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BUDGET BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	Briefing on the proposed FY 2019 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments of the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) and its attached bureaus/agencies	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), listened to the presentation on the proposed FY 2019 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments of the PCOO and its attached bureaus/agencies.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair, Rep. Eric Olivarez (1st District, Parañaque City), sat as the presiding officer during the PCOO's budget briefing.</p> <p>PCOO Secretary Jose Ruperto Martin Andanar said that under the FY 2019 National Expenditure Program (NEP), the PCOO and its attached agencies are set to receive a budget of P1.47 billion which is 2.75% higher than its current budget of P1.43 billion. The proposed 2019 budget of the PCOO will be distributed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCOO Proper – P360.99 million; • Bureau of Broadcast Services – P396.97 million; • Bureau of Communications Services – P37.19 million; • National Printing Office (NPO) – P11.50 million; • News and Information Bureau – P124.68 million; • Philippine Information Agency (PIA) – P337.49 million; and • Presidential Broadcast Staff (Radio-Television Malacañang) – P205.18 million. <p>Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) noted the decrease in the budget of the NPO, saying that this might affect its function of serving the printing requirements of government offices. Andanar agreed with Rep. Zarate and asked the Committee to help reinstate NPO's original proposed budget.</p> <p>Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Bureau C Assistant Director Elena Regina Brillantes explained that the NPO has an existing revolving fund which it can use to finance its operations. Rep. Zarate averred that a government institution such as the NPO should not be made reliant on its revolving fund.</p> <p>On the issues raised against PCOO Assistant Secretary Esther Margaux "Mocha" Uson, such as the supposed use of government resources for the videos posted in her personal blog including her controversial "federalism video," Andanar disclosed that PCOO Undersecretary for New Media and External Affairs Lorraine Badoy already issued Uson a memorandum reminding her to strictly adhere to the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees (RA 6713).</p> <p>The PCOO and its attached bureaus were asked to submit documents requested by the Committee Members.</p>

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Agriculture (Technical Working Group)	Substitute Bill to HBs 2453, 3422, 5835, 6132, 6278 & 6324	Deputy Speaker Yap (A.), Reps. Romero, Go (A.), Panganiban, Deputy Speaker Garin, and Rep. Sy-Alvarado	Promoting and supporting the development of the corn industry, establishing for the purpose the Philippine Corn Research and Development Institute and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Rep. Jose Panganiban Jr. (Party-List, ANAC-IC), will deliberate further on the substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Panganiban informed the TWG that the Department of Agriculture (DA), based on its position paper submitted to the Committee, does not see the need for the creation of a Philippine Corn Research and Development Institute since the DA already has existing policies and programs on corn production and the proposed body will only duplicate its functions and initiatives.</p> <p>Dr. Artemio Salazar of the Institute of Plant Breeding, University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), agreed with the DA's position. He said what is needed right now is the formulation and implementation of a strategy specific to the promotion of the corn industry.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Panganiban on the FY 2018 budget of DA for its corn production program, DA MIMAROPA Regional Executive Director Antonio Gerundio replied that the DA's budget for this is P2.1 billion. Gerundio also volunteered the information that there are currently three million hectares of land planted with white and yellow corn nationwide.</p> <p>Education Program Specialist Donald Buena Agua of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and President Roger Navarro of the Philippine Maize Federation Inc. (PhilMaize) expressed their support to the bill.</p> <p>According to Navarro, the proposed law will institutionalize government intervention in corn production and synchronize government programs and policies geared towards corn industry promotion. He also requested that his group be included in the planning and development of corn policies and program.</p> <p>On the other hand, PHILEXPORT Trustee Oscar Barrera suggested to adopt a good marketing system for corn and to provide incentives to the corn farmers to further boost the industry.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bill for the TWG's consideration.</p>