

Committee Daily Bulletin

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Energy	HB 2172	Rep. Santos-Recto	Reducing the cost of electricity for national government offices by promoting the development and utilization of solar energy in all government buildings and offices, providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Jay Velasco, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to study the two bills and consolidate them afterwards.</p> <p>Rep. Jose "Pingping" Tejada (3rd District, North Cotabato) will act as chair of this TWG.</p>
	HB 5402	Rep. Olivarez	Mandating government offices and/or establishments to allot at least 30% of their energy requirements to solar energy, and mandating them to install solar panels in their buildings	<p>Rep. Rosanna "Ria" Vergara (3rd District, Nueva Ecija) manifested, in behalf of the authors, that the explanatory notes attached to the bills be recorded as the latter's sponsorship speeches.</p> <p>The bills seek to promote the development and utilization of solar energy in all government offices in order to reduce the electricity cost accruing to the national government.</p> <p>The resource persons from the following government agencies expressed support for the bills, with some of them presenting their respective recommendations: Department of Energy (DOE), Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), Commission on Audit (COA), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC).</p> <p>Fortunato Sibayan, division chief of DOE's Solar Wind Energy Management Division, informed the Committee that the lack of rooftop space in some government buildings and low insolation levels in some areas pose as a hindrance to the installation of solar energy systems and may not be able to provide at least 10% of the electric power requirement of the building as proposed in HB 2172.</p> <p>Sharon Montaner, chief regulation officer of ERC's Renewable Energy Division, recommended that government agencies with a renewable energy system, which mostly operate only on weekdays, be excluded from the existing provision of RA 9513 (Renewable Energy Act of 2008), allowing only small power generating entities with 100 kilowatts</p>

Continuation... Energy				<p>(KW) capacity and below to be qualified to the net-metering program.</p> <p>Net-metering involves a distribution grid user having a two-way connection to the grid and is only charged for its net electricity consumption (import energy). Excess electricity (export energy), which occurs on non-operating days, will be deducted to the total import energy per month where the remaining amount will be the total billable charge for the end-user.</p> <p>Business Development Manager Pamela Cea-Borlaza of PNOC Renewables Corporation (PNOC-RC) expressed support for the bills further stating that her office already installed solar energy facilities in 10 government agencies.</p> <p>On the query of Members if the government spent for the installation of the solar facilities, Borlaza answered in the negative, adding that the said solar facilities were installed by PNOC-RC under a 15-year lease contract with the concerned government agency. Borlaza also mentioned that the House of Representatives is currently enrolled in PNOC's net-metering program.</p> <p>On the other hand, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) objects to the bills emphasizing the autonomy of local government units (LGUs).</p>
	HB 1484	Rep. Abayon	Requiring all independent power producers, generation companies or energy resource developers to remit the amount they are required to set aside as financial benefit directly to the host community	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 1484 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Representatives from the ERC, DBM and COA expressed support for the bill.</p> <p>COA-DOE Supervising Auditor Flovitas Felipe apprised the Committee of the status of the Renewable Energy (RE) Trust Fund based on COA's latest audit report: P2.7 billion cash in bank; P4 billion invested in treasury bills; and P400 million accounts receivables.</p> <p>The RE Trust Fund was established upon the passage of RA 9513 or the Renewable Energy Act of 2008 to enhance the development and greater utilization of RE.</p> <p>The COA was requested to furnish the Committee a copy of its audit report on the RE fund.</p>
	HB 6565	Rep. Zarate	Providing for incentives and credit facilities for consumers of small solar power systems in the Philippines	The Committee deferred its deliberation on HBs 6565 and 6960 pending the submission of position papers from the resource persons.
	HB 6960	Rep. Garcia (E.)	Promoting the use of renewable energy in homes by providing incentives and credit facilities for consumers utilizing small solar power systems	In its next meeting, the Committee will invite representatives from the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) and the distribution utilities (DU) sector to comment on the two bills.

Games and Amusements	HR 1394	Rep. Oaminal	<p>Inquiry into the procedure of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) in granting provisional certificates of accreditation to electronic gaming system (EGS) service providers and the manner of selecting and awarding the privilege to operate internet gaming cafés</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Gus Tambunting (2nd District, Parañaque City), will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 1394 in its next meeting.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Henry Oaminal (2nd District, Misamis Occidental), author of HR 1394, asked whether the Commission on Audit (COA) and PAGCOR have reached an agreement with regard to the correct interpretation of “gross earnings” as provided under Presidential Decree (PD) 1869 or the law consolidating and amending certain PDs, relative to the franchise and powers of PAGCOR.</p> <p>Section 12 of PD 1869 provides that after deducting five percent as franchise tax, the 50% share of the government in the aggregate gross earnings of PAGCOR shall immediately be set aside and allocated to fund infrastructure and socio-economic projects.</p> <p>COA Cluster 6 Director Wilfredo Agito said an agreement has yet to be reached. But for now, COA stands by its original position that “gross earnings” pertain to the entire earnings of the Corporation. On the other hand, PAGCOR Assistant Vice President Arnold Salvosa maintained that PAGCOR is required to remit to the government 50% of its gaming revenues only.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Tambunting asked PAGCOR representatives to explain the reasons behind the changes in its systems and processes pertaining to the management of e-games which allowed the grant of a provisional certificate of accreditation to PhilWeb Corporation, an electronic gaming system (EGS) service provider.</p> <p>Salvosa explained that the changes were due to several reasons, among which are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The President finds the past system unacceptable in as far as the monitoring and collection of taxes are concerned; and • Revenues from e-gaming went down since the expiry and non-renewal of the contract of PhilWeb. <p>Thus, PAGCOR opened the e-gaming business to more service providers to level the playing field. Salvosa disclosed that as of today, the certification of four other entities that have applied to become service providers is being processed by PAGCOR.</p> <p>Several Committee Members asked PhilWeb’s Chair and CEO Gregorio “Greggy” Araneta III to explain why he took such a huge risk in his acquisition of a non-operational company from Roberto Ongpin, the former owner of PhilWeb.</p>
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Continuation... Games and Amusements				<p>Araneta explained that one advantage to buying non-operational corporations is that its price can easily be negotiated. Aside from this, Araneta believed that he can convince PAGCOR to renew PhilWeb's accreditation for the simple reason that PAGCOR loses P2.2 billion annually in revenues after PhilWeb ceased its operations. He also claimed to have asked the permission of President Rodrigo Duterte, through Special Assistant to the President Christopher "Bong" Go, prior to purchasing the company.</p> <p>The Committee asked PAGCOR to submit the terms of reference (TOR) as well as other documents pertinent to the accreditation of PhilWeb.</p> <p>It likewise instructed PhilWeb to submit its financial statement for the past five years as well as the legal documents pertinent to the transfer of ownership of the company.</p>
Higher and Technical Education	HB 3807	Rep. Gasataya	Establishing a CHED Office in the Lone District of Bacolod City, Province of Negros Occidental, appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Ann Hofer (2nd District, Zamboanga Sibugay), approved the bill and the corresponding Committee Report subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to refer the bill to the Committee on Appropriations for comments on the bill's funding provisions.</p>
	HB 3910	Rep. Zarate	Converting the West Visayas State University (WVSU)-Extension in the City of Himamaylan, Province of Negros Occidental into a regular campus to be known as the WVSU-Himamaylan City Campus and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved the bill and the corresponding Committee Report subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to refer the bill to the Committee on Appropriations for comments on the bill's funding provisions.</p>
	HB 4957	Rep. Rodriguez (M.)	Appropriating funds for the construction of additional classrooms, laboratories and dormitories in the Misamis Oriental State College of Agriculture and Technology	<p>The Committee approved the bill and the corresponding Committee Report subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to refer the bill to the Committee on Appropriations for comments on the bill's funding provisions.</p>
	HB 3246	Rep. Pineda	Integrating labor education into the social science subjects in the tertiary education curriculum	<p>The Committee agreed to consolidate the two bills with HB 3246 as the lead bill, and thereafter approved the same. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p>
	HB 3621	Rep. Tambunting	Mandating the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to include labor education in the tertiary education curriculum	<p>Rep. Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon) manifested that a bill with similar subject matter was passed by the House of Representatives during the 15th Congress.</p>
	HB 2845	Rep. Salimbangon	Establishing a public college to be known as the Northern Cebu College of Agriculture to be located at Curva, Medellin, Province of Cebu and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to deliberate further on the bill.</p> <p>The Commission on Higher Education</p>

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education				<p>(CHED), through Atty. Joselito Alisuag, director of CHED's Office of Institutional Quality Assurance and Governance (OIQAG), was requested to submit its recommendations on the bill.</p> <p>Likewise, the other resource persons present were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bill.</p>
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IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Justice	<p>Determination of probable cause in relation to the verified complaint for impeachment against Supreme Court (SC) Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno, filed by Atty. Lorenzo Gadon and endorsed by 25 House Members</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Reynaldo Umali (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro), will continue its 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 continued its discussion on the following allegations against Sereno:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betrayal of public trust in the hiring of Helen Perez-Macasaet, an IT consultant, with an excessive compensation without public bidding; • 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; • Manipulation of the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) shortlist for the six vacancies in the Sandiganbayan in 2015 by introducing the practice of "clustering" of nominees; • Extravagant use of public funds by staying 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 • Obstruction and perversion of justice by meeting with Presiding Justice and Associate Justices of the Court of Appeals (CA) and instructing them not to comply with the processes of the House of Representatives in relation to the detention of the six Ilocos Norte provincial officials. <p>On the matter of hiring Macasaet, Rep. Umali said that the Committee has yet to receive a report from the SC on the nature of work for which she was hired. Absent in today's proceeding, Macasaet is expected to appear in the next hearing along with lawyer Ma. Lourdes Oliveros, staff head, Office of the Chief Justice (OCJ).</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Ferdinand Hernandez (2nd District, South Cotabato) noted that Oliveros is personally acquainted with Macasaet and that the latter was hired merely for reasons of trust and confidence.</p> <p>Exercising supervisory authority over the SC procurement service, SC Associate Justice Mariano del Castillo admitted that he did sign documents for the procurement of the Toyota Land Cruiser as part of his ministerial duty. He stressed, however, that there was no indication in the documents he signed that the vehicle specifications indicated therein were predetermined, which he knew would be tantamount to violation of RA 9184 or the Government Procurement Reform Act.</p> <p>Rep. Eugene Michael de Vera (Party-List, ABS), however, presented a copy of an endorsement dated December 2, 2016 which specifically indicated "Toyota Land Cruiser Pearl White" and another</p>

<p>Continuation... Justice</p>		<p>endorsement which contained only the general vehicle specification. Both, however, indicated the exact market price for said vehicle during that time, Rep. De Vera said.</p> <p>On the issue of “clustering” nominees to the Sandiganbayan, Associate Justice Teresita Leonardo-De Castro maintained that the JBC was, in a way, influenced by the Chief Justice when it resorted to group 37 nominees in six separate clusters, as against the tradition of coming up with just a single list, she added.</p> <p>Shangri-La Boracay Director for Sales Melissa Ann Santiago informed the Committee that the resort billed the SC a total of P1.97 million for hosting the 3rd meeting of judiciary leaders from the member-states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2015. Santiago said that it included 27 deluxe rooms, nine sea view rooms, one premier sea view room, and one presidential villa which was occupied by the Chief Justice.</p> <p>Several House Members inquired on who initiated the upgrading of the room accommodation of the Chief Justice to a presidential villa. Santiago attested that it was Associate Justice Zaldy Trespeses of the 7th Division, Sandiganbayan who requested the upgrade.</p> <p>Trespeses, on his part, justified that the room upgrading with a huge discount is an option being practiced in the hotel industry as part of a “room block.”</p> <p>Rep. Vicente “Ching” Veloso (3rd District, Leyte) lectured that such a request for upgrading violates Presidential Decree 46, which prohibits public officials and employees to receive, and for private persons to give, gifts on any occasion, and RA 3019 or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.</p> <p>On the allegations of obstruction and perversion of justice, SC Associate Justice Andres Reyes Jr. manifested that when he was then presiding justice of the CA, he was summoned by Sereno to advise the CA Special 4th Division that it may file a petition for prohibition before the SC, guaranteeing her support, in the event that the House of Representatives issues show cause orders against the members of the CA Special 4th Division. The show cause orders would supposedly ask the CA justices to explain why they should not be cited for contempt for ordering the release of the six Ilocos Norte provincial officials who were then detained at a House facility.</p> <p>The so-called “Ilocos Six” were detained in May 2017 due to their refusal to answer questions of the House Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability relative to the alleged illegal use of the province’s share in tobacco excise taxes.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Dangerous Drugs (Technical Working Group)	HBs 289, 587, 1868, 3406, 3616, 3627, 3733 & 4151	Reps. Romero, Bataoil, Deputy Speaker Hernandez, Reps. Barbers, Acop, Pineda, Bagatsing, and Alejano	Authorizing wiretapping in cases involving violations of RA 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, amending RA 4200 or the law prohibiting and penalizing wiretapping and other related violations of the privacy of communication	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), will deliberate further on the eight bills in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Acop underscored the need to amend RA 4200 or the Anti-Wiretapping Law in response to the needs of the times. He said the authority to conduct wiretapping must be granted to cover serious crimes to facilitate evidence gathering, prosecution of</p>

<p>Continuation... Dangerous Drugs (Technical Working Group)</p>				<p>cases, and conviction of violators.</p> <p>Rep. Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-PACMAN), author of HB 3627, explained that his bill increases the period of imprisonment and fine and provides for the deportation of foreign violators after serving their sentence in the country.</p> <p>Resource persons from the Philippine National Police (PNP) and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) expressed reservation on the said proposal stating that the current penalties under RA 4200 are already strict enough.</p> <p>Rep. Acop agreed that higher penalties do not necessarily deter violations, but may cause perpetrators to just circumvent the law or look for loopholes in existing laws that they can take advantage of.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Arnolfo "Arnie" Teves Jr. (3rd District, Negros Oriental) inquired if a system is being used in the Philippines that can intercept or wiretap only specific calls that are essential to an investigation and not all the calls received by a suspect so as not to violate the privacy of other innocent individuals.</p> <p>Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) Assistant Secretary Allan Cabanlong said that no such system is in use in the country right now. Instead, a mechanism using "keyword match" or "keyword search" is being used where an agreed term or terms such as "drugs" will serve as cue for authorized listeners to begin wiretapping.</p> <p>Rep. Teves suggested that the DICT should coordinate with telecommunications companies (telcos) to provide assistance in isolating such calls as said companies have better technological capability.</p> <p>Atty. Jonathan Galicia, head of Task Force Against Illegal Drugs of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), agreed with the proposal to require telcos to coordinate with agencies that are authorized to do the wiretapping.</p> <p>With regard to HB 587, authored by Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil (2nd District, Pangasinan), which prescribes a 60-day wiretapping authorization and renewable for another 30 days, resource persons from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), AFP, PNP and NBI all agreed that the period being prescribed is too short. Instead, they recommended a wiretapping authorization of six to eight months.</p> <p>The resource persons present in the meeting were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bills for consideration by the TWG.</p>
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