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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Appropriations	Substitute Bill to HBs 13, 1280, 2345, 3050 & 4676	Reps. Belmonte (F.), Belmonte (J.C.), Dalipe, Tambunting, and Nieto	Providing for the special protection of children in situations of armed conflict and providing penalties for violations thereof	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), approved the substitute bill.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 234 & 667	Reps. Marcoleta and Yap (V.)	Institutionalizing the Barangay Integrated Development Approach for Nutrition Improvement (BIDANI) of the rural poor as a linkage program for all state universities and colleges (SUCs) and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 234 and 667 with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HB 894	Rep. Tan (A.)	Prohibiting unchaperoned children from roaming, loitering or sleeping outside their abode during unsafe hours, prescribing penalties for their parents or guardians and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the substitute bill with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 2178 & 4015	Reps. Santos-Recto and Romero	Establishing the National Mariculture Program and providing funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 2178 and 4015 with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HB 2957	Rep. Macapagal-Arroyo	Providing for the establishment of a Timbangan ng Bayan Center in all markets nationwide, amending for the purpose Chapter II of RA 7394, otherwise known as the Consumer Act of the Philippines	The Committee approved the substitute bill with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 3165 & 4565	Reps. Pimentel and Salo	Providing for the legal framework and mechanisms for the creation, operation, and administration of transnational higher education in the Philippines, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 3165 and 4565 with amendments.
Ecology	HBs 1004, 1690, 1713, 4452, 6018 & 6376	Reps. Campos, Rodriguez (M.), Biazon, Yap (A.), Revilla, and Castelo	Providing incentives for the manufacture, assembly, conversion, importation, distribution, sale and mainstream use of electric, hybrid and other alternative fuel vehicles	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the six bills.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Muntinlupa City Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon.</p> <p>Director Elsa Agustin of the Department of Finance's (DOF) Fiscal Policy and Planning Office informed the Committee that electric cars are exempted from the payment of excise tax under the Tax Reform for Acceleration and</p>

Continuation... Ecology				<p>Inclusion (TRAIN) Act, but are still subject to the value-added tax (VAT) imposition.</p> <p>Department of Transportation's (DOTr) Road Transport Planning Division Chief Amel Manresa expressed his support for the bills which are aligned with the policy of the Department to give priority to electric and hybrid vehicles in the issuance of franchises.</p> <p>On the other hand, Professor Carl Odulio from the College of Engineering of the University of the Philippines (UP) suggested that the bill must clearly define certain terms including the definition of "electric vehicles," and the kind of incentives to be given to the makers and suppliers of electric and hybrid vehicles.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bills for consideration by the Committee.</p>
	HB 5915	Rep. Antonio	Mandating the local government units (LGUs) to institutionalize rewards for compliance with Section 32 of RA 9003, otherwise known as the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 5915 in its next meeting.</p> <p>HB 5915, authored by Rep. Michelle Antonio (Party-List, AGBIAG), seeks to grant incentives and awards to all barangays with materials recovery facilities (MRFs) and active Barangay Waste Management Boards or Committees. The aim is to encourage barangays to comply with the law to ensure the protection of people's health and the environment.</p> <p>Rep. Biazon inquired on the number of compliant and non-compliant barangays and the reason for non-compliance.</p> <p>According to Undersecretary Noel Felongco of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), only 30% of the total barangays in the country have their own MRFs. The 70% that have not complied with the law either lack funds and space to put up MRFs or simply do not have the initiative to comply with the law.</p> <p>The DENR Undersecretary also disclosed that the P20 million budget allotted to the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) for its initial operating expenses has never been released by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). The NSWMC is only able to operate because of the support of the DENR-Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) in terms of funds and other logistics.</p> <p>Raul Dealino, a member of the Commission representing the private sector, informed the Committee that a 10-year integrated waste management plan for local government units (LGUs) is now undergoing review by the Commission.</p>

Continuation... Ecology				The Committee will invite the DBM, Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Office of the Ombudsman (OMB), among others, to attend its next meeting.
Government Reorganization jt. w/ Transportation	HBs 5092 & 6275	Reps. Macapagal-Arroyo and Fuentebella	Transforming the Office for Transportation Security into the National Transportation Security Regulatory Commission	<p>The Joint Committee, co-presided by Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo, Chair of the Committee on Government Reorganization, and Rep. Edgar Sarmiento (1st District, Samar), Vice Chair of the Committee on Transportation, will deliberate further on the bills.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to draft a Substitute Bill to HBs 5092 and 6275, incorporating therein the recommendations of the resource persons.</p> <p>Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (2nd District, Pampanga), author of HB 5092, said that her bill seeks to strengthen the oversight power of the Office for Transportation Security (OTS) to address the problem of terrorism, economic sabotage, and all forms of unlawful interference using the country's transportation systems.</p> <p>The OTS, an agency attached to the Department of Transportation (DOTr), was created by virtue of Executive Order (EO) 277 in 2004. The EO was later amended by EO 311 which designated the OTS as the single authority responsible for the security of all transportation modes in the country.</p> <p>Representatives from the DOTr, Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC), and Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) expressed their support for the bills but presented their respective recommendations to firm up certain provisions of the proposed measures.</p> <p>On the other hand, representatives from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP), Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), and Philippine National Police (PNP) expressed their reservations on certain provisions of the bills and promised to submit their official position paper on the matter.</p>
Ways and Means	HR 1324	Rep. Lacson	Inquiry into the alleged violations of Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI) of the terms of its registration under the Motor Vehicle Development Program (MVDP) with the end in view of reviewing the effectiveness of this policy in reviving the automotive industry of the country	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 1324 in its next meeting.</p> <p>In his resolution, Rep. Virgilio Lacson (Party-List, Manila Teachers) disclosed that the Board of Investments (BOI) recently found that Hyundai violated its MVDP registration when it misdeclared the importation of some of its</p>

Continuation...
Ways and
Means

vehicles as completely knocked down (CKD) when they were completely built-up units (CBUs).

The resolution further states that under the MVDP, car manufacturers pay only 1% tariff on imported CKD kits instead of the regular 30% tariff.

Rep. Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-PACMAN) asked the BOI how it computed the penalty of P1 billion against HARI for the said violation. BOI Executive Director for Industry Development Services (IDS) Ma. Corazon Halili-Dichosa explained that the assessment of penalty was based on the taxes and duties that were waived because of the privileges and benefits under the MVDP.

When asked if the Bureau of Customs (BOC) came up with the same computation as the BOI's, Customs Deputy Commissioner Edward James Dy Buco said that to begin with, the BOC does not have any issue with HARI regarding misdeclared vehicle importations.

However, Buco, along with BOC's Port of Batangas District Collector Reynaldo Galleno, mentioned that there was an instance when two of HARI's shipments were directed to the red lane which required physical inspection and x-ray examination. But it turned out that the shipments contained knocked-down (KD) kits and not CBUs, the two added.

BOI Governor Henry Co maintained that the imported vehicles by HARI were CBUs and should not benefit from the MVDP. Co explained that imported vehicles in KD condition are supposed to be assembled locally, involving such assembly processes as welding of parts and painting.

The Committee required Galleno to submit the Port of Batangas' inspection report on the examination of the importation of HARI which was flagged to the red lane, including x-ray images and pictures taken; and its inspection report on the importation made by Mitsubishi Motors Philippines, Inc. which was also flagged to the red lane.

The Committee likewise asked the BOI to clearly define the terms knocked-down, completely knocked-down and completely built-up units to properly guide the BOC, other government agencies, and all participants to the MVDP; and to draft the guidelines of Executive Order 877-A, series of 2010, or the Comprehensive MVDP.

A briefing on the Comprehensive Automotive Resurgence Strategy (CARS) program of the government, which aims to revitalize and

Continuation... Ways and Means				develop the local automotive industry as a regional automotive manufacturing hub, will be conducted in the Committee's next meeting.
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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 G. 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 focused its discussion on the accusation of corruption against Sereno and the circumstances surrounding the hiring of Atty. Jocelyn Fabian and Helen Perez-Macasaet at the Supreme Court (SC).</p> <p>In his verified complaint, 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>SC's Procurement Head and Assistant Chief for Administrative Services Atty. Ma. Carina Cunanan testified that in preparing the SC's annual procurement plan, the different offices in the SC submit to the procurement committee their respective requirements for the incoming year. Cunanan likewise said that the request for the specific car brand and model, a Toyota Land Cruiser, for Sereno emanated from the Chief Justice's office.</p> <p>However, Cunanan disclosed that it was not the first time that a luxury vehicle was procured for a chief justice, explaining that in 1999, the SC purchased a P1.5 million worth Toyota Crown for former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa.</p> <p>Rep. Eugene Michael de Vera (Party-List, ABS) pointed out that specifying the brand of a bid subject is not allowed under Section 18 of Republic Act 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Act.</p> <p>On Sereno's alleged stay in opulent hotels, Atty. Corazon Ferrer-Flores, chief of the SC's Fiscal Management and Budget Office, and Atty. Thelma Bahia, chairperson of the SC's Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), testified that the SC spent about P1.9 million for the three-day meeting of judiciary leaders from the member-states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which was held at the Boracay Shangri-La in 2015, without undergoing the required public bidding.</p> <p>They, however, denied any personal knowledge relative to the allegation that Sereno, apart from the 29 deluxe rooms rented by the SC, booked a lavish P280,000 per night presidential villa during the same occasion.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Fabian, who is the chairperson of the two technical working groups (TWGs) blamed for causing inordinate delay in the</p>

<p>Continuation... Justice</p>		<p>release of survivorship benefits for spouses of deceased judges and justices, was questioned by several lawmakers on her credentials and intention in joining the SC.</p> <p>A certified public accountant (CPA) since 1985, Fabian testified that she passed the Philippine Bar Examinations in 2011 and two years thereafter, was hired by the SC as staff at the Office of the Chief Justice.</p> <p>Fabian, who was then the head of operations in a real estate company with a monthly income of P60,000 a month, claimed that she did not know Sereno personally prior to her employment in the SC, although they belonged to the same Christian faith.</p> <p>When asked by Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn Garcia (3rd District, Cebu) on why Fabian decided to apply in the SC and leave a lucrative position in the real estate business, Fabian replied that she wanted to contribute to nation-building and she does not care much about money, saying that she used to be a missionary with only a minimal compensation.</p> <p>On the employment of Macasaet as IT consultant of the SC, Cunanan admitted that the Office of the Chief Justice decided that the hiring of Macasaet would be through the alternative method of procurement allowed by RA 9184 because her services are "highly technical" in nature, therefore exempted from public bidding under the law's 2009 Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).</p> <p>Rep. Umali said that the foregoing allegations against the highest magistrate may constitute impeachable offenses for violating Section 1, Article XI of the Constitution (Accountability of Public Officers).</p> <p>The Committee requested the submission of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 201 file of Fabian, including her Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN); • Documents on the realignment of funds in the SC, especially those pertaining to the questionable purchase of Sereno's Toyota Land Cruiser; and • Records of transactions pertaining to the Boracay meeting and Sereno's foreign travels.
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SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
<p>Joint Subcommittee of the Committee on Local Government, Committee on Muslim Affairs, and Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity</p>	<p>HBs 92, 6121, 6263 & 6475</p>	<p>Deputy Speaker Sema, Reps. Macapagal-Arroyo and Dimaporo (M.K.), and Speaker Alvarez</p>	<p>Providing for the Basic Law for the Bangsamoro and abolishing the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), repealing for the purpose RA 9054, or the law strengthening and expanding the Organic Act for the ARMM, and RA 6734 or the law providing for an Organic Act for the ARMM</p>	<p>The Joint Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Wilter "Sharky" Wee Palma II (1st District, Zamboanga Sibugay), will deliberate further on the four bills in its next meeting.</p> <p>The Joint Subcommittee reviewed the provisions of the proposed Basic Law for the Bangsamoro, covering Articles V (Powers of Government), VI (Intergovernmental Relations), VII (The Bangsamoro Government), VIII (Wali), IX (Basic Rights), and X (Bangsamoro Justice System).</p> <p>Various provisions have been adopted or approved by the Joint Subcommittee, but those which cannot be resolved at its level will</p>

<p>Continuation... Joint Subcommittee of the Committee on Local Government, Committee on Muslim Affairs, and Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity</p>				<p>be elevated to the mother Committee for further deliberation and decision.</p> <p>As such, the Joint Subcommittee will elevate to the mother Committee the discussion on the proposed asymmetric relationship between the National Government and the Bangsamoro Regional Government.</p> <p>Asymmetric relationship, as defined in HB 6121, is the relationship between the National Government and the Bangsamoro Regional Government, as provided under Section 15, Article X of the 1987 Constitution, where the autonomous regions are granted more powers and with less intervention from the National Government as compared to other territorial and political subdivisions.</p> <p>Other provisions that will be discussed at the mother Committee level include those related to some of the exclusive powers of the Bangsamoro government, basic rights, education system, <i>Wali</i> (titular head of the Bangsamoro), and the justice system.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte) asked the Subcommittee to get the position of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of National Defense (DND) on the proposed exclusive power of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region “to create, divide, merge, abolish, or substantially alter boundaries of provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays” within its jurisdiction.</p>
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AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
<p>East ASEAN Growth Area (Special Committee)</p>	<p>Briefing on the ASEAN Integration in Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) by the following agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Davao del Sur Rep. Mercedes “Didi” Cagas, listened to the briefing of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) on the ASEAN Integration in relation to the BIMP-EAGA.</p> <p>DFA’s Office of ASEAN Affairs Executive Director Zaldy Patron discussed the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 and its relevance to the BIMP-EAGA’s pillars on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport, trade and investment, information and communications, and power and energy infrastructure; • Food basket through the agribusiness development of sub-regional supply value chains in priority commodities; • Tourism; • Environment; and • Socio-cultural and education. <p>Patron further reported that from 2017–2025, priority infrastructure projects (PIPs) in the BIMP-EAGA region will amount to \$21.367 billion. These projects include roads, railways and bridges, inland transport services, airports and seaports, power and energy infrastructure, ICT, trade facilitation, and urban development.</p>

<p>Continuation... East ASEAN Growth Area (Special Committee)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) <p>-</p>	<p>DTI Assistant Secretary Rafaelita Aldaba said that the Philippines is Asia's emerging economic tiger with an impressive gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 6.3% from 2010 to 2016. Geographically, contribution to GDP is highly concentrated in a few regions with the National Capital Region (NCR), CALABARZON, and Central Luzon accounting for 63%. Meanwhile, poverty-stricken regions in Mindanao have the lowest contribution to GDP.</p> <p>Aldaba said that the DTI, in gearing up for "Industry 4.0" or the Fourth Industrial Revolution, is working towards bringing together partners in sustaining the revival of the Philippine manufacturing sector and stakeholders in the development of local industries. Industry 4.0 refers to the current trend of improved automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies.</p> <p>Rep. Isagani Amatong (3rd District, Zamboanga del Norte) expressed reservation on the revival of the local manufacturing industry, saying that high power rates may prevent the growth of this energy-intensive industry.</p> <p>Rep. Orestes Salon (Party-List, AGRI) said that it would have been better appreciated by the Committee if the DTI presented a detailed report on the economic activities in Mindanao instead of those at the national level.</p> <p>Rep. Cagas invited the DTI and DFA to visit the districts of the Committee Members to identify possible projects that will promote the objectives of BIMP-EAGA.</p>
<p>Special Committee on Globalization and WTO jt. w/ Trade and Industry, Agriculture and Food, and Special Committee on Food Security</p>	<p>Briefing on the outcome of the World Trade Organization (WTO) 11th Ministerial Conference held on December 10-13, 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina</p>	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Scott Davies Lanete, M.D. (3rd District, Masbate), Chair of the Special Committee on Globalization and WTO, Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo, Vice Chair of the Committee on Trade and Industry, and Rep. Cecilia Leonila Chavez (Party-List, BUTIL) for the Committee on Agriculture and Food, listened to the briefing conducted by government agencies which attended the WTO's 11th Ministerial Conference (MC11) held in Buenos Aires.</p> <p>Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Undersecretary Ceferino Rodolfo said that the Ministerial Conference, which meets every two years, is the top decision making body of the WTO composed of 164 member-states. He presented the highlights of the conference and the decisions made during the MC11.</p> <p>Rodolfo mentioned that the MC11 affirmed the agreements made during the MC10 held last 2015 in Nairobi on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM), which allows developing countries to temporarily increase tariffs on agricultural products in cases of import surges or price declines; and • The commitment to eliminate all forms of agricultural export subsidies. <p>He also said that MC11 agreed to continue to engage constructively in fisheries subsidies negotiations with the end in view of adopting an agreement on the 12th Ministerial Conference in 2019, ultimately addressing issues such as overcapacity and overfishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.</p> <p>Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) Assistant Director for Technical Services Drusila Esther Bayate confirmed the discussion on fisheries subsidies.</p> <p>Reps. Jesulito Manalo (Party-List, ANGKLA) and Manuel Zubiri (3rd District, Bukidnon) expressed the need to study extensively the WTO</p>

<p><i>Continuation...</i> Special Committee on Globalization and WTO jt. w/ Trade and Industry, Agriculture and Food, and Special Committee on Food Security</p>		<p>trade agreements and practices and identify the areas which could be used for the advantage of the country and make it more competitive in the world market.</p> <p>Similarly, Raul Montemayor, chair of the Committee on International Trade (CIT), Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF), recommended that the Philippine government find potential trade remedies with regard to WTO rules and regulations in order to take advantage of market opportunities abroad.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit to the Committee their respective proposals on improving trade policies for discussion in future meetings.</p>
<p>Health</p>	<p>Briefing on the priorities and policy directions of the Department of Health (DOH)</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4th District, Quezon) listened to the briefing of the DOH on the Agency's priorities and policy directions.</p> <p>In her opening statement, Rep. Tan congratulated the return of DOH Secretary Francisco Duque III to the Department and expressed her enthusiasm in working with him now and in the future. Duque was the DOH Secretary during the time of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.</p> <p>DOH Undersecretary Lilibeth David presented the Agency's strategic thrusts which they dubbed "Formula 1+." According to David, the DOH primarily envisions the Filipinos to be among the healthiest people in Southeast Asia by 2022 and in Asia by 2024, and aims to lead the country in the development of a people-centered, resilient, and equitable health system. This will be achieved through engagement and collaboration with all levels of society and will be focused on four strategic pillars, namely: financing; service delivery; regulation; and governance.</p> <p>David also presented the DOH's Health Executive Agenda for Legislation (HEAL) which includes the enabling of a national purchaser for individual health services and the updating of the Hospital Licensure Act (RA 4226). David added that the DOH will continue to support all measures which aim to improve the healthcare and general health of Filipinos.</p> <p>Several Committee Members inquired about the status of the DOH Nurse Deployment Program (NDP) and the reason behind the drastic reduction of nurses in their respective districts.</p> <p>Duque explained that the reduction was partly due to the increase in nurse's salary brought about by the Salary Standardization Law (SSL), and the deployment of nurses to other calamitous areas in need of immediate medical service.</p> <p>However, Dr. Kenneth Ronquillo, director of DOH's Health Policy Development and Planning Bureau (HPDPB), explained that the number of nurses in hospitals under the DOH was increased by 187% to address the displacement of nurses under the NDP. This equates to an added 9,000 positions as compared to the 1,300 positions that were removed from the NDP.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Cecilia Leonila Chavez (Party-List, BUTIL) asked the DOH on measures it has undertaken to address the dearth of radiologists and medical technologists in the country.</p> <p>Duque replied that he plans to improve the coordination between the DOH and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) so that both are better informed of the issue and come up with the appropriate course of action.</p>

Continuation... Health		<p>Several lawmakers also complained about reports from their constituents regarding the DOH's Medical Assistance Program (MAP). According to them, there have been instances wherein specialty hospitals refused to accommodate their constituents seeking treatment allegedly due to lack of funds or medical supplies.</p> <p>Duque said this issue has already been resolved, but he requested that referrals of patients to specialty hospitals be avoided unless necessary due to the more expensive treatment cost and in order to protect patients in these hospitals who are mostly immunocompromised.</p> <p>The DOH was requested to furnish the Committee copies of the MAP guidelines and to report to the Committee, on a yearly basis, its annual plans and programs, including those that will be implemented in the Members' respective districts.</p>
North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)	Discussion with the Department of Health (DOH) on health-related issues and concerns in North Luzon	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (1st District, Ilocos Sur), was supposed to hear the presentation of the Department of Health (DOH) on its plans and programs in North Luzon but decided against it and went straight to the discussion of issues and concerns raised by the Committee Members.</p> <p>Ifugao Rep. Teddy Brawner Baguilat Jr. asked about the subsequent actions taken by the DOH after the lifting of the temporary restraining order (TRO) issued by the Supreme Court (SC) against two specific contraceptives covered by the Reproductive Health Law. Rep. Baguilat mentioned that this law, enacted in 2012, can now be fully implemented when the TRO was lifted following the issuance of an advisory by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) declaring 51 contraceptive products as non-abortifacient, including two implants which were the subject of the TRO.</p> <p>DOH Undersecretary Herminigildo Valle said that the DOH has already distributed about 80,000 contraceptive products nationwide, in coordination with civil society organizations (CSOs).</p> <p>Likewise, Assistant Regional Director Amelita Pangilinan of the DOH-Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) said that upon learning that the TRO has been lifted, her office immediately allocated funds and partnered with CSOs for the distribution of contraceptive products in CAR. She added that DOH-CAR also coordinated closely with concerned local government units (LGUs) to fast-track the distribution.</p> <p>On the problem of teenage pregnancy, Pangilinan said that the DOH-CAR has been conducting information campaign among the youth, in partnership with the LGUs.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil (2nd District, Pangasinan) asked the DOH if there are additional slots for nurses under its Nurses Deployment Program (NDP).</p> <p>Valle explained that the number of NDP nurses may decrease due to budget constraints especially with the implementation of the third tranche of the Salary Standardization Law (SSL). Nevertheless, DOH intends to hire additional nurses as manpower for DOH-run provincial hospitals.</p>
Transportation	<p>Discussion on the following issues and concerns surrounding the country's maritime industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of maritime passengers 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, discussed with concerned government agencies and private organizations issues and concerns surrounding the country's maritime industry.</p> <p>Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) General Manager Daniel Santiago</p>

<p>Continuation... Transportation</p>	<p>during inclement weather</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of charges and fees by international shipping lines 	<p>discussed the recurring problems in Philippine ports whenever there is cancellation of trips due to inclement weather.</p> <p>Santiago lamented that despite the dissemination of information on the cancellation of trips due to inclement weather, passengers still proceed to port terminals hoping that their trips will push through, resulting in the congestion at the ports.</p> <p>Mark Matthew Parco of 2GO Travel talked about the cancelled trips last December 2017 due to weather disturbance. He added that the company suffered a huge loss as a result of the cancellation. (2GO is a Philippine-based company engaged in transporting people and cargo using fleet of inter-island ferries and cargo ships.)</p> <p>Port Users Confederation (PUC) Chair Oscar Sevilla emphasized that the Coast Guard should always be on top of the situation every time an inclement weather hits the country.</p> <p>Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Deputy Chief Donette Dolina said that the PCG only relies on the weather bulletins of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) in determining whether a vessel can sail or not.</p> <p>Rep. Carlo Lopez (2nd District, Manila) said that the Department of Transportation (DOTr) should be the lead agency in ensuring the safety of the maritime passengers and should coordinate all efforts of government agencies involved in this responsibility.</p> <p>For his part, Malabon City Rep. Federico "Ricky" Sandoval II suggested that the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) should assign some of its personnel to different ports in order to provide immediate relief and assistance to stranded passengers because of weather disturbance.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG), to be chaired by Rep. Sandoval, to solicit the comments and recommendations of other stakeholders and resource persons on addressing the problems in Philippine ports due to inclement weather.</p> <p>Sevilla presented the various shipping charges imposed by international shipping lines to Philippine importers and exporters, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Container deposit - ranging from \$50 to \$850; • Emergency Cost Recovery Fee (ECRF) - ranging from \$300 to \$450 per 40-foot container; • Terminal Handling Charge (THC) - ranging from \$168 to \$200 per container; • Import Imbalance Fees (IIF) - ranging from \$640 to \$850 per 40-foot container; and • Other irrelevant and arbitrary charges. <p>Sevilla asserted that the imposition of these charges should be discontinued immediately. He pointed out that there should be a law or executive order to clearly define the jurisdiction of MARINA over the collection of these charges and fees by international shipping lines.</p> <p>Michael Raeuber of the Joint Foreign Chamber of the Philippines commented that the imposition of "container deposit" is very unique to the Philippines. Raeuber revealed that most shipping lines do not refund container deposits.</p> <p>PBA Party-List Rep. Mark Aeron Sambar requested the PUC to prepare a matrix of shipping charges imposed by international shipping lines to Filipino importers and exporters, indicating whether</p>
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<p>Continuation... Transportation</p>		<p>or not these charges are being imposed in other countries.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Deputy Executive Director Emmarita Mijares of the Export Development Council (EDC), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), claimed that “destination charges” are also being collected by international shipping lines from Philippine importers which account for 61% of the total amount paid for shipping, as well as “origin charges” being collected from Philippine exporters which correspond to 75% of the total shipping cost. According to Mijares, these charges are estimated to cost the economy roughly \$2 billion annually, which undermines the country’s export competitiveness.</p> <p>Association of International Shipping Lines, Inc. (AISL) General Manager Maximo Cruz belied the accusation that container deposits are not returned or refunded and expressed his willingness to dialogue with anyone who has any complaint about the matter.</p> <p>The AISL was requested to submit a list of the shipping charges it imposes on Philippine exporters and importers.</p> <p>Rep. Sarmiento suggested that another meeting on the matter be conducted jointly with the Committee on Economic Affairs to determine which specific government agency should lead in addressing the issues pertinent to the collection of fees and charges.</p> <p>Director Sonia Malaluan of Maritime Industry Authority’s (MARINA) Management, Financial and Administrative Service promised to look into the issues and concerns raised by the resource persons during the meeting.</p>
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