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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Energy (Technical Working Group)	HB 27	Rep. Umali	Amending Sections 3-A and 4 of PD 1865 to increase the penalties for prohibited acts such as adulteration of petroleum products which is inimical to public interest	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Carlos Roman Uybarreta (Party-List, 1-CARE), will deliberate further on HB 27 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Uybarreta asked the Department of Energy (DOE) on how it intends to address oil pilferage or “paih” in the local industry parlance.</p> <p>Director Rino Abad of the DOE’s Oil Industry Management Bureau said that PD 1865 does not have specific regulations on the transport of petroleum products. He said that the DOE places such responsibility to the oil companies, saying that pilferage usually happens when petroleum products are in transit.</p> <p>Representatives from various oil companies present in the meeting claimed that they impose strict regulations in the transport of fuel. However, they admitted that some unscrupulous oil tanker drivers would make detours from their original destinations and pilfer petroleum products they are transporting by siphoning off fuel to separate containers. These crooks then replace the stolen petroleum products with kerosene or even water to cover up their crime before delivering the products to gasoline stations, and that’s when adulteration happens, the oil companies stated.</p> <p>The TWG asked the oil companies to submit a copy of their contracts with their respective petroleum haulers.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Biosyn PowerGen, Inc. Chief Executive Officer Deo Reloj Jr. apprised the TWG of the basic refining process for gasoline and diesel. He said that straight-run diesel is blended with light cycle oil (LCO), a waste product in gasoline production, which is harmful to the environment and to the health and well-being of the people. Reloj encouraged the use of “zero sulfur diesel fuel,” explaining that the current Euro 4 vehicle emission standard being implemented in the country only reduces the fuel’s sulfur content.</p> <p>In 2015, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has issued a directive requiring the use of cleaner fuel and imposing stricter vehicle emission standards. This sets the Philippine national standards (PNS) to Euro 4 or the use of fuel with significantly low concentration of sulfur and benzene.</p> <p>Engr. Dave Garcia of the National Jeepney Federation for Environmental Sustainable Transport (NJFEST) sought for a review of the PNS for fuel and vehicle</p>

Continuation... Energy (Technical Working Group)				<p>emission, adding that the best way to a cleaner emission and less air pollution is to get rid of the LCO in diesel fuel.</p> <p>For his part, Michael Alunan of Atin 'To Development Services proposed the implementation of a "polluter pays principle" where the party responsible for causing pollution will have to pay for the damage done to the environment.</p>
Government Enterprises and Privatization jt. w/ National Defense and Security (Technical Working Group)	HBs 1137 & 5673	Reps. Alejano and Matugas	Amending pertinent laws on the retirement benefits and pension of the uniformed personnel of the uniformed services and providing funds therefor	<p>The joint technical working group (TWG), co-chaired by Baguio City Rep. Mark Go, for the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, and Rep. Gary Alejano (Party-List, MAGDALO), for the Committee on National Defense and Security, will deliberate further on the bills in its next meeting.</p>
	HB 4709	Rep. Antonino	Establishing a single retirement and separation benefit system for government employees, including members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP), amending for the purpose PD 1146, as amended, otherwise known as the Government Service Insurance Act of 1997	<p>The joint TWG focused its discussion on the issues and concerns with regard to the retirement benefit and pension system of uniformed personnel in government.</p> <p>Col. Luis Vincent Tacderas, head of the AFP Pension and Gratuity Management Center (AFPPGMC), presented the legal bases for the AFP's system of retirement and separation, the unpaid obligations to military retirees, the source of funds for payment of such liabilities, and other relevant statistics.</p> <p>Replying to the query of Rep. Alejano, Department of National Defense (DND) Internal Audit Service (IAS) Director Ronald Patrick Rubin said that according to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), the total liability of the government to those who already retired from the service has ballooned to P18-20 billion.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) expressed support for the bills.</p> <p>The AFP and the PNP were directed to submit to the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) data on their respective employees and retirees to help the GSIS update its records and validate the amount of the government's unpaid obligations to the pensioners.</p>

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Transportation	Briefing by the Department of Transportation (DOTr) on the Public Utility Vehicle (PUV) Modernization Program	<p>The Committee, chaired by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, listened to the presentation of the DOTr on the PUV Modernization Program.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Sarmiento averred that the PUV modernization is only part of the solution to reform the Philippine transport system. He said that it is the view of the Committee that before embarking on a PUV Modernization Program, the government should have first rationalized the routes in order to determine the actual demand in certain routes and decide on the type and number of PUVs that should be deployed.</p> <p>DOTr Assistant Secretary Mark de Leon discussed the government's PUV Modernization Program which aims to provide a safe, adequate, reliable, comfortable, and environment-friendly road-based public transportation system to Filipino commuters.</p>

<p>Continuation... Transportation</p>	<p>He said that in crafting the program, the DOTr considered the provisions of HB 6425, or the Traffic Crisis Act, principal of which is the route rationalization. (The bill was already reported out by the Committee and is up for plenary deliberations.)</p> <p>De Leon went on to say that the DOTr has engaged the services of experts from the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman to conduct a study on route rationalization for Metro Manila, which is expected to be completed by November of this year. As for the rest of the country, De Leon said the Department will consult with and seek the assistance of local government units (LGUs) in planning the rationalization of routes in their respective localities.</p> <p>The Program also includes the modernization of PUVs including jeepneys, which means that PUVs older than 15 years will be replaced. It will also require PUVs to comply with the Euro 4 emission standards already being observed worldwide. For affected PUV operators and drivers, the government will provide support mechanism such as access to loan facilities and training.</p> <p>As presented by De Leon, the Euro 4 emission standard limits the fuel's sulfur content to only 50 parts per million (ppm), which reduces the level of harmful pollutants from vehicle emissions.</p> <p>Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) Chair Martin Delgra III said that it is about time that the government starts modernizing the transport system which is probably the biggest non-infrastructure project of the government. He said that the LTFRB proposes that PUV franchise holders join together and form cooperatives or corporations for easier regulation.</p> <p>On the other hand, George San Mateo, president of PISTON, one of the transport groups that staged a two-day nationwide strike this month, refuted claims that his organization is against the modernization of PUVs. He explained that the strikes were staged to protest against the program's framework which according to him is not favorable to small jeepney operators.</p> <p>San Mateo likewise denounced DOTr's issuance of Department Order 2017-011, or the Omnibus Franchising Guidelines (OFG), which only favors big automotive corporations to the detriment of small transport operators who will be forced to purchase new vehicles from them at a high cost. Consequently, he asserted that the OFG and the planned phase-out of jeepneys be junked.</p> <p>LTFRB Board Member Aileen Lizada clarified that there is no memorandum circular or any issuance phasing out jeepneys as a mode of public transportation.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Rodel Batocabe (Party-List, AKO BICOL), De Leon admitted that the country still has no facility or equipment to test the compliance of PUVs with the Euro 4 emission standards. However, Land Transportation Office (LTO) Assistant Secretary Edgar Galvante was quick to say that the LTO intends to propose the procurement of the needed testing equipment and facility.</p> <p>The LTFRB was requested to submit a copy of the proposed design and dimensional standard for the new jeepney units.</p> <p>DOTr Secretary Arthur Tugade, officials from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and representatives from commuter groups and local car manufacturing companies capable of manufacturing the new jeepney units will be invited to attend the next Committee meeting.</p>
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