

Committee Daily Bulletin

17th Congress
Second Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. II No. 98
March 14, 2018

COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Appropriations	Substitute Bill to HBs 17, 41, 73, 207, 293, 318, 366, 399, 501, 518, 699, 823, 887, 901, 1098, 1429, 1548, 1661, 1694, 1948, 2278, 2456, 2545, 2688, 2772, 4135, 4155, 5401, 6536, 6600, HR 464 & Privilege Speech 277	Rep. Biazon, Deputy Speaker Quimbo, Reps. Vargas, Violago, Suansing (H.), Primicias-Agabas, Deputy Speaker Hernandez, Reps. Belmonte (J.C.), Yap (V.), Deputy Speaker Castro, Reps. Macapagal-Arroyo, Yap (A.), Tan (A.), Fortuno, Castelo, Tupas, Angara-Castillo, Rodriguez (M.), Santos-Recto, Tambunting, Pineda, Tan (S.), Mercado, Bag-ao, Bolilia, Olivarez, Villarín, Romero, and De Jesus	Institutionalizing the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) to reduce poverty and promote human capital development and providing funds therefor	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1 st District, Davao City), approved the Substitute Bill to the 32 measures.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 48 & 2126	Reps. Fortun and Salimbangon	Establishing marine protected areas in all coastal municipalities and cities	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 48 and 2126.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 209, 524, 591, 656, 1831, 2173, 2513, 2546, 2738, 3490 & 5579	Reps. Violago, Garbin, Velarde, Treñas, Vargas, Santos-Recto, Roa-Puno, Pineda, Tupas, Tan (A.), and Bagatsing	Providing for the mandatory PhilHealth coverage for all persons with disability (PWDs), amending for the purpose RA 7277, as amended, otherwise known as the Magna Carta for Persons with Disability	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the 11 bills.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 656, 1584, 1586, 1916, 2396, 4865, 5058 & 6284	Reps. Treñas, Vargas, Violago, Sy-Alvarado, Laogan, Aglipay-Villar, and Velasco-Catera	Granting additional privileges to PWDs, amending for the purpose RA 7277, as amended, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the eight bills with amendments.

Continuation... Appropriations	HB 270	Rep. Roman	Increasing the monthly pension of senior veterans thereby amending RA 6498, or the law standardizing and upgrading the benefits for military veterans and their dependents, as amended	The Committee approved HB 270 with amendments.
Information and Communications Technology	Substitute Bill to HBs 2873, 5195, 5765, 7148 & 7281	Reps. Yap (V.), Velasco, Gatchalian, Vargas, and Villafuerte	Requiring public telecommunications entities to provide nationwide mobile number portability to subscribers	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Victor Yu (2nd District, Tarlac), approved the Substitute Bill to the five bills subject to style and amendment.
	HBs 2333, 2447, 2604, 2872, 3268, 4654, 5109, HRs 100 & 254	Reps. Cojuangco, Yap (A.), Santos-Recto, Yap (V.), Roque (H.), Lazatin, Castelo, and Herrera-Dy	Prepaid Load Protection Act	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to study the nine measures further.</p> <p>Resource persons from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), and National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) informed the Committee that the three agencies have already signed a joint memorandum circular (JMC) extending the expiration date of all prepaid load cards to one year from the date of top-up.</p> <p>Ariel Tubayan, head of Globe Telecom Inc.'s Policy Division, Corporate and Legal Services Group, and Sherwin de Joya, manager of the Legal and Regulatory Department of Smart Communications Inc., opposed the extension of the prepaid load validity to one year, arguing that maintaining the data of prepaid load has a corresponding carrying cost to the company. Both also rebutted the NTC's claim that the carrying cost will go down with the increase in the number of subscribers. However, Tubayan and De Joya said that Globe and Smart will comply with the JMC which is already in effect.</p> <p>According to Pierre Tito Gala, co-founder of the advocacy group Democracy.Net.PH, the carrying cost is the storage of prepaid load record on data servers which is measured by dollar per terabytes. Thus, he suggested that to be fair to both parties (the telecommunications companies and the consumers), the load validity should last for a year but if the SIM has been inactive for a year, a one peso per day deduction on the load will be implemented until it zeroes out. The SIM will also be subjected to deactivation.</p>
	HB 6736	Rep. Cua	Systemizing spectrum user fees imposed against all allocated and assigned radio frequency bands, amending for the purpose RA 7925, otherwise known as the "Public Telecommunications Policy Act of the Philippines"	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to study the two measures further.</p> <p>Representing the Philippine Cable Television Association (PCTA), Frederick Esquillo requested that satellite and cable television spectrum users be excluded from the imposition of spectrum user's fees.</p>
HR 1338	Rep. Yap	Investigation on the management and administration of the country's radio frequency spectrum by the National Telecommunications Commission	However, NTC Deputy Commissioner Edgardo Cabarios said that all entities receiving and using satellite for commercial purposes are subject to spectrum user's fees.	

Continuation... Information and Communications Technology				Internet Society Philippine Chapter Vice President Mary Grace Mirandilla-Santos urged to review further the measure especially its impact on small players such as cable television operators and municipal radio stations. Similarly, Gala recommended a thorough study on the country's spectrum management since the start of the digital age.
Public Order and Safety	Substitute Bill to HBs 1115, 1306 & 2426	Reps. Alejano, Bataoil, and Deputy Speaker Abu	Providing for the reorganization and modernization of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), will deliberate further on the substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Abra Rep. Joseph Sto. Niño Bernos, who chaired the technical working group (TWG) tasked to study the proposed law, discussed the salient features of the substitute bill.</p> <p>According to Rep. Bernos, the substitute bill aims to provide the necessary support toward the advancement of PNP's personnel and the modernization of its facilities and equipment to make it at par with the world's best police organizations.</p> <p>The Committee discussed several contentious issues in the bill.</p> <p>One of which is the proposed transfer of the management of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) and the National Police Training Institute (NPTI) from the Philippine Public Safety College (PPSC) to the PNP.</p> <p>Rep. Acop asked if PNP could provide the support and the required funding for the unhampered operations of the PNPA and NPTI. PNP Deputy Director General Ramon Apolinario conveyed the PNP's commitment to fully support the two training schools once they are transferred to the PNP.</p> <p>Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Bureau D Division Chief Concordia Chavez said that the PNP needs to coordinate with the PPSC for the realignment of the budget for the two schools.</p> <p>Another issue raised during the meeting was the unclear provisions in Chapter IV of the bill on the PNP's infrastructure development and equipment acquisition.</p> <p>Deputy Executive Director Melissa Santiago-Yan of the Government Procurement Policy Board's (GPPB) Technical Support Office (TSO) said that the bill is not clear on whether the PNP wants to be exempted from the competitive bidding required under the Government Procurement Reform Act (RA 9184) and undertake procurement under any alternative mode of procurement.</p> <p>With regard to the limitation on the types of cases into which the Internal Affairs Service</p>

Continuation... Public Order and Safety				<p>(IAS) is authorized to conduct <i>motu proprio</i> investigation, PNP Directorate for Personnel and Records Management (DPRM) Chief Nora Camaro explained that the six cases enumerated in the bill were the most common offenses committed by PNP personnel based on its database.</p> <p>Commenting on Section 40 of the bill, on restrictive custody of personnel under investigation, Rep. Acop suggested that the PNP should come up with a police justice system approved by the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) which will serve as guideline in handling erring police personnel.</p> <p>Camaro disclosed that there are two memorandum circulars (MC) issued by the PNP regarding restrictive custody, but she admitted that these MCs will be strengthened once a police justice system is established.</p> <p>The resource persons from the PNP, NAPOLCOM, DBM, GPPB, and Civil Service Commission (CSC) were requested to submit several data relative to the issues raised during the meeting.</p>
Tourism	Consolidated Bill on HBs 1828 & 2963	Reps. Vargas and Macapagal-Arroyo	Establishing an intergovernmental task force for the protection and assistance of tourists	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Lucy Gomez (4 th District, Leyte), approved the Consolidated Bill on HBs 1828 and 2963.
	HB 6093	Rep. Gomez	Creating the Tourism Resiliency Certification Program under the administration of the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved the bill.</p> <p>Rep. Gomez, author of HB 6093, said that her bill aims to determine and manage all possible risks that the tourism industry is exposed to by creating a Tourism Resiliency Certification Program.</p> <p>Representatives from the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA), Department of Tourism (DOT), and Office of Civil Defense (OCD) expressed their support for the bill.</p>
	HB 7229	Rep. Gomez	Integrating and establishing pertinent policies and regulations to ensure the sustainability of the Philippine tourism industry, and providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved the bill.</p> <p>Rep. Gomez, author of HB 7229, said that her bill seeks to organize and create the Philippine Sustainable Tourism Council which shall establish a unified definition of sustainable tourism and set goals in achieving and maintaining sustainable tourism, among others.</p> <p>Davao del Sur Rep. Mercedes "Didi" Cagas inquired if DOT and TIEZA already have programs on tourism resiliency and sustainability, pointing out that in case there are, the bills might just duplicate government efforts and might lead to overlapping of functions among agencies.</p>

Continuation... Tourism				<p>Rep. Gomez explained that the creation of the Council is primarily for the purpose of establishing the Philippine Tourism Risk Assessment Framework that will target long-term goals for the tourism industry. She also clarified that the proposed Council will be dissolved once the task to create the aforementioned framework is done.</p> <p>Representatives from TIEZA and DOT expressed their support for the bill.</p>
Transportation	Substitute Bill to HBs 456 & 1286	Reps. Manalo and Baguilat	<p>Providing for a Maritime Code for the full and effective implementation and enforcement of international maritime instruments of which the Philippines is a state-party – the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, and its Protocols of 1978 and 1988, and Agreement of 1996; the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, its Protocol of 1978 and its Protocol of 1997; the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972; the International Convention of Load Lines 1966, and its Protocol of 1988, as amended in 2003; the International Convention of the Tonnage Measurement of Ships 1969</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 456 and 1286 subject to style and the corresponding Committee Report.</p>
	HB 1318	Rep. Velarde	<p>Requiring the mandatory compliance by all motorcycle drivers and operators to automatically turn on and ride with their headlights on at all hours of the day and night on all roads</p>	<p>The Committee approved HB 1318.</p> <p>Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City) sponsored HB 1318 on behalf of the author, Rep. Mariano Michael Velarde Jr. (Party-List, BUHAY).</p> <p>The bill requires motorcycle drivers and operators to automatically turn their headlights on as soon as they start their motorcycle engines and to maintain their headlights on while their motorcycles are running on all roads at all hours of the day and night.</p> <p>Representatives from the Land Transportation Office (LTO) and Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) expressed support for the bill.</p> <p>Rep. Acop asked the Highway Patrol Group (HPG) if there is any similar directive being implemented by the executive agencies. HPG PSupt. Edwin Engay answered in the negative, but clarified that new motorcycles now automatically turn on their headlights while in use.</p> <p>Engay emphasized that turning on the motorcycles' headlight at all times will increase the visibility of motorcycles on the road, thus preventing road accidents.</p>

Continuation... Transportation				<p>Engineer Emilio Llavor of MMDA's Head Road Safety Unit reported the following statistics based on the accident reports received by the MMDA for year 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For motorcycle riders – 178 killed and 7,905 injured; • For passengers – 37 killed and 2,292 injured; and • For pedestrians – 32 killed and 1,185 injured.
Transportation jt. w/ Public Order and Safety	Substitute Bill to HBs 5381, 5714, 5839 & 6226	Rep. Yap (V.), Deputy Speaker Hernandez, Reps. Umali and Luis Villafuerte	Penalizing and preventing the use of motorcycles or scooters in the commission of crimes through the use of bigger plate numbers and identification marks, and regulation of back riders	The Joint Committee, co-versed by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, Chair of the Committee on Transportation, and Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), Chair of the Committee on Public Order and Safety, approved the Substitute Bill and the corresponding Committee Report, subject to style and amendment.
Ways and Means	HR 1460	Deputy Speaker Garin	Investigation into the proliferation of the off-dock container yard/container freight stations (ODCY/CFS) in the Philippines jeopardizing the Bureau of Customs' (BOC) capacity to closely supervise and control these sensitive areas of customs operations	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 1460 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Cora delos Santos, member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Off-dock CY/CFS Operators of the Philippines (ACOP), presented to the body a brief history of the ODCY/CFS industry which was established under Customs Administrative Order (CAO) 11-80, dated August 21, 1980, and issued by then Minister of Finance Cesar Virata. Later on, the rules on the approval of applications to operate ODCY/CFS were superseded by CAO 5-96 dated July 31, 1996, which established the aggregate capacity utilization (ACU) of existing ODCY/CFS as the sole basis for approving new ones.</p> <p>According to Delos Santos, in effect, a moratorium on the issuance of certificate of authority to operate ODCY/CFS was thus imposed, except when the ACU of existing ODCY/CFS goes beyond 50%.</p> <p>Hence, Delos Santos said ACOP questioned the validity of the certificate of authority issued to Port Net Logistics, Inc. (Port Net) to operate an ODCY/CFS considering that the industry never reached 50% of its capacity when the license was issued to Port Net.</p> <p>Delos Santos likewise alleged that former BOC Assessment and Operational Coordinating Group (AOCG) officer-in-charge Melita Orbos-Del Rosario issued her 2nd endorsement, dated October 24, 2016, in favor of the issuance of Port Net's license to operate but with a handwritten note which would have negated Port Net's application. The note stated that Port Net's contract of lease with Sotelo Realty was already expired. Valid lease contract or certificate of ownership of land intended for the operation of ODCY/CFS is a prerequisite for</p>

Continuation... Ways and Means				<p>approval of ODCY/CFS operation under CMO 32-2015 (or the Revised Rules and Regulations for the Establishment, Operation, Supervision and Control of ODCY/CFS), Delos Santos said.</p> <p>Daisy Sotelo, president and chief executive officer of Port Net, asserted that the company has complied with all the requirements under CMO 32-2015, including the submission of renewed contract of lease with Sotelo Realty.</p> <p>However, when asked by Rep. Lianda Bolilia (4th District, Batangas) if Port Net has complied with the requirements, BOC Deputy Commissioner Edward James Dybuco attested that the the company never submitted a copy of its renewed contract of lease.</p>
	HR 1667	Rep. Cua	Review of the provisions of the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (RA 10863) on the disposition of property in the custody of the Bureau of Customs (BOC)	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 1667 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Dybuco said that the Customs Bureau disposes of confiscated goods by either destroying them, subjecting them to public auction, or donating them. When asked by Rep. Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (1st District, Ilocos Sur) on the disposition of perishable goods such as vegetables, Dybuco said that if these goods are not released within 24 hours, BOC has effectively destroyed them. With regard to confiscated imported rice, however, the BOC disposes of them either through public auction or donation.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their position papers on HR 1667.</p>

COMMITTEE MEETING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Constitutional Amendments	Discussion on the cost of shifting into a federal form of government	<p>The Committee, chaired by Southern Leyte Rep. Roger "Oging" Mercado, will continue with its discussion on the cost of shifting into a federal form of government in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Mercado cited several problems associated with the current fiscal system particularly the inequitable distribution of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) among local government units (LGUS) that hindered the growth of a lot of provinces especially those in Mindanao. He added that it is one of the problems which the government seeks to address through a shift to a federal form of government.</p> <p>According to Rep. Mercado, funds required for the shift to federalism may come from several sources such as the budget allocated for the capital outlay (CO) and maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE) of government agencies whose functions would have been devolved to the LGUs as well as the revenues collected by revenue generating agencies like the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and Bureau of Customs (BOC).</p>

<p>Continuation... Constitutional Amendments</p>		<p>Rep. Mercado also mentioned the "one-fund" concept espoused under PD 1177 or the Budget Reform Decree of 1977, which is being implemented at present. The said concept is a fiscal management policy requiring that all revenues and other receipts of the government must accrue to the General Fund and their utilization and disbursement must be subject to the budgeting process. (<i>Source: DBM website</i>)</p> <p>Reps. Arnolfo "Arnie" Teves Jr. (3rd District, Negros Oriental) and Manuel "Chiquiting" Sagarbarria (2nd District, Negros Oriental) surmised that the one-fund concept may be pursued instead of shifting to federalism.</p> <p>However, Rep. Jose Panganiban Jr. (Party-List, ANAC-IP) pointed out that the one-fund concept seems to run contrary to the concept of a federal government which guarantees fiscal autonomy to its constituent states.</p> <p>Rep. Corazon Nuñez-Malanyaon (1st District, Davao Oriental) sought to be apprised of the cost of maintaining a federal bureaucracy.</p> <p>Due to lack of material time, Rep. Mercado promised to conduct a thorough discussion next meeting to address the Members' queries and concerns.</p>
----------------------------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
<p>Health jt. w/ Trade and Industry (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 884, 885, 917, 925, 4129, 4713 & 5204 and HR 973</p>	<p>Reps. Tan (A.), Roque (H.), Abaya, Castelo, Fortun, Biazon, and Bravo (A.)</p>	<p>Strengthening the Inter-Agency Committee-Tobacco (IAC-Tobacco) to ensure compliance with Article 5.3 of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), thereby amending for this purpose Sections 2, 4, 29, 31, 32, 36 and 39 of RA 9211, otherwise known as the Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003</p>	<p>The joint technical working group (TWG), co-chaired by Rep. Jose Enrique "Joet" Garcia III (2nd District, Bataan), Vice Chair of the Committee on Health, and Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo, Vice Chair of the Committee on Trade and Industry, will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4th District, Quezon), author of HBs 884 and 885, explained that the proposed amendments to the Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003 is in accordance with the WHO FCTC, particularly Article 5.3, which states: "In setting and implementing their public health policies with respect to tobacco control, Parties shall act to protect these policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry in accordance with national law."</p> <p>The proposed law removes from the membership in the IAC-Tobacco the NTA and a representative from the tobacco industry, imposes stricter measures on the designation of "no smoking" areas and on advertisements, and increasing penalties against violations of the law, among other provisions.</p> <p>National Tobacco Administration's (NTA) Regulation Department OIC Rohbert Ambros warned that around three million tobacco</p>

<p>Continuation... Health jt. w/ Trade and Industry (Technical Working Group)</p>				<p>workers from the production to the manufacturing sector might be displaced once this proposed measure would be passed into law. He said that while the NTA has implemented alternative farming and livelihood programs for tobacco farmers affected by the implementation of RA 9211, a lot of them still went back to tobacco farming.</p> <p>Associated Anglo-American Tobacco Corp. (AAATC) Vice President Blake Clinton Dy likewise emphasized the huge revenues government stands to lose with this proposed law, saying that in 2016 alone, the tobacco industry paid P100 billion in excise taxes.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Raneo Abu (2nd District, Batangas) requested that the Department of Finance (DOF) and the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) be invited in the next meeting of the TWG to comment on the bill. Citing the major contribution of the tobacco industry to the economy, Deputy Speaker Abu said the bill should strike a balance between health concerns and the interest of the tobacco workers and other stakeholders in the tobacco industry.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Eric Singson (2nd District, Ilocos Sur) acknowledged the need to regulate the tobacco industry, but not to totally eliminate it.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Singson and Rep. Cecilia Leonila Chavez (Party-List, BUTIL) both suggested to retain the policy statement in RA 9211 which states that it is the policy of the State to “safeguard the interests of the workers and other stakeholders in the tobacco industry” to ensure a balanced policy.</p> <p>On the other hand, Deputy Speaker Romero "Miro" Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City), emphasized the need to focus on the enforcement of the law and to address illicit trade of tobacco products.</p> <p>Dr. Ma. Encarnita Limpin, executive director, Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Alliance, Philippines (FCAP), and Ma. Cristina Galang, medical specialist at the Disease Prevention and Control Bureau, Department of Health (DOH), expressed support for the bill.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their recommendations to the bill for consideration in the next TWG meeting. They were likewise asked to submit the reports and other documents requested by the Members of the TWG.</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--	--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Mindanao Affairs (Technical Working Group)	Discussion on how the existing share of Mindanao in the national budget may be augmented to ensure the funding of all major projects in Mindanao	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Rep. Evelyn Mellana (2nd District, Agusan del Sur), will continue its discussion on the existing share of Mindanao in the national budget in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Maximo Rodriguez Jr. (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City) underscored the need to augment the share of Mindanao in the national budget in order to implement its much needed development projects. He cited the inequitable budget distribution among regions based on a study by the House of Representatives' Congressional Policy and Budget Research Department (CPBRD) which showed a much lesser budget for Mindanao as compared to Visayas and Luzon.</p> <p>Similarly, Rep. Mellana pushed for the increase of Mindanao's share in the national budget to at least 21%. However, she observed the contrasting figures of the CPBRD and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) with regard to Mindanao's allocation in the 2018 national budget and advised both offices to reconcile their figures.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Rodriguez concerning the budgetary process, DBM OIC-Assistant Director Ma. Grace delos Santos explained that the process begins with the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC), a cabinet level committee under the umbrella of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), which approves the parameters in determining the annual budget.</p> <p>These parameters include: the inflation and exchange rates; the cost of fuel; the target growth rate; the projected revenues of the government; and the debt ceiling.</p> <p>Replying to the query of Rep. Rodriguez on the 10% limit imposed by the DBM on government agencies' annual budgetary increase, Delos Santos said that since 2017, instead of imposing a ceiling, the increase in the agencies' budget is based on their budget utilization rate (BUR) or their absorptive capacity. She also disclosed DBM's present policy initiative of minimizing the lumpsum fund of government agencies so that they will be able to completely disburse their funds according to the purpose for which they were allocated prior to the approval of their next budget.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Director Reyzaldy Tan of the Planning, Policy and Project Development Office, Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA), said that Mindanao will need an additional budget of P1.25 trillion spread over a five-year period primarily for infrastructure and economic projects. At least 12 catalytic projects are needed to be implemented by MinDA to be able to effectively spur economic growth and reduce poverty in the region, Tan said.</p> <p>In addition, Tan sought the support of the Committee for the fulfillment of the following legislative agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a Mindanao Railways Corporation, with MinDA serving as co-chair of the Board of Directors (BOD); • Systemic shift to Federalism; • Strengthening of Islamic Finance; and • Creation of Lake Lanao Development Authority (LLDA), with MinDA sitting as chair of the BOD. <p>MinDA was requested to submit to the TWG its budgetary proposal for Mindanao including the funding requirements for its 12 catalytic projects for the region.</p>

BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Land Use (Special Committee)	Briefing on the Committee's Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Alex "AA" Advincula (3rd District, Cavite), listened to the briefing conducted by Acting Committee Secretary Abigail Marie Apostol on its Rules of Procedure for the 17th Congress as well as the inventory of measures referred to the Committee as of March 1, 2018.</p> <p>The Committee met for the first time under its new chair, Rep. Advincula.</p>
	Review of HB 5240 or the proposed National Land Use and Management Act of the Philippines	<p>The Committee listened to the briefing by the Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners (PIEP) and the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations Inc. (CREBA) on their respective positions regarding HB 5240.</p> <p>The bill, principally authored by Dinagat Islands Rep. Kaka Bag-ao, was approved by the House of Representatives on May 5, 2017 and was transmitted and received by the Senate four days after.</p> <p>PIEP President Maria Theresa Quimpo commented that the bill's planning approach is more academic rather than practical. As such, Quimpo suggested that the following courses of action should be done to further improve the bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonize various laws related to land use; • Review implementing mechanisms and structure, especially on inter-agency coordination; • Encourage public-private partnership arrangements; • Consider the current practices on the ground; and • Consider the economic drivers, such as employment centers or central business districts, in settlement developments, industrial areas, and production land use. <p>PIEP is a non-governmental, non-profit, professional organization that promotes, advances and raises the study, practice and development of environmental planning in the Philippines.</p> <p>Meanwhile, CREBA National Chair Charlie Gorayeb suggested that the proposed land use policy should be comprehensible to all sectors. Gorayeb opined that the bill is biased towards "protection land use" or the rehabilitation, conservation, and management of sensitive/critical ecosystems; and "production land use" or the direct and indirect utilization of land resources for crop production, fishery, livestock and poultry production, timber production, agroforestry, mining, industry, and tourism. He added that the bill lacks focus on settlement development and infrastructure development despite the 1.7 to 6 million backlogs in housing.</p> <p>CREBA is a recognized umbrella organization of firms, individuals and associations directly or indirectly involved in land and housing, construction, allied industries, and various professional fields of discipline.</p> <p>Rep. Virgilio Lacson (Party-List, MANILA TEACHERS) requested the resource persons to come up with recommendations on how to manage congestion and urban sprawl away from central urban areas and into communities with low population density.</p> <p>Rep. Advincula suggested that the bill should have a provision requiring the construction of wastewater treatment facilities in every establishment and prohibiting commercial establishments from setting up business along or near main roads to avoid traffic congestion.</p>

<p>Continuation... Land Use (Special Committee)</p>		<p>Rep. Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-PACMAN) cited the lack of proper planning as the cause of the problems in Boracay Island, particularly the establishments' failure to comply with the country's wastewater treatment laws.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel "Chiquiting" Sagarbarria (2nd District, Negros Oriental) cited the successful wastewater management project of Dumaguete City which can serve as a model for other cities and municipalities. He encouraged the Committee to conduct a meeting in the City to observe this Galing Pook awardee project.</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------	--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
<p>North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)</p>	<p>Briefing by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) on its budget, plans and programs for North Luzon</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (1st District, Ilocos Sur), listened to the briefing conducted by CHED on its budget, plans and programs for North Luzon.</p> <p>CHED Region I Director Cherrie Melanie Diego informed the Committee that the Department's 2019 proposed budget for Region I is P167.27 million.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Eric Singson (2nd District, Ilocos Sur) inquired about the effect of the implementation of RA 10931 (Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act) on his current scholars. Diego answered that the scholars are still entitled to receive their monthly stipends over and above their tuition and miscellaneous fees through the same process of coordination between CHED and House Members.</p> <p>Baguio City Rep. Mark Go asked if the P6,000.00 grant to the student per semester under the Tulong Dunong Program (TDP) will be increased.</p> <p>CHED Legislative Liaison Specialist Jocelyn Balanag replied that the grant has actually increased to P12,000 per semester as a result of a recent amendment to the Student Financial Assistance Program (StuFAP) guidelines. The Unified Student Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education (UniFAST) Board has also allotted P1 billion for the short-term (payable in one year) loan program for students.</p> <p>In addition, as part of the benefits under RA 10931, students coming from poor households who are enrolled or who wish to enroll in private higher education institutions (HEIs) may avail themselves of financial assistance of as much as P60,000 per year, as long as they are listed in the <i>Listahanan</i> or the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) under the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).</p> <p>As for the Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR), CHED-CAR Chief Education Program Specialist Menzie Kuengan reported that the total budget for TDP for academic year 2017-2018 is P58 million.</p> <p>On the other hand, CHED Region II Director Honorato Alzate informed the Committee that under the region's TDP for academic year 2017-2018, there are 8,431 slots for 10 congressional districts with an allotment of P87.23 million and 2,077 slots for party-list groups with an allotment of P17.78 million.</p>

OTHER MATTERS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Ways and Means	Update by the Bureau of Customs (BOC) on the draft implementing rules and regulations (IRR) on Section 1226 (supervision and regulation of third parties) of RA 10863 or the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, will deliberate further on the draft IRR on Section 1226 of the CMTA in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Rodel Batocabe (Party-List, AKO BICOL) and Deputy Speaker Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA) inquired about the status of the IRR.</p> <p>BOC Deputy Commissioner Natalio Ecarma III said that the CMTA's IRR on Section 1226 was already approved and signed by Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III. He promised to submit a copy of the IRR to the Committee.</p> <p>Maria Zapanta of the Confederation of Truckers Association of the Philippines (CTAP) apprised the Committee of the components of transport cost and charges imposed by BOC-accredited port operators against container freight (trucking) operators which she describes as exorbitant and arbitrary.</p> <p>However, Rep. Cua said that the government is not inclined to intervene in the transactions between the two private entities and allow market forces to come into play.</p> <p>The Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) was requested to submit its guidelines in issuing shipline permit to operate (auxiliary or within ports services).</p> <p>The Committee decided to invite representatives from the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) to attend its next meeting to expound on the management of and regulations in the shipping industry.</p>