

Committee Daily Bulletin

17th Congress
Second Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. II No. 9
August 8, 2017

BUDGET BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	Briefing by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and its attached agencies and corporations on their proposed FY 2018 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), listened to the presentation of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and its attached agencies and corporations on their proposed FY 2018 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay) sat as the presiding officer during the DTI's budget briefing.</p> <p>DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez said that under the FY 2018 National Expenditure Program (NEP), the DTI and its attached agencies will get a total budget of P5.10 billion, which is 6% higher than their 2017 budget of P4.82 billion. On the other hand, DTI's attached corporations are set to receive P3.47 billion for 2018, which is 14% lower than their current budget of P4.01 billion.</p> <p>The DTI budget for 2018 is distributed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of the Secretary (OSEC) - P4.44 billion; • Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) - P2.15 billion; • Small Business Corporation (SB Corp) - P1 billion; • Board of Investments (BOI) – P392 million; • Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (CITEM) - P232 million; • Construction Industry Authority of the Philippines (CIAP) – P102 million; • Design Center of the Philippines (DCP) – P97 million; • Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority (APECoFA) - P89 million; and • Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC) – P67 million. <p>Under the slogan “<i>Trabaho, Negosyo Kabuhayan at Konsyumer</i>”, the DTI 2018 proposed budget is geared towards developing industries; increasing exports and investments; assisting and developing micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs); and enhancing consumers' welfare and protection.</p> <p>Lopez also presented the accomplishments of the Department for 2016 up to the first semester of 2017.</p> <p>For 2017 and beyond, Lopez said that the DTI is committed to fulfill the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensify support programs and efforts that promote MSMEs; • Improve access in both domestic and international markets and maximize gains in free trade agreements (FTAs); • Build innovative, value-adding technology that enhanced competitive industries globally; • Obtain a massive flow of investments; and • Intensify efforts to promote product standards, consumer awareness and encourage a culture of quality consciousness.

<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>		<p>Rep. Nograles asked how the President's pronouncement of partnership with Russia and China and the issue of human rights violations associated with the administration's war against drugs affect the flow of investments in the country.</p> <p>Lopez said that investors approve of the President's move to implement policies that would render a more conducive and safe business environment for the country. He added that trade relations with European Union (EU) member-states continue to gain positive results.</p> <p>Rep. Christopher V.P. de Venecia (4th District, Pangasinan) inquired on the steps undertaken by the DCP in keeping Filipino products globally competitive.</p> <p>DCP Executive Director Ma. Rita Matute said that DCP continues to invest in research and development (R&D) to transform native materials into world-class Philippine-made products.</p> <p>Responding to the query of Rep. Ferjenel Biron M.D. (4th District, Iloilo) on the plan to put up economic zones dedicated to pharmaceutical companies or the so called "pharmazones," PEZA Chair Charito Plaza informed the Committee that a Saudi pharmaceutical company specializing in oncology medicines has signified its willingness to share information on how these medicines can be manufactured in the Philippines.</p> <p>On the question raised by AKO-BICOL Party-List Rep. Rodel Batocabe, DTI Undersecretary Ruth Castelo admitted that the DTI has no existing policy to check on the legitimacy of businesses after they have registered their business names with the DTI. Castelo clarified that this is a responsibility of the local government unit (LGU) that issued the Mayor's permit. Nonetheless, Castelo said that the DTI is already devising possible measures to address the matter.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel Zubiri (3rd District, Bukidnon) suggested that the DTI should come up with a job matching system that applicants can access online to facilitate the application process especially for those who have no financial means and have to travel far just to look for a job.</p> <p>The DTI was requested to submit to the Committee a profile of the economic zones in the country, the Iron and Steel Industry Roadmap, and a draft of the Maritime and Shipbuilding Plan.</p>
	<p>Briefing by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) on its proposed FY 2018 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments</p>	<p>The Committee, presided by Vice Chair Rep. Raul del Mar (1st District, Cebu City), dispensed with the CSC's presentation and decided to approve the Commission's proposed FY 2018 budget.</p> <p>Under the FY 2018 National Expenditure Program (NEP), the CSC is set to receive P1.5 billion, which is 12% higher than last year's budget of P1.34 billion.</p> <p>By expense class, CSC's 2018 proposed budget will be distributed as follows: personnel services (PS), P1.16 billion; maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE), P222.55 million; capital outlay (CO), P83.89 million; locally-funded project (under the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007), P37.69 million; and financial expenses (Finex), P9,000.</p> <p>CSC Chair Alicia dela Rosa-Bala thanked the House Members for their support for and approval of the CSC's proposed FY 2018 budget.</p>

COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Energy	HB 1292	Rep. Robes	Implementing a prepaid electrification system for the electricity consumers of the Lone District of San Jose del Monte, Province of Bulacan	<p>The Committee, chaired by Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Jay Velasco, approved HB 1292 subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>San Jose del Monte Rep. Florida "Rida" Robes, author of HB 1292, discussed the salient features of her bill.</p> <p>San Jose del Monte City Administrator Paul Vega manifested his support for the bill.</p>
	HB 1222	Rep. Umali	Declaring power infrastructure projects as projects of national significance, amending for the purpose certain provisions of RA 9136, otherwise known as the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) of 2001	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to study further HB 1222. It likewise agreed to adopt the guidelines enunciated under EO 30 signed by President Rodrigo Duterte in June 28, 2017.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Reynaldo Umali (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro), author of HB 1222.</p> <p>EO 30 creates the Energy Investment Coordinating Council (EICC) that is tasked to establish a simplified approval process, and harmonize the relevant rules and regulations of all government agencies involved in obtaining permits and regulatory approvals for the implementation of energy projects.</p> <p>Representatives from the Department of Energy (DOE), Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP), National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO), Philippine Rural Electric Cooperatives Association (PhilRECA), Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM), National Power Corporation (NPC), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Manila Electric Company (Meralco), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and National Water Resources Board (NWRB) manifested their support for the bill. They were requested to submit their respective position papers for consideration of the TWG.</p>
	HB 4892	Rep. Batocabe	Establishing the virtual one stop shop for the purpose of streamlining the permitting process of power generation projects	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to study further HB 4892.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by AKO BICOL Party-List Rep. Rodel Batocabe, author of HB 4892.</p> <p>Representatives from the DOE, ERC, NGCP, TRANSCO, PhilRECA, PSALM, NPC, SEC, Meralco, NCIP, and NWRB manifested their support for the bill. They were requested to submit their respective position papers for consideration of the TWG.</p>
Good Government and Public	HR 782 & Privilege Speech	Reps. Roque (H.) and Bravo (A.)	Inquiry into the alleged anomalies in the procurement process conducted by the Department of Transportation (DOTr) with	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2 nd District, Surigao del Sur), terminated its deliberations on the issues raised

Accountability			<p>respect to the award of the Bicol International Airport (BIA) Package 2B</p>	<p>relative to the two measures, subject to the submission by the DOTr of documents required by the Committee.</p> <p>Rep. Anthony Bravo, Ph.D., AKO BICOL Party-List Reps. Alfredo Garbin Jr., and Rodel Batocabe opined that JD Legaspi Construction, even if it has partnered with EM Cuerpo, Inc. through a joint venture, should still be disqualified to participate in any government project for incurring negative slippage of more than 15% on several government projects.</p> <p>Felicisimo Pangilinan Jr., head of the DOTr's technical working group (TWG) for primary infrastructure, narrated that on December 2016, the TWG received the instruction from the DOTr's Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) to conduct review and evaluation of the bid documents of JD Legaspi Construction for the BIA Package 2B Project. During the review the TWG noticed that there are lacking information regarding the contracts of JD Legaspi Construction with the National Irrigation Administration (NIA).</p> <p>The TWG reported to BAC the apparent non-listing of the contracts of JD Legaspi with NIA, thus BAC wrote NIA inquiring on the matter. NIA submitted the status of projects undertaken by JD Legaspi on February of this year.</p> <p>After an evaluation of the eligibility documents, BAC recommended the approval of the awarding of the BIA Package 2B Project to the JD Legaspi and EM Cuerpo Joint Venture.</p> <p>NIA Deputy Administrator Estrella Icasiano disclosed that NIA's first contract with JD Legaspi was mutually terminated on February 2017. Meanwhile the second contract was terminated by NIA because the contractor refused to comply with valid instructions, incurred slippage of 15% or more, and did not have the minimum essential equipment on the project site.</p> <p>On the other hand, the third contract has been extended due to unfavorable weather conditions and on-going construction of the access road.</p> <p>Legal Counsel Julienne Jorge of JD Legaspi Construction refuted the statements of Icasiano, explaining that her company sent notice for the termination of the third contract to NIA on August 23, 2013 due to failure of the agency to provide information necessary to proceed with the construction.</p> <p>SAGIP Party-List Rep. Rodante Marcoleta questioned the relevance of the information sought from NIA, adding that it has no bearing with the issues at hand.</p> <p>Rep. Ty said that the negative slippages report on the third contract between the contractor and NIA is not relevant to the evaluation of JD</p>
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Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability				Legaspi's qualification to bid. He explained that when the bidding for the BIA Package 2B Project was conducted in November 2016, the third project of JD Legaspi with NIA was already terminated, thus can no longer be considered as an on-going project. The DOTr was requested to submit the documents related to the winning bidder's projects with the DPWH as well as the status of their implementation.
	HR 757	Rep. Daza	Investigation into the incomplete or complete but substandard public works, including school buildings, by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) First District Office in Catarman, Northern Samar	The Committee assumed jurisdiction over HR 757. A hearing will be scheduled to deliberate on the measure.
	HR 1000	Rep. Marcoleta	Inquiry into what appears to be spurious land deals perpetuated by unscrupulous real estate developers in the Municipality of Mariveles, Bataan with the collusion of concerned agencies and public officials	The Committee assumed jurisdiction of HR 1000. A hearing will be scheduled to deliberate on the measure. Rep. Marcoleta, author of HR 1000, requested the Committee to invite representatives from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Land Registration Authority (LRA), Office of the Solicitor General, Bataan Registry of Deeds (RD), and the Assessor's Office of the Municipality of Mariveles, to shed light on the issues raised in his resolution.
Local Government	HB 1012	Rep. Pacquiao	Creating Sitio Ladol as regular barangay in the Municipality of Alabel, Province of Sarangani	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Pedro Acharon Jr. (1 st District, South Cotabato and General Santos City), approved the bill with amendments.
	HB 3525	Rep. Calixto-Rubiano	Creating a barangay to be known as Barangay 201, Zone 20 in the City of Pasay	The Committee approved the bill with amendments.
	HB 4613	Rep. Ramirez-Sato	Creating a barangay to be known as Barangay Sta. Maria in the Municipality of Abra de Ilog, Province of Occidental Mindoro	The Committee approved the bill.
	HB 1003 & 3755	Reps. Campos and Rocamora	Expanding the purposes and application of the Special Education Fund (SEF), amending certain sections of RA 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to harmonize the bills. The TWG will be headed by Rep. Wilter "Sharky" Palma II (1 st District, Zamboanga Sibugay).
	HB 1885	Rep. Robes	Expanding the SEF, regulating the utilization of the same	San Jose del Monte City Rep. Florida "Rida" Robes, author of HB 1885, said that her bill seeks to expand the coverage of the Special Education Fund (SEF) and to provide a regulatory mechanism for its utilization and administration to maximize the financial support to basic education.
	HB 3785	Rep. Batocabe	Providing for inclusion of private schools as beneficiaries of the SEF, amending for the purpose RA 7160, as amended	Section 235 of RA 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991 provides that provinces or cities and municipalities within Metro Manila may levy and collect an annual tax of one percent on the assessed value of real property, which shall be in addition to the basic real property tax. The proceeds thereof shall exclusively accrue to the SEF.

Continuation... Local Government				<p>The SEF shall be allocated for the operation and maintenance of public schools; construction and repair of school buildings, facilities and equipment; educational research; purchase of books and periodicals; and sports development as determined and approved by the local school board.</p> <p>Rep. Rosenda Ann Ocampo (6th District, Manila) suggested that a discussion be made on how the SEF is being spent by local governments, adding that some local officials use the funds for their political agenda. She claimed that if the SEF is properly utilized, Filipino school children will be provided with better quality education services.</p> <p>Sought to comment on the proposal that private schools be included as beneficiaries of the SEF, Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Budget Management Specialist John Aries Macaspac said that under RA 7160 public funds should be spent for public purposes only.</p> <p>The Commission on Audit (COA) was requested to submit a list of all local government units (LGUs) that were issued disallowances relative to the use of their respective SEF.</p>
Public Order and Safety	HR 763	Rep. Acop	Inquiry into the manifest breakdown of discipline in the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the light of the recent high-profile criminal incidents allegedly involving officers and members of the organization	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 763 in its next meeting.</p> <p>The Committee focused its discussion on the disciplinary mechanisms in the PNP and the role of the PNP leadership.</p> <p>PNP Internal Affairs Service (IAS) Acting Deputy Inspector General Leo Angelo Leuterio and Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM) Director Augusto Marquez Jr. gave an update on the number of cases filed against erring PNP personnel.</p> <p>For 2016, Leuterio reported that IAS has recorded around 1,262 cases nationwide, of which 657 cases have already been resolved. On the other hand, Marquez said that, for 2017, there are no criminal cases filed against PNP personnel.</p> <p>The IAS was requested to provide the Committee with an updated data on the cases filed in its Office against erring PNP personnel.</p> <p>PNP Deputy Director General for Operations Ramon Apolinario confirmed the statement of Rep. Horacio Suansing Jr. (2nd District, Sultan Kudarat) that PNP Chief Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa, in a press statement, has identified 1,200 rogue cops. Apolinario assured the Committee that the PNP will conduct an investigation on these rogue cops and if found guilty, they will be dismissed from the service.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn Garcia (3rd District,</p>

<p>Continuation... Public Order and Safety</p>				<p>Cebu) emphasized that the root cause of the apparent lack of discipline in the PNP is its creation as a civilian institution which makes it difficult to prosecute them under the present set-up. She underscored the need to amend the Constitution to apply the Articles of War to the PNP.</p> <p>Article 105 of Commonwealth Act 408 or the Articles of War provides a footer and more rigorous procedure in imposing disciplinary punishments to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), while at the same time affording them due process.</p> <p>Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte) highlighted the failure of intelligence gathering of the PNP that resulted to the Marawi siege. He emphasized the need to improve intelligence gathering to prevent similar occurrences.</p> <p>Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil (2nd District, Pangasinan) said that the PNP should improve their relationships with the community within their jurisdictions, saying that this will serve as a tool for intelligence gathering to address insurgency and terrorism in the country.</p> <p>Agreeing with Rep. Bataoil, PNP Directorate for Operations Director Camilo Pancratius Cascolan conveyed to the Committee that the PNP has been conducting strategic planning with all field commanders on improving community relations.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Luis “Jon-Jon” Ferrer (6th District, Cavite) on the possibility that the Marawi incident will be repeated, PNP Directorate for Intelligence Chief Superintendent Mariel Maniego Magaway believed that a similar incident may be repeated particularly in Mindanao. However, Magaway said there is a lesser possibility that the same incident will happen in other parts of the country.</p> <p>Deputy Ombudsman for Military and Other Law Enforcement Offices Cyril Ramos could not give an assurance that the Marawi incident will not happen in other parts of the country, saying that terrorism is a worldwide problem. What the government should do, Ramos emphasized, is to improve its intelligence gathering on the ground to suppress possible terrorist attacks.</p> <p>On the issue of leadership, Rep. Acop suggested for the PNP to devise a system which will minimize the intervention of local officials in the appointment of regional directors, provincial directors and chiefs of police. Rep. Acop said that this will ensure that the position of field commanders will not be politicized, thereby removing the public perception that field commanders have loyalty only to local officials in their area of assignment.</p> <p>Following the requests of the Members of the Committee, Cascolan gave his assurance that he will direct all field commanders to submit a</p>
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Continuation... Public Order and Safety				<p>monthly situational report on the peace and order situation of the Members' respective districts.</p> <p>The PNP was requested to provide the Committee with its security plan for Marawi City.</p>
Revision of Laws	Substitute Bill to HB 3605	Speaker Alvarez	Amending Section 13 of RA 3019, as amended, otherwise known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act	<p>The Committee chaired by Rep. Marlyn Primicias-Agabas (6th District, Pangasinan), reconsidered its previous approval of the substitute bill to give way to the amendment presented by ABS Party-List Rep. Eugene Michael de Vera, co-author of the bill, to exempt elected officers who are no longer connected with the office wherein the offense charges was committed, from the list to be preventively suspended by the <i>Sandiganbayan</i>.</p> <p>Thereafter, the Committee approved the substitute bill and the corresponding Committee Report.</p>
	HBs 2290, 4209, 4383 & 5238	Reps. Eusebio, Gomez, Romualdez, and Olivarez	Declaring special non-working holidays in certain parts of the country to commemorate special events	<p>The Committee approved HBs 2290, 4209, 4383 and 5238.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Reports.</p>
	HBs 5207 & 5693	Reps. Palma and Hofer	Declaring February 24 of every year as a special non-working holiday in the Province of Zamboanga Sibugay to be known as <i>Araw ng Sibugay</i>	The Committee approved HB 5207 in consolidation with HB 5693.
	HB 4872	Rep. Daza	Increasing the penalty of <i>reclusion temporal</i> and <i>reclusion perpetua</i> , amending for the purpose Act 3815, otherwise known as the Revised Penal Code, as amended	<p>The Committee deferred its deliberation on HB 4872.</p> <p>The Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) were requested to submit their position papers on the bill.</p> <p>Rep. Raul Daza (1st District, Northern Samar), author of HB 4872, said that his bill seeks to amend Act 3815 by increasing the duration of the penalties of <i>reclusion temporal</i> to 30 years from 12 years and one day, and <i>reclusion perpetua</i> to 40 years from 30 years. Rep. Daza underscored the need to impose stiffer penalties on certain crimes, particularly crimes involving illicit drugs.</p> <p>The DOJ and the BuCor were requested to submit to the Committee their position papers on the bill within 15 days.</p>
	HB 3980	Rep. Robes	Declaring Tanglawan Festival an official festival in the City of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan	<p>The Committee deferred its deliberation on HB 3980.</p> <p>San Jose del Monte City Rep. Florida "Rida" Robes, author of HB 3980, manifested that the same bill will be re-filed to amend RA 9750 or the Foundation Day of the City of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan.</p>
	HB 5095	Rep. Vargas	Declaring July 2 of every year as <i>Araw ng Novaliches</i> in the Fifth District of Quezon City	The Committee deferred its deliberation of his position on HB 5095 pending the submission of Rep. Alfredo Vargas III (4 th District, Quezon City),

Continuation... Revision of Laws				author of the bill, of his position on the objection raised by the NHCP.
	HBs 5139, 5262 & 5609	Reps. Acharon, Nava, and Vargas	Declaring special non-working/working holidays in certain parts of the country to commemorate special events	The Committee deferred its deliberation on HBs 5139, 5262 and 5609 pending the submission of the authors of their position on the objection raised by the NHCP.
Science and Technology	HB 1205	Rep. Yu	Upgrading the position of Provincial Science and Technology Officer into Provincial Science and Technology Director in the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), amending Republic Act (RA) 6959, appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Erico Aristotle Aumentado (2nd District, Bohol), approved in principle HB 1205, subject to style and the inclusion of the comments and recommendations of the resource persons.</p> <p>The DOST and Civil Service Commission (CSC) manifested support for the measure.</p> <p>On the other hand, Atty. Mark Eubank of the Department of Budget and Management's (DBM) Organization, Position Classification, and Compensation Bureau signified the DBM's objection to the bill due to budgetary considerations.</p>
	HB 2163	Rep. Ramirez-Sato	Instituting reforms in the existing policy on access and benefit-sharing from the utilization of Philippine genetic resources	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to fine-tune HB 2163.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by BUHAY Party-List Rep. Mariano Michael Velarde Jr.</p> <p>OIC Chief Marivene Santos of the National Museum's Zoology Division expressed support for the bill. She, however, requested that the National Museum's recommendations, particularly on Section 10 (Special Mandates of Identified Agencies) of the bill, be included in the proposed law.</p> <p>Professor Teresita Borromeo of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) said that the proposed law should, as far as practicable, adhere to the fundamental principles and provisions of the Nagoya Protocol.</p> <p>The Nagoya Protocol is a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity which provides a transparent legal framework for the effective implementation of one of the three objectives of the Convention, which is the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit their agencies' respective position papers on the proposed law.</p>
Suffrage and Electoral Reforms	HB 5680	Rep. Roman	Amending the Omnibus Election Code to include the mandatory drug testing by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) for all candidates as a prerequisite for the filing of their Certificates of Candidacy	<p>The Committee, chaired by CIBAC Party-List Rep. Sherwin Tugna, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune the bill.</p> <p>Expressing concern over reports that 30% of barangay officials in the country are involved in illegal drug trade, Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan), author of HB 5680, underscored the need to amend Batas Pambansa 881 or the</p>

Continuation... Suffrage and Electoral Reforms				<p>Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines to allow for the mandatory drug testing of candidates for elective positions.</p> <p>According to Rep. Roman, the proposed law, which is in consonance with the anti-illegal drugs agenda of the administration, will assure Filipinos that their leaders are truly good role models.</p> <p>However, 1-CARE Party-List Rep. Carlos Roman Uybarreta said that a Supreme Court (SC) decision issued in 2008 has declared the conduct of mandatory drug testing of candidates for public office as unconstitutional.</p> <p>National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) Secretary General Eric Jude Alvia, while recognizing the importance of the bill, shared the opinion of the SC, saying that drug testing cannot be made a requirement for candidates until constitutional amendments have been made.</p> <p>On the other hand, Commission on Elections (COMELEC) Lawyer Albert Rodriguez said that drug testing for local government positions is possible through an amendment to the Local Government Code.</p> <p>When asked by Rep. Tugna if the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) is capable of administering the drug testing as required under the proposed law, PDEA Deputy Director General Ricardo Quinto replied in the affirmative.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Fredenil "Fred" Castro (2nd District, Capiz) urged the Department of Health (DOH) to assist the PDEA should the proposed law be enacted.</p>
	HBs 520 & 1692	Deputy Speaker Castro and Rep. Rodriguez (M.)	Identifying other persons criminally liable for election offenses and increasing the penalties for election-related offenses, amending Sections 263 and 264 of Batas Pambansa 881, as amended, or the Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines, and Section 46 of RA 8189 or the Voter's Registration Act of 1996	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HBs 520 and 1692 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Castro and Rep. Maximo Rodriguez Jr. (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City), authors of HBs 520 and 1692, respectively, expressed the need to amend certain sections of the Omnibus Election Code and the Voter's Registration Act of 1996.</p> <p>According to both authors, some of the penalties specified in these laws are already antiquated and are no longer able to deter potential violators.</p> <p>COMELEC Lawyer Albert Rodriguez informed the Committee that the COMELEC <i>en banc</i> believes that it is best to retain the existing penalties, explaining that raising the penalties of some offenses might result to imposing punishments that are not commensurate to the offense committed.</p>
Ways And Means	HR 1145	Rep. Villanueva	Inquiry into the alleged irregularities in tax assessment and collection involving Del Monte Philippines Inc. (DMPI) resulting to	The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 1145.

<p>Continuation... Ways And Means</p>			<p>revenue loss to the government</p>	<p>Rep. Noel Villanueva (3rd District, Tarlac), author of HR 1145, said that he filed his resolution to gather facts and information necessary in legislating a law that will prevent Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) tax examiners from issuing unrealistic tax assessments.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Cua presented the Committee's observations during its previous meetings on the alleged huge reduction in the tax liabilities of Del Monte Philippines, Inc. (DMPI) for taxable years 2011 to 2013.</p> <p>Rep. Cua narrated that the BIR issued a preliminary assessment notice (PAN) valued at P14 million to DMPI for taxable year 2011. However, for 2012 and 2013, the preliminary assessments significantly increased to a staggering P3.4 billion and P5.3 billion, respectively, which DMPI disputed. Subsequently, after reviewing pertinent documents, the corporation's 2011-2013 tax liability was remarkably reduced from P8.72 billion to P65.4 million.</p> <p>The Committee Members stressed the need to scrutinize the BIR's assessment processes to explain the discrepancies.</p> <p>BIR Commissioner Caesar Dulay disclosed that the BIR is set to put a threshold on the percentage of the preliminary tax assessment may be reduced later on. He said this will prevent occurrences of large discrepancies between the assessment of tax liabilities and the amount actually collected from corporate taxpayers.</p> <p>Rep. Cua, however, opined that the issue at hand is not limiting the tax assessment, but on making revenue officers accountable for erroneous tax assessments. He argued that putting a cap on tax assessments is like "killing the revenue potential of the government." Dulay acceded to Rep. Cua's statement.</p> <p>Rep. Lianda Bolilia (4th District, Batangas) asked why the BIR did not issue a final assessment notice (FAN) to DMPI for the latter's tax liability for 2011. She said that under Revenue Memorandum Order (RMO) No. 26-2016, formal letter of demand (FLD) and FAN shall be issued 15 days from date of receipt by the taxpayer of the PAN, whether or not the tax assessment is questioned.</p> <p>Chief of Staff for Legal Counsel Gaudencio Mendoza Jr. of the BIR Commissioner's office answered that RMO No. 26-2016 has been suspended by virtue of Revenue Memorandum Circular (RMC) No. 69-2016 issued by Dulay which suspends, until further notice, all issuances promulgated by former BIR Commissioner Kim Henares within the period covering June 1-30, 2016.</p>
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Continuation... Ways And Means				<p>Mendoza said that Revenue Regulation No. 18-2013, which provides that FAN will only be issued when the taxpayer disagrees with the PAN, is the existing regulation being followed by the Bureau in issuing a FAN.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), Dulay said that the BIR created a Special Disciplinary Committee to investigate revenue officers and employees allegedly associated with questionable tax audits. He reported that erring BIR personnel have been suspended and were placed under administrative investigation while others were formally charged with appropriate cases.</p> <p>The BIR was requested to submit its criteria in determining the companies that will be issued a letter of authority (LOA) from 2011 to 2013 and the professional credentials and performance appraisal of all personnel of the BIR's Large Taxpayers Service (LTS) for the period 2010 to 2017.</p> <p>LOA is an official document that authorizes a revenue officer to examine and scrutinize a taxpayer's books of accounts and other accounting and financial records, in order to determine the taxpayer's correct internal revenue tax liabilities.</p> <p>The Committee will invite Commission on Audit (COA) Chairperson <i>Michael Aguinaldo</i> and representatives from the Punongbayan and Araullo accounting firm to attend the Committee's next meeting on the measure. Likewise, it will issue subpoena to the Department of Finance (DOF) and KPMG R.G. Manabat and Co., external auditor of DMPI, to compel their attendance in the next meeting.</p>
Women and Gender Equality	HBs 194, 508 & 4822	Rep. Bertiz, Deputy Speaker Andaya, and Rep. Antonio	Expanding the scope of acts constituting sexual harassment, amending for the purpose RA 7877, otherwise known as the Sexual Harassment Act of 1995	<p>The Committee, presided by its acting Chair Rep. Sol Aragon (3rd District, Laguna), directed the Secretariat to draft a substitute bill to the seven measures, incorporating therein the recommendations of the resource persons.</p> <p>The Committee directed the Secretariat to draft a substitute bill to the five measures, incorporating therein the recommendations of the resource persons.</p> <p>Chairperson Rhodora Bucoy of the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) expressed her</p>
HB 2932	Rep. Roque (H.)	Amending RA 7877, Section 3 on the definition of work, education or training-related sexual harassment		
HBs 2591 & 3691	Reps. Villarica and Brosas	Expanding the definition of sexual harassment, strengthening the mechanisms to monitor compliance with policies against sexual harassment in the workplace and in educational and training institutions, and prescribing penalties for violations thereof		
HB 5977	Rep. Roque (H.)	Amending Section 7 of RA 7877		
HB 1471	Rep. Abayon	Establishing the Address Confidentiality Program for victims of violence against women and their children, providing penalties for violation thereof, appropriating funds therefor		

Continuation... Women and Gender Equality	HBs 2592, 2664 & 5153	Reps. Villarica, De Jesus, and Tambunting	Defining electronic violence against women (e-VAW) and their children, providing protective measures, and prescribing penalties, amending for the purpose RA 9262, otherwise known as the Anti-Violence Against Women (VAWC) and their Children Act of 2004	appreciation to the House Members for initiating the legislation of measures that are aligned with the Magna Carta of Women, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women (CEDAW), and other human rights treaties.
	HB 2850	Rep. Cuaresma	Establishing a task force to recommend a uniform strategy to protect women against violent crime	<p>Bucoy added that the measures are consistent with the Constitution which guarantees full respect for the human rights of all persons and mandates the State to protect all women from all forms of violence.</p> <p>Kristine Jazz Tamayo, representing the Lesbian and Gay Legislative Advocacy Network (LAGABLAB), expressed support for the proposal to penalize electronic violence against women (e-VAW).</p> <p>Tamayo suggested revising the definition of "Dating Relationship" in RA 9262, or the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004, to contemplate non-heterosexual relationships. She also requested that the definition of sexual orientation gender identity and expression (SOGIE) be included in the substitute bill.</p> <p>Under RA 9262, "Dating Relationship" refers to a "situation wherein the parties live as husband and wife without the benefit of marriage or are romantically involved over time and on a continuing basis during the course of the relationship."</p> <p>Representatives from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO), Philippine National Police (PNP), University of the Philippines Diliman, and the <i>Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas</i> (KBP) expressed support for the bills.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the proposed law.</p>
	HB 5781	Rep. Villarin	Defining gender-based street and public spaces harassment, providing protective measures and prescribing penalties therefor	The Committee directed the Secretariat to draft a substitute bill to the two measures, incorporating therein the recommendations of the resource persons.
	HB 5956	Rep. Antonio	Defining street, public spaces and online sexual harassment committed on and against any persons providing protective measures and prescribing penalties therefor	
	HB 3813	Rep. Castelo	Penalizing all advertising agencies that exploit women and glorify sexual violence in their advertisements	The Committee agreed to discuss the bill in another meeting because it covers a different subject matter.
HB 5213	Rep. Rocamora	Penalizing all forms of sexual harassment	The Committee agreed to discuss the bill in another meeting, upon the request of the author, Siquijor Rep. Ramon V.A. "Rav" Rocamora.	

Continuation... Women and Gender Equality	HB 5584	Rep. Sandoval	Defining domestic violence against individuals including members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, other than women and children, and providing for protective measures for victims, prescribing penalties therefor	The Committee agreed to discuss HB 5584 in another meeting because the bill's coverage includes the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) group, which is not included in VAWC.
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SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Subcommittee on Investigation and Enforcement Reforms (Justice)	HBs 8 & 775	Majority Leader Fariñas and Rep. Aglipay-Villar	Institutionalizing a criminal investigation system, repealing for the purpose RA 5180, or the law prescribing a uniform system of preliminary investigation by provincial and city fiscals and their assistants and by state attorneys or their assistants, as amended	The Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Strike Revilla (2nd District, Cavite), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the bills.
	HB 3081	Rep. Castelo	Requiring closed-circuit television (CCTV) owners to yield information or recorded data on the commission of a crime upon request of the proper investigative body or competent court	Rep. Reynaldo Umali (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro), chairman of the Committee on Justice, said that the measures seek to streamline the criminal investigation process and do away with the flawed preliminary investigations being practiced under the present criminal justice system for speedy administration of criminal justice in the country.
	HB 3296	Rep. Escudero	Repealing RA 5180, as amended	The proposed law, according to Rep. Umali, would also require more active participation from the prosecutors in the investigation of cases. State Prosecutor Donald Lee of the Department of Justice (DOJ) expressed the department's reservation on the measures, explaining that the present number of prosecutors may not be sufficient to effectively handle additional functions that will be given to them under the proposed criminal investigation system. The resource persons present were requested to submit their respective position papers and their recommendations for the TWG's consideration.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Science and Technology (Technical Working Group)	HBs 4581	Rep. Salceda	Establishing the Science for Change Program (S4CP)	The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Arlene Arcillas (1st District, Laguna), will deliberate further on HB 4581 in its next meeting. Consistent with the President's advocacy for genuine change, Rep. Arcillas said that the bill, authored by Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay), aims to increase investments in science and technology to spur economic growth and global competitiveness. She

<p>Continuation... Science and Technology (Technical Working Group)</p>				<p>emphasized that government agencies must do their part in keeping research and development (R&D) endeavours in the country at par with other ASEAN countries. She also noted that industrialization can only take place in a country where science and technological efforts are given priority and funding.</p> <p>Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Undersecretary Rowena Cristina Guevarra underscored the importance of Section 6 (Mandatory Adaptation of Publicly Funded Technologies by National Government Agencies (NGAs) and State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) of the bill. Currently, Guevarra said that the DOST is already implementing science and technology (S&T) initiatives to help develop and adopt government funded locally developed technologies, citing DOST's partnership with the Department of Health (DOH) as an example.</p> <p>Representatives from the DOST's attached agencies, namely, Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (PCHRD) Executive Director Jaime Montoya, Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) Undersecretary Renato Solidum, and National Research Council of the Philippines (NRCP) Executive Director Marieta Bañez Sumagaysay presented their respective S&T programs and projects.</p> <p>Rep. Arcillas requested the DOST to come up with specific programs to ensure that there will be no duplication of projects among its attached agencies.</p> <p>National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Social Development Director Mary Anne Darauay and Statistical Planning and Development Section Chief Estrella Turingan lauded the intent of the proposed law as this is consistent with the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 and is seen as a tool for increasing growth potential for subsequent development plans.</p> <p>Turingan urged the DOST to promote the utilization of technologies from a publicly funded R&D; develop an intellectual property rights (IPR) culture; and encourage less innovative financing for start-ups for their innovations.</p> <p>The NEDA promised to submit its additional comments and suggestions on the bill.</p> <p>The DOST on the other hand, will submit the list of plans and programs for S&T innovations of its attached agencies.</p> <p>Aside from the DOST and NEDA, the</p>
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Continuation... Science and Technology (Technical Working Group)				Committee will invite the Departments of Trade and Industry (DTI), Energy (DOE), Agriculture (DA), Information and Communication (DICT), Transportation (DOTr), and <i>Environment and Natural Resources</i> (DENR) in its next meeting.
Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development (Technical Working Group)	HB 4498	Rep. Rodriguez (M.)	Further promoting entrepreneurship by strengthening, empowering, and enhancing the financing programs for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), amending for the purpose RA 6977, as amended, otherwise known as the Magna Carta for Small Enterprises	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Jose Enrique “Joet” Garcia III (2nd District, Bataan), will deliberate further on HBs 4498 and 5540 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Garcia underscored the important role of the MSMEs in the country’s economic development, saying that the success of the MSMEs will help the economy reach its maximum potential.</p> <p>Representatives from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), and the Philippine National Bank (PNB) expressed their support for the bills.</p> <p>On the other hand, representatives from the Social Security System (SSS) and the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) expressed their reservations on the proposal for the two financial institutions to contribute to the capitalization and funding of the SB Corp.</p> <p>SSS Legislative Department head Joseph Desunia and GSIS Vice President Lucio Yu Jr. said that they want to ensure the sustainability of their agencies’ funds to provide for the benefits of their members and pensioners, which is their foremost priority.</p> <p>1-PACMAN Party-List Rep. Enrico Pineda, author of HB 5540, sought the support of SSS and GSIS in the effective implementation of the proposed law.</p> <p>Rep. Maximo Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City), author of HB 4498, advised the SB Corp to prove that investing in the corporation would yield profit and dividends to encourage the SSS and GSIS to invest.</p> <p>The GSIS and SSS representatives were requested to submit their respective position papers stating their reservations on the proposed law.</p>
	HB 5540	Rep. Romero	Providing additional capitalization and funding to the Small Business Corporation (SB Corp.) to effectively spur its growth and development throughout the country and to rationalize its guidelines	

AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Bicol Recovery and Economic Development (Special Committee)	Presentation of the FY2018 budget of the following government agencies in Region 5:	The Special Committee, chaired by Rep. Renato “Kuya Jojo” Unico Jr. (1 st District, Camarines Norte), listened to the presentation on the FY 2018 budget of the Philippine National Police (PNP), Mines and Geoscience Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and

<p>Continuation... Bicol Recovery and Economic Development (Special Committee)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) • Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) • Office of the Regional State Prosecutor of the Department of Justice (DOJ) 	<p>DPWH Region 5 OIC- Planning and Design Division Engineer Marilou Lacuna said that under the FY 2018 NEP, DPWH Region 5 will receive a budget of P34.62 billion, proposed to fund the following infrastructure programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network Development – P10.62 billion; • Flood Management Program – P9.94 billion; • Convergence and Special Support Program – P4.62 billion; • Asset Preservation Program – P4.27 billion; • Local Program – P3.76 billion; and • Bridge Program – 1.41 billion. <p>DSWD Regional Director Arnel Garcia said that under the FY 2018 NEP, the DSWD will get a total budget of P8.26 billion, broken down as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations – P7.61 billion; • General Administrative and Support Services – P649.6 million; and • Support to Operations – P1.6 million. <p>DOJ Regional State Prosecutor Mary May de Leoz informed the Committee that the Office of the Regional Prosecutor has no separate budget because it is considered as a local office under the National Prosecution Service, one of the programs under the Major Final Output (Law Enforcement Services) of the DOJ-Office of the Secretary.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon) if CHED has already promulgated the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) on the grant of free tertiary education in state colleges and universities (SUCs) which was signed by President Rodrigo Duterte into law, Colorado said that the CHED Regional Office has not yet been briefed by the Central Office on how the law will be implemented.</p> <p>In response to the query of Rep. Gabriel Bordado (3rd District, Camarines Sur), San Luis-Lutey said that the LTO has to look for a new service provider since the validity of the driver's license cards was changed from three years to five years.</p> <p>On the question regarding vehicle license plates, San Luis-Lutey said that the temporary restraining order (TRO) on the issuance of license plates issued by the Supreme Court has not yet been lifted. The LTO Central Office is looking for a new service provider for these license plates, San Luis-Lutey added.</p> <p>AKO BICOL Party-List Rep. Rodel Batocabe inquired on the status of the directive of PNP Chief Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa to bring an end to the proliferation of illegal number games.</p> <p>Gardiola said that the PNP already met with Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) General Manager Alexander Balutan, together with the AACs and local chief executives to address the issue.</p>
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