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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Natural Resources jt. w/ Legislative Franchises (Technical Working Group)	Draft Consolidated Bill on HBs 5674, 6259, 2165, 2915 & 3229	Rep. Cuaresma, Speaker Alvarez, Reps. Amante, Paduano, and Matugas	Amending RA 7924, otherwise known as the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, by promoting the development of mineral processing, banning the export of unprocessed mineral ores, prohibiting mining in watersheds, and requiring legislative franchise for mining operations	<p>The joint technical working group (TWG), co-presided by Rep. Francisco Jose "Bingo" Matugas II (1st District, Surigao del Norte), Vice Chair of the Committee on Natural Resources, and Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo, for the Committee on Legislative Franchises, will deliberate further on the draft consolidated bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Luisa Lloren Cuaresma, author of HB 5674, explained that her bill requires a legislative franchise for large scale mining to ensure better scrutiny of its operations and the protection of the environment.</p> <p>Professor Rey Cruz of the College of Forestry and Natural Resources, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), favors the proposal requiring mining companies to secure a legislative franchise as a means of screening applicants properly and ensuring that mining operation is feasible in the area.</p> <p>Cruz added that a full valuation of the cost and benefit of the mining project in an area be done, taking into consideration not only the financial gain that can be derived from the project but even its intangible costs and benefits.</p> <p>Asked to comment on the proposal to put up mineral processing plants in the country instead of exporting unprocessed mineral ores, especially the high-value minerals, the representatives of the Department of Finance (DOF) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) both explained that the proposal should be thoroughly studied as it entails huge investments and high production costs which the country may not be able to sustain.</p> <p>Board of Investment (BOI) Director for Resource-based Industries Service (RBIS) Nestor Arcansalin said that the BOI's position paper submitted to the body cited the need for a comprehensive feasibility study on putting up a processing plant and banning the export of minerals.</p> <p>Rep. Matugas said that a timeline for this study should be made, with the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) designated as the lead agency.</p>

Comments, suggestions and requests for copies may be sent to the Editorial Unit, Committee Administrative Support Service, 3rd Floor, Ramon V. Mitra, Jr. Bldg., Batasan Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City. Tel. Nos. 9326118; 9315001 local 7122.

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