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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Appropriations	Substitute Bill to HBs 162, 327, 435, 1305, 1697 & 3005	Reps. Belmonte (F.), Romualdo, Escudero, Bataoil, Rodriguez (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	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), approved with amendments the Substitute Bill to the six bills.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 530 & 5188	Reps. Batocabe and Alejano	Providing for rural employment assistance program and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved with amendments the Substitute Bill to HBs 530 and 5188.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 3353, 4408 & 5167	Rep. Uybarreta and Deputy Speaker Singson	Institutionalizing the electric cooperatives emergency and resiliency fund and providing funds therefor	The Committee approved with amendments the Substitute Bill to HBs 3353, 4408 and 5167.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 1123 & 5049	Reps. Alejano and Rodriguez (M.)	Regulating the practice of criminology profession in the Philippines, and appropriating funds therefor, repealing for the purpose RA 6506, or the law creating the Board of Examiners for Criminologists in the Philippines	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 1123 and 5049.
	HJR 18 in consolidation with HBs 1325, 1350, 1465 & 1701, HR 1459, and HJRs 14, 16, 17 & 19	Speaker Alvarez, Reps. Pimentel, Abayon, Biazon, Belaro, Alejano, Bertiz, Alonte, and Yap (A.)	Authorizing the increase in base pay of military and uniformed personnel in the government	<p>The Committee approved HJR 18, authored by Speaker Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez (1st District, Davao del Norte), in consolidation with the other nine measures. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Reps. Antonio Tinio and France Castro (Party-List, ACT TEACHERS) emphasized that an increase in the salary of all uniformed personnel should also result to an increase in the salary of all government employees.</p> <p>In response, Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Assistant Secretary Myrna Chua said that the government will be implementing its third tranche of the Salary Standardization Law by 2018 for all civilian employees.</p> <p>The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), and National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA) expressed support for the proposed law.</p>
Banks and Financial Intermediaries	Substitute Bill to HBs 4283, 731,	Reps. Evardone, Nograles	Amending RA 7653, also known as the New Central Bank Act, strengthening the Bangko Sentral ng	The Committee, chaired by Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone, approved the substitute bill.

Continuation... Banks and Financial Intermediaries	2436 & 3456	(K.A.), Collantes, and Oaminal	Pilipinas (BSP)	
Public Order and Safety	HB 4718	Rep. Yap (V.)	Placing the provincial, sub-provincial and district jails under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), amending Sections 61, 62 and 63 of RA 6975, otherwise known as the Department of the Interior and Local Government Act of 1990	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), will deliberate further on HB 4718 in another meeting.</p> <p>BJMP's Legal Service head Michael Angelo Caceres expressed support for the bill. HB 4718 transfers the supervision and control of provincial, sub-provincial and district jails from the local government units (LGUs) to the BJMP.</p> <p>Likewise, Policy Director Angelica Sanchez of the League of Provinces of the Philippines said that majority of the provinces support the bill, explaining that they no longer want to bear the financial burden of operating these detention facilities.</p> <p>Sanchez added that majority of the provinces, except for La Union and Ilocos Norte, are willing to let the BJMP use their existing facilities, on the condition that these should be returned once the BJMP decides not to use them anymore.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Acop suggested that BJMP should assess whether it has the capability and capacity to run all the jails throughout the country.</p> <p>The Committee asked Sanchez to submit pertinent data on the population of provincial, sub-provincial and district jails, and their jail personnel. The BJMP was asked to present in the Committee's next meeting the budgetary requirement of every provincial jail in the country and the current situation of jails nationwide.</p>
Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development	HBs 5618, 5701, 6227 & 6476	Rep. Yap (V.), Gatchalian, Villafuerte, and Yap (A.)	Adopting innovation as vital component of the country's development policies to drive inclusive development, promote the growth and national competitiveness of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair Rep. Dennis Laogan (Party-List, ANG KABUHAYAN), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the four bills.</p> <p>Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Assistant Secretary Rafaelita Aldaba informed the Committee that the DTI and Department of Science and Technology (DOST) agreed to work together to create an inclusive "innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem" in the country.</p> <p>National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Senior Economic Development Specialist Cesar Aben raised concern on the creation of a National Innovation Council (NIC), as proposed in the bills, saying that this runs counter to the current efforts of the government to right-size the bureaucracy. (The proposed NIC shall be tasked to develop the country's innovation goals, priorities, and long-term national strategy.)</p> <p>Representatives from the Bureau of Immigration (BI), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and Intellectual Property Office (IPO) manifested their support for the bills.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bills for the consideration of the TWG.</p>

IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Justice	Determination of probable cause in relation to the verified complaint for impeachment against Supreme Court Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno, filed by Atty. Lorenzo Gadon and endorsed by 25 House Members	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Reynaldo Umali (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro), will continue its hearing on the determination of probable cause with regard to the impeachment complaint against the Chief Justice in its next meeting.</p> <p>In today's hearing, the Committee agreed to limit its discussion on the following grounds of impeachment: culpable violation of the Constitution and corruption.</p> <p>Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II recalled the events surrounding the alleged delayed action of Sereno on his urgent request to transfer the cases against members of the radical Islamist group Maute from Cagayan de Oro City to anywhere in Luzon or Visayas. Aguirre narrated that he sent five letters to Sereno from May to July 2017 on the matter, including follow-up letters, stating that there existed clear and present danger on the part of judges and prosecutors handling the cases in courts as well as to the people of Cagayan de Oro City.</p> <p>However, Aguirre said, the resolution of the supposed urgent request was released only after 50 days or on July 20, 2017, which finally allowed the transfer of Maute group's cases to Taguig City courts.</p> <p>Gadon, for his part, cited instances that showed the manifest intention of the Chief Justice to delay the resolution of the urgent request which constitutes an impeachable offense.</p> <p>With regard to accusation of corruption against the Chief Justice, Gadon claimed that Sereno used public funds to finance her "extravagant, immoderate and lavish lifestyle" despite the government's austerity measures. Specifically, Gadon alleged that Sereno committed corruption based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of a P5 million-worth 2017 Toyota Land Cruiser as her personal vehicle in violation of Administrative Order 233 (Series of 2008) which prohibits the acquisition and use of luxury vehicles for government operations; • Stay in opulent hotels when attending conferences within the Philippines and abroad and flying on business or first class together with her staff and security; and • Unnecessarily bringing a huge entourage of lawyers in official foreign trips. <p>Several lawmakers asked Gadon to produce documents to substantiate his allegations of corruption against Sereno.</p> <p>Gadon, however, requested the Committee to use its subpoena powers as he has been denied access to certified copies of documents needed to support his claims.</p>

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Overseas Workers Affairs (Technical Working Group)	HB 4740	Rep. Gonzales (A.D.)	Providing for the protection of the remittances of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs)	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Committee Secretary Christopher Lomibao, will deliberate further on HB 4740 in its next meeting.</p> <p>HB 4740, authored by Rep. Aurelio "Dong" Gonzales (3rd District, Pampanga), seeks to limit</p>

<p>Continuation... Overseas Workers Affairs (Technical Working Group)</p>				<p>the amount of fees and charges on OFW remittances through the grant of discounts by financial intermediaries on the said remittance fees.</p> <p>Department of Finance (DOF) Chief Tax Specialist Miriam Tassara objects to the provision in the bill allowing establishments to claim the discounts on OFW remittance fees as tax deduction, arguing that this will unduly complicate the country's tax collection system contrary to the objective of the government to simplify the same.</p> <p>Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) OIC-Director John Rio Bautista suggested that the definition of "immediate family member" under Section 3 of the bill be limited to relatives up to the first degree of consanguinity rather than up to the fourth degree.</p> <p>The TWG likewise recommended the deletion of Section 5 entitled "Access to Credit, Loans and Accommodations" because of the ambiguity of the said provision.</p> <p>The Association of Bank Remittance Officers, Inc. (ABROI) was requested to submit a simplified discount mechanism involving OFW remittances.</p> <p>The TWG agreed to study the comments and recommendations of the resource persons and discuss the same with Rep. Gonzales.</p>
<p>Revision of Laws (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 388, 878, 972, 1520, 3398, 3478, 3498, 4112, 4206, 5201, 5604, 6175 & 6576</p>	<p>Reps. Ocampo, Lopez (B.), Fortun, Macapagal-Arroyo, Brosas, Escudero, Vargas, Lazatin, Barbers, Castelo, and Deputy Speaker Villarica</p>	<p>Amending RA 8972, otherwise known as the Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000, providing for additional benefits and privileges to solo parents and their children, appropriating funds therefor, and providing penal sanctions for violations thereof</p>	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Lawrence "Law" Fortun (1st District, Agusan del Norte), will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Resource Monitoring and Evaluation Division Chief John William Lucero expressed support for the proposed law. He, however, suggested that small and medium-enterprises (SMEs) should be exempted from giving discounts to solo parents, as proposed in the bill, as they may not be financially capable to do so.</p> <p>The TWG agreed to retain the provision on the grant of tax incentives to corporations or business establishments that give a discount to solo parents in accordance with the proposed law.</p> <p>Department of Finance (DOF) Chief Tax Specialist Miriam Tassara expressed reservation on the tax provision of the bill. She also suggested that the target beneficiaries be extended direct assistance instead of giving them discounts, the funds for which may be included in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA).</p> <p>Representatives from the DOF, DTI and Mercury Drug Corporation were asked to submit their respective position papers on the substitute bill.</p>

AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Banks and Financial Intermediaries	Briefing by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) on its regulatory approach on virtual currencies	<p>The Committee, chaired by Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone, listened to the briefing of BSP Deputy Director Melchor Plabasan on BSP's regulatory approach on virtual currencies such as Bitcoins.</p> <p>According to Plabasan, virtual currency (VC) refers to "any type of digital unit that is used as a medium of exchange or a form of digitally stored value created by agreement within the community of VC users."</p> <p>Plabasan said that the BSP sees the huge potential of VCs in transforming the delivery of financial services, specifically in the area of payments and remittance. He added that VCs can move funds across the globe at a much faster, cheaper and convenient way compared to traditional models. Likewise, VCs can be beneficial for the unbanked people, given their cost efficiency and wider reach, which is consistent with BSP's advocacy on financial inclusion. Plabasan reported that the average VC transaction in the Philippines has reached \$2.09 million, \$6.98 million and \$8.80 million in 2015, 2016, and 2017, respectively.</p> <p>However, Plabasan said there are legitimate areas of concern which are being looked into by the BSP and other financial regulators globally in relation to the use of VCs. He said that VCs may be used for money laundering and terrorist financing activities and they may pose risks to consumers and financial stability.</p> <p>Plabasan said that the Monetary Board has approved BSP Circular No. 944 series of 2017 which provides the guidelines for VC exchanges in the Philippines offering services or engaging in activities that provide facility for the conversion or exchange of fiat currency to virtual currency or vice versa. Companies engaging in VC exchanges are required to submit periodic reports to BSP including audited financial statements, report on volume and value of virtual currencies transacted, and list of operating offices and websites.</p> <p>Rep. Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-PACMAN) stressed the need to strike a balance between deriving benefits from using VCs and protecting the local end-users' welfare. Plabasan assured the Committee that the BSP is closely monitoring the VC sector to prevent possible illegal or fraudulent activities.</p> <p>Rep. Jorge Almonte (1st District, Misamis Occidental) asked if VC companies are capable of identifying suspicious transactions that may violate the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA).</p> <p>Miguel Cuneta, founder of Rebitance Inc., a VC company, answered in the affirmative, adding that his company is aware and cautious of the fact that VC transactions may be abused by money launderers and terrorist financiers.</p> <p>The Committee decided to continue its discussions on VC matters in another meeting for the purpose of determining the appropriate legislative measure that may be crafted to enhance the services provided by VC companies and at the same time ensure the protection of consumers.</p>
Special Committee on Sustainable Development Goals	<p>Briefing by the following government agencies on their plans and programs for the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Economic and Development 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Elisa "Olga" Kho (2nd District, Masbate), listened to the briefing conducted by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Department of Education (DepEd), and National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) on their plans and programs for the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030.</p> <p>NEDA Undersecretary Rosemarie Edillon said that the 2017-2022</p>

<p>Continuation... Special Committee on Sustainable Development Goals</p>	<p>Authority (NEDA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Education (DepED) • National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) 	<p>Philippine Development Plan (PDP) and the Regional Development Plans (RDPs) are aligned with the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.</p> <p>Edillon also highlighted the collective long-term vision and aspirations of the Filipino people for themselves and for the country in the next 25 years dubbed as "AmBisyon Natin 2040." This vision aims for a strongly rooted (<i>matatag</i>), comfortable (<i>maginhawa</i>) and secure (<i>panatag</i>) life for all Filipinos.</p> <p>To achieve this vision, Edillon said the government needs to implement strategic trade and fiscal policies, maintain micro-economic stability, and promote competition. It also requires the tripling of per capita income over the next 25 years complemented by innovations in human capital development, science and technology, infrastructure development, and research and development, he added.</p> <p>DepEd Undersecretary Nepomuceno Malaluan briefed the Committee on DepEd's policies and programs to achieve SDG 4, which is to "ensure inclusive education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030." Some of these policies and programs are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to quality education especially for the poor and the vulnerable; • Eliminate gender disparities in education; • Ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults achieve literacy and numeracy; • Build and upgrade education facilities and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all; and • Substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers. <p>Undersecretary Roseller Barinaga explained NAPC's role in the achievement of SDG 1, which is to "end poverty in all its forms everywhere" and SDG 2, which is to "end hunger, achieve food security, and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture."</p> <p>Barinaga highlighted NAPC's flagship campaign dubbed as "Kilos para sa Sampung Batayang Pangangailangan or Kilos SAMBAYANAN" which is a call for convergence among the various sectors of society to build a mass movement against poverty. The 10 basic needs according to Barinaga are: food and land reform, water, shelter, work, health, education, social protection, healthy environment, peace, and participation.</p> <p>NAPC's programs to attain SDG 2 are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Community Food Production (ICFP), which aims to make food readily available to poor families even in times of disasters and calamities, and provide them with the opportunity to increase their income through engaging in social or community enterprises; and • ASEAN Regional Study on Food Security and Price Spikes, which aims to strengthen social protection to safeguard poor people/farmers from the risk of price spikes, analyze the linkages and disconnect the issues of hunger and food security, and identify and communicate approaches in ASEAN to address gaps of inadequacies in current policies and strategies.
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