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BICAMERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Bicameral Conference Committee	HB 8169	Former Rep. Nograles (K.A.)	Appropriating funds for the operation of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines from January 1 to December 31, 2019	<p>The Bicameral Conference Committee, co-presided by Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. (1st District, Camarines Sur), Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, and Sen. Loren Legarda, Chair of the Senate Committee on Finance, approved the Bicameral Conference Committee Report on House Bill 8169 (General Appropriations Act of 2019).</p> <p>Aside from Rep. Andaya, the following conferees from the House of Representatives attended the meeting: Deputy Speaker Arthur Yap (3rd District, Bohol), Minority Leader Danilo Suarez (3rd District, Quezon), Reps. Yedda Marie Romualdez (1st District, Leyte), Rodante Marcoleta (Party-List, SAGIP), Maria Carmen Zamora (1st District, Compostela Valley), Edcel Lagman (1st District, Albay), Federico "Ricky" Sandoval II (Malabon City), "Kuya" Jose Antonio Sy-Alvarado (1st District, Bulacan), Alfredo "Albee" Benitez (3rd District, Negros Occidental), Corazon Nuñez-Malanyaon (1st District, Davao Oriental), Xavier Jesus Romualdo (Camiguin), Anthony Bravo, Ph.D. (Party-List, COOP NATCCO), Johnny Ty Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur), Florida "Rida" Robes (San Jose del Monte City), Vicente "Ching" Veloso (3rd District, Leyte), and Raul del Mar (1st District, Cebu City).</p> <p>On the part of the Senate, aside from Senator Legarda, other conferees who were present during the bicameral conference committee meeting were: Senate President Pro-Tempore Ralph Recto, Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri, Senate Minority Leader Franklin Drilon, Senators Sonny Angara, Cynthia Villar, Maria Lourdes "Nancy" Binay, and Joseph Victor Ejercito.</p>

COMMITTEE MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Good Government and Public Accountability	HR 654	Rep. Gonzales (A.D.)	Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the sale of Paskuhan Village in Pampanga by the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) to SM Development	The Committee, chaired by Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo, agreed to set aside the Committee Report on HR 654 and to inform the concerned agencies on the Committee's decision, particularly the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG).

Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability			Corporation (SMDC) reportedly under the former's Asset Privatization Program, with the end in view of ascertaining the real ownership of the subject property amidst certain assertions to the contrary, as well as to determine whether correct procurement procedures were followed and whether the condition imposed by its former owner Jesus Lazatin has legal effect and to determine if the same was complied with or not	Rep. Rodante Marcoleta (Party-List, SAGIP), Senior Deputy Majority Leader, explained that the House of Representatives reconsidered its adoption of Committee Report No. 425 pertaining to HR 654. The Committee Report recommended the filing of a legal action to nullify or rescind the sale of the Paskuhan Village to SMDC, as it was allegedly done illegally by TIEZA. Rep. Marcoleta stated that there is a need for the Committee to reassess its findings and recommendations on the matter, on the following grounds: the Paskuhan Village has not been declared as a cultural and historical site, thus the sale of the property did not violate any law; the buyer of the property was a buyer in good faith having offered a price more than the property's book value; and the right of first refusal of the concerned local government unit cannot be invoked because under RA 9593 (Tourism Act of 2009), this right can only be exercised when the government property for sale or lease has already been declared as a cultural and historical site.
	HR 2317 & Privilege Speech 422	Reps. Uy (J.) and Siao	Inquiry into the illegal entry and dumping of hazardous plastic garbage from South Korea in the Phividec Industrial Estate in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental	The Committee assumed jurisdiction over HR 2317 and Privilege Speech 422 and will coordinate with the Committees on Ecology and Local Government on the scheduling of a joint inquiry. Rep. Juliette Uy (2 nd District, Misamis Oriental), principal author of HR 2317, said that her resolution seeks to investigate into the circumstances why 51 container vans containing hazardous plastic garbage from South Korea were allowed entry into the country by certain government agencies.

PUBLIC HEARING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Appropriations	HR 2104	Rep. Andaya	Inquiry into the legal basis and possible effects of the shift from an obligation-based to a cash-based budgeting system as proposed in the Fiscal Year 2019 national budget	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. (1 st District, Camarines Sur), will continue its inquiry relative to HR 2104 and Privilege Speech 430. Rep. Andaya disclosed that Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Benjamin Diokno had a meeting with him, arranged by a "common friend," after the House of Representatives found out about the alleged P75 billion insertion in the 2019 proposed national budget. In that meeting, which happened at the DBM's office in Manila, Diokno offered P40 billion in projects to the lawmakers in exchange for their silence on the issue, Rep. Andaya further revealed. Once again, despite having been subpoenaed, Diokno failed to attend today's hearing of the Committee to answer the accusations against him. DBM Undersecretary Amenah Pangandaman, DBM division chief Ellen Tumang, and DBM Bureau A
	Privilege Speech 430	Rep. Andaya	On allegations of large amount of budget allocation given to allies of the House leadership	

<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>				<p>staff Arriane Jean Geronimo, who were also subpoenaed, also failed to appear in the hearing. Reading their letter addressed to House Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (2nd District, Pampanga), Rep. Andaya said that the four cited their right to proper notice and just hearing and that they would attend the Committee's inquiry upon "direct order" from the House of Representatives.</p> <p>Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Undersecretary Maria Catalina Cabral confirmed that she and DPWH Secretary Mark Villar only learned about the additional P75 billion in the DPWH budget after the 2019 National Expenditure Program (NEP) was printed. Cabral said that Villar considered the additional P75 billion as "budgetary adjustments," which the DBM can do as a prerogative.</p> <p>Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) Sorsogon Branch Manager Leonora Ariola, who was again called to testify, reiterated her position that she could not divulge any information about the alleged P81 million deposit transaction in the account of Aremar Construction Corporation, citing RA 1405 or the Bank Secrecy Law. Aremar is one of the construction firms that allegedly uses Triple A contractors as dummies to bag huge infrastructure projects in the Bicol Region.</p> <p>Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) Executive Director Mel Georgie Racela said that under RA 9160 or the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001, transactions in cash or other equivalent monetary instrument exceeding P500,000 should be reported by the bank to the AMLC.</p> <p>Pressed to answer if the alleged bank deposits were reported by LBP to AMLC, Racela also cited the same prohibition under the Bank Secrecy Law. Nevertheless, he said that the AMLC has already initiated its own investigation regarding the matter.</p> <p>On the failure of Consolacion Leoncio, owner of the CT Leoncio Construction and Trading, to attend today's hearing, the Committee agreed to issue a show cause order to the chief of police in Sta. Maria, Bulacan to explain why he failed to serve the subpoena to Leoncio promptly.</p>
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