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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 Labor and Employment (DOLE) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), listened to the presentations on the proposed FY 2018 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and their attached agencies.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Ana Cristina Siquian Go (2nd District, Isabela) sat as presiding officer during the DOLE's budget briefing.</p> <p>Labor Secretary Silvestro Bello III said that under the 2018 National Expenditure Program (NEP), the DOLE and its attached agencies will get a total budget of P10.81 billion, which is 5.45% lower than its 2017 budget of P11.44 billion.</p> <p>The DOLE budget for 2018 is distributed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of the Secretary (OSEC) – P6.85 billion; National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) – P1.14 billion; Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) – P890.68 million; Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) – P827. 56 million; Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) – P541.10 million; National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB) – P212.24 million; National Wages and Productivity Commission (NWPC) – P208.81 million; National Maritime Polytechnic (NMP) – P99.39 million; and Institute for Labor Studies (ILS) – P36.45 million. <p>Bello explained that the decrease in the budget of DOLE is largely due to the non-allocation of MOOE funds for emergency and livelihood assistance for displaced workers and the transfer of the Emergency Repatriation Program to the OWWA; and decrease in CO allocation for the construction and renovation of some DOLE buildings.</p> <p>To achieve its vision of providing every Filipino worker attain a full, decent and productive employment, Bello said that in 2018, DOLE intends to undertake the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link people to employment opportunities through various employment facilitation services; Invest in human capital development to enhance workers employability and make them job-ready; Promote and protect the right of workers by providing just and humane working conditions and better terms of employment; and Maintain industrial peace among workers and employers. <p>On the question raised by several House Members regarding the</p>

<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) 	<p>compliance of employers with labor laws, DOLE Undersecretary Joel Maglunsad reported that DOLE has only 554 labor laws compliance officers (LLCOs) right now tasked to assess and inspect around 937,000 business establishments nationwide. Maglunsad said that DOLE already made a request for additional 200 LLCO items with the corresponding budget of P300 million.</p> <p>Party-list Reps. Antonio Tinio (ACT TEACHERS) and Emmi de Jesus (GABRIELA) asked DOLE about the status of retail giant Shoemart's (SM) practice of contractualization and end of contract (endo). Bello said that SM has committed to gradually regularize all its employees.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte) on DOLE's assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) due to the armed conflict in Marawi City, Bello said that his Department already downloaded P30 million to Lanao for relief and emergency assistance benefiting around 2,161 people. Rep. Dimaporo asked DOLE to intensify its efforts in Marawi considering that around 300,000 IDPs are in need of assistance.</p> <p>The DOLE was requested to submit reports and documents pertinent to the proposed 2018 budget as requested by the Members of the Committee before the plenary deliberation of its budget.</p> <p>DPWH Secretary Mark Villar said that under the 2018 National Expenditure Program (NEP), the Department is set to receive P643.25 billion, which is 38% higher than this year's budget of P467.66 billion.</p> <p>The biggest portion of the DPWH's budget or P605.57 billion goes to capital outlay (CO); while the rest will go to maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE), P16.54 billion; personnel services (PS), P8.13 billion; motor vehicle user's charge (MVUC), P12.29 billion; and retirement and life insurance premiums (RLIP), P72 million.</p> <p>Villar reported that the proposed 2018 budget for CO will be distributed by region/area, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mindanao – P174.1 billion; Northern Luzon – P111 billion; Southern Luzon – P103.1 billion; Inter-regional/nationwide projects – P89.97 billion; Visayas - P87.1 billion; and National Capital Region (NCR) - P38.9 billion. <p>Villar said the DPWH's budget will be utilized for strategic programs such as: traffic decongestion; convergence and rural road development; integrated and seamless transport system; integrated water resources management; and disaster risk management and climate change adaptation.</p> <p>Rep. Julieta Cortuna (Party-List, A TEACHER) noted the Department's low absorptive capacity due to the difficulty in acquiring right-of-way that hinders the start of construction. She called on the DPWH's district engineers to make initial consultations with landowners of affected lands to determine potential problems before submitting their program of work (POW).</p> <p>Villar said that the DPWH has created a task force that will look into and resolve the right-of-way issues to minimize, if not avoid, delays in the implementation of infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Reps. Corazon Nuñez-Malanyaon (1st District, Davao Oriental) and Christopher V.P. De Venecia (4th District, Pangasinan) suggested the creation of a national design policy, which will incorporate aesthetics in the design of structures, as well as promote the country's cultural identity and national patrimony.</p>
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Continuation... Appropriations		<p>On the query of Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte) on DPWH's plans in war-torn Marawi City, Villar mentioned the creation of <i>Task Force Bangon Marawi</i>, by virtue of Administrative Order No. 3, upon the instructions of President Rodrigo Duterte.</p> <p><i>Task Force Bangon Marawi</i> is an inter-agency task force that will focus on the recovery, reconstruction and rehabilitation of Marawi City and other affected areas in Mindanao.</p> <p>Meanwhile, ACTS-OFW Party-List Rep. Aniceto "John" Bertiz III questioned the Department's unfulfilled promise to give jobs to the displaced overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in Saudi Arabia. Villar said that his Department has already requested from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) additional funds for the hiring of engineers and will coordinate with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) regarding the hiring of the displaced workers.</p>
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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Agrarian Reform	HB 5662	Rep. Mercado	Mandating the transfer of the Provincial Agrarian Reform Office (PARO) in the Municipality of Sogod to the City of Maasin, Southern Leyte	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Rene Relampagos (1st District, Bohol), approved HB 5662.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Southern Leyte Rep. Roger "Oging" Mercado, author of HB 5662, said that the transfer of the DAR Provincial Office to Maasin City will improve the delivery of support services to the agrarian reform beneficiaries and will expedite the process of transacting business with government offices which are mostly located within the city.</p> <p>DAR Regional Director Shiela Enciso interposed no objection to the bill. However, she requested that the employees of the Provincial Office, 80% of whom are residents of Sogod, be given allowances to cover transportation, lodging, and other incidental expenses.</p> <p>Relative to the concerns raised by Sogod Vice Mayor Rufo Olo and Provincial Agrarian Reform Program Officer Elisea Orapa, Rep. Mercado committed to discuss with DAR and the Provincial Government of Southern Leyte the most beneficial way of implementing the transfer.</p>
	HB 555	Rep. Casilao	Instituting genuine agrarian reform in the country and creating the mechanism for its implementation	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 555 in its next meeting.</p> <p>ANAKPAWIS Party-List Rep. Ariel "Ka Ayik" Casilao, author of HB 555, emphasized that his bill, also called the Genuine Agrarian Reform Bill (GARB), seeks to address the inherent flaws of the previous agrarian reform laws such as insufficient funding support and other support mechanisms to ensure the</p>

Continuation... Agrarian Reform				<p>program's success.</p> <p>Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Assistant Director Vilma Gorospe recommended that the bill be studied further, particularly on issues pertaining to the past performance of DAR in implementing the agrarian reform program, the budget requirement, and the sustainability of the new program as contemplated in the bill.</p> <p>Atty. Carmen Leonor Alcantara, member of the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC) representing the Mindanao landowners, opposed the bill for being unconstitutional. Alcantara said that the bill violates the constitutional prohibition on deprivation of property without due process of law and taking of private property without payment of just compensation (Sections 1 and 9, Bill of Rights).</p> <p>Rep. Arnolfo "Arnie" Teves, Jr. (3rd District, Negros Oriental) pointed out that the real intent of land reform is to develop and cultivate idle lands, especially idle government lands, which can be attained even without transferring ownership of the land.</p> <p>The DBM was requested to submit to the Committee its position paper on the bill.</p>
Ecology	HBs 49 & 1843	Reps. Fortun and Alejano	Preventing and controlling pollution from ships, providing penalties therefor	<p>The Committee, presided by Vice Chair Rep. Lawrence "Law" Fortun (1st District, Agusan del Norte), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the three bills.</p> <p>Rep. Fortun, author of HB 49, said that a bill with a similar subject matter was approved during the 16th Congress.</p> <p>Muntinlupa City Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon, author of HB 1714, underscored the need to update the antiquated policies and laws against the pollution of the Philippine waters.</p> <p>Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Administrator Marcial "Al" Quirico Amaro and Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Commander Godofredo Vagilidad expressed support for the proposed measures.</p> <p>Amaro said that it is important to have a law that will enable MARINA to effectively enforce all instruments of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Conventions.</p> <p>Likewise, Vagilidad said that the bills will strengthen the implementation of the Marine Pollution 73/78 or the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships. He also suggested the designation of the PCG as the lead agency to implement the proposed law.</p>
	HB 1714	Rep. Biazon	Increasing the penalty imposed against polluters of navigable waters by amending Section 7 of PD 979, otherwise known as the Marine Pollution Decree of 1976	

Continuation... Ecology				<p>On the query of Rep. Biazon, PCG Lieutenant Commander Ernesto Valdez said that government vessels with law enforcement functions should be included among the list of vessels exempted under Section 5 (Exemptions) of HBs 49 and 1843 which states that the proposed law shall not apply to warships, naval, auxiliary ships, and man-of-war vessels, as well as government or non-commercial ships during emergency response cases.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Philippine Inter-island Shipping Association (PISA) Executive Director Pedro Aguilar suggested that aside from tankers and barges hauling oil for petroleum products, all other vessels that may potentially harm marine waters should contribute to the proposed Marine Environmental Management Fund (MEMF).</p> <p>Malabon City Rep. Federico "Ricky" Sandoval II said that imposing a fine of five centavos per liter for every transshipment of oil made by tanker ships is too much. According to Rep. Sandoval, there is no need to impose an additional fine because tankers are insured, the amount of which is enough to cover the clean-up expenses in case of accidental spillage.</p>
	HB 4287	Rep. De Jesus	Prohibiting waste dumping and strengthening the existing system of waste control and management in the country, thereby amending Sections 4 (b), 13, 14 (a) i, and 15 of RA 6969, also known as the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act of 1990	<p>The Committee agreed to consolidate HBs 4287 and HR 377 and other bills that have similar subject matter and were already referred to the technical working group (TWG).</p> <p>Engr. Geri Sañez, chief of the Hazardous Waste Management Section of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), presented the Bureau's mandate, overview of RA 6969 or the Toxic Substance and Hazardous and Nuclear Waste Control Act of 1990, and the country's international commitments on the proper disposal of toxic substances and hazardous and nuclear wastes.</p>
	HR 377	Rep. De Jesus	Inquiry into the increasing quantity of imported toxic and hazardous electronic waste in the country as permitted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) through DENR Administrative Order (AO) 2013-22, and recommending measures that would impose stiffer penalty on illegal importation, and ensure proper handling, disposal and recycling of electronic waste	<p>Meanwhile, Teofilo Leonin, chief of the Nuclear Research Division of the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute (PNRI), presented an overview of the National Regulatory Framework for Radioactive Waste Management in the Philippines.</p> <p>When asked by Aklan Rep. Carlito Marquez if mercury and asbestos are still imported into the country, Sañez said that mercury use in all Philippine health care facilities and institutions was already banned as per Department of Health (DOH) Administrative Order No. 21, series of 2008.</p> <p>On the other hand, chrysotile or white asbestos is not banned in the country, according to Sañez, because it is used for cement production and it does not pose great</p>

Continuation... Ecology				danger as compared to the other types of asbestos which are already banned in the country.
Good Government and Public Accountability	HR 292	Rep. Vergara	Inquiry into the alleged illegal practices in the Bureau of Immigration (BI)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur), terminated its inquiry relative to HR 292.</p> <p>The resolution states that a case was filed against Rep. Rosanna “Ria” Vergara (3rd District, Nueva Ecija) by a certain Philip Piccio in the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal (HRET) citing a certification made by former BI Commissioner Ronaldo Geron that the BI had no documents pertaining to the renunciation of Rep. Vergara’s foreign citizenship. The case was filed by Piccio after the disqualification cases against Rep. Vergara were already dismissed by the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) and the courts. Rep. Vergara renounced her foreign citizenship prior to the filing of her certificate of candidacy in October 2015.</p> <p>During the meeting, Rep. Vergara brought out the original copy of her certificate of dual citizenship which was authenticated by BI Legal Division Chief Arvin Cesar Santos right there and then.</p> <p>SAGIP Party-List Rep. Rodante Marcoleta chided the former BI Commissioner for disclosing personal information without the consent of Rep. Vergara in violation of the confidentiality clause in the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of RA 9225. The IRR provides that documents cannot be disclosed, given away, or taken away by the BI without the expressed consent of the person concerned.</p> <p>Geron admitted his mistake and deeply apologized to Rep. Vergara. He informed the Committee that he is currently facing charges from the Office of the Ombudsman regarding the matter.</p> <p>BI Deputy Commissioner Aimee Torrefranca-Neri said that the documents relating to the dual citizenship of Rep. Vergara are sufficient secondary evidence to counter the case filed against her by Piccio at the HRET.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn Garcia (3rd District, Cebu) and AKBAYAN Party-List Rep. Harry Roque Jr. claimed that this was not the first time that a document pertaining to the citizenship of a legislator facing a disqualification case due to questions on citizenship has “disappeared” from the Records Section of the Immigration Bureau. They suggested that this might be the work of a syndicate operating within the Bureau.</p> <p>BI Commissioner Jaime Morente promised to order an investigation into the matter and file a</p>

Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability				<p>case against erring personnel.</p> <p>Rep. Vergara proposed the amendment of Article 226 (Removal, Concealment or Destruction of Documents) of the Revised Penal Code by penalizing the very act of "removal, concealment or destruction of documents" regardless of whether the damage to the third party or to public interest was serious, not serious, or none at all.</p> <p>She also asked the Ombudsman and the BI Commissioner to file the appropriate criminal and administrative charges against BI officials and employees who may be involved in the illegal practices in the BI.</p>
Government Enterprises and Privatization	Substitute Bill to HBs 2318, 3147, 4329 & 4963	Reps. Papandayan, Alejano, Adiong, and Rodriguez (M.)	Creating the Lake Lanao Development Authority, prescribing its powers, functions and duties, and providing funds therefor	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Jesus Nonato Sacdalan (1 st District, North Cotabato), approved the substitute bill.
	HB 1659	Rep. Angara-Castillo	Creating the Benham Rise Development Authority (BRDA), defining its powers and functions, providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune the bill.</p> <p>The TWG will be co-chaired by Aurora Rep. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo, author of HB 1659, and Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" Mariño (5th District, Batangas).</p> <p>Executive Director Jose Luis Alano of the National Coast Watch Council Secretariat (NCWCS), expressing support to the bill, said the bill will strengthen the country's claim to the Benham Rise.</p> <p>NCWCS Director Michael Castillo presented a situationer of Benham Rise, now officially known as Philippine Rise, particularly its location, size, legal basis for the country's claim, and potential resources that could be developed. The Philippine Rise, a 130,000-square kilometer undersea region/underwater volcanic plateau, is located in the east portion of the Provinces of Aurora and Isabela.</p> <p>Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Assistant Secretary Lourdes Yparraguirre interposed no objection to the passage of the bill. She also disclosed that there is no other country laying claim to the area and, in fact, several countries have applied with the Philippine government for joint marine scientific research in Philippine Rise. Among these countries are the United States, Japan, China, France, Korea and Russia.</p>
Government Enterprises and Privatization jt. w/ Health	HB 4580	Rep. Acosta	Creating a body corporate to be known as the Western Philippines Medical Center in Palawan	<p>The Joint Committee, co-presided by Rep. Jesus Nonato Sacdalan (1st District, North Cotabato), Chair of the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, and Rep. Michelle Antonio (Party-List, AGBIAG), Vice Chair of the Committee on Health, approved HB 4580 subject to style.</p> <p>Department of Health (DOH) MIMAROPA</p>

Continuation... Government Enterprises and Privatization jt. w/ Health				<p>Regional Director Eduardo Janairo expressed support for the bill, stressing the need for a regional hospital in Palawan to meet the growing demand for health services given the rate of population growth and tourism arrivals in the area.</p> <p>The Secretariat was instructed to solicit written comments of stakeholders and take these into consideration in the preparation of a substitute bill. Thereafter, the bill will be referred to the Committee on Appropriations for its consideration of the funding provision.</p>
Government Enterprises and Privatization jt. w/ Housing and Urban Development	HBs 415 & 3591	Deputy Speaker Quimbo and Rep. Villarín	Creating the Social Housing Development and Finance Corporation (SHDFC)	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Jesus Nonato Saccalan (1st District, North Cotabato), Chair of the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, and Rep. Alfredo "Albee" Benitez (3rd District, Negros Occidental), Chair of the Committee on Housing and Urban Development, deferred its deliberations on the bills.</p> <p>Rep. Benitez said that the housing sector is still in the process of finalizing the roles that various housing agencies will play in the proposed Department of Housing.</p>
	HB 2904	Rep. Belmonte (J.C.)	Strengthening the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC) for mass housing endeavors, amending for the purpose PD 1267 and other laws affecting the NHMFC	
Justice	HBs 2746, 3464, 3608 & 4644	Reps. Alonte, Aragonés, Arcillas, and Malapitan	Creating court salas in the Cities of Biñan, San Pablo, Santa Rosa, all in the province of Laguna; and in the City of Caloocan	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Reynaldo Umali (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro), approved the Committee Reports on HBs 2746, 3464, 3608 and 4644.</p> <p>The bills will be referred to the Committee on Appropriations for its consideration of the bills' appropriations provisions.</p> <p>Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso (3rd District, Leyte), chairman of the Subcommittee on Judicial Reforms which deliberated on the measures, reported that on the recommendation of the Office of the Court Administrator of the Supreme Court, only one additional Municipal Trial Court in Cities (MTCC), instead of two, shall be established in the City of Sta. Rosa, Laguna, in reference to HB 3608.</p>
	Substitute Bill to HBs 162, 327, 435, 1305, 1697 & 3005	Reps. Belmonte (F.), Romualdo, Escudero, Bataoil, Rodríguez (M.), and Castelo	Creating the Commission on Immigration, defining its powers and functions, expanding, rationalizing and further professionalizing its organization, upgrading the compensation and benefits of its officials and employees, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved the substitute bill. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>The substitute bill will be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means for its consideration of the bill's tax provisions.</p>
	HBs 5658, 3266, 4656 & 5405	Speaker Alvarez, Deputy Speaker Villarica, Reps. Macapagal-Arroyo, and Tiangco	Granting Filipino citizenship to Phillip Leach, Mohamad Wassim Nanaa, Mayleen Ting, and Fr. Julian Mazana, respectively	The Committee approved HBs 5658, 3266, 4656 and 5405. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Reports.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 350, 547, 3275, 4748,	Deputy Speaker Quimbo, Reps. Escudero, Roque (H.),	Further strengthening the Office of the Solicitor General by providing for its powers and functions, and redefining, expanding, and rationalizing its	The Committee decided to recommit the substitute bill to the Subcommittee on Judicial Reforms to act on the recommendations made.

Continuation... Justice	5216 & 5233	Alejano, Chipeco, and Speaker Alvarez	organization, repealing for the purpose Republic Acts 9417 and 2327, and Executive Orders 1 and 2, s. 1986, and appropriating funds therefor	Deputy Speaker Fredenil "Fred" Castro (2 nd District, Capiz) manifested his reservation on Section 8 (Standards and Qualifications) of the bill giving power to the Solicitor General to determine the qualifications of the Associate Solicitors. Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas (1 st District, Ilocos Norte) suggested that this provision be further refined by the Subcommittee.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 2, 505, 935, 1609, 2009 & 3973	Deputy Speaker Castro, Reps. Yap (V.), Tiangco, Cagas, Acop, and Suansing (E.)	Expanding the scope of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare System and strengthening the social reintegration programs for children in conflict with the law, amending for the purpose Republic Act 9344, as amended, otherwise known as the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006	The Committee deferred approval of the substitute bill pending the recommendation of the Subcommittee on Correctional Reforms on the proposed amendment of Navotas City Rep. Tobias "Toby" Tiangco, author of HB 935. Stressing the best interest of the child, Rep. Tiangco suggested amending the substitute bill to reflect that a "child in conflict with the law" and who is nine years of age and below 12, must be automatically released to the custody of his/her parents or guardian, instead of admitting him/her to a youth care facility or <i>Bahay Pag-asa</i> .
Legislative Franchises	Substitute Bill to HB 3118	Rep. Madrona	Granting Streamtech Systems Technologies Inc. a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain telecommunications systems throughout the Philippines	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Franz "Chicoy" Alvarez (1 st District, Palawan), approved the Substitute Bill to HB 3118 and the corresponding Committee Report, subject to compliance with the requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).
	Substitute Bill to HB 4759	Rep. Trefñas	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 Substitute Bill to HB 4759 and the corresponding Committee Report subject to compliance with the requirements of the SEC.
	Substitute Bill to HB 5166	Rep. Albano	Granting Northeastern Broadcasting Services, Inc. a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain radio and television broadcasting stations in Isabela Province and Region II	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 5166 and the corresponding Committee Report subject to compliance with the requirements of the SEC.
	Substitute Bill to HB 5303	Rep. Tugna	Granting Magnum Air (Sky Jet) Inc. a franchise to establish, operate and maintain domestic and international air transport services	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 5303 and the corresponding Committee Report subject to compliance with the requirements of the SEC.
	HB 5504	Rep. Yap (A.)	Renewing the franchise granted to the Bohol Chronicle Radio Corporation to construct, maintain and operate radio broadcasting stations in the Philippines under RA 7634 to another 25 years from the date of approval of this Act	The Committee approved HB 5504 subject to style and form, as well as the submission of SEC report on the compliance of Bohol Chronicle Radio Corporation with SEC requirements. Rep. Micaela Violago (2 nd District, Nueva Ecija) suggested amending the title of the bill to reflect the grant of a new franchise to the Bohol Chronicle Radio Corporation. She explained that since the company's franchise already expired on July 24, 2017, the renewal of its old franchise is no longer applicable. Likewise, SAGIP Party-List Rep. Rodante

Continuation... Legislative Franchises	HB 5054	Rep. Revilla	Renewing the franchise granted to Century Communications Marketing Center, Inc. (CCMCI) under RA 8133 for another 25 years from the effectivity of this Act	<p>Marcoleta manifested that the title of the bill should also reflect that Bohol Chronicle's operation is limited to the Province of Bohol.</p> <p>The Committee decided to deliberate further on HB 5054 in its next meeting.</p> <p>AKO BICOL Party-List Rep. Alfredo Garbin Jr. sought an explanation from CCMCI on the alleged "renting out" of several of its provisional authorities (PAs) to private operators in the Bicol Region, particularly in the Cities of Naga and Legaspi. This, according to Rep. Garbin, is a clear violation of CCMCI's franchise.</p> <p>A provisional authority refers to the authority granted to a qualified applicant to operate and maintain a public telecommunications/broadcast/cable TV facility/service by the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) pending the grant of a final authority to be issued also by the NTC.</p> <p>CCMCI Legal Counsel Venus Torbela-Tio denied the allegation of Rep. Garbin and explained that the said radio broadcasts are actually under "block-time" agreements.</p> <p>NTC Deputy Commissioner Edgardo Cabarios said that a block-time agreement is where a radio or television network sells air time to individuals or entities allowing the latter control over the programming content. It is allowed by law, Cabarios added.</p>
Southern Tagalog Development	HRs 19 & 29	Reps. Zarate and Casilao	Investigation into the socio-economic impact of the Laguna Lake Expressway Dike Project (LLEDP) on the affected communities of fisherfolk, workers, urban poor and other sectors	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Isidro Rodriguez Jr. (2nd District, Rizal), will deliberate further on the issues raised in HRs 19 and 29 in its next meeting.</p> <p>The LLEDP involves the construction of a 47-kilometer flood control dike on top of which will be a six-lane expressway on an off-shore alignment, including interchanges, bridges, floodgates and pumps from Taguig City to Los Baños, Laguna, and the reclamation of 700 hectares along the Cities of Taguig and Muntinlupa.</p> <p>Relative to the issues raised in the resolutions, Engr. John Amiel Fernandez of the Public Private Partnership Project of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) explained that the government will provide relocation sites and alternative livelihood for affected communities. On the other hand, affected aquaculture businesses will be compensated. He added that the Department has also established a program for managing the possible impact of the project to the environment.</p> <p>Concurring with Fernandez, Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) Community</p>

<p>Continuation... Southern Tagalog Development</p>				<p>Development Division Chief Reena Buena added that the LLEDP may be reconfigured to address these issues and concerns.</p> <p>Engineer Lene Ramboyong of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), said that a new Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) law is needed to accurately determine the ecological costs and losses that the LLEDP and other similar projects might bring. He stressed that the current EIA system is ill-equipped and too dated to reflect these costs and losses.</p> <p>National Water Resources Board (NWRB) Deputy Executive Director Jorge Estioko underscored the need to put in place safeguards to address other problems that may arise during and after the construction of the project, such as water pollution, flooding, and reduced ecosystem variability.</p> <p>Environmental advocates, such as the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA), Kalikasan - People's Network for the Environment, Save Laguna Lake Movement, and Samahan ng Mangingisda ng Muntinlupa City conveyed their strong opposition to the implementation of the LLEDP.</p> <p>National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Economic Development Specialist Jane Desiree Andal informed the Committee that a request for "transaction advisory assistance" for the restructuring of the LLEDP was already submitted by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in view of the failure of bidding for the project.</p> <p>Reps. Joaquin Chipeco Jr. (2nd District, Laguna) and Arlene Arcillas (1st District, Laguna) suggested that instead of pursuing such project given its possible adverse effects, the DPWH and the LLDA should focus on finding a solution to address the current state of the Laguna Lake, aside from the condition of the families residing near the lake as well as their source of livelihood.</p> <p>BAYAN MUNA Party-List Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate concurred with the suggestions of Reps. Chipeco and Arcillas.</p>
<p>Tourism</p>	<p>HB 4253</p>	<p>Rep. Belaro</p>	<p>Giving road access to all tourism sites in the country and appropriating funds therefor</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Lucy Gomez (4th District, Leyte), approved the bill.</p> <p>Department of Tourism (DOT) Assistant Secretary Reynaldo Ching expressed his support for the bill, citing the benefits it would bring to tourism.</p> <p>The DOT and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) implement the</p>

Continuation... Tourism				Convergence Program for Enhancing Tourism Access which involves the construction of roads and other infrastructure to boost tourism in priority tourist destinations in the Philippines.
	HB 1828	Rep. Vargas	Preventing the harassment of tourists	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate HBs 1828 and 2963.
	HB 2963	Rep. Macapagal-Arroyo	Establishing an Intergovernmental Task Force for International Visitor Assistance	Ching expressed support for the two measures, which he said are in line with the mandate of the DOT to ensure the safety of local and foreign tourists in the country. Department of Justice (DOJ) State Counsel Maricel Pintucan also conveyed DOJ's support to the bill.
HB 3412	Rep. Ortega	Declaring the Municipality of San Juan, La Union as a tourist destination and the "Surfing Capital of the North"	The Committee approved the amendment to HB 3412 as proposed by the author herself, Rep. Vini Nola Ortega (Party-List, ABONO). The bill was already approved by the Committee in the previous meeting. The proposed amendment expands the scope of the bill to cover the entire Province of La Union, declaring it as the "Surfing Capital of the North," instead of limiting it to the Municipality of San Juan as originally stated in the bill.	

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
People's Participation (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to 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 technical working group (TWG), chaired by San Jose del Monte City Rep. Florida "Rida" Robes, agreed to submit the draft substitute bill with amendments to the mother Committee for its consideration and approval. Rep. Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba (1st District, Bukidnon), author of HB 146, asked that issues pertaining to the funding provision (Section 14) of the bill be promptly resolved. The resource persons were requested to submit their additional comments and recommendations to the TWG before the finalization of the bill.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 3023 & 3789	Reps. Roque (H.) and Zarate	Strengthening the right of the people to free expression, to peaceably assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances, repealing for the purpose BP 880, otherwise known as the Public Assembly Act of 1985	The TWG requested the Secretariat to finalize the draft substitute bill, incorporating the pertinent recommendations of the resource persons. Thereafter, the draft substitute bill will be submitted to the mother Committee for its consideration and approval. Rep. Robes recalled that based on the agreements reached during the TWG's previous meeting, a funding provision will be included in the bill to cover the establishment of freedom parks.

Continuation... People's Participation (Technical Working Group)				<p>Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Superintendent Ericson Velasquez informed the Committee that the PNP has already drafted its recommendations to the bill, one of which is the exclusion of religious places from among the allowable areas for public assemblies. He added that major thoroughfares, such as city, provincial and national highways, should likewise be disallowed. The PNP also recommended that organizers should be required to be present in the venue of public assemblies so that they can police their own ranks and prevent any unlawful acts that may be committed by the rally participants.</p> <p>The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) also sought the inclusion of a provision in the bill that would put the responsibility to clean up after the rallies to the organizers themselves.</p> <p>Commission on Human on Rights representative Atty. Eunice Manahan and Karapatan Legal Counsel Atty. Maria Sol Taule asserted that the PNP should afford full protection to people in public assemblies bearing in mind that they are merely exercising their freedom of expression and right to peaceably assemble. The police should also maintain peace and order at the venue and exercise maximum tolerance towards the rallyists, they added.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their additional comments and recommendations before the TWG finalizes the bill.</p>
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AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Mindanao Affairs	<p>Briefing by the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindanao Development Corridors 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Maximo Rodriguez Jr. (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City), listened to the briefing conducted by the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) on the Mindanao Development Corridors (MinDC), Mindanao power situation, and the proposed legislative priorities that would greatly benefit Mindanao.</p> <p>Secretary Datu Abul Khayr Alonto of MinDA asked the support of Congress to MinDA's effort to secure sufficient funding for the realization of projects in Mindanao and push for policy reforms aimed at accelerating growth in MinDC.</p> <p>MinDC is a spatial development strategy that aims to increase the competitiveness of Mindanao industries by providing them with common service facilities. Mindanao is subdivided into three development corridors: Northern Mindanao, South-Central Mindanao, and Western Mindanao, with five industrial clusters, namely, industrial trade, mariculture and trade, biodiversity and eco-tourism, food basket, and food, agri-business and logistics.</p> <p>Alonto also urged Congress to pass a law creating the Mindanao</p>

<p>Continuation... Mindanao Affairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mindanao Power Situation 	<p>River Basin Authority (MRBA), which is one of MinDC's critical projects, and a law providing for the implementation of a comprehensive and integrated program that will serve the needs of the Mindanaoans in terms of infrastructure, industry, and social services.</p> <p>MinDA Undersecretary Janet Lopez informed the Committee that MinDA has convened the Mindanao Power Monitoring Committee (MPMC) to monitor the power industry in Mindanao.</p> <p>The MPMC was created through Executive Order 81 issued in 2012 to spearhead and coordinate the efforts of the national, regional and local governments, and power industry stakeholders to improve the power situation in Mindanao.</p> <p>Under EO 81, MinDA heads the MPMC; while the Department of Energy (DOE), Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), National Electrification Administration (NEA), National Power Corporation (NPC), and the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM) sit as members of the MPMC.</p> <p>On MinDA's request for more funding for next year, Rep. Rodriguez suggested that Alonto discuss the matter with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). He also advised MinDA to request President Rodrigo Duterte to issue an executive order that would facilitate the implementation of development projects in Mindanao.</p> <p>Iligan City Rep. Frederick Siao agreed to Rep. Rodriguez' suggestion, adding that the President, having come from Mindanao, would be able to recognize the need to give priority to the Region.</p> <p>MinDA was requested to submit a record of the budget allocated in Mindanao for the past years as compared to that of Luzon and Visayas, as well as the full blown plan for the Mindanao Railway System (MRS).</p> <p>The Committee agreed that MinDA will spearhead a joint meeting of the Committee on Mindanao Affairs and the MPMC. It also agreed to meet with government agencies concerned with the rehabilitation of Marawi City and push for an increase in the budget for Mindanao.</p>
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