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COMMITTEE MEETING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Metro Manila Development	Discussion on the status of the Laguna Lake Development Authority's (LLDA) water filtration project and on its programs ensuring the quality of water supply in Metro Manila	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Winston "Winnie" Castelo (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Quezon City), discussed with the LLDA the status of its water filtration project and how it ensures the quality of water supply in Metro Manila.</p> <p>Rep. Castelo underscored the need to stop the discharge of dangerous and untreated wastewater into the Laguna de Bay and its tributaries by industrial parks, commercial establishments, factories and locators. He explained that Metro Manila's more than 12 million population depends on the lake as a main source of water supply.</p> <p>LLDA Department Manager for Environmental Regulations Emitterio Hernandez apprised the body of the regulatory functions of the LLDA pursuant to RA 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004. He reported that LLDA issues wastewater discharge permits to about 10,000 business entities around the Laguna de Bay area, allowing them to discharge wastewater into the bay based on the effluent standards set by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and subject to certain conditions. However, he said about 40-50% of these establishments do not comply with the requirements set under the discharge permit such as the establishment of wastewater treatment facilities.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Jose Christopher Belmonte (6<sup>th</sup> District, Quezon City) about LLDA's process of issuing wastewater discharge permits, Hernandez said that the issuance and annual renewal of discharge permits are supposed to be supported by the results of an ocular inspection. However, because of lack of inspectors, the LLDA is incapable of monitoring and inspecting all these industrial and commercial entities surrounding the Laguna de Bay region.</p> <p>Replying to the query of Rep. Bayani Fernando (1<sup>st</sup> District, Marikina City), Hernandez disclosed that the major source of pollutants in Laguna de Bay comes from household domestic wastes, followed by quick-service or fast-food restaurants.</p> <p>The LLDA was requested to submit to the Committee a list of industrial parks, commercial establishments, and factories with pending cases for violation of the requirements on wastewater discharge, as well as copies of notice of violations and closure orders it issued.</p> <p>Rep. Castelo proposed that LLDA's functions and jurisdiction on wastewater management should be transferred to the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the DENR, which has sufficient logistics to undertake such functions.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to invite LLDA General Manager Jaime Medina to attend its next meeting to shed light on the issues raised.</p>

<p><i>Continuation...</i> Metro Manila Development</p>	<p>Discussion on the alleged inefficient performance of various public utilities in Metro Manila</p>	<p>The Committee discussed the issues raised by Rep. Fernando relating to public utility services in Metro Manila.</p> <p>In a brief presentation, Rep. Fernando showed a number of electrical poles and dangling wires in various places in Metro Manila which are not properly installed. He also decried the improper installation of gauges atop electrical poles as well as water meters along sidewalks and roadsides which, to him, are all violative of international and domestic engineering codes.</p> <p>Rep. Fernando chided the Manila Electric Company (Meralco) and the telecommunications and water companies for not doing something to correct the problem.</p> <p>Meralco's Central Distribution Services head Andres Sumayao explained that it takes about two years for the company to attend to the request of local government units (LGUs) to transfer electric poles affected by road widening projects in Metro Manila due to the huge volume of such requests.</p> <p>However, the city engineer of Quezon City, Chito Cabungcal, countered that most of the city's road widening projects, such as the one in Barangay Sauyo, have already been completed for more than two years and yet Meralco has not done anything to move the electrical poles to the side of the road.</p> <p>Rep. Fernando likewise pointed out the failure of cable and mobile network providers to respond and resolve consumer complaints promptly. The hotlines or e-mail addresses established by the public utilities themselves are difficult to access or not accessible at all which render their services to the consumers ineffective.</p> <p>The public utility providers were requested to submit their position papers, including their timeline within which the issues raised can be resolved and the constraints involved, which shall be presented to the Committee in its next meeting.</p>
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