



Committee Daily Bulletin

18th Congress
Second Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. II No. 51
November 4, 2020

COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Transportation	HB 3391	Rep. Castelo	Prohibiting drag racing in public roads and prescribing penalties for violation thereof	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento (1st District, Western Samar), approved HB 3391 subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Rep. Aloy Lim (Party-List, RAM) proposed to include in the bill the regulation of legal or legitimate drag racing sport. The Committee approved the proposal.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bill were the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Land Transportation Office (LTO), and the Philippine National Police - Highway Patrol Group (PNP-HPG).</p>
	HB 4286	Deputy Speaker Pimentel	Providing for the administrative reform and reorganization of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), amending certain provisions of RA 9993, otherwise known as the PCG Law of 2009	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate and discuss further the two bills.</p> <p>Rep. Macnell Lusotan (Party-List, MARINO) was designated as the TWG Chair.</p>
	HB 4287	Rep. Deloso-Montalla	Strengthening further the PCG, amending certain provisions of RA 9993	<p>Expressing their support for the bills were the PCG, DOTr, Department of National Defense, and the Department of Budget and Management.</p> <p>PCG Commandant George Ursabia Jr. expressed his support for the bill and explained that RA 9993 does not clearly state the system of operation and administration of the PCG. He also opined that the PCG, being a military organization, should not be attached to the DOTr which is a civilian agency.</p> <p>Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) OIC-Deputy Administrator for Planning Arsenio Lingad II noted that some of the functions of the PCG Commandant, as reflected in the bills, overlap with some of the functions of the MARINA. He said that MARINA will be submitting its official position paper on the bills.</p>
	<i>Motu Proprio Inquiry</i>		On increasing the number of public utility vehicles (PUVs) that are allowed to operate to address the shortage in transportation amidst the pandemic	The Committee approved the Committee Report on the results of the inquiry and the Committee's recommendations on the matter.
	<i>Motu Proprio Inquiry</i>		On the delays in conducting swab tests for COVID-19 at the country's airports and in releasing the test results which lead to more difficulties for the arriving overseas Filipino workers (OFWs)	Rep. Sarmiento asked the officials of the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) and the Office for Transportation Security (OTS) about the allegation that their personnel are escorting arriving OFWs to private testing centers in some areas at the airport for their

<p>Continuation... Transportation</p>				<p>COVID-19 tests instead of referring them to the government one-stop-shop (OSS) COVID-19 testing center which is also positioned at the airport.</p> <p>MIAA General Manager Eddie Monreal and OTS Administrator Raul del Rosario denied the allegation. According to Del Rosario, the OSS testing center, which is a joint initiative of the DOTr, MIAA, and OTS, administers RT-PCR (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) tests to OFWs, non-OFWs, tourists, and locally stranded individuals. Del Rosario added that the RT-PCR tests for OFWs are paid by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA).</p> <p>Del Rosario confirmed that aside from the OSS, two private testing centers are also operating at the airport, the Detoxicare Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory, Inc. in Terminal 2, and the Philippine Airport Diagnostic Laboratory in Terminals 1 and 3. These testing centers are laboratory partners of the Philippine Airlines (PAL) and the Philippine Airport Ground Support Solutions, Inc. (PAGSS), respectively, and are accredited by the Department of Health. Both testing centers also charge an amount of P4,000 for each RT-PCR test.</p> <p>According to Del Rosario, some OFWs themselves opt to have their tests done in these private testing centers for faster results if they need to be cleared immediately due to some urgent concerns such as death in the family or emergency medical condition. Test results in private testing centers are released within 48 hours as compared to those of the OSS which take about two to three days.</p> <p>Replying to the query of Rep. Sarmiento on the number of repatriated OFWs that have already been released from quarantine facilities, Del Rosario reported that they were able to clear and release about 27,000 OFWs from quarantine facilities between the period October 15 to 29.</p> <p>Minority Leader Rep. Joseph Stephen Paduano (Party-List, ABANG LINGKOD) enjoined the OTS to ensure the quality of tests and services provided by the two private testing centers. Del Rosario assured the body that the two private testing centers are being closely monitored by the OTS and the MIAA.</p>
	<p><i>Motu Proprio</i> Inquiry</p>		<p>On the recent road accidents involving buses in the Province of Cebu</p>	<p>Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) Region VII Director Eduardo Montealto Jr. confirmed that Ceres Liner, a bus company based in Cebu, was recently involved in three vehicular accidents in the province that killed two bicycle riders and one conductor and injured several persons. He said that the drivers were required to undergo drug testing and a driving</p>

Continuation... Transportation				<p>proficiency seminar, while the operations of the bus units involved were suspended for 30 days.</p> <p>Montealto recommended the rationalization of PUV routes and the designation of bicycle lanes to prevent similar accidents in the future. Similarly, transport expert Robert Siy of the Move as One Coalition recommended the inclusion of bicycle lanes in the design and construction of roads to ensure the safety of bicycle riders.</p>
Women and Gender Equality	HBs 95, 134, 160, 258, 640, 865, 1041, 1359, 2211, 2870, 4474, 5818, 6294 & 7754	Reps. Acosta-Alba, Roman, Belmonte, Cullamat, Deputy Speaker Legarda, Reps. Aglipay, Singson-Meehan, Herrera-Dy, Aragonés, Olivarez, Abaya, Vargas, Brosas, and Tan (A.S.)	Prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression (SOGIE) and providing penalties for violations thereof	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba (1st District, Bukidnon), will deliberate further on the 16 bills in its next meeting.</p> <p>The Committee, after nominal voting, adopted as its working draft the version of the bill that was approved by the House of Representatives on Third Reading during the 17th Congress.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Acosta-Alba, who is also the author of HB 95, recognizes that the SOGIE bill is a sensitive issue considering the diverse personal, cultural, political, and religious beliefs of Filipinos; and must therefore be addressed collectively without further delay. She noted that productive dialogues and debates on equality and anti-discrimination have the same theme, that is inclusiveness.</p> <p>Rep. Jose Atienza Jr. (Party-List, BUHAY) supports the intent of the proposed law which is to protect the rights of every Filipino against discrimination. However, he manifested that a person's refusal to issue a marriage license to a couple of the same gender should not be included in the bill as one of the prohibited acts.</p> <p>Rep. Atienza stressed that the right to a marriage license should only be given to a man and a woman desiring to build a family, as provided under the Constitution. Thus, he said the provision on same sex marriage should not be part of the bill because not only does it run in conflict with the Constitution but it is also not reflective of the religious beliefs of Filipinos, who are predominantly Catholics.</p> <p>Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan), author of HB 134, clarified that the working draft adopted by the Committee does not include the refusal to issue a marriage license to same-sex couple as a prohibited and punishable act. She also maintained that the proposed legislation is an anti-discrimination bill and not a same sex marriage bill, nor is it a gender recognition bill. Further, she refuted claims that the proposed law is anti-family. She cited Pope Francis' recent statement that LGBTs deserve to have and be in families, and not shunned away, ostracized or marginalized.</p>
	HB 1023	Rep. Castelo	Proscribing discrimination against members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) community and prescribing penalties for violations thereof	
	HB 4369	Deputy Speaker Santos-Recto	Establishing LGBT, queer, intersexual, asexual, and individuals of various sexual and gender orientations (LGBTQIA+) help and protection desks in all Philippine National Police (PNP) stations, amending for the purpose Title VII of RA 8551, as amended, otherwise known as the PNP Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998	

<p>Continuation... Women and Gender Equality</p>				<p>Expressing support for the bills were representatives from the Department of Health, Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Professional Regulation Commission, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, Psychological Association of the Philippines, Philippine Medical Association, GANDA Filipinas, GALANG Philippines, Inc., Babaylanes, Inc., Bahaghari Center, Metro Manila Pride, University of the Philippines (UP) College of Law, and Philippine Anti-Discrimination Alliance of Youth Leaders (PANTAY), among others.</p> <p>They maintained that human rights is universal and should be enjoyed by everyone no matter who they are and without prejudice to their gender and sexual orientation or preference. Likewise, they are of the opinion that existing laws are not sufficient to address gender-based violence and provide LGBT community the protection that they deserve.</p> <p>On the other hand, Atty. Lyndon Cana of the Coalition of Concerned Families of the Philippines (CCFP) said that while the CCFP respects the LGBT community, it has serious objections to the bill. He said that the concepts of “sexual orientation,” “gender identity,” and “gender expression” are subjective and are based on feelings and not on facts. He likewise averred that while the proposed law is against discrimination of LGBTs, its provisions are discriminatory to the “straight community.”</p> <p>Cana’s remarks did not sit well with Rep. Roman. She said she feels insulted by what Cana said. She stressed that the proposed law is not about granting special privileges to the LGBT community and does not redefine gender marks. Rep. Roman further said that there are existing laws that already define “sexual orientation,” “gender identity,” and “gender expression.”</p> <p>Dr. Reuben Abante, Bishop of the Lighthouse Bible Church, said that the Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination Bill pending in the House Committee on Human Rights would be more inclusive in addressing the issue of discrimination in the country. He proposed to prioritize its passage instead, which in turn will strengthen the provisions of the SOGIE bill.</p> <p>Rep. Domingo Rivera (Party-List, CIBAC) is of the opinion that the rights of the LGBT community are already protected under the Constitution’s Bill of Rights.</p> <p>UP Professor Evelyn (Leo) Battad and CHR Center for Gender Equality and Women’s Human Rights head Krissi Shaffina Twyla Rubin said that the Bill of Rights is not self-explanatory. Hence, there is a need to enact enabling laws to protect the marginalized.</p>
--	--	--	--	---

Continuation... Women and Gender Equality				Deputy Speaker Eduardo "Bro. Eddie" Villanueva (Party-List, CIBAC) suggested that the proposed law should be carefully studied and analyzed as this may also discriminate other sectors of society. The Deputy Speaker suggested that the Committee also hear the sentiments of the business and faith-based education sectors, to which the Committee agreed.
---	--	--	--	--

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Tourism	<p>Briefing by the following government agencies on the implementation of RA 11494, otherwise known as the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act, particularly on the provisions concerning the tourism industry and how tourism stakeholders may avail of the assistance and services provided under the law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Tourism (DOT) • Small Business Corporation (SB Corp) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Sol Aragonés (3rd District, Laguna), listened to the briefing conducted by concerned government agencies on the implementation of RA 11494, particularly on the provisions concerning the tourism industry.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Aragonés said that RA 11494 (Bayanihan 2), which seeks to revive the country's struggling economy due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was signed into law on September 11 of this year. The law provides funding for government projects and initiatives such as cash loans, capital infusions, and subsidies for hard-hit sectors including tourism. (Bayanihan 2 was enacted to continue the programs under Bayanihan 1 or the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act.) Rep. Aragonés said the Committee called this meeting to discuss with concerned government agencies their programs under the Bayanihan 2 and provide the Committee and the stakeholders of the tourism sector valuable information on how to avail themselves of the assistance and services provided under the law.</p> <p>DOT Assistant Secretary Maria Rica Bueno informed the Committee that under RA 11494, an amount of P100 million was allotted to finance the training and subsidy for tour guides. The 3,563 DOT-accredited tour guides and local government unit (LGU)-licensed tour guides will be given priority under this Program. Since it is mandatory for tour guides to have relevant training before they can avail of the cash assistance, the DOT will provide the tour guides a two-hour learning course on any of the following topics: Filipino Brand of Service Excellence, Tourism WoRCS or the Tourism Integrates, Supports and Minds Women's Respect and Child Safety; and Health and Safety Protocols in the New Normal.</p> <p>SB Corp Vice President Frank Gonzaga reported that out of the P10 billion budget allocated for the SB Corp's COVID-19 Assistance to Restart Enterprises (CARES) Program, P6 billion will be loaned to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the tourism sector under the SB Corp's CARES for Tourism Rehabilitation and Vitalization of Enterprises and Livelihood (CARES for TRAVEL) Program. MSMEs with Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR)-filed financial statements (FS), with no major unresolved negative credit dealings, are eligible to apply for a loan of up to 15% of their sales and 20% of their asset size as stated in their FS. MSMEs without a BIR-filed FS may still apply for this loan as long as they comply with the SB Corp's requirements which include proof of their asset size and their 2018-2019 sales along with other documentary requirements.</p> <p>When asked by Rep. Aragonés about the turnaround time of loan applications, Gonzaga said that processing of loan applications usually takes 15-30 days from the submission of complete requirements. Loans are also interest-free but are subject to a service charge of as low as 4%, Gonzaga added.</p>

Continuation... Tourism		gaps in communication. He reiterated the need for government to lend its support not only to the hotel industry but to all stakeholders of the tourism sector, which were hard-hit by the pandemic.
----------------------------	--	---

DISCUSSION WITH AGENCIES/ENTITIES		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Transportation	Update on the release of the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act (Bayanihan 2) funds for the transportation industry	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento (1st District, Western Samar), listened to the updates of the Department Transportation (DOTr) on the release of the Bayanihan 2 funds for the transportation industry.</p> <p>DOTr Assistant Secretary for Road Transport and Infrastructure Mark Steven Pastor informed the body that under the Bayanihan 2, a budget of P9.5 billion was allocated to the DOTr for the following: P5.6 billion for service contracting; P2.6 billion for assistance to critically impacted transportation sectors; and P1.3 billion for the establishment of bike lanes. The notice of cash allocation for the P9.5 billion was already issued to the DOTr on November 2 by the Department of Budget and Management.</p> <p>Under the service contracting scheme, the government will be paying operators and drivers of public transportation units based on vehicle-kilometers travelled and specific performance indicators.</p> <p>Pastor said that this arrangement will incentivize PUV operators to resume operations, thus restoring the livelihood of displaced transport workers. He added that drivers will receive proper compensation and the operators will also have guaranteed income from this arrangement.</p>
Youth and Sports Development	<p>Discussion on the status of implementation of RA 10699, otherwise known as the National Athletes and Coaches Benefits and Incentives Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. John Marvin "Yul Servo" Nieto (3rd District, Manila), listened to the updates of concerned government agencies on the status of implementation of RA 10699.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Nieto said that the purpose of the meeting is to monitor the implementation of RA 10699 to ensure that the national athletes and coaches receive the benefits and incentives due them under the law. These benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% discount on transportation services, in hotels and other lodging establishments, restaurants and recreation centers, and on purchase of medicines and sports equipment; • Minimum of 20% discount on admission fees charged by places of culture, leisure and amusement; and • Scholarship, retirement, and death benefits. <p>PSC Assistance and Coordination Division Assistant Chief Anna Christine Abellana reported on the accomplishments relative to the grant of benefits and privileges to national athletes and coaches under RA 10699:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PSC entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the National Housing Authority (NHA) for the prioritization of national athletes and coaches in national housing programs; • An agreement on scholarship benefits is being finalized by the PSC with the Commission on Higher Education and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. The PSC is also awaiting the operationalization of the National Academy of Sports which was established on June 9; • From 2016 up to the present, retirement benefits amounting to P9.61 million were granted to 103 athletes and coaches while the primary beneficiaries of 12 deceased national athletes and coaches received P30,000 each; and • Cash incentives amounting to P258.99 million covering the

