is the 65th Miss Universe Beauty Pageant; Through route development, the Wuhan-Cebu flight of China Eastern Airline, the Guangshou-Kalibo flight of Philippine Airlines and the Chongqing-Cebu flight of the Sichuan Airline were opened; Strengthened bilateral relations with Thailand, Russia, Cambodia and China. <p>Cañizal also discussed the DOT’s National Tourism Development Plan 2016-2022 which is geared towards enhancing competitiveness and growth in the tourism industry through transport infrastructure development; product development; travel facilitation; and tourism investments and business environment.</p>

Continuation... Appropriations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and its attached agencies 	<p>Asked by Rep. Raul Daza (1st District, Northern Samar) whether tourism arrivals in the country were affected by the Marawi incident, DOT Secretary Wanda Corazon Tulfo-Teo admitted that there was a decline in visitors' arrivals, adding that some inbound international flights were cancelled after the declaration of Martial Law in Mindanao.</p> <p>Rep. France Castro (Party List – ACT TEACHERS) chided the DOT for being unable to notice the similarities between the advertisement used in South Africa in 2014 and the McCann Philippines "Sights" which the Department used in its tourism promotion.</p> <p>Cañizal informed the Committee that the DOT has already pulled out the advertisement. Currently, Cañizal said the DOT is inviting ad agencies to submit their proposals for a new ad promotion.</p> <p>Reps. Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon) and Mercedes "Didi" Cagas (Davao del Sur) questioned the snail-pace implementation of tourism infrastructure projects by the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA).</p> <p>TIEZA General Manager and Chief Operating Officer Pocholo Joselito Paragas explained that TIEZA is currently reviewing its process to hasten the implementation of these projects.</p> <p>Rep. Rodrigo Abellanosa (2nd District, Cebu) urged the DOT to be more aggressive in enticing investors to put up theme parks in the country, citing Hong Kong's Disneyland and Singapore's Universal Studios as successful tourist attractions.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Oscar "Richard" Garin Jr. (1st District, Iloilo) sat as the presiding officer during the DSWD's budget briefing.</p> <p>Social Welfare Secretary Judy Taguiwalo said that under the FY 2018 NEP, DSWD is set to receive P137.56 billion which is 7.41% higher than the 2017 budget of P128.07 billion.</p> <p>The DSWD's proposed budget for 2018 is distributed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of the Secretary (OSEC) – P137.56 billion; Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC) – P133.18 million Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) – P65.76 million; Inter-Country Adoption Board (ICAB) – P54.94 million; and National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA) – 54.5 million. <p>By expense class, the largest portion of the budget goes to maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE), P130.95 billion; while the rest go to personnel services (PS), P5.79 billion; capital outlay (CO), P30.85 million; and financial expenses (FE), P781.73 million.</p> <p>The budget of the DSWD shall be used to finance the following Top 10 + 1 programs of the Department, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program</i> (4Ps) - P89.41 billion for 4.4 million beneficiaries; Social Pension of Indigent Senior Citizens - P19.28 billion for 3 million beneficiaries; Sustainable Livelihood Program - P7.07 billion for 345,957 poor household beneficiaries; <i>Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan</i> – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (Kalahi-CIDSS) National Community Driven Development Program (NCDDP) - P5.38 billion for 308,961 poor household beneficiaries; Protective Services for Individuals and Families in Difficult Circumstances - P3.46 billion; Supplementary Feeding Program – P3.43 billion for 1,746,967 children beneficiaries;
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Continuation... Appropriations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster Response and Rehabilitation Program – P2.15 billion for 364,308 individual beneficiaries; • Provision for Center-based Clients – P1.55 billion; • Tax Reform Cash Transfer Program – P1.18 billion; • Provision of technical/advisory assistance and other related support services – P891.52 million; and • The (new) Bangsamoro Umpungan sa Nutrisyon (BangUn) – P156.01 million. <p>In support of the present administration’s goal of being a “government for the masses, from the masses,” Taguiwalo said the DSWD has begun to re-align its strategies, policies, and programs and services to make these more responsive to the needs of the Filipino people.</p> <p>Taguiwalo continued that the DSWD will reinforce its commitment to provide genuine public service by focusing all interventions around the concept of “<i>Maagap at Mapagkalingang Serbisyo na Walang Bahid ng Katiwalian</i>” or prompt and compassionate service devoid of corruption.</p> <p>Rep. Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon) observed that, while the number of 4Ps beneficiaries of 4.4 million has not increased since 2016, the budget of the Department increases from P62 billion in 2016 to P78 billion in 2017 and P89 billion in 2018.</p> <p>Taguiwalo explained that the increase in the 2017 budget of the DSWD is attributed to the rice subsidy for PPP beneficiaries at P600 per beneficiary that was promised by the President. On the other hand, the 2018 increase will be used for the health grant of P500 each for 1.3 million PPP beneficiaries that had been removed by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) in the 2017 budget.</p> <p>Noting that the Kalahi-CIDDS will end in 2019, Rep. Manuel Zubiri (3rd District, Bukidnon) recommended that the program be implemented in the long term, emphasizing that it has empowered communities to formulate programs and projects which they deemed are necessary.</p>
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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Good Government and Public Accountability	HR 882	Majority Leader Fariñas	Inquiry into the use by the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte of its shares from the excise taxes on locally manufactured Virginia-type cigarettes or the Special Support Fund under RA 7171 for a purpose other than those provided for by the said law, in its highly irregular purchase of motor vehicles made through cash advances without the benefit of public biddings for the total amount of P66.45 million	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur), decided to continue its inquiry relative to HR 882 on August 23.</p> <p>Ilocos Norte Governor Imee Marcos stressed that there was no anomaly in the release of the P66.45 million worth of tobacco funds for the purchase of motor vehicles, claiming that the Commission on Audit (COA) did not even issue adverse findings on the said disbursement through cash advances. She also contended that Presidential Decree 1445 or the Government Auditing Code of the Philippines, which was issued in 1978 allows cash advances as a mode of disbursement.</p> <p>Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas (1st District, Ilocos Norte) asserted that RA 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991 is the prevailing law that governs disbursements of local government units (LGUs). He explained further that Section 339 of RA 7160 provides</p>

<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability</p>				<p>that cash advances shall be made in accordance with COA's rules and regulations. However, COA Audit Circular No. 92-382, s. 1992 prohibits cash advance for purchase of motor vehicles.</p> <p>COA Audit Circular No. 92-382, s. 1992 provides for the accounting and auditing rules governing the handling of funds by LGUs.</p> <p>Commission on Audit (COA) Commissioner Jose Fabia said that government officials are prohibited from making cash advances for their purchases.</p> <p>Majority Leader Fariñas questioned the lump sum budget of P57.5 million allocated for the <i>Programang Ikaunlad ng Mamamayan, Ekonomiya at Ekolohiya (P-Imee)</i> through Provincial Appropriation Ordinance No. 022-2011 issued by the <i>Sangguniang Panlalawigan</i> of Ilocos Norte. The budget came from Ilocos Norte's share of tobacco excise taxes.</p> <p>Marcos denied that the appropriation issued to P-Imee program is a lump sum discretionary fund. She said that there was no specific program under the P-Imee as it was a general reference used for the various activities of the province for public service.</p> <p>The Committee, through the motion of Rep. Juan Pablo "Rimpy" Bondoc (4th District, Pampanga), agreed to conduct a <i>motu proprio</i> inquiry on the utilization of the Province of Ilocos Norte's shares from the excise taxes as reflected in the Annual Investment Plan (AIP) for 2011 to 2012.</p> <p>A <i>motu proprio</i> inquiry will also be conducted to investigate other transactions of the provincial government of Ilocos Norte that are included in the Audit Observation Memorandum (AOM) 2013-007.</p> <p>ABS Party-List Rep. Eugene Michael de Vera disclosed that there were two resolutions issued separately by the Ilocos Norte <i>Sangguniang Panlalawigan</i> and the Municipal Assessors' League of Ilocos Norte which denounce the Committee's legislative inquiry, saying that it is unconstitutional and branding the proceedings as political persecution.</p> <p>Atty. Vicentito Lazo, member of the <i>Sangguniang Panlalawigan</i> of Ilocos Norte, said that their resolution was not voted upon and was later archived.</p> <p>Finding the resolutions to be contemptuous and a direct attack to the integrity of the House of Representatives, the Committee will issue "show cause order" against the members of the Municipal Assessors' League of Ilocos Norte to explain in writing why they should not be cited for contempt.</p>
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<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability</p>				<p>Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn Garcia (3rd District, Cebu) questioned the authority of Granstar to sell Foton mini trucks to the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte when the United Asia Automotive Group, Inc. (UAAGI) is the exclusive distributor of the brand.</p> <p>Gilbert Suribas, vice president for operations of Granstar Motors and Industrial Corporation, maintained that Granstar is the exclusive distributor of Foton-Forland mini truck in the Philippines from 2010 until 2013.</p> <p>Suribas explained that the mini trucks sold by Granstar was Foton-Forland mini trucks which is a different brand from Foton mini trucks being sold by UAAGI.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Majority Leader Fariñas reported that the Bureau of Customs (BOC) certified that out of 110 mini trucks sold to the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte, only 11 were listed as having entered the Port of Cebu.</p> <p>Suribas was requested to submit Granstar's sales record of Foton-Forland mini trucks from 2011 until the termination of its exclusive distributorship.</p> <p>The Office of the Provincial Treasurer of Ilocos Norte was also asked to submit the logbooks, journal or ledgers listing all check transactions made by the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte during the period 2011-2012 as well as the list of programs under P-Imee which were funded by the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte.</p> <p>The Committee will issue subpoena <i>duces tecum</i> to the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Region IV to submit documents relating to the sale of motor vehicles by Granstar to the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte in the years 2011 and 2012.</p> <p>It will likewise issue subpoena <i>ad testificandum</i> to Fabian Go, president of Granstar Motors and Industrial Corporation, to compel his attendance in the Committee's next meeting.</p>
<p>Government Reorganization jt. w/ Basic Education and Culture</p>	<p>HB 2628</p>	<p>Rep. Atienza</p>	<p>Strengthening the cultural and sports training of the Filipino youth by reorganizing the Department of Education (DepEd) into the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), appropriating funds therefor</p>	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by MANILA TEACHERS Party-List Rep. Virgilio Lacson, Vice Chair of the Committee on Government Reorganization, and KABAYAN Party-List Rep. Ron Salo, Vice Chair of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the three bills.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Salo.</p> <p>BUHAY Party-List Rep. Jose Atienza Jr., author of HB 2628, said that his bill seeks to reorganize the Department of Education (DepEd) to reintegrate sports and culture education to its mandate.</p>
	<p>HB 4884</p>	<p>Rep. Sy-Alvarado</p>	<p>Establishing the Department for Culture and the Arts, strengthening the national endowment for culture and the arts</p>	
	<p>HB 6113</p>	<p>Rep. Escudero</p>	<p>Establishing the Department of Culture, appropriating funds therefor</p>	

Continuation... Government Reorganization jt. w/ Basic Education and Culture				<p>Rep. Atienza lamented that the value of culture and sports consciousness has deteriorated in the country. Thus, through the reintroduction of culture and sports in the educational system, younger generation will be properly guided on how to be better leaders and custodians of the country in the future.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon), author of HB 6113, said that her bill aims to create a national body which will develop, manage and implement policy for the protection, regulation, preservation and promotion of the country's culture through the creation of a Department of Culture.</p> <p>Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) Chairman William Ramirez briefed the Committee of the PSC's programs and activities on sports development. He said that the Commission will submit to the wisdom of Congress on whatever legislation it will undertake.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Salo, Rep. Atienza explained that the creation of a separate department for sports runs counter to the national policy of downsizing the government.</p> <p>On the other hand, Plan/Policy Formulation and Programming Division Chief Bernan Joseph Corpuz of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCAA) underscored the need to create a Department of Culture to address the issues and challenges concerning the protection, preservation and promotion of the country's culture and arts.</p> <p>However, Rep. Atienza argued that the creation of a separate department for culture is unconstitutional, citing Section 18 of Article XIV of the Constitution which reads that "the State shall ensure equal access to cultural opportunities through the educational system..."</p> <p>National Museum of the Philippines Director Jeremy Barns supports the creation of a bureau within DepEd that will focus on sports education and culture. However, he explained that creating a Department of Culture will consolidate the efforts of cultural agencies towards the protection, preservation, and regulation of movable, immovable, intangible properties related to arts and culture.</p>
Legislative Franchises	Substitute Bill to HB 4145	Rep. Lagman	Extending for another 25 years the franchise granted to Filipinas Broadcasting Network, Inc. under RA 8168	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Franz "Chicoy" Alvarez (1 st District, Palawan), approved the Substitute Bill to HB 4145 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	Substitute Bill to HB 4180	Rep. Acosta	Extending for another 25 years the franchise granted to RMC Broadcasting Corporation under RA 8159	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 4180 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	Substitute Bill to HB 4342	Rep. Salimbangon	Extending for another 25 years the franchise granted to Pacific Broadcasting System, Inc. under RA 7967	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 4342 and the corresponding Committee Report.

Continuation... Legislative Franchises	Substitute Bill to HB 4343	Rep. Salimbangon	Extending for another 25 years the franchise granted to Philippine Broadcasting Corporation under RA 7962	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 4343 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	Substitute Bill to HB 4600	Rep. Treñas	Granting the Deus Amor Est. Broadcasting, Inc. a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain radio and television broadcasting stations in the Philippines	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 4600 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	Substitute Bill to HB 5632	Rep. Nograles (K.A.)	Extending for another 25 years the franchise granted to University of Mindanao, doing business under the name and style of University of Mindanao Broadcasting Network and UM Broadcasting Network, under RA 8170	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 5632 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HB 3118	Rep. Madrona	Granting the Streamtech Systems Technologies Inc. a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain telecommunications systems throughout the Philippines	The Committee approved the bill with amendments.
	HB 4759	Rep. Treñas	Granting the volunteer LifeCare Ministries Inc. a franchise to construct, install, establish, maintain and operate non-commercial radio broadcasting stations in the Philippines	The Committee approved the bill subject to the submission of amendments to LifeCare Ministries' Articles of Incorporation.
	HB 5166	Rep. Albano	Granting Northeastern Broadcasting Services, Incorporated a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain radio and television broadcasting stations in Isabela Province and in Region II	The Committee approved the bill subject to the submission by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) of its position paper.
	HB 5303	Rep. Tugna	Granting Magnum.Air (Sky Jet) Inc. a franchise to establish, operate and maintain domestic and international air transport services, with Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 4 as its base	The Committee approved the bill subject to the submission by the SEC of its position paper.
	Natural Resources	HBs 3932, 3979 & 5733	Deputy Speaker Abueg, Reps. Gullas, and Matugas	Declaring certain parcels of land of the public domain as agricultural land open to disposition for agricultural, commercial, residential, industrial and other productive purposes in the Municipality of Jose P. Rizal, Province of Palawan; City of Naga, Province of Cebu; and Surigao City, Province of Surigao del Sur
HBs 4387, 5086, 5301 & 5597		Reps. Cosalan, Almario, Mercado, and Acosta	Declaring certain parts of the country as mining free zones	The Committee approved the four bills. Bills with similar subject matters were approved on Third Reading during the 16th Congress, according to Benguet Rep. Ronald Cosalan, author of HB 4387. The bills seek to prohibit mining operations in certain parts of the country to protect the indigenous people's (IPs)/residents in the area and the environment.

Continuation... Natural Resources				Atty. Josephine Sescon, Officer-In-Charge of the Legal Service Division, Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), expressed the agency's opposition to the bills explaining that the rights of the IPs are already covered by existing laws. She assured the Committee that under RA 7942, or the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, an application for mining will not be processed without the free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of the affected IPs in the area. Representatives from the DENR and FMB echoed the position of Sescon.
	HB 2938 & 4115	Reps. Dalog and Rocamora	Establishing forestland boundaries in Mountain Province and in the Province of Siquijor	The Committee approved the two bills. Bills with similar subject matters were approved on Third Reading during the 16th Congress, according to Kalinga Rep. Allen Jesse Mangaoang, who sponsored HB 2938, in behalf of late Mountain Province Rep. Maximo Dalog.
People's Participation	Substitute Bill to HB 249 & 568	Reps. Bordado and Canama	Creating a system of partnership between local governments and civil society organizations through the establishment of a people's council in every local government unit (LGU), prescribing its powers and functions	The Committee, chaired by San Jose del Monte City Rep. Florida "Rida" Robes, approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 249 and 568. The Secretariat was instructed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report. The bill will be referred to the Committee on Appropriations for review of its funding provision.
	Substitute Bill to HB 1598	Rep. Baguilat	Providing for the accreditation of non-government organizations (NGO's) and people's organizations (POs) eligible to access government funds and for the system of accountability and transparency for the use of these funds	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 1598. The Secretariat was instructed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report. The bill will be referred to the Committee on Appropriations for review of its funding provision.
	HB 3023	Rep. Roque (H.)	Ensuring the free exercise by the people of their right to peaceably assemble and petition the government	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate and fine-tune HBs 3023 and 3789.
	HB 3789	Rep. Zarate	Strengthening the right of the people to free expression, to peaceably assemble and to petition the government for redress of grievances, repealing for the purpose BP 880, otherwise known as the Public Assembly Act of 1985	BAYAN MUNA Party-List Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate, author of HB 3789, said that a bill with a similar subject matter was approved on Second Reading during the 16th Congress. Representatives from the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights (KARAPATAN), and Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) expressed their support for the proposed law.
	HB 146	Rep. Acosta-Alba	Institutionalizing volunteerism as a strategy for national development and as a domain of people's participation, amending for the purpose Section 12 of RA 9418 or The Volunteer Act of 2007	The Committee agreed to create a TWG to fine-tune the bill. Rep. Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba (1st District, Bukidnon), author of HB 146, said that a bill with a similar subject matter was approved during the 16th Congress.

Continuation... People's Participation				<p>Representatives from the Departments of Budget and Management (DBM), Foreign Affairs (DFA), Justice (DOJ), and Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Presidential Management Staff (PMS), and the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) expressed support for the bill.</p> <p>Also in support of the proposed law were representatives from the Philippine Coalition on Volunteerism, Inc. (PhilCV), International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE Philippines), <i>Gawad Kalinga</i> Community Development Foundation, Inc., and the PLDT, Inc.</p> <p>The resource persons were instructed to submit their respective position papers on the bill.</p>
Public Information	HB 1571	Rep. Vargas	Promoting local arts and entertainment industry by providing the local movie and film industry corporate tax breaks and exempting venue operators from the payment of amusement tax when using locally produced films and music events featuring Filipino artists	<p>The Committee, chaired by BAGONG HENERASYON Party-List Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy, agreed to consolidate HBs 1571 and 2624.</p> <p>BUHAY Party-List Rep. Jose Atienza Jr., author of HB 2624, said that his bill seeks to provide a five-year tax holiday for the film industry in order for it to recover and improve, especially with the entry of new players in the industry.</p>
	HB 2624	Rep. Atienza	Providing a five-year tax holiday for the film industry, by amending RA 9167 or the law creating the Film Development Council of the Philippines, defining its powers and functions, appropriating funds therefor	<p>Rep. Alfredo Vargas III (5th District, Quezon City), author of HB 1571, said that the intent of his bill is to encourage Filipino producers to produce more films to help uplift the state of the movie industry.</p> <p>Actors Guild of the Philippines Board of Director Rez Cortes expressed his support for the bills.</p>
	HB 1794	Rep. Villafuerte	Establishing a framework for film and television tourism in the Philippines, providing tax incentives, marketing the industry globally and providing employment for the sector	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune HBs 1794, 2215 and 4684.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by YACAP Party-List Rep. Benhur Lopez Jr.</p>
	HB 2215 & 4684	Reps. Macapagal-Arroyo and Nieto	Developing and promoting film tourism in the Philippines, providing funds and incentives therefor	<p>Rep. Luis Raymund "LRay" Villafuerte (2nd District, Camarines Sur), author of HB 1794, said that his bill proposes ways in which the film tourism can boost the country's tourism industry.</p> <p>Department of Finance (DOF) Chief Tax Specialist Miriam Tasarra expressed the Department's reservation on Section 6 (Amount of Tax Credit) of HB 1794, citing the tax incentives already afforded to eligible production outfits.</p> <p>Reps. Villafuerte and Atienza argued that the DOF should first qualify its position and listen to the comments of the movie industry before giving its official position on the bill.</p> <p>The DOF was directed to submit its position paper on HB 1794.</p>

Continuation... Public Information	HB 5021	Speaker Alvarez	Regulating the use of social media, prescribing penalties	The Committee agreed to create a TWG to fine-tune HBs 5021 and 6022.
	HB 6022	Rep. Villafuerte	Prohibiting the creation and distribution of false news	The TWG will also be chaired by Rep. Lopez.
Public Works and Highways	HB 480	Rep. Sy-Alvarado	Appropriating funds for the construction of a coastal highway connecting the Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela (CAMANAVA) area and the Provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, and Bataan	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Celso Lobregat (1 st District, Zamboanga City), approved HB 480 subject to style and amendment. Engineer. Alex Bote, OIC-Office of the Director, Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Service, DPWH, said that the project is lined up for further evaluation by the PPP Center.
	HBs 274, 275, 1096, 1643, 1986 & 2381	Reps. Del Mar, Cosalan, Deputy Speaker Villarica, Reps. Ting and Mercado	Providing for the construction of roads and bridges in certain parts of the country	The Committee approved the six bills subject to style and amendment.
	HB 238	Rep. Almonte	Appropriating P250 million for the construction of a trans-axial highway to be known as the Governor William Chiongbian National Highway from Barangay Poblacion in the City of Oroquieta, to Barangay Mansawan in the Municipality of Don Victoriano, Province of Misamis Occidental and connecting to a national highway in the Municipality of Josefina, Province of Zamboanga del Sur	The Committee will deliberate further on HB 238 in its next meeting. Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Planning Service Division Chief Maximo Montana said that the DPWH Planning Service, together with DPWH Region X and Misamis Occidental First District Engineering Office, will conduct a feasibility study on the bill.
	HBs 599 & 627	Minority Leader Suarez and Rep. Lanete	Mandating the Construction of the Quezon-Bicol Expressway	The Committee agreed to consolidate and deliberate further on the two bills. The Committee requested the DPWH to submit a feasibility study on the bills.
	HBs 2524, 2767, 2779, 3136, 3383 & 4165	Reps. Mercado, Umali, Dimaporo (A.), Dimaporo (K.), and Minority Leader Suarez	Providing for the construction of road and highways in certain parts of the country	The Committee will further deliberate on the six bills in its next meeting. Engineer Nenita Jimenez, OIC-Development Planning Division, DPWH, said the Department lacks the necessary funding for the conduct of feasibility studies for projects espoused in the bills which is a requirement before project implementation. Rep. Randolph Ting (3 rd District, Cagayan) asked the DPWH to submit to the Committee the budgetary requirements for the conduct of feasibility studies. He also asked the DPWH to submit the list of projects under feasibility study for the current year and for 2018. Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Supervising Budget and Management Specialist Bernardita Chua explained that the DPWH is only tasked to identify projects in its priority listing, but it is the DBM that evaluates and approves project proposals based on certain parameters.
	HB 2517	Rep. Mercado	Providing for the construction of a circumferential road in Panaon Island in the Province of Southern Leyte	The Committee agreed to table HB 2517.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Constitutional Amendments	Discussions on the proposed draft Philippine Federal Constitution as contained in Resolution of Both Houses (RBH) 8	<p>The Committee, chaired by Southern Leyte Rep. Roger Mercado, agreed to create technical working groups (TWGs) to study the provisions contained in RBH 8 and prepare a draft Philippine Constitution. Each TWG shall cover a major subject matter of the Constitution that shall be amended.</p> <p>The Committee adopted as its working draft the proposed presidential-bicameral-federal constitution contained in RBH 8, principally authored by Rep. Aurelio “Dong” Gonzales Jr. (3rd District, Pampanga).</p> <p>ABS Party-List Rep. Eugene Michael de Vera, co-author of RBH 8, clarified that the draft was made to give the House of Representatives a head start in the event that both houses of Congress, under a Constituent Assembly, decide to vote in favor of adopting a federal form of government. The draft is open for amendment and revisions, and can even be disregarded, Rep. De Vera added.</p> <p>KABAYAN Party-List Rep. Ron Salo suggested that other government agencies be invited to join the TWGs to discuss the current operational costs of the government and the projected costs should a federal form of government be adopted.</p> <p>PDP-Laban Federalism Institute, a political think tank dedicated to the research, study and advocacy of federalism in the Philippines, represented by its Executive Director Jonathan Malaya, informed the Committee that they are also working on a draft constitution with help from the academe. The said draft, which shall be available in two weeks, will be submitted to the Committee.</p> <p>Local Government Development Foundation (LOGODEF) Executive Director Edmund Tayao said that the Committee should consider the current electoral and political system before deciding to switch to a federal form of government in order to understand federalism under the unique context of the Philippines.</p> <p>1-CARE Party-List Rep. Carlos Roman Uybarreta suggested that the best and the brightest minds from different fields of profession be invited in the meetings of the TWGs to share their insights on federalism and help Congress to come up with a draft constitution that embodies the views of all sectors.</p> <p>The Secretariat was tasked to come up with a matrix on the salient features of the draft constitution as contained in RBH 8 as well as that of the PDP Laban Federalism Institute and LOGODEF, and how they differ from the 1987 Philippine Constitution.</p>
Ways and Means	<i>Motu proprio</i> investigation into the alleged smuggling of high grade “shabu” through the express lane of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) which was consequently seized by the Bureau's agents together with the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, will deliberate further on the circumstances surrounding the smuggling of P6.4 billion worth of shabu which was seized by the BOC and NBI agents on May 26, 2017 in two warehouses in Valenzuela City.</p> <p>In today's meeting, Fidel Anoché Dee, Filipino, and the prime suspect of the drug smuggling, was presented for questioning. He is presently under the custody of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) for violation of RA 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.</p> <p>Anoché Dee apprised the Committee that the warehouse, from which one of the five crates containing more than 100 kilos of shabu was seized, is owned by his sister, Emily Anoché Dee. The said warehouse has been the subject of a lease contract between her and a certain Jhu</p>

<p>Continuation... Ways and Means</p>		<p>Ming-Jyun, a Taiwanese national, on the early part of 2016. He said that he was employed by Ming-Jyun and a certain Filipino-Chinese named Jun Wang in May 2016 to manage the make-shift warehouse which is actually a residential house.</p> <p>On the query of PBA Party-List Rep. Jericho Jonas Nograles, Anoché Dee manifested that during his one-year employment with Ming-Jyun, four shipments were delivered in the warehouse from June 2016 until the time when the raid was conducted on May 26.</p> <p>Anoché Dee disclosed that the deliveries made in January and May of this year, which were shipped under his name, comprised of crates containing metal cylinders. He said that he was told by Jun Wang that the cylinders will be used for some production machineries.</p> <p>Majority of the Committee Members expressed dismay on the BOC's lack of coordination with the PDEA, NBI, and the Philippine National Police (PNP) which compromised the integrity of the raid operations in the two warehouses where the shabu was seized.</p> <p>Rep. Vincent "Bingbong" Crisologo (1st District, Quezon City) manifested that the raids should have been conducted on the basis of a seizure warrant if there was proper coordination with the PDEA. The raids cannot be made merely on the basis of a letter of authority (LOA) issued by the Commissioner of Customs, he said.</p> <p>Col. Neil Anthony Estrella, director of BOC's Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service (CIIS-Intelligence Group), however, expressed confidence that his raiding team, with the subsequent assistance from the NBI and the PDEA, was successful in the conduct of the operation.</p> <p>When asked by Deputy Speaker Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA) if there was an accompanying mission order (MO) along with the LOA issued in his favor, Estrella answered in the negative.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Hernani "Nanie" Koh, employee at the BOC's Auction and Cargo Disposal Monitoring Division, denied involvement in the alleged irregularities in the BOC as claimed by witness Mark Ruben Taguba II.</p> <p>Taguba later on identified Koh as not the "Tita Nani" whom he met and is subject of the bribery issue in the BOC.</p> <p>Rep. Reynaldo Umali (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro) said that some rogue officials of the BOC may have already gained too much knowledge in the intricacies of the Bureau's procedures that they have devised ways to take advantage of their positions.</p> <p>The Committee will issue subpoena to Emily Anoché Dee, Cris Bolastig, a former BOC employee, and a certain "Kimberly," whom Atty. Mandy Therese Anderson, chief of staff of BOC Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon, identified to be a certain Julie Gamboa. According to Taguba, Bolastig and Kimberly are alleged to be connected directly to some irregularities in the BOC and may have direct links to the Office of Commissioner Faeldon.</p>
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SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Subcommittee on Telecommunications (Information and Communications Technology)	Substitute Bill to HB 2871	Rep. Yap (V.)	Promoting open access data in transmission, providing additional powers to the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC)	The Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Francis Gerald Abaya (1st District, Cavite), approved the Substitute Bill to HB 2871 subject to style and amendment.

Continuation... Subcommittee on Telecommunications (Information and Communications Technology)				The substitute bill will be submitted to the mother Committee for its consideration and approval.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 1946, 3052 & 3876	Reps. Santos- Recto, Yap (V.), and Zarate	Strengthening the powers of the NTC, amending for the purpose RA 7925, otherwise known as the Public Telecommunications Act of the Philippines	The Subcommittee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 1946, 3052 and 3876 subject to style and amendment. The substitute bill will be submitted to the mother Committee for its consideration and approval.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Government Enterprises and Privatization (Technical Working Group)	HB 1266	Rep. Biazon	Strengthening the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), thereby repealing RA 4850, as amended, otherwise known as the LLDA Act of 1966	The technical working group (TWG), chaired by AKBAYAN Party-List Rep. Tom Villarin, will deliberate further on the two measures in its next meeting.
	HB 4359	Rep. Villarin	Creating the Laguna Lake Conservation Authority (LLCA), thereby repealing RA 4850, as amended	<p>LLDA Legal and Adjudication Division Atty. John Andrew de Guzman argued that some of the powers of the LLDA under RA 4850, particularly those relating to its proprietary functions, were deleted in the proposed measures, thereby limiting its sources of funds.</p> <p>Philippine National Police (PNP) Deputy Director for Operations Chief Superintendent Emmanuel Licup expressed reservation on the provision under Section 26 of HB 4359 creating the Laguna Lake Police Force that will enforce laws on fisheries and other environmental laws. Licup suggested that the PNP Maritime Group (PNP-MG) be utilized instead, emphasizing that the agency is primarily tasked to perform police functions over Philippine territorial waters.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Villarin on LLDA's annual revenue and what percentage represents collection from fines and penalties, De Guzman replied that, of the LLDA's annual income of approximately P200 million, about 70 to 80 percent represents collection from fines and penalties.</p> <p>On the current state of aquaculture structures within the Laguna de Bay pursuant to LLDA Board Resolution 518, LLDA Assistant General Manager Generoso Dungo said that the LLDA has already demolished fishpens covering about 2,000 hectares of the lake, leaving behind some 4,000 hectares more to demolish. Currently, Dungo said there are 15,000 hectares covered by these fishpens which is way more than the 9,000 hectares carrying capacity of the lake. (Board Resolution 518 sets a moratorium on the operation of aquaculture structures within the Laguna de Bay.)</p>

Continuation... Government Enterprises and Privatization (Technical Working Group)				<p>Engr. Eduardo Manalili, senior science research specialist of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), recommended that the provision in the bills for the establishment and enforcement of anti-pollution standards should be coordinated with the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).</p> <p>The LLDA was asked to submit the documents requested by the TWG.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bills for the consideration of the TWG.</p>
Housing and Urban Development (Technical Working Group)	HBs 130, 157, 2102 & 3736	Reps. Tambunting, Belmonte (J.C.), Villarin, and Marcoleta	Prescribing a Code of Conduct for the eviction of underprivileged and homeless citizens or the demolition of their dwellings, providing penalties for violation thereof, and appropriating funds therefor, amending for the purpose RA 7279, otherwise known as the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992	<p>The technical working group, chaired by Rep. Jose Christopher Belmonte (6th District, Quezon City), will deliberate further on HBs 130, 157, 2102 and 3736 in its next meeting.</p> <p>The TWG agreed to use HB 157, authored by Rep. Belmonte himself, as the working draft.</p> <p>Rep. Belmonte said that a bill with similar subject matter was approved on Third Reading during the 16th Congress.</p> <p>The TWG agreed to retain the definition of "danger areas" as including "esteros, railroad tracks, garbage dumps, riverbanks, shorelines, waterways, and other public places such as sidewalks, roads, parks, and playgrounds," consistent with the glossary of housing terminologies formulated during the National Housing Summit.</p> <p>National Housing Authority (NHA) Consolidated Union of Employees President Rose Nartates recommended to adopt the provisions under Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Memorandum Circular 2014-82 which prescribes the guidelines on requesting for police assistance in demolition or eviction activities.</p> <p>Rep. Belmonte requested the Philippine National Police (PNP) to provide the TWG with a copy of the PNP Police Operational Procedures Manual which can be incorporated in the proposed law or in the law's implementing rules and regulations (IRR) in order to ascertain the rules of engagement that shall apply during demolitions to prevent the outbreak of violence.</p>
Metro Manila Development (Technical Working Group)	HB 4642	Rep. Castelo	Granting the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) additional powers and functions, amending for the purpose RA 7924	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Malabon City Rep. Federico "Ricky" Sandoval II, will deliberate further on the measures in its next meeting.</p> <p>Representatives from various local</p>

<p><i>Continuation...</i> Metro Manila Development (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>HB 5057</p>	<p>Rep. Fernando</p>	<p>Amending RA 7924, strengthening the MMDA, providing funds therefor</p>	<p>government units (LGUs) have expressed their apprehensions on the proposed law, explaining that the MMDA is solely an administrative body and is bereft of any legislative function based on a number of Supreme Court decisions.</p> <p>They warned that in the course of implementation of the proposed law, conflict between ordinances to be promulgated by the MMC and the LGUs may create confusion among the public.</p> <p>However, Rep. Bayani Fernando (1st District, Marikina City), author of HB 5057, opined that the MMC's role shall be limited only to proposing ordinances which will still be subject for approval by each of the 19 LGU councils comprising Metro Manila.</p> <p>According to Rep. Fernando, the MMC proposed ordinance, if approved, will be implemented in all of Metro Manila subject to the limitations provided for by the provisions of RA 7924 or the law creating the MMDA.</p> <p>Resource persons present were requested to submit their respective position papers as well as comments, suggestions or recommendations for the TWG's consideration.</p>
<p>Population and Family Relations (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>HBs 886, 2157, 2653, 2775, 3934 & 5038</p>	<p>Reps. Tan (A.), Pineda, Campos, Gonzaga, Zarate, and Batocabe</p>	<p>Amending RA 7432, as amended by RA 9994, otherwise known as the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010</p>	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Ma. Lourdes Aggabao (4th District, Isabela), agreed to draft a substitute bill to the six measures.</p> <p>Rep. Luis Jose Angel Campos Jr. (2nd District, Makati City), author of HB 2653, said that his bill aims to increase monthly stipend being granted to senior citizens 70 years old and above from the existing P500 to P2,000 to help support their daily and medical needs.</p> <p>Meanwhile, AKO BICOL Party-List Rep. Rodel Batocabe, author of HB 5038, said that his bill aims to grant social pension to all senior citizens, whether or not they are indigent, as long as they are not receiving any pension from the Social Security System (SSS), Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), and other public or private social protection system.</p> <p>BAYAN MUNA Party-List Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate, author of HB 3934, wants to make a more inclusive definition of "indigent senior citizen" by removing the physical requirements (frail, sickly or with disability), and the requirement that he/she should not be receiving financial assistance from relatives to qualify as such.</p> <p>The TWG agreed to adopt the definition of "indigent senior citizen" under HB 886, authored by Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D.</p>

Continuation... Population and Family Relations (Technical Working Group)			<p>(4th District, Quezon) and insert the phrase “with minimum pension of P5,000 and below” in the definition. It likewise agreed to delete the physical requirements to qualify as an indigent senior citizen.</p> <p>Representatives from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), and the Coalition of Services of the Elderly (COSE) expressed support for the proposed law.</p> <p>Assistant Director Jane Abella of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), said that the DBM supports the intention of the bill, however, she advised the TWG to seriously consider the financial sustainability of the proposed law which may entail huge budgetary requirements.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit their position papers on the bills for the TWG’s consideration.</p>
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AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Economic Affairs	<p>Briefing by various government agencies on the status of implementation of big ticket infrastructure projects under the Build Build Build Program of the Duterte administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) • Department of Finance (DOF) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Arthur Yap (3rd District, Bohol), listened to the presentation of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Department of Finance (DOF), and the Department of Transportation (DOTr) on the status of implementation of big ticket infrastructure projects under the Build Build Build Program of the Duterte administration.</p> <p>NEDA Infrastructure Staff Director Roderick Planta informed the Committee that a total of 75 flagship projects are under the Build Build Build Program of the present administration with estimated cost of P8.13 trillion.</p> <p>Out of the 75 projects, Planta reported that 18 projects have already been approved by the NEDA Board amounting to P462.74 billion. He added that majority of these projects, which will be located in Mega Manila, will be implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and the DOTr.</p> <p>DOF’s Bilateral Assistance Division Chief John Narag presented the DOF’s proposed Official Development Assistance (ODA) financing sources for selected infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Narag said that China will provide ODA loans for two projects and ODA grants for another two projects, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For ODA Loan Projects: Chico River Pump Irrigation Project, with an estimated cost of P2.69 billion and estimated loan of P2.29 billion; and the New Centennial Water Source – Kaliwa Dam Project, with an estimated cost of P10.85 billion and an estimated loan of P9.22 billion; and • For ODA Grant Projects: Binondo-Intramuros Bridge, with an estimated cost of P4.60 billion; and the Estrella-Pantaleon Bridge, with an estimated cost of P1.36 billion. <p>Narag also mentioned that Japan will be providing the biggest ODA loan amounting to P161.42 billion that will fund four projects, namely: Malolos Clark Railway Project, Cavite Industrial Area Flood Management Project, Arterial Road Bypass Project (Phase III), and the Malitbog-Maridagao Irrigation Project (Phase II).</p>

<p>Continuation... Economic Affairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Transportation (DOTr) 	<p>DOTr Undersecretary Gary de Guzman presented the Department's major accomplishments for 2016 and 2017. He reported that the DOTr was able to remit P25.8 billion to the National Treasury in 2016 and P7 billion in the first quarter of 2017.</p> <p>Aside from building new roads and airports, De Guzman said that the Department is also focused on building new railway routes where it plans to build 1,900 kilometers of railways nationwide, citing the Mindanao Railway Project and the Metro Manila Subway Project which would shorten travel time and decongest traffic along major thoroughfares.</p> <p>Rep. Yap expressed concern that these agencies may fall short in delivering the said projects on time. He urged them to submit a detailed report of the difficulties they may encounter in implementing such projects in order for the Committee to come up with solutions.</p> <p>Representatives from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), National Irrigation Administration (NIA), Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), and the Philippine Contractors Association (PCA), who did not get the chance to make their presentations during the meeting, were instead requested to submit the same to the Committee.</p>
<p>Energy</p>	<p>Briefing by Shell Philippines Exploration BV on the Malampaya Natural Gas Project</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Jay Velasco, listened to the briefing conducted by Shell Philippines Exploration BV (SPEX) on the Malampaya Natural Gas Project.</p> <p>SPEX Managing Director and General Manager Rolando Paulino Jr. presented an overview of the Malampaya Project and its technical and commercial aspects and regulatory framework.</p> <p>Paulino reported that the Malampaya gas field, which began actual production in 2001, was discovered in 1992 off the north-west coast of Palawan Island. The project is being undertaken by SPEX in joint venture with Chevron Malampaya LLC Philippines and the Philippine National Oil Company Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC) and 38 service contractors (SC). Under the service contract agreement, 70 percent of the gross proceeds from the sale of natural gas goes to the contractor to recover the investment cost. The remaining 30 percent is to be shared by the government and the consortium on a 60-40 ratio. The service contract will expire in 2024, but can be extended up to 15 years. For the last 16 years, Paulino disclosed that SPEX already remitted a total of \$9.2 billion representing the government's share in royalties from the project.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Wilter "Sharky" Wee Palma II (1st District, Zamboanga Sibugay) on the status of the extension of the service contract for the Malampaya Project, Department of Energy (DOE) Energy Resources Bureau Director Rino Abad said that the application for extension was filed during the term of then DOE Secretary Jericho Petilla. However, Abad said he is not aware if the application was re-filed with the new DOE Secretary, Alfredo Cusi.</p> <p>In response to the question of 1-CARE Party-List Rep. Carlos Roman Uybarreta, SPEX Reservoir Development Manager Delton Sy said that the quality of natural gas that will be extracted from the field up to 2027 will remain the same. The quantity, however, may diminish.</p> <p>On the query of several House Members with regard to the share of the local government unit (LGU) in the Malampaya Project, Abad explained that the share of the LGU is released through the issuance of Notice of Cash Allocation (NCA) by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).</p>

<p>Games and Amusements jt. w/ Public Order and Safety</p>	<p>Briefing by the City of Dreams (COD) Manila on its security and safety protocols</p>	<p>The Joint Committee, co-presided by Rep. Gus Tambunting (2nd District, Parañaque City), Chair of the Committee on Games and Amusements, and Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), Chair of the Committee on Public Order and Safety, listened to the briefing conducted by the City of Dreams (COD) on its security and safety protocols.</p> <p>COD Security Director Paul Hill presented the casino's security protective plan and fire and life safety systems. He informed the Committee that the COD has a Crisis Management Plan (CMP) which outlines the roles of the Crisis Management Team, as well as Emergency Management Plan (EMP) that defines the roles, responsibilities and actions of those directly involved in emergency management and response. COD's security personnel are also guided by a Security Standard Operating Procedures Manual, Hill added.</p> <p>COD Property President Geoff Anders apprised the Committee of his and his colleague's professional credentials and level of experience in handling the security and safety protocol of the casino.</p> <p>COD Surveillance Director Kenneth Gillon said that the casino is equipped with key security technology, such as closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras, access controlled doors, key management system (KMS), TETRA communications, lift control, and duress. He explained the salient features of each security technology to the Members of the Committee.</p> <p>In terms of the COD's preparedness during emergency situations, Hill emphasized that they regularly conduct emergency and evacuation drills for their personnel. They also provide specialized trainings and tactical drills for their security personnel, as well as regular joint drills with the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP).</p> <p>As for their Fire and Life Safety Systems, COD Engineering Director Paul Bruce said that they have fully complied with the requirements of the BFP. He reported that the COD has three fire detection alarm system work stations where the fire alarm activation system is being monitored. Fireman's lift are also available for fire fighter's use, as well as smoke detectors and sprinkler heads that are installed and located strategically throughout the building.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Tambunting if the COD's security protocol in Manila is the same with that of their establishments in Macau, and who will be in charge in case of an emergency, Anders said that the COD has adjusted their security and safety protocols to respond to the kinds of threats that exist in the Philippines. In the event of an emergency, one out of four operations manager and four surveillance managers on duty that day will be in command, Anders explained.</p> <p>On the questions raised by Rep. Acop, Gillon said that they have direct radio communication with their security personnel and that the personnel on duty inside the surveillance rooms are only allowed to leave if absolutely necessary. As for outsourced security, Hill said that they are still looking for a company or agency that can provide armed officers or personnel.</p> <p>PAGCOR's Vice President for Security Lino Calingasan reported that PAGCOR already disseminated copies of its security protocol to casinos. Calingasan, however, clarified that casinos may still create their own security protocols as long as they comply with the list of requirements contained in the PAGCOR's Security Protocol.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to conduct an ocular inspection of the COD to assess if its security protocols are indeed in place.</p>
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Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Special Committee)	Briefing on the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) peace talks with the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army/National Democratic Front (CPP/NPA/NDF), and on the status of the new Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Tawi-Tawi Rep. Ruby Sahali, listened to the briefing conducted by the GRP peace panel on the status of peace talks with the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army/National Democratic Front (CPP/NPA/NDF).</p> <p>Rep. Sahali lamented on the sudden turn of events in the peace process with the CPP/NPA/NDF when all were optimistic that a peace agreement was forthcoming. However, Rep. Sahali believes that the commitment towards peace has not waned and all are still hopeful that it can still be attained.</p> <p>Secretary Jesus Dureza, presidential adviser on the peace process, said that talks with the CPP/NPA/NDF have to be suspended pending an enabling environment that is more conducive to peace negotiations.</p> <p>Secretary Silvestre "Bebot" Bello II, chairman of the GRP panel, reported that the four rounds of formal peace talks with the CPP/NPA/NDF conducted since August 2016 and facilitated by the Royal Norwegian Government produced modest gains, among which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions on the draft comprehensive agreements on socio-economic reforms, political and constitutional reforms, and on ending hostilities and disposition of forces resulted in some consensus points; • The unilateral ceasefire declared by both sides in August 2016 that lasted for six months led to a reduction in violent incidents on the ground and provided a peaceful environment in conflict-affected communities; and • Confidence-building measures were implemented that included the release of 21 NDF consultants in August 2016, which enabled their participation in the rounds of talks and provided transparency in the peace process. <p>However, Bello disclosed that the peace process was interrupted because the CPP/NPA/NDF withdrew their unilateral ceasefire and engaged on heightened attacks against government forces and civilians. These incidents, Bello said, prompted President Rodrigo Duterte to cancel the talks in February, the fifth round of formal talks in May, and the backchannel talks in July. He said that the GRP panel is awaiting the President's directive to resume the peace talks.</p> <p>On the status of the new Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), Dureza said that the Bangsamoro Transition Commission (BTC) has already transmitted to the House the new draft of the BBL. Dureza is hopeful that Congress will come up with a BBL that is constitutional and acceptable to the Filipino people.</p> <p>BTC Chair Ghazali Jaafar believes in the commitment of the President to push for the enactment of the BBL under his administration, and trusts that the lawmakers understand and support his peacebuilding program especially for Mindanao.</p> <p>Jaafar is confident that the draft BBL will pass legal scrutiny. He further emphasized that the draft BBL has taken into account the issues and concerns not only of the Bangsamoro, but also that of the Moro and non-Moro indigenous peoples, as well as the Christian communities.</p>
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