



Committee Daily Bulletin

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ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Natural Resources	Organizational meeting and adoption of the Committee's Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Elpidio Barzaga Jr. (4th District, Cavite), held its organizational meeting during which the Committee's Rules of Procedure for the 18th Congress was adopted.</p> <p>Under the Rules of the House, the Committee has jurisdiction over matters directly and principally relating to natural resources, except energy and fisheries resources, and their exploration, conservation, management and utilization, lands of the public domain, mines and minerals, forests, parks and wildlife, and marine resources.</p>
Transportation	Organizational meeting and adoption of the Committee's Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento (1st District, Samar), held its organizational meeting during which the Committee's Rules of Procedure for the 18th Congress was adopted.</p> <p>Under the Rules of the House, the Committee has jurisdiction over matters "relating to land, sea, and air transportation and all public utilities and services connected thereto, as well as the establishment, operation, management and regulation of airports, seaports and other mass transportation systems including light and heavy rail systems and roll on-roll off systems (RO-RO), civil aviation, air transport agreements, transportation safety standards, air transport security, maritime security, ballast water management, ship financing, ship mortgage, maritime liens and transportation related insurance."</p> <p>Rep. Sarmiento asked the Committee Members to submit their preferred membership in the following subcommittees: Land Transportation, Aviation, Maritime Transportation, Railways, and Oversight.</p>

BUDGET BRIEFINGS

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	<p>Briefing on the proposed FY 2020 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments of the following government offices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Health (DOH) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Isidro Ungab (3rd District, Davao City), listened to the presentation on the proposed FY 2020 budget, plans and programs, and major accomplishments of the DOH and the Judiciary.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair, Rep. Jose Antonio "Kuya Jonathan" Sy-Alvarado (1st District, Bulacan), sat as the presiding officer during the budget briefing of the DOH.</p> <p>DOH Undersecretary Mario Villaverde said that under the 2020 National Expenditure Program (NEP), the DOH and its attached agencies/corporations are set to receive a budget of P160.15 billion, which is 5% lower than their current budget of P169.45 billion. The DOH-Office of the Secretary will receive the biggest chunk of the DOH's proposed budget with P88.26 billion, followed by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) with P67.35 billion.</p> <p>Villaverde explained that the decrease in the DOH's budget can be attributed to the decrease in the allocation for Health Facilities Enhancement Program (HFEP) to P5.9 billion from this year's P15.92 billion budget. Another reason is that the entire funding for the</p>

Continuation...
Appropriations

payment of personnel services (PS) under the Human Resources for Health Deployment (HRHD) Program was transferred to the Miscellaneous Personnel and Benefits Fund (MPBF) which is being managed by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

The HFEP aims to upgrade health facilities such as health centers, barangay health stations, and rural health units to sufficiently provide for emergency and primary care services; while the HRHD deploys health workers to rural areas and poor communities and assists local government units (LGUs) in paying for the salary of workers when they are financially unable to do so.

Villaverde also reported that 98% or 104.5 million Filipinos are already covered under the PhilHealth's National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) as of 2018. He also briefly discussed the salient features of RA 11223 or the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act of 2019. The UHC Law is a landmark legislation passed in February this year which provides the automatic enrolment of all Filipinos to the NHIP and ensures that they are able to access quality and affordable health services without exposure to financial hardship.

Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte) asked how the DOH identified the 33 areas where the UHC Law will be partially implemented.

DOH Undersecretary Gerardo Bayugo said that these areas, comprising of 28 provinces and 5 cities, were the first ones to signify their commitment to implement the UHC Law through their respective resolutions and letters of commitment.

Several House Members expressed dismay at the supposed discrimination in the implementation of the UHC Law, chiding the DOH of its decision to implement the law in selected areas without informing the legislators and all the provincial governments nationwide.

DOH Secretary Francisco Duque III explained that the full implementation of the UHC Law would require about P257 billion. Due to budget constraints and concerns on the readiness of implementing RA 11223, the DOH cannot rollout the implementation of the law on a national scale all at once. Nevertheless, Duque assured the House Members that other areas will be covered by the UHC program in the next budget cycle.

- Judiciary

Committee Vice Chair, Rep. Ruwel Peter Gonzaga (2nd District, Compostela Valley), sat as the presiding officer during the Judiciary's budget briefing.

Present during the meeting was Majority Leader Ferdinand Martin Romualdez (1st District, Leyte) who expressed his support for the Judiciary.

Supreme Court (SC) Administrator Jose Midas Marquez said that under the FY 2020 NEP, the Judiciary is set to receive P38.71 billion. This amount will be allocated to the following courts: Supreme Court of the Philippines and the Lower Courts, P34.39 billion; Court of Appeals, P2.89 billion; Sandiganbayan, P809.71 million; Court of Tax Appeals, P481.26 million; and Presidential Electoral Tribunal, P135.75 million.

Marquez also informed the Committee that the Supreme Court's original budget proposal was P55.66 billion but the DBM only approved P38.71 billion, with a variance of P16.95 billion.

The Committee Members present did not have any query on the proposed budget of the Judiciary but asked the DBM to explain the budget cuts.

Continuation... Appropriations		<p>DBM Bureau-D Director Amanella Arevalo said that the budget reduction was due to the exclusion of non-recurring items as well as congressional initiatives that were part of last year's budget.</p> <p>The Committee Members called for the augmentation of the Supreme Court's 2020 budget as they lauded the "exemplary performance" of the Judiciary.</p>
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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Basic Education and Culture	HB 638	Deputy Speaker Legarda	Institutionalizing Philippine participation in the international exhibitions of the Venice Biennale	The Committee, chaired by Pasig City Rep. Roman Romulo, approved, subject to style, HB 638 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HB 1943	Rep. Fortun	Declaring the Balangay, otherwise known as the Butuan boat, as the National Boat of the Philippines	The Committee approved, subject to style, HB 1943 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HB 3506	Rep. Garcia (V.)	Declaring the Walingwaling as the National Orchid of the Philippines	<p>The Committee approved, subject to style and amendment, HB 3506 and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that Walingwaling should be regarded as the National Orchid of the Philippines and the Sampaguita to remain as the National Flower of the Philippines.</p>
	HB 434	Rep. Rodriguez	Declaring Cagayan de Oro River as a Cultural Heritage Zone	<p>The Committee approved, subject to style, HB 434 and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Rep. Rufus Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City), author of HB 434, said that the Cagayan de Oro River is culturally significant in terms of its historical, archeological, cultural, ecological and economic values. The river is the only class-A city river in the Philippines which remains unpolluted and continually draws tourists all year round.</p>
	HB 593	Rep. Mangaoang	Establishing the Kalinga Heritage Museum and Cultural Center, defining its purposes and objectives and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved, subject to style, HB 593 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HB 1790	Rep. Gullas	Declaring the City of Carcar in the Province of Cebu as a Cultural Heritage Zone	<p>The Committee approved, subject to style and amendment, HB 1790 and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>The Members of the Committee agreed to amend Section 5 of the bill to require the immediate submission of the development plan for the City of Carcar and not within one year after the approval of the proposed law.</p>
	HB 2797	Rep. Rodriguez	Establishing a cultural center and museum in the City of Cagayan de Oro, Province of Misamis Oriental	<p>The Committee approved, subject to style and amendment, HB 2797 and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) should be designated as the lead agency in the implementation of the proposed law.</p>

Continuation... Basic Education and Culture	HB 2863	Rep. De Venecia	Establishing the Edades and Bernal Museum in the City of Dagupan, Province of Pangasinan, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved, subject to style and amendment, HB 2863 and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Rep. Christopher de Venecia (4th District, Pangasinan) agreed with the recommendation of National Museum of the Philippines (NMP) Director General Jeremy Barns and National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) Chair Rene Escalante to expand the bill to allow the establishment of a cultural center and museum to be known as the “Edades and Bernal Museum and Cultural Center.”</p>
	HBs 3608 & 3609	Rep. Cari	Establishing a junior high school in Barangay Punta to be known as Punta Junior High School and in Barangay Maganhan to be known as Maganhan Junior High School both located in the City of Baybay, Province of Leyte and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved, subject to style, HBs 3608 and 3609 and the corresponding Committee Reports.</p>
	HB 791	Rep. Biazon	Ensuring the protection and conservation of Rizal Memorial Sports Complex (RMSC) in the District of Malate, City of Manila as an important cultural property and a national historical landmark	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>The bill proposes to appropriate the RMSC and its land to the National Museum in order to ensure the perpetuity of the RMSC as a cultural heritage.</p> <p>Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) Chair William Ramirez said that the Manila City local government owns the RMSC and the PSC only manages its operations. He added that the PSC was asked to vacate the place but PSC affirmed its right to stay and manage the RMSC.</p> <p>Due to the many issues raised during the meeting, Rep. Romulo requested the PSC, NHCP, NCCA and the Heritage Conservation Society, a non-stock, non-profit organization advocating the protection and preservation of the country’s built heritage, cultural, and historical sites, to submit their respective position papers on the bill.</p>
HB 2223	Rep. Radaza	Rectifying the dishonorable use of a great Filipino name Lapulapu to a fish species “Plectropomus Leopardus”	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Lapu-Lapu City Rep. Paz Radaza said that the bill seeks to rectify, correct and give justice to the honorable name of Lapulapu as one of the country’s heroes by naming the fish species “Plectropomus Leopardus” as “Pugapo.”</p> <p>Philippine Information Agency (PIA) information officer Portia Palma expressed support for the bill but emphasized that the preparation of the ads and information campaign, as provided under Section 4 of the proposed law, will only be as far as the agency’s resources will allow.</p>	

Continuation... Basic Education and Culture				<p>The NHCP Chair said that the name of Lapulapu should be spelled without a hyphen, referring to the spelling of his name in the bill.</p> <p>Rep. Romulo requested the resource persons to submit their respective position papers on the matter. The Secretariat was directed to invite representatives from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) to attend the Committee's next meeting.</p>
	HB 1095	Rep. Salo	Amending Section 24 of RA 8491, otherwise known as the Flag and Heraldic Code of the Philippines (by expanding the list of persons who, upon death, are privileged to have their casket covered or draped by the Philippine flag)	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the three bills.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon) was designated to head the TWG.</p>
	HBs 2748 & 3734	Rep. Rodriguez and Deputy Speaker Escudero	Strengthening the Rules on the proper use and display of our national symbols and the rendition of the national anthem, repealing for the purpose Republic Act No. 8491, otherwise known as the "Flag and Heraldic Code of the Philippines"	
	HB 2111	Rep. Aumentado	Declaring Chocolate Hills as national patrimony, national heritage park, and geological monuments penalizing their pillage, destruction, and defacement	The Committee deferred its consideration of the bill.
Economic Affairs	HBs 78, 301, 346, 1781 & 4167	Reps. Salceda, Yap (V.), Romualdo, Salo, and Suansing (E.)	Providing for the definition of public utility, further amending for the purpose Commonwealth Act 146, otherwise known as the Public Service Act, as amended	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA), approved the consolidation of the seven bills and directed the Secretariat to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.
	HBs 403 & 540	Deputy Speaker Villafuerte and Rep. Cabatbat	Amending Commonwealth Act 146, as amended (by clarifying the terms "public utility" and "public service;" formalizing the transfer of functions of the Public Service Commission to various administrative agencies; creating a mechanism to fix rates, among others)	<p>Rep. Garin said that the bills define public utility as a person that operates, manages, and controls for public use any of the following: electricity distribution system, electricity transmission system, and water pipeline distribution system or sewerage pipeline system.</p> <p>According to Rep. Antonio 'Tonypet' Albano (1st District, Isabela), the proposed law may already be approved by the Committee pursuant to Section 48 of the House Rules which provides that priority bills passed by the House on third reading in the immediately preceding Congress may already be disposed of as matters already reported, upon approval by the Committee.</p> <p>Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay), author of HB 78, explained that his bill, when passed into law, will foster competition in the country which will result in improved quality of service at a lower price, thus promoting the interest of the public.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Ferdinand Hernandez (2nd District, South Cotabato) recommended the inclusion of "common carriers" in the definition of public utilities in view of the nature of their</p>

Continuation... Economic				<p>operations which is to serve the public. He stressed that allowing foreign-owned common carriers control of the country's airspace, roads and internal waters will pose a threat to national security.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Prospero Pichay Jr. (1st District, Surigao del Sur), Rep. Rufus Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City), and Rep. Manuel Zubiri (3rd District, Bukidnon) supported the views of Deputy Speaker Hernandez.</p> <p>Rep. Zubiri added that there should be reciprocity between the Philippines and the country of origin of foreign-owned common carriers. He explained that if a foreign airline is allowed to do business domestically, an airline company owned by Filipinos should also be allowed to do the same in the country of the foreign airline.</p> <p>On the classification of electric cooperatives as public utilities, Rep. Presley de Jesus (Party-List, PHILRECA) argued that the ownership of electric cooperatives should remain with their member-owners and should not be open to foreign national or entities.</p> <p>Representatives from Globe, Smart, Philippine Airlines, and MERALCO likewise expressed their concern over some of the provisions of the proposed law.</p> <p>The following agencies/entities gave their support for the proposed law: National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham), and Foundation for Economic Freedom (FEF).</p>
Transportation	HBs 698 & 4166	Reps. Fariñas (R.C.) and Sarmiento	Declaring the third Sunday of November of every year as the National Day of Remembrance for road crash victims, survivors, and their bereaved families	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento (1st District, Samar), agreed to consolidate HBs 698 and 4166.</p> <p>Rep. Ria Christina Fariñas (1st District, Ilocos Norte), principal author of HB 698, explained that the bill pays tribute to lost lives caused by road accidents by providing an annual venue for collaboration among road safety stakeholders. The bill also underlines the need for the government's commitment to life saving road safety programs.</p> <p>A similar bill (HB 7920), filed by former Rep. Rodolfo Fariñas and which was substituted by HB 9069, was approved on third reading in the 17th Congress.</p> <p>Rep. Sarmiento informed the Members of the Committee that his bill, HB 4166, is the exact version of the bill approved on third reading in the last Congress. He added that the proposed law aims to increase public awareness of the causes, consequences, and costs of road accidents.</p>

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Natural Resources	Briefing on the mandate and plans and programs of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Elpidio Barzaga Jr. (4th District, Cavite), listened to the briefing of the DENR on its mandate, and plans and programs for the environment sector.</p> <p>DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones highlighted the status of the Department's 23 foreign-assisted projects (FAPs), with a total cost of US\$414.01 million.</p> <p>Leones also informed the Committee of the status of the following major programs of the DENR: Boracay Island and Manila Bay Rehabilitation; Clean Water; Solid Waste Management; Clean Air; Enhanced National Greening; Intensified Forest Protection and Anti-Illegal Logging; Enhanced Biodiversity Conservation; Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management; Geo-hazard, Ground Water Assessment and Responsible Mining; and Improved Land Administration and Management.</p> <p>The DENR's legislative agenda for the 18th Congress include the amendment of the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 and the passage of laws pertaining to National Land Use, Rainwater and Harvesting Facility, and Water Resources Management and Rationalization.</p> <p>Several House Members asked about the process of securing a mining permit and the period of its validity.</p> <p>DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) acting Director Wilfredo Moncano said that a mining permit is valid for 25 years, renewable for another 25 years, subject to a favorable review by the DENR and provided that a Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) was secured from the affected indigenous peoples (IPs).</p> <p>The resource persons from the DENR answered the queries of the Members relative to the concerns of their respective legislative districts.</p>

DISCUSSION WITH AGENCIES/ENTITIES		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Metro Manila Development	Discussion with concerned government agencies on the continuing water crisis in Metro Manila	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Manuel Luis Lopez (1st District, Manila), agreed to hold another meeting with officials from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), National Irrigation Administration (NIA), and Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to discuss long term solutions to the water shortage being experienced in some parts of Metro Manila.</p> <p>Rep. Lopez said that even at the onset of the rainy season, there are still areas in Metro Manila that are experiencing intermittent water interruptions. He underscored the need to find permanent solutions to the water shortage.</p> <p>MWSS Administrator Emmanuel Salamat recalled the water crisis in March 2019 which affected millions of residents in Metro Manila. He attributed this to the El Niño climate cycle that caused water in Angat Dam – the main source of water for Metro Manila – to dip to critical level. He cited the measures that MWSS has taken to augment water source such as activating deep wells and operating additional treatment plants. In preparation for the summer of 2020, Salamat said</p>

<p>Continuation... Metro Manila Development</p>		<p>that the MWSS is launching its OPLAN TAG-INIT 2020 to ensure adequate water supply next year.</p> <p>Rep. Eric Martinez (2nd District, Valenzuela City) asked if the current water level in Angat Dam of 181.77 meters is adequate to supply the water requirements of Metro Manila residents without any service interruptions.</p> <p>National Water Resources Board (NWRB) Executive Director Seville David, Jr. clarified that in order to avoid water interruptions, the water level in Angat Dam should be at least 210 meters. David added that the water shortage can also be attributed to the increase in population that resulted in the higher demand for water.</p> <p>Muntinlupa City Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon suggested that the government come up with a better water treatment system to process raw water from the Laguna Lake, making it potable and available as another water source for Metro Manila residents.</p> <p>Manila Water Company Chief Executive Ferdinand de La Cruz said that, aside from the two water treatment plants in Laguna Lake, Manila Water will soon construct a third water treatment plant which will process lake water into potable water, De La Cruz added.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Precious Hipolito-Castelo (2nd District, Quezon City) inquired on the status of the construction of the Kaliwa Dam in Quezon Province. Salamat said that the China Energy Engineering Corporation, a Chinese state-owned company, won the bidding held in December last year, besting two other Chinese contractors which were disqualified for failing to comply with the requirements. Construction of the Kaliwa Dam will commence upon the winning bidder's completion of documentary requirements, Salamat added.</p>
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