



# Committee Daily Bulletin

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Basic Education and Culture	Substitute Bill to HB 102	Rep. Lagman	Protecting cultural property from adverse visual impact, amending for the purpose RA 10066, otherwise known as the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009	The Committee, chaired by Pasig City Rep. Roman Romulo, approved the Substitute Bill to HB 102, subject to style.
	HR 1127	Deputy Speaker Legarda	Expressing the utmost support of the House of Representatives to the yearly celebration of World Teacher's Day on October 5	The Committee adopted HR 1127.
	HR 1196	Rep. De Venecia	Congratulating and commending the recipients of the 2020 Gawad CCP para sa Sining awardees for their outstanding achievements and contributions to Philippine arts and culture	The Committee adopted HR 1196.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 2075 & 2732	Reps. Alvarado and Rodriguez	Strengthening the promotion and delivery of mental health services in basic education through recruitment, hiring and training of mental health professionals, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the Substitute Bill to HBs 2075 and 2732 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Rufus Rodriguez (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Cagayan de Oro City), author of HB 2732, said that the substitute bill already contained provisions that address the issues and concerns raised during the previous meetings with regard to the hiring of enough mental health service providers in public schools.</p> <p>Department of Education (DepEd) Undersecretary Jesus Lorenzo Mateo expressed his support for the substitute bill. Mateo stressed the importance of engaging with and establishing linkages to the community and other agencies in the advocacy, promotion, and implementation of mental health programs and activities geared towards the development of learners.</p> <p>According to Mateo, DepEd has existing offices whose functions can accommodate or can be expanded to include the proposed mental health programs and services for learners. He also welcomes not just the hiring of additional mental health service providers in public schools but also the provision of appropriate training programs to capacitate or improve the skills of DepEd's teaching and non-teaching personnel.</p> <p>Baguio City Rep. Mark Go inquired if DepEd will be able to hire enough mental health professionals for all DepEd schools nationwide. Mateo admitted that the problem really lies on the lack of qualified professionals in the country. He rather suggests capacitating existing DepEd personnel through appropriate training on handling mental health problems.</p>

Continuation... Basic Education and Culture				<p>However, Rep. Romulo opined that the task of a mental health professional should not be given to teaching personnel as this will be an additional function to them and might affect the quality of service they provide.</p> <p>Rep. Stella Luz Quimbo (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Marikina City) stated that in the existing setup in public schools, the homeroom teachers are the ones tasked to provide counselling to their students. She asked if these teachers can be given additional honorarium to compensate for their additional task.</p> <p>DepEd Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS) Director Ronilda Co said that budgetary constraints may not allow the Department to provide an honorarium to homeroom teachers at this point.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Coordinating Council of Private Educational Associations (COCOPEA) Managing Director Joseph Noel Estrada pointed out the need to harmonize the proposed law with RA 11036 or the Mental Health Act. Estrada explained that RA 11036 provides the required number of mental health professionals in educational institutions, as well as the definition of mental health professionals, which includes not just guidance counselors but also other trained mental health professionals.</p> <p>Representatives from the Philippine Guidance and Counseling Association (PGCA) and the Psychological Association of the Philippines (PAP) both agreed that mental health providers should not be limited to guidance counselors.</p>
HB 2458	Rep. Reyes	Reestablishing the General Vito Belarmino National High School and enhancing its sports curriculum and appropriating funds therefor		The Committee will deliberate further on HB 2458.
HB 3222	Rep. Erice	Declaring San Roque Parish in Caloocan City as a national landmark and shrine for history, freedom and independence, calling for its preservation and improvement, providing funds therefor		<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 3222.</p> <p>National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) OIC-Deputy Executive Director for Programs and Projects Alvin Alcid said that the NHCP Board resolved that the San Roque Parish in Caloocan does not qualify as a national historical landmark and shrine. Nevertheless, Alcid said that the Board agreed to install a “simple historical marker” at the place within the church grounds where General Antonio Luna established one of his staging camps during the Filipino-American war.</p>
HB 4479	Rep. Espina	Establishing a cultural center and museum in the Province of Biliran and providing funds therefor		<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 4479.</p> <p>National Museum of the Philippines (NMP) Director Jeremy Barns suggested that the implementing agency for the proposed law should be the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA).</p>

Continuation... Basic Education and Culture				NCCA Deputy Executive Director Marichu Tellano expressed NCCA's willingness to be the implementing agency of the proposed law. She, however, said that the funding for this law may be included in the 2022 budget of the agency since its proposed 2021 budget has already been submitted to Congress.
	HB 6587	Rep. Lacson-Noel	Declaring the City of Malabon in Metropolitan Manila a cultural heritage zone	The Committee will deliberate further on HB 6587.  Barns and Tellano expressed support for the bill.
	HB 7568	Rep. Suarez (A.)	Digitalizing all books necessary for public education and establishing the Philippine Online Library, providing funds therefor	The Committee will deliberate further on HB 7568.
	HB 7600	Rep. Tambunting	Establishing the Philippine High School for Creative Arts System and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee will deliberate further on HB 7600.
	HB 3781	Rep. Rodriguez	Providing for an expanded voucher system in the elementary and secondary education, amending for the purpose RA 6728, otherwise known as Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education Act (GASTPE), as amended	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate HBs 3781, 7635 and 7667.  The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Ruth Mariano-Hernandez (2 <sup>nd</sup> District, Laguna).  HB 3781 seeks to increase the funding for GASTPE Program by allocating P1 billion exclusively for the teachers' skills training to improve the delivery of education services to students. Likewise, it seeks to institute a voucher system in place of the current tuition fee supplement program to further improve benefits to students enrolled in private schools.
	HB 7635	Rep. Mariano-Hernandez	Expanding the assistance for students in Grades 4 to 6, and teachers in private elementary schools, amending for the purpose RA 8545, otherwise known as the Expanded GASTPE	HBs 7635 and 7667 seek to expand the coverage of E-GASTPE to include elementary students in the grant of subsidies and to include teachers in private schools as beneficiaries under the Teachers' Salary Subsidy Fund.
	HB 7667	Rep. Romulo	Proposing further amendments to Paragraph 3 of Section 3, Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 12 & 14, RA 6728, as amended by RA 8545, to include students and teachers in private elementary schools as beneficiaries of the Expanded GASTPE program	Expressing support for the passage of the bills were representatives from the DepEd, COCOPEA, Private Education Assistance Committee (PEAC), Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU), Association of Christian Schools, Colleges and Universities (ACSCU), and Tech-Voc Schools Association of the Philippines, Inc. (TVSA).  DepEd Undersecretary Mateo said that since the E-GASTPE law was approved in 1998, an amendment is much needed to make the law more relevant and responsive to the current and future challenges in basic education.
<b>Overseas Workers Affairs</b>	Substitute Bill to HB 826	Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.)	Protecting the remittances of overseas Filipino workers (OFW)	The Committee, chaired, by Rep. Raymond Democrito Mendoza (Party-List, TUCP), approved the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HB 826.

	Substitute Bill to HBs 272, 328, 1568, 2318, 3282, 3990, 4685, 4749, 5142 & 5430	Reps. Aglipay, Deputy Speaker Arenas, Reps. Angara, Gonzalez (S.), Yap (E.), Agabas, Mendoza, Espino, Lusotan, and Kho (W.)	Instituting the Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HBs 1825, 4426, 5333	Reps. Chatto, Deputy Speaker Savellano, and Rep. Panotes	Establishing Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) centers or satellite offices in certain parts of the country, providing funds therefor	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the five bills and come up with a substitute bill.  Rep. Marisol Panotes (2 <sup>nd</sup> District, Camarines Norte), author of HB 5333, said that establishing an OWWA center in every province would bring the government closer to the people, as the families of OFWs who are in distress due to certain problems in their jobsites abroad would be able to immediately attend to the requirements without traveling all the way to Manila.
	HB 1826	Rep. Chatto	Establishing a Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) satellite office in the City of Tagbilaran, Province of Bohol and appropriating funds therefor	Rep. Ronnie Ong (Party-List, ANG PROBINSYANO), author of HB 3887, said that his bill seeks to institutionalize the regional one-stop-shop center for OFWs to ensure that all frontline government services are of quality and are available per region. He said this would effectively shorten document processing time, reduce travel expenses, increase the efficiency in delivering basic services, and most importantly, allow OFWs to maximize their time with their loved ones while in the country.
	HB 3887	Rep. Ong	Institutionalizing the regional one-stop-shop centers for OFWs Nationwide	Expressing their support for the bills were the OWWA and the POEA.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
<b>Ecology</b> (Technical Working Group)	Substitute Bill to HBs 1678, 2805, 4012 & 4856	Reps. Villafuerte, Rodriguez, Villarica, and Sy-Alvarado	Preventing marine pollution by regulating the dumping of wastes, providing penalties therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Francisco "Kiko" Benitez (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Negros Occidental), will deliberate further on the substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Benitez said that the TWG needs to discuss how the government should abide by and implement the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972, or the "London Convention."</p> <p>The London Convention is "one of the first global conventions to protect the marine environment from human activities and has been in force since 1975. Its objective is to promote the effective control of all sources of marine pollution and to take all practicable steps to prevent pollution of the sea by dumping</p>

<p>Continuation... Ecology (Technical Working Group)</p>				<p>of wastes and other matter. Currently, 87 States are parties to this Convention.” (Source: <i>International Maritime Organization website</i>)</p> <p>Philippine Coast Guard’s Deputy Chief of Coast Guard Staff Roel Saguid said that the International Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution for Ships and the London Convention differ in terms of the protocol on dumping wastes at sea. Saguid suggested that the TWG follow the London Convention in relation to the four bills.</p> <p>Commenting on Section 5 (Issuance of Special Permits to Dump Materials) of the Substitute Bill, Engr. Michiko Sumida of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said that at present, the Discharge Permit being issued by the DENR does not cover the activities of accredited waste collectors and treaters. She maintained that the Department is primarily tasked to monitor land-based dumping and that its current structure does not make it capable of monitoring pollution from sea-based sources.</p> <p>Section 5 (a) of the Substitute Bill provides that the DENR’s Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) shall issue a Discharge Permit to licensed accredited waste collectors and/or treaters who intend to dump or incinerate waste materials at sea.</p> <p>The PCG, as mentioned by Saguid, has the capability to monitor the dumping of wastes at sea and has the technical know-how to determine the chemical characteristics of such wastes.</p> <p>Rep. Rufus Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City), author of HB 2805, maintained that the issuance of Discharge Permit for sea-based dumping should be the responsibility of the DENR as it is the Department’s mandate to protect the environment. Once the vessel loaded with wastes sets sail, the PCG acquires jurisdiction over it in accordance with its mandate of enforcing maritime laws and protecting the marine environment.</p> <p>Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Engineer Ma. Sarena Casas suggested that the deliberate abandonment of vessels at sea be considered as an act of “dumping” under the proposed law.</p> <p>Resource persons from the DENR, PCG, MARINA, and Department of National Defense were requested to submit additional comments and suggestions for consideration in the final version of the substitute bill.</p>
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**AGENCY BRIEFING**

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>SUBJECT MATTER</b>	<b>DISCUSSIONS</b>
<p><b>Overseas Workers Affairs</b></p>	<p>Discussion/update on the following issues and concerns regarding OFWs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current situation of OFWs affected by the COVID-19 pandemic</li>   <li>• Incident involving Panamanian-flagged cargo vessel Gulf Livestock 1 that capsized off the waters of Japan on September 2, 2020 with 39 Filipino seafarers onboard</li> </ul>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Raymond Democrito Mendoza (Party-List, TUCP), listened to the updates on issues and concerns regarding OFWs.</p> <p>Department of Labor and Employment’s (DOLE) International Labor Affairs Bureau Director Alice Visperas apprised the body that 495,848 OFWs were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, most of whom were displaced from work and 9,402 were infected with the virus. Most of the displaced and infected OFWs were deployed in the Middle East. Out of the 486,446 displaced OFWs, 79,780 opted to stay onsite while 275,619 were repatriated as of October 26. A total of 131,047 displaced OFWs are still up for repatriation.</p> <p>According to Visperas, 309,120 OFWs were provided assistance amounting to P3.15 billion under DOLE’s Abot Kamay ang Pagtulong (AKAP) Program. The DOLE-AKAP Program for OFWs is a one-time financial assistance of P10,000 to be given to landbased and seabased OFWs whose employments were affected by the COVID-19 global pandemic.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs Sarah Lou Arriola reported that as of October 28, the DFA facilitated the repatriation of 233,742 OFWs from over 80 countries and 135 cruise ships (76,556 are seabased and 157,186 are landbased). She added that 111,258 OFWs are still expected to be repatriated by December 2020.</p> <p>OWWA Administrator Hans Leo Cacdac reported that two Filipino seafarers survived and were rescued while one seafarer died after the Gulf Livestock 1 cargo vessel capsized off the waters of Japan on September 2. However, he said that 36 other Filipino seafarers are still missing to date. He also highlighted that the OWWA Board of Trustees agreed to grant a package of benefits to the families of the missing seafarers which include death and burial assistance, livelihood assistance, scholarship for dependents, and financial assistance worth P200,000 per family. Psychosocial counseling, stress debriefing seminar, and financial assistance amounting to P100,000 will also be provided to each of the survivors.</p> <p>Undersecretary Arriola reported that the two survivors already arrived in the country on September 19. She also gave the following updates on the measures undertaken by the DFA in response to the incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Philippine Embassy in Tokyo made representations with the Japanese Government for the entry in Japan of the representatives of the licensed manning agency who will monitor the situation;</li> <li>• The Philippine Embassy in Abu Dhabi coordinated with the operations manager of Gulf Navigation who confirmed that the shipowners are citizens of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and reassured that a thorough investigation of the accident is ongoing. The shipowners have requested the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs to make a government-to-government plea to the Japanese Coast Guard to allow a team to conduct search operations; and</li> <li>• The DFA Manila sent a letter to the licensed manning agency, Korpil Shipmanagement, to compel its foreign principal to bear responsibility for the incident. A letter from the DFA Secretary was also sent to the Japanese Ambassador to appeal the continuation of Japan’s search and rescue (SAR) operation. Philippine Embassies in Tokyo, Beijing, and Seoul were also instructed by DFA</li> </ul>

<p>Continuation... Overseas Workers Affairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incident involving the maltreatment of a Filipino helper by the Philippine Ambassador to Brazil</li> </ul>	<p>Manila to make representations with host governments to continue their SAR operations.</p> <p>Arriola also assured the body that the DFA continues to provide constant updates and responses to queries of families through a messenger group moderated by a foreign service officer. Bulletins on the case are also being updated on the DFA website and OFW Help Facebook Page.</p> <p>Captain Andrew Malpass, President and General Manager of Pandiman Philippines Inc., informed the Committee that the Panama Maritime Authority has already initiated an official investigation of the incident, but the results may take months to come out. He said that while Philippine laws provide that the prescriptive period of presumption of death in the case of missing persons at sea is four years, the Protection and Indemnity Club (P&amp;I Club), an association of marine insurance providers, does not wait for this period to lapse before it issues the benefits to the rightful claimants. Malpass added that his company, which is the P&amp;I Club's official representative in the Philippines, has already contacted the legal heirs of the missing seafarers for the processing and release of payments.</p> <p>Mary Joy Fortun, wife of one of the missing seafarers, urged the Committee to help in intensifying the SAR operations in Japan.</p> <p>Rep. Macnell Lusotan (Party-List, MARINO) said that he will file a resolution recommending the creation of a task force that will conduct SAR in Japan to be composed of the OWWA, DFA, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG). The four agencies expressed their support for the proposal.</p> <p>DFA Undersecretary for Administration J. Eduardo Malaya reported that the DFA Secretary already issued a public statement on the issue involving Ambassador to Brazil Marichu Mauro. He said that aside from the immediate recall of Mauro from her post, a thorough investigation will be conducted and appropriate sanctions will be meted out and administrative or criminal charges will be filed against her if warranted. He also said that the DFA will extend assistance to the Filipino helper who was reportedly maltreated by the Ambassador.</p> <p>The Chair underscored the need for the DFA to reeducate its diplomats and officers on the rights and proper working conditions of the "kasambahays" or domestic workers pursuant to RA 10361, otherwise known as the Domestic Workers Act or "Batas Kasambahay". He said that this unfortunate incident should never happen again and that the DFA should "clean" its ranks of officers that go against DFA's core mission of protecting the rights and promoting the welfare of OFWs.</p>
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