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BICAMERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Bicameral Conference Committee	HB 5784 & SB 1896	Rep. Tan (A.) and Sen. Recto	Instituting universal health care for all Filipinos, prescribing reforms in the health care system and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Bicameral Conference Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4th District, Quezon), Chair of the House Committee on Health, and Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito, Chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography, will deliberate further on the disagreeing provisions of HB 5784 and SB 1896.</p> <p>The Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) were requested to submit their respective proposals on the premium rate, income ceiling and timeframe to be adopted in relation to the provision increasing the members' monthly PhilHealth premium.</p> <p>Other conferees who were present during the bicameral conference committee meeting were the following: On the part of the House, Deputy Speaker Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon), Reps. Jose Enrique "Joet" Garcia III (2nd District, Bataan), Arlene Arcillas (1st District, Laguna), Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), Cheryl Deloso-Montalla (2nd District, Zambales), and Ron Salo (Party-List, KABAYAN); on the part of the Senate, Senators, Ralph Recto, Risa Hontiveros, and Joel Villanueva.</p> <p>Also present were former Reps. Karlo Alexei Nograles and Harry Roque Jr., DOH Secretary Francisco Duque III, and Dr. Roy Ferrer, acting President and CEO of PhilHealth.</p>
Bicameral Conference Committee	HB 5236 & SB 2031	Rep. Acop and Sen. Lacson	Providing for the rank classification in the Philippine National Police, amending for the purpose Section 28 of RA 6975, as amended, otherwise known as the Department of the Interior and Local Government Act of 1990	<p>The Bicameral Conference Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), Chair of the House Committee on Public Order and Safety, and Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, Chair of the Senate Committee on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs, adopted SB 2031 as the reconciled version of the proposed law.</p> <p>Also present in the bicameral conference committee meeting were the following: On the part of the House, Reps. Edgar Sarmiento (1st District, Samar) and Leopoldo Bataoil (2nd</p>

Continuation... Bicameral Conference Committee				District, Pangasinan); and on the part of the Senate, Senators Gregorio Honasan II, Joel Villanueva, Sherwin Gatchalian, and Antonio "Sonny" Trillanes IV.
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ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Disaster Management	Approval of the Committee's Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan), adopted its Rules of Procedure for the 17th Congress.</p> <p>The Committee, which was created only last September 10, has jurisdiction over all matters directly and principally relating to disaster and calamities, whether natural or man-made, as well as policies, plans, programs and projects related to disaster risk and vulnerability reduction and management including disaster preparedness and resiliency, relief and rescue, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.</p> <p>Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (2nd District, Pampanga) said that the oversight function of the legislature will be useful in encouraging the implementing agencies from the executive branch to always strive for maximum results at the shortest possible time. The Speaker also enjoined the Committee to look into the status of the government's rehabilitation efforts in Marawi City in the aftermath of the armed hostilities in the area.</p>

COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Basic Education and Culture	Substitute Bill to HBs 87, 474, 1504, 2147, 2597, 5884, 6224 & 6346	Reps. Cortuna, Tinio, Alejano, Pineda, Santos-Recto, Vargas, Villafuerte, and Sy-Alvarado	Institutionalizing the grant of a teaching supplies allowance for public school teachers and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Ramon "Red" Durano VI (5th District, Cebu), approved the substitute bill, and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Rep. France Castro (Party-List, ACT TEACHERS), co-author of HB 474, and Rep. Julieta Cortuna (Party-List, A TEACHER), author of HB 87, presented the merits of their bills.</p> <p>The bill grants an annual cash allowance of P5,000 to each teacher engaged in actual classroom teaching in public basic education for the purchase of teaching supplies such as chalks, erasers, forms and other classroom materials.</p> <p>The Department of Education (DepEd) supports the bill.</p>
	HB 7958	Rep. Durano	Institutionalizing the Philippine participation in the international exhibition of the Venice Biennale in Venice, Italy and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 7598.</p> <p>Rep. Durano said that his bill seeks to encourage Filipino artists to exhibit their expertise and crafts in the global arena by ensuring them of the government's continuous</p>

Continuation... Basic Education and Culture				<p>financial support for such undertaking. He informed the Committee that the counterpart measure in the Senate, Senate Bill (SB) 1504, was already approved at the committee level.</p> <p>The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), through a letter submitted to the Committee, conveyed its support for the bill.</p>
	HB 8543	Rep. Lanete	Recognizing Faith Academy as an educational institution of international character and providing for mechanisms on the grant of certain prerogatives conducive to its growth	<p>The Committee approved HB 8543 and its corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Rep. Scott Davies Lanete, M.D. (3rd District, Masbate), author of HB 8543, said that the counterpart measure in the Senate, SB 1669, was already approved on Third Reading.</p>
Basic Education and Culture jt. w/ Higher and Technical Education	HB 7109	Rep. Roa-Puno	Requiring educational institutions all over the country to provide left-handed armchairs	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Ramon "Red" Durano VI (5th District, Cebu), Chair of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture, and Antique Rep. Paolo Javier, Chair of the Committee on Higher and Technical Education, approved HB 7109 subject to amendment. Thereafter, the corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>Rep. Cristina "Chiqui" Roa-Puno (1st District, Antipolo City), author of HB 7109, said that the number of left-handed armchairs that will be required from each school will be equivalent to at least 10 percent of the student population. The bill's intent is to address the plight of left-handed students who are left with no choice but to use right-handed armchairs which do not offer the needed arm support and cause inefficient and awkward writing position.</p> <p>Representatives from the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC), and Department of Budget and Management (DBM) expressed their support for the bill.</p>
Disaster Management	HR 2211	Rep. Savellano	Enjoining all crucial line agencies to affirm their strong commitment in rebuilding the different districts in Regions I and II, and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), their respective cities, municipalities, and barangays which were hit hard by Typhoon Ompong	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan), adopted HR 2211 subject to style. Thereafter, the Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Rep. Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (1st District, Ilocos Sur), author of HR 2211, stressed the need to call on concerned line agencies to swiftly act on the rebuilding of the areas greatly devastated by Typhoon Ompong, including the quick release of funds by the central office to the concerned local government units.</p>
	HB 8200	Rep. Villarín	Providing for compensation for loss or destruction of properties in Marawi City	The Committee agreed to deliberate further on HB 8200 in its next meeting.

Continuation... Disaster Management			during the 2017 siege of Marawi, appropriating funds therefor	<p>Rep. Tom Villarin (Party-List, AKBAYAN), author of HB 8200, said that his bill seeks to provide for a compensation scheme to the victims of the Marawi siege to cover for the loss of or damage to their properties.</p> <p>The Marawi siege was an armed conflict in Marawi, Lanao del Sur that started in May 2017 and lasted for several months between the government and armed groups tagged as terrorists affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).</p> <p>Rep. Villarin agreed to the suggestion of Benguet Rep. Ronald Cosalan to broaden the scope of the bill, by including women and the indigenous peoples as beneficiaries under the proposed law, being among the most vulnerable sectors during armed conflicts.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Prospero Pichay Jr. (1st District, Surigao del Sur) commented that the bill should only have one subject matter. Thus, the proposal to create a Compensation Board should be filed separately. Rep. Villarin, however, explained that the creation of a Compensation Board has to be part of the bill because it is tasked to administer the compensation scheme proposed in the bill.</p> <p>Task Force Bangon Marawi Secretariat head Falconi Millar said that the task force has already submitted to the Committee its position paper on HB 8200.</p> <p>Representatives from the Bangon Marawi Civil Society Organization (CSO) Platform, Marawi Consensus Group, and the Sowara o Miyamagoyag (Voices of Marawi IDPs) pleaded that they be allowed to return to their respective homes in Marawi which are located within the so-called "most affected area."</p> <p>Millar assured the local organizations that they can return to their places once the area is cleared of explosive devices that may still be hidden in some areas and other security threats. He added that the task force started the clearing of the most affected area last October, which will be followed by the horizontal development projects.</p>
Games and Amusement	HB 7528	Rep. Panganiban	Prohibiting the live streaming and broadcasting of cockfighting for purposes of betting and gambling and providing penalties for violations thereof	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Gus Tambunting (2 nd District, Parañaque City), approved the Committee Report on HB 7528 with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 4843 & 6983	Reps. Batocabe and Bernos	Strengthening the Games and Amusements Board (GAB)	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City) expressed his reservation on the bill particularly on the proposed additional powers of GAB pertaining to the establishment of</p>

Continuation... Games and Amusement				<p>additional cockpits. He suggested that there should only be up to two cockpits allowed in each municipality regardless of the size of the population. He also suggested setting uniform criteria for the establishment of cockpits that must be adhered to by all municipalities.</p> <p>Explaining his position further, Rep. Acop said the GAB has allowed the establishment of four cockpits in his district contrary to the provisions of the Cockfighting Law of 1974 (Presidential Decree No. 449, dated May 9, 1974), which prescribes that only a maximum of two cockpits are allowed for each locality.</p> <p>GAB Legal Division head Ermar Benitez confirmed that under the Cockfighting Law, only one cockpit shall be allowed in each city or municipality, except that in cities or municipalities with a population of over 100,000, two cockpits may be established, maintained and operated.</p> <p>Rep. Tambunting agreed that the cockfighting law should be strictly followed and that the GAB should not be given the authority to determine the number of cockpits that may be allowed per locality.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Lianda Bolilia (4th District, Batangas) if all cockpits have licenses and if GAB is able to monitor all of them, Benitez clarified that the LGUs and not GAB have jurisdiction over the issuance of cockpit licenses.</p>
Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Foreign Affairs	HR 1608	Rep. Zarate	Investigation into the alleged anomalies behind the slow passport processing of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)	<p>The Joint Committee, co-presided by Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo, Chair of the Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability, and Rep. Ann Hofer (2nd District, Zamboanga Sibugay), Vice Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, will deliberate further on the issues raised in the two measures in its next meeting.</p> <p>DFA Assistant Secretary Ernesto Abella admitted that there was indeed a wide gap between demand for passports and DFA's capability to receive and process passport applications. However, Abella said that the DFA has narrowed down the gap having the capacity now to process 20,000 passports daily, from 9,500 passports, and with its target of more than 30,000 passports daily by the end of the year. Abella added that the DFA was able to shorten the waiting time for booking online appointments for passport applications from an average of three months to only two weeks.</p> <p>Several lawmakers again questioned the still unresolved issue of the legality of the joint venture agreement (JVA) between APO Production Unit, Inc. (APO) and United</p>
	Privilege Speech 339	Rep. Bravo (A.)	On the state of passport application process of the DFA	

<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Foreign Affairs</p>				<p>Graphic Expression Corporation (UGEC) for the printing of the Philippine passport. They expressed concern over allegations that the JVA is being used by APO to skirt around the provisions of the Government Procurement Reform Act (RA 9184).</p> <p>Atty. Aileen Sanguir, representative of the APO-UGEC JVA, explained that a government-private sector JVA is a modality allowed under the 2013 Revised Guidelines and Procedures for Entering into JVAs Between Government and Private Entities issued by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA). Thus, the JVA between APO, a government-owned and controlled corporation, and UGEC, a private corporation, is allowed under the NEDA guidelines.</p> <p>Sanguir also clarified that the subject JVA (for the upgrading and operation of a high security printing plant in Batangas) was already in place before the DFA contracted APO for the printing of the e-passports. Even the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) has come out with an opinion which found the JVA between APO and UGEC to be regular and valid, Sanguir said.</p> <p>Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA), author of HR 1608, emphasized that the Joint Committee is conducting its own inquiry independent of the findings of the OES.</p> <p>Rep. Anthony Bravo, PhD. (Party-List, COOP-NATCCO) reminded the body that the previous statements of then Presidential Legal Counsel, now Presidential Spokesperson, Salvador Panelo and former Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay Jr. contradicted the findings of the OES.</p> <p>Replying to the query of Rep. Winston "Winnie" Castelo (2nd District, Quezon City), DFA Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs Neil Frank Ferrer gave assurance that the DFA exercised due diligence in contracting out to APO the printing of e-passports and that APO made full disclosure about its JVA with UGEC.</p> <p>Sanguir was requested to submit a position paper explaining the nature and details of the JVA and the possible legal implications stemming from this agreement.</p> <p>A representative of the OES will be invited in the next meeting of the Joint Committee to shed light on the JVA issue.</p>
<p>Government Reorganization jt. w/ Games</p>	<p>HBs 6158, 7574 & 8257</p>	<p>Reps. Pacquiao, Rodriguez (M.), and Pineda</p>	<p>Creating the Philippine Combat Sports Commission and providing funds therefor</p>	<p>The Joint Committee, presided by Rep. Mariano Michael Velarde Jr. (Party-List, BUHAY), Chair of the Committee on</p>

<p>and Amusements</p>			<p>Government Reorganization, and Rep. Gus Tambunting (2nd District, Parañaque City), Chair of the Committee on Games and Amusements, agreed to come up with a substitute bill to the three bills and approved the same subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte) sponsored HBs 6158 and 7574 in behalf of Reps. Rogelio Pacquiao (Sarangani) and Maximo Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City), respective authors of the bills.</p> <p>Rep. Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-PACMAN), author of HB 8257, conveyed that his bill seeks to provide social welfare and health care benefits to all professional boxers by enrolling them in the Social Security System (SSS), Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH), and the Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-IBIG).</p> <p>The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) commented on the appropriations provision of HB 6158, which allocates P150 million pesos for the initial implementation of the proposed law, with the PCSO and PAGCOR each contributing half of the amount.</p> <p>PCSO Legal Department Manager Anna Liza Inciong suggested that the provision conform to the PCSO's policy on the grant of a one-time assistance fund.</p> <p>PAGCOR Legal Counsel Angelo Carlo Talatala recommended that the agency's funding contribution be taken from the 50% share of the national government in PAGCOR's income.</p> <p>SSS Assistant Legislative Liaison Officer Joseph Desunia said that the agency will study the appropriate monthly SSS contribution of professional boxers, although he said that professional boxers are presently categorized as self-employed and that athletes in general are considered voluntary members of the SSS.</p> <p>On the confirmation of Rep. Tambunting that the bill covers all combat sports including boxing, kickboxing, and martial arts, Reps. Manuel Monsour del Rosario III (1st District, Makati City) and Manuel Zubiri (3rd District, Bukidnon) suggested that the body being proposed to be created under HBs 6158 and 8257 be named as the Philippine Combat Sports Commission.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Energy (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 4893 & 6668	Reps. Batocabe and Villafuerte	Establishing the Philippine Energy Research and Policy Institute, defining its objectives, powers and functions, and providing funds therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Rep. Carlos Roman Uybarreta (Party-List, 1-CARE), terminated its discussion on the draft substitute bill. The bill will be submitted to the mother Committee for its consideration and approval.</p> <p>The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) was requested to submit its recommendation regarding Section 15 (Tax Exemptions) of the bill.</p>
Labor and Employment (Technical Working Group)	HB 7066	Rep. Go (M.)	Mandating golf clubs to provide health, retirement, and other benefits to golf caddies and other service workers through a shared contribution scheme	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Ma. Theresa Collantes (3rd District, Batangas), agreed to conduct a meeting and an ocular inspection at Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City on November 29, 2018 in relation to HB 7066.</p> <p>Baguio City Rep. Mark Go, author of HB 7066, explained that the bill is a social legislation that ensures that caddies and other independent workers in golf clubs are covered by the Social Security System (SSS), Pag-IBIG Fund, and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth).</p> <p>Legal Researcher Mark Laurence Monterde of the SSS Legislative Affairs Department, expressed his support for the bill. However, he informed the Committee of a case in 1994 involving Manila Golf and Country Club, Inc. where the Supreme Court ruled that caddies are not employees of the golf clubs and are classified as independent contractors.</p> <p>The representatives of the Department of Labor and Employment - Bureau of Working Conditions (DOLE-BWC) also expressed their support for the bill and suggested to study DOLE's Department Order 174-17 entitled "Rules implementing Articles 106 to 109 of the Labor Code of the Philippines, as amended" to determine if there is an employer-employee relationship between the golf clubs and the caddies and independent workers.</p>

AGENCY BRIEFING

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Disaster Management	Briefing by the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management (NDRRMC) on the effects of Typhoons Ompong and Rosita in Luzon	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan), listened to the briefing by the NDRRMC on the damage caused by Typhoons Ompong and Rosita in the affected provinces in Luzon.</p> <p>Office of the Civil Defense's (OCD) Logistics, Interoperability and Force Management Division chief Susan Quiambao reported that</p>

<p>Continuation... Disaster Management</p>		<p>Typhoon Ompong affected 730,000 families; left 82 casualties; and caused damage to agriculture and infrastructure at a cost of P33 billion. On the other hand, Typhoon Rosita affected over 78,000 families and left 20 casualties. Both typhoons hit the provinces in Northern Luzon in September and October this year, respectively. (The OCD is the implementing arm of the NDRRMC.)</p> <p>Rep. Roman questioned the difference in the data on the death toll reported by the NDRRMC and the local government of Itogon, Benguet relative to the huge landslide in Barangay Ucab, Itogon due to the onslaught of Typhoon Ompong.</p> <p>OCD's Assistant Secretary Kristoffer James Purisima explained that the discrepancies may be due to the NDRRMC's verification process wherein the figures reported by the local DRRM councils may change upon determining the cause of death of individuals which may not all be due to the typhoon. The validation process is also used in identifying the beneficiaries of government financial assistance programs, Purisima added.</p> <p>Benguet Rep. Ronald Cosalan refuted Purisima's claim that no funding has been released yet for the rehabilitation of damaged infrastructures in the typhoon-hit provinces because the OCD has not received any request for such. Rep. Cosalan asserted that the requests and accompanying documents for the release of the Quick Response Fund (QRF) and Calamity Fund were already submitted to the NDRRMC as endorsed by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).</p> <p>When asked by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua on the cause of delay in the release of the QRF and Calamity Fund, Purisima attributed it to the lack of personnel to process fund requests, the submission by requesting parties of incomplete documents, and the long process of releasing funds by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).</p> <p>Rep. Cua asked the NDRRMC to review its organizational structure to solve its manpower problem and improve its systems in order to facilitate the release of funds to implement the much-needed infrastructure projects in the provinces hit by disasters.</p> <p>The NDRRMC was also requested to submit all reports and documents required by the Members in relation to the calamity fund releases from years 2016 to 2018.</p>
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