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COMMITTEE MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Transportation	<i>Motu Proprio</i> Inquiry		<p>On land transportation policies post-Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) particularly concerning bus, jeepney, and motorcycle taxi operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDSA Busway Project 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento (1st District, Western Samar), conducted an inquiry into current land transportation policies particularly concerning bus, jeepney, and motorcycle taxi operations after the lifting of the ECQ.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Sarmiento presented the accomplishment report of the Committee for the First Regular Session of the 18th Congress which includes the passage of several measures by the Committee.</p> <p>In relation to the EDSA Busway Project, several House Members tagged as road hazards the concrete barriers placed on the innermost lanes of EDSA to segregate the bus lanes from the other lanes of the highway. They said these barriers could cause accidents on EDSA.</p> <p>The EDSA Busway Project, which was designed to allow faster travel time for commuters, is a joint undertaking of the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) with the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).</p> <p>MMDA General Manager Jose Arturo Garcia Jr. said that the purpose of the concrete barriers is to separate buses from private vehicles and to protect the commuters from any untoward incident. The dedicated bus lane measures from 3.2 to 3.5 meters in width compared to the usual width of a bus which ranges from 2.5 to 2.8 meters. He refuted reports of bus accidents being caused by the newly placed barriers. He emphasized that drunk driving, texting while driving, and the lack of discipline among drivers are the major causes of bus accidents on EDSA. He added that buses plying along EDSA have a speed limit of 60 kilometers per hour (kph).</p> <p>Reps. Ferdinand Gaité (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) and Anthony Peter “Onyx” Crisologo (1st District, Quezon City) urged the concerned agencies to review the safety aspect of putting these concrete barriers on EDSA to ensure the safety of commuters as well as public and private vehicles.</p>

<p>Continuation... Transportation</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation of motorcycle taxis 	<p>resources and attain better fleet management, thereby ensuring profitability and longevity in the operation of public land transport. In addition, under the program, jeepney drivers will enjoy a fixed monthly salary similar to the system established for bus drivers.</p> <p>Delgra clarified that jeepney operators who will not be able to consolidate their franchises may still operate under a provisional authority.</p> <p>Rep. France Castro (Party-List, ACT-TEACHERS) urged the land transport agencies to allow the jeepneys to resume operation in all cities in the National Capital Region. She stressed that jeepney drivers need to go back to work in order to provide for their families.</p> <p>Rep. Sarmiento agreed to conduct another meeting that will focus on the issues raised relative to policies on jeepney operations.</p> <p>On the operations of motorcycle taxis, Rep. Castelo urged the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) and the National Task Force (NTF) against COVID-19 to already allow the operations of motorcycle taxis provided that they comply with government health and safety protocols. She said this will be beneficial to workers who mainly rely on this mode of transportation to reach their workplace.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Biazon questioned the safety of installing barriers on motorcycles to comply with social distancing. He explained that this would be more dangerous to the riders in case of accidents. He asked if a study has been made on the effect of the barrier to the riders during a crash.</p> <p>NTF Undersecretary Isidro Purisima, also the Deputy Presidential Adviser on Peace Reconciliation and Unity (for Operations), replied that it is being reviewed right now by the IATF, after which the latter will come up with a decision on the matter.</p> <p>ANGKAS majority owner George Royeca presented to the body the study made by his motorcycle ride-hailing firm on the safety of the motorcycle barrier. He explained that the barrier is not made of acrylic but from polyethylene plastic which is unlikely to break during a crash, thus the use of such barrier is considered safe and will not endanger the lives of the riders.</p> <p>Rep. Cristal Bagatsing (5th District, Manila) recommended to continue the pilot testing of motorcycle taxis and requested the Committee on Transportation to spearhead this activity.</p> <p>According to the LTO Chief, a technical working group (TWG) headed by the LTFRB</p>
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Continuation... Transportation				<p>conducted a three-month pilot testing of motorcycle taxis to determine whether motorcycles are safe for public transport. The pilot test ended on March 23 with no final decision reached as the pandemic had caused delays in the collection of data and prevented the TWG staff from submitting the necessary reports.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to spearhead the extension of the motorcycle pilot testing designating Navotas City Rep. John Reynald Tiangco as the lead person.</p>
	Motu Proprio Inquiry		On the proposal to temporarily extend the vehicle registration process for two years	<p>The LTO Chief informed the Committee that the LTO has allowed the extension of the validity of vehicle registration to a maximum period of 60 days because of the pandemic, but it may be extended for another 60 days if needed. Galvante also mentioned that penalties are not being imposed by the LTO for late vehicle registration at this time.</p> <p>Galvante admitted that LTO has backlogs in vehicle registration due to the pandemic, with only a limited number of personnel reporting for work each day to observe social distancing protocols and because some of the employees got infected with COVID-19.</p> <p>DOTr OIC-Undersecretary Artemio Tuazon Jr. said that several measures have already been implemented to address the backlog.</p>

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Good Government and Public Accountability	Briefing on actions taken by the government to address the plight of locally stranded individuals (LSIs) during the COVID-19 pandemic	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. "Kuya" Jose Antonio Sy-Alvarado (1st District, Bulacan), listened to the presentations of the Department of Tourism (DOT) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on the actions they have taken so far to address the plight of LSIs amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>DOT National Capital Region Director Woodrow Maquiling Jr. said that the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) Resolution No. 29 issued on April 28 authorized the DOT to organize sweeper flights for stranded local tourists. The Department arranged with local airlines several flights to Metro Manila and a few going to Clark from the major tourism destinations in the country such as Butuan, Caticlan, Cebu, Davao, El Nido, Siargao, Cagayan, Tacloban, Iloilo, and Puerto Princesa. A total of 29 sweeper flights have been arranged by the DOT during the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) period which benefitted around 9,000 LSIs, particularly distressed tourists. Maquiling added that the DOT also provided one-time cash assistance of P2,000 to domestic tourists whose trips were cancelled during the ECQ.</p> <p>DSWD Undersecretary for Operations Aimee Torre Franca-Neri apprised the Committee of the Hatid-Tulong Program, which is a whole-of-government approach to address the needs of LSIs, particularly to be able to go home to their home provinces. She reported that the Departments of Transportation (DOTr) and</p>

<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability</p>		<p>Energy (DOE) committed to provide gasoline for the one-way trip of buses that will transport the LSIs. On its part, the DSWD extended financial assistance in the amount of P2,000 to qualified LSIs. Torrefranca-Neri added that the LSIs who stayed at the Quirino Grandstand were transported to their home provinces from July 4-5 while most of those who were at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex (RMSC) were transported to their provinces from July 25-29.</p> <p>Rep. Sy-Alvarado, Deputy Speaker Dan Fernandez (1st District, Laguna), and Minority Leader Bienvenido Abante Jr. (6th District, Manila) believe that the concerned government agencies were able to promptly respond to the problems of the LSIs, although there may have been some lapses in implementation. They lamented that the media just did not highlight the efforts of the government with regard to this matter. Nevertheless, the lawmakers urged the concerned government agencies to devise a better and strategic way of managing similar situations so that the scenario at the RMSC will not happen again.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Fernandez and Rep. Jesus Crispin Remulla (7th District, Cavite) suggested the designation of several areas where the LSIs can temporarily stay so that there will be no overcrowding in one area just like what happened at the RMSC.</p> <p>Replying to the query of Minority Leader Abante, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Undersecretary Benjo Santos Benavidez said that there are no more LSIs at the RMSC as of today. Those LSIs who have not yet been transported to the provinces were brought to temporary shelters, while those who tested positive with COVID-19 and their immediate families were sent to an isolation facility. DOLE is a member of the sub-task group on the management of the LSIs.</p> <p>Rep. Sy-Alvarado directed the Committee Secretary to draft a letter addressed to the DOTr, Presidential Management Staff, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Health, Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, and the IATF strongly urging them to attend the Committee's next meeting.</p>
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