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PUBLIC HEARING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
Population and Family Relations	Status of implementation of RA 11055 or the Philippine Identification System (PhilSys) Act	<p>The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair, Rep. Ma. Lourdes Aggabao (4th District, Isabela), held a public hearing in Dumaguete City last March 12, 2019 to discuss the status of implementation of RA 11055, which was signed into law last August 6, 2018.</p> <p>Under the law, the PhilSys serves as the single national identification system for Filipino citizens and resident aliens in the Philippines for the purpose of simplifying and facilitating both public and private transactions.</p> <p>House Speaker Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (2nd District, Pampanga) said that in the exercise of its oversight function, the Committee conducted this hearing to know the progress of implementation of the PhilSys Act. She also explained that Dumaguete City was chosen as the venue of the hearing because it is part of the region where one of the law's principal authors, Rep. Arnolfo "Arnie" Teves Jr. (3rd District, Negros Oriental), comes from.</p> <p>The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the primary implementing agency of the PhilSys Act, presented the timeline for the law's implementation. According to PSA Deputy National Statistician Lourdines dela Cruz, the PSA already formulated and approved the law's implementing rules and regulations (IRR) last October 5, 2018.</p> <p>Explaining the main features of the PhilSys Act, Dela Cruz said that a randomly generated, unique, and permanent identification number, called the PhilSys Number (PSN), will be assigned to every Filipino citizen or resident alien in the country upon birth or registration with the PSA. The PhilID card, which will be issued to those who registered under the PhilSys, shall be honored and accepted in all government and private transactions requiring proof of identification.</p> <p>Moreover, Dela Cruz said the information that will be collected and stored under the PhilSys registry shall be limited to the individual's demographic data (e.g. full name, sex, date of birth, place of birth, blood type, and address) and biometric information (e.g. front facing photograph, full set of fingerprints, and iris scan).</p> <p>The PSA should be able to register over 100 million Filipinos and resident aliens by December 2022, of which about six million shall be covered at the start of the registration this September 2019. According to Dela Cruz, the PSA is already reviewing proposals for the design and structure of the national ID.</p> <p>Dispelling fears on data privacy violations, Dela Cruz said that under Section 18 of RA 11055, the PSA, with the assistance of the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), is mandated to implement safeguards that would protect the data stored in the PhilSys registry from unauthorized access, use and disclosure and against accidental or intentional loss, destruction or damage. In addition, the PSA works hand in hand with the National Privacy Commission (NPC) to ensure proper compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012.</p> <p>An open forum facilitated by Rep. Teves followed after the PSA's presentation.</p> <p>Other House Members who attended the public hearing were Deputy Speaker Prospero Pichay Jr. (1st District, Surigao del Sur) and Reps. Jocelyn Limkaichong (1st District, Negros Oriental) and Manuel "Chiquiting" Sagarbarria (2nd District, Negros Oriental).</p>

DISCUSSION WITH AGENCIES/ENTITIES

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Metro Manila Development	Discussion on the water crisis in Metro Manila	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Winston "Winnie" Castelo (2nd District, Quezon City), discussed with concerned government agencies and private entities the severe water shortage besetting several areas in Metro Manila this month.</p> <p>The meeting started early in the morning, at 7:00 a.m., with House Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (2nd District, Pampanga) in attendance.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Alfredo "Albee" Benitez (3rd District, Negros Occidental) stressed the need to immediately resolve the water shortage affecting more than a million residents in the east zone of Metro Manila, which is being serviced by Manila Water Company, Inc. He added that it is also important to determine the factors that led to this water shortage to prevent the same problem from happening again.</p> <p>Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) Administrator Reynaldo Velasco reported on some of the short-term solutions that will address the water crisis such as the transfer of 10 million liters per day (MLD) of Maynilad's water allocation to Manila Water at the La Mesa portal. Velasco also said that one of the long-term solutions to assure the public of an uninterrupted water service in the future is the construction of additional dams, water treatment plants, and aqueducts.</p> <p>Manila Water President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ferdinand Dela Cruz apologized for the water shortage, but added that solving the problem is a top priority of his company. He explained that one of the factors that caused the water supply shortage was the drop in the water level at the La Mesa Dam to the threshold of 69 meters due to lack of rains. With the increase in demand, Manila Water has to source from the La Mesa Dam about 150 million liters of water to augment its 1,600 MLD allocation from the Angat Dam.</p> <p>Under their Concession Agreements with the government, through the MWSS, Manila Water gets an allocation of 1,600 MLD for its six million consumers and Maynilad Water Services, Inc., the other water concessionaire, with 2,400 MLD for its nine million consumers. (Source: MWSS website)</p> <p>Dela Cruz said that Manila Water will source water from the Laguna Lake through its Cardona water treatment plant that could process 100 MLD if fully operationalized. The water concessionaire will also reactivate 101 decommissioned deep wells, develop new deep well sources, and deploy water tankers to supply and distribute water in the affected areas.</p> <p>According to Dela Cruz, Manila Water commits to fully restore water services to its consumers by the end of May. At present, he said, the company has restored water supply to 80 percent of the households in the East Zone.</p> <p>Majority Leader Fredenil "Fred" Castro (2nd District, Capiz) chided the MWSS for its lack of foresight in managing water supply and distribution in Metro Manila. He stressed that had the MWSS planned ahead, the water crisis would not have happened and the public would have been assured of a round-the-clock water service.</p> <p>Rep. Jose Atienza Jr. (Party-List, BUHAY) and Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy (Party-List, Bagong Henerasyon) noted that despite Manila Water's failure to install water treatment facilities in its service area in accordance with the terms of the agreement, fees for this purpose are already being collected from consumers.</p> <p>Rep Herrera-Dy explained that future investments included in the water concessionaires' business plans are already considered in the computation of water rates, thus consumers have effectively been advancing the payment for undelivered services.</p>

		<p>Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Zarate asked Manila Water to refund its customers for the days when there was no water supply in their homes. Dela Cruz said his company will abide by the rules of the MWSS on the matter.</p> <p>MWSS Chief Regulator Patrick Lester Ty earned the ire of lawmakers when he said that MWSS does not have the power to penalize the water concessionaires for renegeing on some of its obligations under their concessionaire agreements.</p> <p>Several Committee Members agreed that the Manila Water should be penalized for its failure to provide 24/7 water service as stipulated in its concession agreement with the MWSS.</p>
	<p>Discussion on the dredging activity in Manila Bay and the non-compliance of water concessionaires with their obligations to set up sufficient waste water treatment facilities and sewer lines</p>	<p>The Committee discussed the ongoing desilting and dredging activities at the Manila Bay being undertaken by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) as part of the government's efforts to rehabilitate the bay.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel Luis Lopez (1st District, Manila) noted the DPWH's slow-paced dredging of the Manila Bay. He also inquired why the dredging of the bay has only reached the area fronting the US Embassy. He said the portion of the Manila Bay along the Baseco Compound in Tondo, Manila, which may be heavily silted because of the high number of residents in the area, should also be covered. However, the resource person from the DPWH said that he does not have enough knowledge of the project being not part of it, and is therefore not in a position to answer the query.</p> <p>The discussion then focused on the lack of wastewater treatment facilities and sewer lines in Metro Manila. Both Rep. Lopez and Rep. Bayani Fernando (1st District, Marikina City) attribute the high fecal coliform levels in Manila Bay to the failure of Maynilad and Manila Water to comply with their obligation to install and maintain adequate sewerage and sanitation facilities in their respective service areas.</p> <p>Rep. Victor Yap (2nd District, Tarlac) called for the suspension of the collection of the environmental fees from consumers until the two concessionaires are able to fully comply with their contractual obligations. Under the concession agreement, the 20% environment fee being collected monthly from consumers is intended for the installation of sewerage, sanitation, and drainage facilities.</p> <p>Maynilad Assistant Vice President for Government Relations Marie Antonette De Ocampo explained that the proceeds of the environmental fee are used for the construction, maintenance, and operation of its waste water treatment facilities and other related projects.</p> <p>The MWSS chief regulator disclosed that after five years, the environmental fee will be increased to 40% to cover the cost of additional sewerage facilities.</p> <p>Rep. Francisco Datol Jr. (Party-List, Senior Citizen) called for transparency in the conduct of tests on the quality of water in Manila Bay. Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) Assistant General Manager Generoso Dungo supports Rep. Datol's stand on the matter.</p> <p>Noting the absence in the meeting of some invited resource persons, the Committee reminded the representatives of government agencies present to ensure the attendance of their senior officials in the next meeting to be able to accurately and adequately respond to the queries of the Members.</p>