



Committee Daily Bulletin

18th Congress
Second Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. II No. 49
October 30, 2020

COMMITTEE MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Energy	Substitute Bill to HBs 7059 & 7341	Reps. De Jesus and Gatchalian	Extending the implementation of the lifeline rate, amending for the purpose Section 73 of RA 9136, otherwise known as the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) of 2011, as amended by RA 10150	<p>The Committee, presided by its Senior Vice Chair, Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo (2nd District, Pampanga), approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 7059 and 7341 and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Under Section 73 of RA 9136, the lifeline rate is a socialized pricing mechanism for the marginalized end-users which is exempted from the cross subsidy phase-out under the law for a period of 10 years from 2001, unless extended by law. The lifeline rate was first extended in 2011 until 2021. The substitute bill proposes to again extend the implementation of the lifeline rate from 2021 to 2031.</p> <p>Expressing support for the proposed law were representatives from the Department of Energy (DOE), Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), National Power Corporation (NPC), National Transmission Corporation (TransCo), National Electrification Administration (NEA), Manila Electric Company (Meralco), Philippine Rural Electric Cooperatives Association (PHILRECA), Philippine Federation of Electric Cooperatives (Philfeco), Association of Mindanao Rural Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (AMRECO), and Philippine Independent Power Producers Association, Inc. (PIPPA).</p>
	Substitute Bill to HBs 2099 & 2427	Speaker Velasco and Rep. Vargas	Strengthening the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) by expanding and streamlining its bureaucracy, upgrading employee skills, augmenting for the purpose employee benefits, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>In today's meeting, the Committee focused its discussion on whether or not to increase the number of ERC Commissioners.</p> <p>Rep. Arroyo said that Speaker Lord Allan Jay Velasco (Marinduque), author of HB 2099 and who served as Chair of the Committee before becoming the House Speaker, wants to increase the number of Commissioners from four to eight to speed up the processing of applications for capital expenditures (CAPEX) and the resolution of cases lodged with the Commission.</p> <p>However, ERC Chair Agnes Devanadera explained that the number of Commissioners need not be increased for the purpose of speeding up work at the ERC. She stressed that the real problem lies in the lack of technical personnel who are tasked to investigate and evaluate the cases lodged with the ERC. In fact, Devanadera said, increasing the number of Commissioners would most probably further delay the ERC decisions as there will be more</p>

Continuation... Energy				<p>people who will review and sign its issuances. Instead of increasing the number of Commissioners, Devanadera suggested that the plantilla positions for ERC's technical staff be increased.</p> <p>Rep. Rosanna "Ria" Vergara (3rd District, Nueva Ecija) agreed with the position of the ERC. She said that since the ERC is a collegial body, getting the consensus of all members of the Commission might slow down the processing of CAPEX applications.</p> <p>On the other hand, several lawmakers supported the increase in the number of Commissioners.</p> <p>Rep. Presley de Jesus (Party-List, PHILRECA) said that alongside with increasing the number of Commissioners is the need to create additional divisions in the Commission to address the delayed issuance of ERC decisions.</p> <p>Rep. Sergio Dagooc (Party-List, APEC) said that CAPEX applications could already be resolved at the division level and need not be decided upon by the Commission en banc.</p> <p>Likewise, Rep. Adriano Ebcas (Party-List, AKO PADAYON) suggested that once the Commissioners have decided on a case, they may authorize the ERC Chair to sign the decision so that it would no longer be transmitted to all Commissioners for their individual signatures.</p> <p>Devanadera explained that the Electric Power Reform Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) requires that all the Commissioners sign the decisions and resolutions. She likewise said that having the members sign these documents themselves is a good way to maintain check and balance in the ERC.</p>
	HB 7060	Rep. Dagooc	Promoting the use of microgrid systems for the total electrification of unserved and underserved areas	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to further study and discuss HB 7060.</p> <p>Rep. De Jesus, co-author of HB 7060, explained that the bill seeks to accelerate the implementation of the total electrification program of the government as this will benefit the lives of the people and stimulate the economy of the unserved and underserved areas.</p> <p>Expressing support for the proposed law were representatives from the DOE, ERC, NPC, TransCo, NEA, Meralco, and the electric cooperative associations present in the meeting.</p>

Comments, suggestions and requests for copies may be sent to the Committee Publication Staff, Committee Management Support Service I, 3rd Floor, Ramon V. Mitra, Jr. Bldg., House of Representatives, Constitution Hills, Quezon City, through cmss1.cad@house.gov.ph or at tel. nos. 8932-6118/8931-5001 local 7122. Also available at <http://www.congress.gov.ph>