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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Agrarian Reform	HR 1130	Rep. Casilao	Investigation into the state of landlessness among Filipino farmers, perpetuation of former and present haciendas and the urgent necessity for land distribution, as a step towards the attainment of genuine agrarian reform in the country	<p>The Committee, presided by Rep. Fernando Gonzalez (3rd District, Albay), will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 1130 in its next meeting.</p> <p>ANAKPAWIS Party-List Rep. Ariel "Ka Ayik" Casilao, author of the resolution, underscored the need to come up with short and long term solutions to address the centuries-old problem of landlessness in the country which is one of the causes of social unrest. He said that the agrarian reform laws, such as RA 6657 or the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and RA 9700 or the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Extension with Reforms (CARPER), failed miserably to address the landlessness of the peasant masses.</p> <p>Rep. Casilao mentioned that he also filed a bill, HB 555 or the Genuine Agrarian Reform (GARB) Bill, which proposes the distribution of lands to all qualified farmer-beneficiaries for free.</p> <p>ACT TEACHERS Party-List Rep. France Castro, co-author of the resolution, added that the measure provides an opportunity to discuss and address the problem of landlessness among Filipino farmers, who should directly benefit from the gains of their farm labor.</p> <p>Supportive of the holding of this inquiry, Davao del Sur Rep. Mercedes "Didi" Cagas cited the recent killing of nine sugar workers in an hacienda in Negros Occidental as an indicator of the failure of the agrarian reform law to settle land problems.</p> <p>Rep. Arnolfo "Arnie" Teves Jr. (3rd District, Negros Oriental) urged the DAR to study the rate of productivity of agricultural lands before and after they were awarded to farmers to gauge the success or failure of the agrarian reform law. Rep. Teves claimed that the certificates of land ownership awards (CLOAs) were sold illegally by farmers who did not have the capability to manage their own lands.</p>

Continuation... Agrarian Reform				<p>Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) Undersecretary Luis Meinrado Pañgulayan reported that approximately 560,000 hectares of land are yet to be distributed to qualified farmers. He requested Congress to pass a law that will implement the second phase of the CARP.</p> <p>Former DAR Secretary Rafael Mariano supports the passage of the proposed GARB, saying that it will address the fundamental problem of landlessness in the country and will make way for a lasting peace in the rural areas.</p> <p>Representatives from farmers' organizations and peasant groups, namely, Paragos Pilipinas, National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW), Farmer's Organization of Mindanao, and Amihan Federation of Peasant Women manifested their support for the conduct of the inquiry.</p> <p>The DAR regional directors were requested to submit to the Committee a written report on the status of land acquisition and distribution (LAD) in their respective areas.</p>
Civil Service and Professional Regulation	HB 5390	Rep. Alejano	Regulating the practice of fisheries profession in the Philippines, creating for the purpose a Professional Regulatory Board of Fisheries and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" Mariño (5th District, Batangas), adopted the Senate version of HB 5390 and approved the same with amendments.</p> <p>Senate Bill 1641, regulating the practice of fisheries profession in the Philippines, was earlier referred to the Committee. The bill was recently approved on Third Reading by the Senate.</p> <p>Rep. Anthony Bravo, PhD. (Party-List, COOP NATCCO), co-author of HB 5390, sponsored the bill. He said that the bill seeks to professionalize the practice of fisheries profession and upgrade the standards of fisheries education in the country.</p> <p>Representatives from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), and the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) presented their views on the bill.</p>
Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Health	HRs 444, 480, 1519 & 1675 and Privilege Speech 125	Reps. Tan (A.), Suansing (E.), Atienza, Zarate, and Leachon	Inquiry into the legality of the procurement process and use of public funds relative to the school-based dengue immunization program of the Department of Health (DOH) as well as the efficacy and safety of the vaccine procured	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo, Chair of the Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability, and Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4th District, Quezon), Chair of the Committee on Health, will deliberate further on the issues raised in the five measures in its next meeting.</p> <p>In April 2016, the government launched a school-based immunization program to selected public schools in certain parts of the</p>

<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Health</p>				<p>country. A year after, Sanofi Pasteur (manufacturer of Dengvaxia vaccine) released a statement that based on its long-term clinical trial data on Dengvaxia, children who have not been exposed to dengue and were vaccinated with the dengue vaccine were more likely to get severe dengue after immunization.</p> <p>Public Attorney's Office's (PAO) Forensic Laboratory Director Erwin Erfe maintained PAO's position that the anti-dengue vaccine Dengvaxia is linked to the deaths of 96 out of 102 children that were autopsied by PAO's forensic team.</p> <p>This was, however, refuted by Dr. Raymundo Lo, a pathology expert, claiming that PAO's findings were not supported by factual data. Lo likewise criticized the conduct of the autopsies performed on the subjects and alleged that the team did not state all the required elements of an autopsy report. According to Lo, PAO's forensic team cited organomegaly, which is an abnormal enlargement of the organs, in most of the reports without performing actual comparisons with the standard weight and size of the organs depending on age.</p> <p>On the other hand, PAO Chief Persida Rueda-Acosta was quick to question Lo's authority to interpret and cast doubt on the findings of the PAO forensic team. She said the PAO's forensic team consists of clinical experts, medico-legal doctors, senior pathologists and doctors from reputable medical centers and hospitals in the country.</p> <p>On the procurement of the Dengvaxia vaccine amounting to P3.5 billion, Director Minerva Cabigting, of the Government Corporate Sector, Commission on Audit (COA), commented that the purchase of the Dengvaxia vaccines was not in accordance with the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Executive Order (EO) 49, Series of 1993, which directs the mandatory use of the Philippine National Drug Formulary (PNDF) Volume 1 as the basis for procurement of drug products by the government; the IRR of RA 9184 or the "Government Procurement Reform Act;" and the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the DOH and Philippine Children's Medical Center (PCMC).</p> <p>Dr. Anthony Leachon, president of the Philippine College of Physicians Foundation, Inc. (PCPFI), attested that the issue could have been avoided if the involved government agencies followed proper protocol for new drugs that enter the market. Leachon explained that product launch protocol requires that post-marketing surveillance (PMS) – a system of monitoring the safety of a pharmaceutical drug or medical device after it</p>
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<p><i>Continuation...</i> Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Health</p>				<p>has been released in the market – must be submitted to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) before the Formulary Executive Council (FEC) is consulted. However, he disclosed that despite the demand of the FEC for Sanofi Pasteur and the DOH to submit the PMS before the conduct of the mass vaccination, they did not comply.</p> <p>Rep. Gabriel Bordado (3rd District, Camarines Sur) asked whether there was undue haste in the procurement of the vaccines, and if it could be a case of technical malversation.</p> <p>Rep. Romualdo said that it is up to the Committee to determine whether there was technical malversation relative to the questioned transaction of the DOH.</p> <p>PCMC Executive Director Julius Lecciones admitted that when he prepared the purchase request for the Dengvaxia vaccines there was yet to be issued a PNDF exemption. But, he proceeded with the request because he was confident that it would eventually be issued. Lecciones further testified, among others, that the PCMC complied with the minimum number of days for procurement and there was no undue haste in the purchase. He added that the PCMC was prepared to terminate the procurement process in the event the request for exemption from the PNDF was denied. (The PCMC was the implementing agency of the DOH's dengue immunization program.)</p>
<p>Labor and Employment</p>	<p>HB 172</p>	<p>Former Rep. Nograles (K.A.)</p>	<p>Providing assistance to new graduates by waiving government fees and charges collected in connection with the issuance of documents required in their application for employment</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Randolph Ting (3rd District, Cagayan), approved the Committee Report on HB 172.</p>
	<p>HB 1296</p>	<p>Rep. Robes</p>	<p>Declaring the City of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan as a Human Resource Capital</p>	<p>The Committee approved the Committee Report on HB 1296.</p>
	<p>Substitute Bill to HBs 4562, 5911, 6650, 7116 & 7270</p>	<p>Reps. Laogan, Silverio, Tugna, Villarin, and Villafuerte</p>	<p>Strengthening rank-and-file employees' benefits from service charges, amending for the purpose Article 96 of PD 442, as amended, otherwise known as the Labor Code of the Philippines</p>	<p>The Committee approved with amendments the Substitute Bill to the five measures.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the payment of service charge shall be voluntary on the part of the customers and that all service charges collected by hotels, restaurants and similar establishments shall be distributed at the rate of 90% for the rank-and-file and supervisory employees and 10% for the management. At present, Article 96 of the Labor Code of the Philippines provides that the rank-and-file employees of the service sector shall be entitled to 85% of the service charges collected and 15% for the management.</p> <p>Rep. Sherwin Tugna (Party-List, CIBAC), author of HB 6650, and Rep. Raymond Democrito Mendoza (Party-List, TUCP) maintained their position that the collected</p>

Continuation... Labor and Employment				service charges should be wholly and equally distributed to all covered employees.
	HB 354	Former Rep. Aglipay-Villar	Establishing a Productivity Improvement Program, repealing for the purpose RA 6971, otherwise known as the Productivity Incentives Act of 1990	The Committee deferred the approval of the draft Committee Report on HB 354 to discuss further Section 7 (Incentives) of the bill.
National Defense and Security	HBs 7421 & 8037	Reps. Villafuerte and Alejano	Strengthening the employment rights of members of the Citizen Armed Forces or the Reserve Force of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)	<p>The Committee, presided by Vice Chair Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil (2nd District, Pangasinan), agreed to consolidate the two bills and approved the same and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>The bills seek to protect the reservists' employment rights by ensuring that after the end of their service in the military, they are reinstated to their civilian careers in their original or equivalent position, and without loss of seniority rights and decrease in salary. The bills also prohibit any discrimination against reservists in terms of job hiring, promotion or any benefit of employment.</p> <p>Reservists are called to active duty to augment and support the regular force of the AFP in times of war, national emergencies, calamities, disasters, and other threats to peace, order, and security.</p> <p>All Members present during the meeting expressed their support for the bills.</p> <p>AFP Deputy Chief of Staff for Reservist and Retiree Affairs Samuel Felix said that a bill with subject matter similar to HBs 7421 and 8037 was already approved on Third Reading by the Senate.</p> <p>Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City) requested Felix to submit to the Committee his observations and personal experience during the armed fighting in Marawi City last year and the rebuilding of the city after the cessation of the hostilities. Reservists had been called to active duty during the Marawi siege to help the AFP in its war against the terrorists.</p>
Public Order and Safety	Substitute Bill to HBs 3153 & 5787	Reps. Alejano and Bataoil	Transferring the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) and National Police Training Institute (NPTI) from the Philippine Public Safety College (PPSC) to the Philippine National Police (PNP), amending for the purpose Sections 24, 35, 66 and 67 of RA 6975, otherwise known as the "Department of the Interior and Local Government Act of 1990," as amended	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2 nd District, Antipolo City), approved the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HBs 3153 and 5787.
Ways and Means	Substitute Bill to HBs 8252 & 8323	Reps. Suansing (E.) and Villafuerte	Amending certain sections of RA 8424, otherwise known as the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997, as amended (by redesigning the financial sector taxation into a simpler, fairer, more efficient, and revenue neutral tax system)	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1 st District, Nueva Ecija), approved the Technical Working Group Report on the Substitute Bill to HBs 8252 and 8323 with amendments. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.

Continuation... Ways and Means	HB 4575	Rep. Salceda	Restructuring the excise tax on tobacco products, amending for the purpose pertinent sections of the NIRC, as amended	The Committee agreed to reschedule the deliberation on the two bills to November 27.
	HB 6648	Rep. Tan (A.)	Increasing the excise tax on tobacco products, amending for the purpose Section 145 of the NIRC of 1997, as amended by RA 10351 or the Sin Tax Reform Law	
Women and Gender Equality	Substitute Bill to HBs 4413 & 8364	Reps. Zarate and Nieto	Declaring May 17 of every year as the National Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy (Party-List, BAGONG HENERASYON), approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 4413 and 8364 subject to style, and the corresponding Committee Report.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 5213, 5781 & 5956	Reps. Rocamora, Villarin, and Antonio	Defining gender-based street, public spaces and online sexual harassment, providing protective measures and prescribing penalties therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 5213, 5781 and 5956 subject to style, and the corresponding Committee Report. Relative to the bill's provision prescribing penalties against online harassment, the Committee agreed to adopt the fines prescribed under the Cybercrime Law. Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) explained that online harassment is akin to cybercrime hence, the same penalty should be applied.
	HB 372	Rep. Brosas	Creating a National Women's Museum	The Committee approved HB 372 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HB 5453	Rep. Zarate	Mandating the observance of 29 November of every year as "Women Human Rights Defenders Day"	The Committee approved the Committee Report on HB 5453.

COMMITTEE MEETING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)	Briefing by the Department of Health (DOH) on its accomplishments, and plans and programs for North Luzon – Regions I and II and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (1st District, Ilocos Sur), listened to the briefing by the DOH on its plans and programs for North Luzon.</p> <p>DOH Region II Regional Director Rio Magpantay highlighted the DOH's "<i>Ang Kalusugan at Ang Pamilya Pilipino, Masaya at Organizado</i>" (AKAP-MO) strategy, which is being employed by his office in providing quality health care to the poor families in Region II through an organized health care system at the community level. Magpantay also reported that maternal and infant mortality rates have significantly decreased largely due to the increased access by pregnant women to skilled health workers. According to him, mortality rates can further go down with better access to other health facilities such as blood banks.</p> <p>Magpantay also presented the challenges that the DOH faces in Region II, which include access to safe water and sanitary toilets, and the effective detection of tuberculosis (TB). He disclosed that the 47% case detection rate (CDR) for TB in Region II is much lower than the region's target of 85%.</p>

<p>Continuation... North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)</p>		<p>DOH officials from the central office, Region I, and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) were also present to answer the queries of the Committee Members.</p> <p>The lawmakers inquired about the status of the DOH's water and sanitary toilet projects as these continue to be a problem in their respective districts.</p> <p>DOH Assistant Secretary Maria Francia Laxamana said that the DOH is considering the construction of communal septic tanks to address the lack of toilets in the countryside citing the high cost of constructing individual facilities. Magpantay added that plans are underway to provide kits for water quality analysis and technical assistance for the use of these kits.</p> <p>Rep. Savellano and Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Luisa Lloren Cuaresma, however, doubt the feasibility of constructing communal septic tanks as houses in the regions are oftentimes quite far from each other.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City) asked to be apprised of the status of the DOH's manpower problems. Laxamana replied that while the DOH still lacks health professionals, it has made great progress insofar as the filling up of vacant positions.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
<p>Government Reorganization jt. w/ Transportation (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 190, 1725, 2731, 3116, 5042, 5480 & 6978</p>	<p>Reps. Bravo (A.), Biazon, Alejano, Villafuerte, Garcia (G.), Vargas, and Fariñas</p>	<p>Establishing the Philippine Transportation Safety Board (PTSB), defining its powers and functions, and appropriating funds therefor</p>	<p>The technical working group (TWG), co-chaired by Rep. Ron Salo (Party-List, KABAYAN), for the Committee on Government Reorganization, and Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento (1st District, Samar), Vice Chair of the Committee on Transportation, will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>One of the contentious issues discussed during the meeting pertain to the proposed primary functions of the PTSB, such as the creation of safety standards for all transport sectors and the conduct of investigation on the cause of transportation accidents, in relation to the functions of other transport bodies.</p> <p>Resource persons from the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police Maritime Group (PNP-MG), Land Transportation Office (LTO), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), and the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) favor the proposal that the PTSB should only recommend, and not create, transportation safety measures that will prevent the recurrence of transportation accidents.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel Zubiri (3rd District, Bukidnon) recommended that there should be a universal safety standard to be followed by every transportation sector to facilitate the work of the PTSB.</p>

Continuation... Government Reorganization jt. w/ Transportation (Technical Working Group)				<p>Meanwhile, Rep. Anthony Bravo, PhD. (Party-List, COOP NATCCO), author of HB 190, recommended that the PTSB be designated as the umbrella agency that will oversee all existing transportation safety bodies and recommend additional safety measures, as needed.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their proposed amendments to the draft substitute bill for the TWG's consideration.</p>
Public Order and Safety (Technical Working Group)	HB 4171	Rep. Barbers	Requiring mandatory autopsy on bodies of crime victims and deaths under mysterious and suspicious circumstances	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Edgar Sarmiento (1st District, Samar), agreed to consolidate the four measures and come up with a substitute bill incorporating therein the pertinent recommendations of the resource persons and using HB 4171 as the working draft.</p> <p>Among the recommendations that were presented by the resource persons during the meeting include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the qualified medical officers that will do the mandatory autopsy; • Require the confidentiality of the autopsy report; • Clearly define "mandatory autopsy," and • Impose penalty on persons who prohibit, obstruct or impede the conduct of mandatory autopsy. <p>Representatives from the Department of Justice (DOJ), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital (UP-PGH), and Philippine National Police (PNP), expressed their support for the measures.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the measures for consideration by the TWG.</p>
	HB 4900	Rep. Castelo	Interdicting unauthorized disposition of human corpses by individuals, crematorium or funeral parlors and prescribing penalties for violations thereof	
	HB 4994	Former Rep. Roque (H.)	Prohibiting the cremation of bodies of crimes under investigation	
	HR 758	Rep. Uybarreta	Urging the Department of Health (DOH) to adopt and implement rules on the operation of crematoriums to ensure that such facilities shall not be used to destroy or conceal evidences of crimes	