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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Appropriations	Substitute Bill to HBs 10, 166, 854, 1242, 1417, 2434, 2522, 2549, 2552, 2610, 2657, 3192, 3323, 3299, 4346 & 4880	Reps. Cayetano, Tan (A.), Aglipay, Torres-Gomez, Enverga, Canama, Nograles (J.J.), Villafuerte, Garin, Jalosjos, Dy (I.P.), Suarez (A.), Tambunting, Deputy Speakers Romero and Rodriguez	Declaring the coconut levy assets as a trust fund, providing for its management and utilization, authorizing the Privatization and Management Office (PMO) to dispose the coconut levy assets	The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair, Quirino Rep. Junie Cua, approved the Substitute Bill to the 16 bills with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 54, 285, 614, 758, 1312, 1400, 1915, 2136, 3311, 4099, 4116, 4217, 4214, 4399, 4667 & 5470	Reps. Cabochan, Suansing (E.), Vargas, Biazon, Gatchalian, Olivarez, Castelo, Villar, Fortun, Villarica, Speaker Velasco, Reps. Tambunting, Dy (F.), and Deputy Speaker Villanueva	Instituting services for learners with disabilities in support of inclusive education, establishing learning resource centers in all school districts, providing for standards, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the 16 bills with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 55, 487, 522, 1579 & 4586	Reps. Cabochan, Deloso-Montalla, Aglipay, Deputy Speaker Hataman, and Rep. Belmonte	Equality and Non-Discrimination on Race, Ethnicity and Religion Act	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the five bills.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 79, 1310, 4693 & 7102	Reps. Salceda, Gatchalian, Yap (V.), and Deputy Speaker Rodriguez	Strengthening the culture of development planning in the Philippine government, thereby creating the Department of Economics and Development Planning, repealing for the purpose EO 230, series of 1987, reorganizing the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and Book V, Title II, Subtitle C, Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4 of EO 292, series of 1987, otherwise known as the Administrative Code of 1987, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the four bills with amendments.

Continuation... Appropriations	Substitute Bill to HBs 106, 1474, 3061 & 4891	Reps. Fortun, Yu, Babasa, and Deloso-Montalla	Providing for the sustainable management of forests and forest lands	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the four bills with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 157, 2417, 3035, 4280, 7008, 7215, 7269, 7292 & 7364	Reps. Belmonte, Castelo, Nieto, Deputy Speaker Pimentel, Reps. Villafuerte, Vargas, Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, Tambunting, and Suansing (E.)	Establishing a Rental Housing Subsidy Program for informal settler families (ISFs) and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the nine bills with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 172, 437, 1451, 3078, 3079, 3332 & 4811	Reps. Tan (A.), Revilla, Bagatsing, Saulog, Tambunting, and Alonte	Providing for a mandatory immunization program, repealing for the purpose RA 10152, otherwise known as the Mandatory Infants and Children Health Immunization Act of 2011	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the seven bills.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 193, 232, 1320, 1358, 1829, 2172, 2272, 2481, 2514, 2586, 2725, 2879, 2887, 2895, 2981, 2997, 3172, 3347, 3350, 3380, 3512, 3656, 3987, 4026, 4097, 4098, 4114, 4251, 4328, 4329, 4447, 4654, 4807, 4830, 4897, 4944, 5049 & 5141	Reps. Suansing (E.), Vargas, Vergara, Herrera-Dy, Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, Reps. Salo, Tan (A.), Defensor (L.), Deputy Speaker Romero, Reps. Nograles (J.J.), Aumentado, Nieto, Ramirez-Sato, Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.), Reps. Salceda, Tolentino, Deloso-Montalla, Arroyo (J.M.), Sacdalan, Aragonés, Deputy Speaker Savellano, Reps. Tupas, Biazon, Haresco, Villarica, Tambunting, Olivarez, Deputy Speaker Hernandez, Rep. Villafuerte, Speaker Velasco, Reps. Lim, Siao, and Suarez (D.)	Establishing the national framework for water resource management and creating the Department of Water Resources and the Water Regulatory Commission, defining its mandate, powers and functions, appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the 38 bills with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HB 200	Rep. Garcia (J.E.)	Special Defense Economic Zone (SpeDEZ) Act	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 200 with amendments.

Continuation... Appropriations	Substitute Bill to HB 204	Rep. Garcia (J.E.)	Mandating the establishment and implementation of the parent effectiveness development service by local government units (LGUs) and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 204 with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 284, 637, 855, 2119, 3412, 4081, 5640, 5923, 6472 & 7768	Rep. Suansing (E.), Deputy Speaker Legarda, Rep. Aglipay, Deputy Speaker Romero, Reps. Benitez, De Venecia, Mariano-Hernandez, Cabochan, Deputy Speaker Villar, and Rep. Tambunting	Promoting integrated urban agriculture in urban areas nationwide to address food security and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the 10 bills.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 297, 659, 2909 & 5514	Reps. Yap (V.), Abaya, Castelo, and Romulo	Establishing the "No Call and No Text Registration" System, providing penalties for violations thereof	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the four bills.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 339, 1666, 1838, 4103, 4178 & 4791	Reps. Romualdo, Cabochan, Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, Rep. Haresco, and Deputy Speaker Hernandez	Modernizing the Bureau of Immigration (BI) by defining its powers and functions, expanding, rationalizing, and further professionalizing its organization, upgrading the compensation and benefits of its officials and employees, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the six bills with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 340, 1371, 4288, 5316, 5729, 5968 & 6399	Reps. Romualdo, Go (E.C.), Hofer, Eriguel, Nieto, Datol (dec.), and Deputy Speaker Rodriguez	Providing for a new Passport Law, repealing for the purpose RA 8239, otherwise known as the Philippine Passport Act of 1996	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the seven bills.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 486, 1532, 4649 & 5279	Reps. Deloso-Montalla, Nograles (J.J), Villafuerte, and Belmonte	Providing a framework for the right to adequate food, and providing penalties for violation thereof	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the four bills.
	Substitute Bill to HB 1485	Rep. Chipeco	Regulating the practice of microbiology in the Philippines and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 1485 with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 3366 & 4413	Reps. Herrera-Dy and Romualdo	Providing for the revised Warehouse Receipts Law of the Philippines	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 3366 and 4413 with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 3565, 1101, 237, 342, 548, 2217, 2273, 2947 & 3813	Reps. Sarmiento, Salo, Vargas, Romualdo, Biazon, Barba, Guico, Fariñas (R.C.), and Deputy Speaker Rodriguez	Establishing the Philippine Transportation Safety Board, defining its powers and functions and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to the nine bills with amendments.

Continuation... Appropriations	HB 260	Rep. Ramirez-Sato	Strengthening the national policy on access, and benefit-sharing from the utilization of Philippine genetic resources	The Committee approved HB 260.
Information and Communications Technology	Substitute Bill to HBs 1655, 4115, 7398 & 7403	Reps. Cabochan, Villarica, Lacson, and Vargas	Establishing information and communications technology (ICT) hubs nationwide	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Victor Yap (2nd District, Tarlac), approved the Substitute Bill to the four bills.</p> <p>Rep. Yap mentioned that the Substitute Bill was crafted by the technical working group (TWG), headed by Rep. Francisco "Kiko" Benitez (3rd District, Negros Occidental), after a series of extensive discussions on the four original bills. Rep. Yap also said that a similar bill was approved on Third Reading by the House of Representatives in the last two Congresses but failed to get past the Senate.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel Cabochan III (Party-List, MAGDALO), author of HB 1655, expressed his gratitude to the TWG for its efforts in coming up with a Substitute Bill that recognizes the pivotal role of ICT in the country's economic growth. He said the establishment of ICT hubs across the country will attract more investors, generate jobs to Filipinos, and diminish the digital divide especially for those living in the rural areas.</p> <p>The Chair approved the manifestation of Deputy Speaker Rose Marie "Baby" Arenas (3rd District, Pangasinan) to be one of the principal authors of the proposed law since the original measure, which was previously approved in the 16th and 17th Congress, was principally authored by her.</p>
	HB 6094	Rep. Biazon	Regulating the use of facial recognition technology	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to further enhance HB 6094.</p> <p>Muntinlupa City Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon was designated as TWG Chair.</p> <p>Rep. Biazon, author of HB 6094, said that while facial recognition technology (FRT) has potential benefits, it likewise poses a threat to a person's security and privacy. Thus, he underscored the need to regulate the widespread use of FRT and to provide parameters that will safeguard modern technology from abuse.</p> <p>He also apprised the body that the Philippine National Police (PNP) Region II has been using the FRT since 2017 to recognize and catch criminals, while the banking sector is already planning to use FRT for their automated teller machine (ATM) transactions.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Pablo John Garcia (3rd District, Cebu) expressed his support for the bill.</p> <p>Also supportive of the bill were the Department of Information and Communications</p>

Continuation... Information and Communications Technology				<p>Technology (DICT) and the National Privacy Commission (NPC). They agreed that a legal framework on the regulation of FRT is necessary to avoid negative implications to data privacy, rights and freedom, and law enforcement.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to invite the PNP, Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Bureau of Immigration (BI), and the banking industry as members of the TWG.</p>
	HB 6303	Deputy Speaker Garcia	Establishing a transcendent unified government mobile application for government services, setting a framework and common standards for government mobile applications, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to refine HB 6303.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Garcia, who is also the author of HB 6303, was designated as TWG Chair.</p> <p>He said that his bill seeks to establish a standard government mobile application so that government information and services will be made easily accessible and available.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bill were resource persons from the NPC, DICT, Department of Science and Technology - Advanced Science and Technology Institute (DOST-ASTI), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Department of Tourism (DOT), and the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO).</p> <p>Chair Yap requested the DICT to give the Committee a technical presentation on the National Government Portal (NGP) in its next meeting.</p> <p>The NGP is envisioned as a one-stop gateway uniting all web-based government content to maximize efficiency and provide rapid, high-quality service to citizens. Its single website factor effectively reduces costs as opposed to maintaining multiple systems. For citizens, business or government users, this means access to a reliable government online services and information (<i>Source: GOV.PH website</i>).</p>
Higher and Technical Education	Substitute Bills to HBs 3265, 6502 & 7352	Reps. Veloso, Silverio, and Singson-Meehan	Converting/establishing state colleges and universities in certain parts of the country	<p>The Committee, chaired by Baguio City Rep. Mark Go, approved the 13 Committee Reports on the 13 Substitute Bills pertaining to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversion/establishment of state colleges and state universities; • Integration of schools; and • Establishment of TESDA training and assessment centers.
	Substitute Bill to HB 7194	Rep. Ouano-Dizon	Integrating the Consolacion Community College in the Province of Cebu as a satellite campus of the Cebu Technological University (CTU), and appropriating funds therefor	

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education	Substitute Bills to HBs 6736, 7250, 7342, 7349, 7354, 7437, 7472, 7505 & 7526	Reps. Fariñas (R.C.) Dalog, Yu, Almario, Nava, Cabredo, Ecleo, Panotes, and Fortuno	Establishing Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) training and assessment centers in certain parts of the country and appropriating funds therefor	
Justice	HB 932	Rep. Cabochan	Integrating all the national, provincial, sub-provincial, city, and municipal jails, placing for the purpose the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) provincial/sub- provincial jails and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) under a new bureau to be called the Bureau of Correctional Services, appropriating funds therefor	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso III (3 rd District, Leyte), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to draft a substitute bill to the 12 bills. The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Manuel Cabochan III (Party-List, MAGDALO). Rep. Cabochan, author of HB 932, said that his bill seeks to create a single agency that will integrate all the national, provincial, sub- provincial, city, and municipal jails to formulate a uniform and standard jail and penal system for a better rehabilitation of detainees.
	HB 1507	Rep. Garbin	Strengthening the jail and correctional system by creating the Jail and Correctional Authority as the principal government entity for jail and correctional management, integrating therewith the BuCor, BJMP, all provincial, sub-provincial, district, city and municipal jails, defining its structure, powers and functions, and appropriating funds therefor	Representatives from the Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), BJMP, BuCor, and Civil Service Commission (CSC) manifested their support for the bills.
	HBs 2965, 4645, 4713, 4879, 5082, 5237, 5481, 6183, 6352 & 7793	Reps. Matugas, Villafuerte , Bustos, Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, Reps. Panotes, Yap (V.), Fariñas (R.C.), Babasa, Yu, and Garcia (J.E.)	Transferring the supervision and control over all the provincial and sub-provincial jails to the BJMP, placing/integrating all these jails under the jurisdiction of the BJMP, amending for the purpose certain provisions of RA 6975, as amended, otherwise known as the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Act of 1990, and RA 9263, otherwise known as the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and BJMP Professionalization Act of 2004	Atty. Leslie Ramirez-Picio of the CSC recommended that a provision be included in the proposed law that will set a uniform qualification standard and provide for a five- year transition period within which personnel from the local government units (LGUs) can comply with the qualification requirement for the position should the supervision and control over provincial and sub-provincial, district, city and municipal jails be transferred to the BJMP. Ramirez-Picio explained that personnel positions in the BJMP require an educational attainment and civil service eligibility depending on the salary grade of the position. DILG Undersecretary for Public Safety Nestor Quinsay, Jr. concurred with the proposal of the CSC for a five-year transition period. Quinsay recalled a similar situation during the enactment of RA 6975 in 1991 which established the Philippine National Police (PNP) under a reorganized DILG, thereby abolishing the Philippine Constabulary- Integrated National Police (PC-INP). During that period, the PC/INP personnel were given a chance to meet the educational and civil service eligibility requirements and those who were not able to comply were allowed to retire with proper retirement benefits. Quinsay added that the creation of a single agency to supervise national, provincial, sub- provincial, city, and municipal jails will entail the hiring of additional personnel and the construction of additional facilities. League of Provinces of the Philippines National President and Marinduque Governor

<p>Continuation... Justice</p>				<p>Presbitero Velasco said that some governors are in favor of transferring supervision and control of provincial jails to the BJMP, while others are against such transfer. Thus, he proposed that provinces be given the choice of either agreeing to transfer the control and supervision of provincial and sub-provincial jails to the BJMP, or allowing them to just seek the assistance of the BJMP in the management of jails through a memorandum of agreement. There is also a need to amend Section 17 (Basic Services and Facilities) of the Local Government Code which mandates local government units (LGUs) to operate and maintain provincial, sub-provincial, city, and municipal jails.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) inquired on the current protocol set by the BJMP with regard to the visitation of persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>BJMP Chief Jail Director Allan Iral said that currently, relatives and friends of PDLs are allowed to bring food and medicines to the latter. However, Iral stressed that physical visitation of PDLs is strictly prohibited at the moment, pursuant to the health protocols issued by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Emerging Infectious Diseases.</p> <p>Rep. Zarate requested Iral to submit to the Committee a copy of the memorandum he issued on the matter.</p> <p>The Committee requested the resource persons to submit their respective position papers on the bills for the consideration of the TWG.</p>
<p>Metro Manila Development</p>	<p>Substitute Bill to HB 2141</p>	<p>Rep. Fernando</p>	<p>Enhancing the effectiveness of the Metropolitan Manila Council in formulating policies, rules, regulations, and in enacting ordinances for Metro Manila, amending for the purpose RA 7924, or the law creating the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), defining its powers and functions, providing funds therefor</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Manuel Luis Lopez (1st District, Manila), approved the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HB 2141, subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Navotas City Rep. John Reynald Tiangco expressed his objection to the proposed law. He questioned, among others, the provision allowing the Metropolitan Manila Council (MMC) to promulgate ordinances. Rep. Tiangco said that this is violative of the Constitution, contrary to the local autonomy provisions of RA 7160 (Local Government Code), and an overstep of the mandates of MMDA under its charter.</p> <p>Rep. Bayani Fernando (1st District, Marikina City), author of HB 2141, along with Rep. Allan Benedict Reyes (3rd District, Quezon City), explained that it will still be the local government councils of the 17 cities/municipality in Metro Manila which will issue ordinances on flood control, health, sanitation, traffic management, and other public utilities.</p>

Continuation... Metro Manila Development				<p>The ordinances shall only be prepared or drafted by the MMC whose members include all mayors of Metro Manila, Rep. Fernando added.</p> <p>Rep. Maceda likewise expressed his reservation on the bill and said that he will just decide on the matter during the plenary deliberations on the proposed law.</p> <p>The Chair requested Rep. Tiangco to submit his comments and proposed amendments to the bill.</p>
	<i>Motu Proprio</i> Inquiry		<p>Inquiry into the issues affecting several barangays in Quezon City situated along the alignment of Segment 8.2 of the North Luzon Expressway Circumferential Road 5 (NLEX-C5) Link Project</p>	<p>The Committee approved, subject to style, the Committee Report on the <i>motu proprio</i> investigation into the problems being faced by several barangays in Quezon City situated along the alignment of Segment 8.2 of the NLEX-C5 Link Project.</p> <p>Rep. Lopez said that the Project, which costs P18.38 billion, is an 11.3-kilometer highway that will pass through eight barangays in Quezon City and one barangay in Valenzuela City. He said that the Committee recommends that affected families, private establishment owners, and informal settlers be properly compensated.</p>
	<i>Motu Proprio</i> Inquiry		<p>Inquiry into the North Luzon Expressway - South Luzon Expressway (NLEX-SLEX) connector road and North-South commuter railway projects as these affect several barangays in the City of Manila</p>	<p>The Committee approved, subject to style, the Committee Report on the <i>motu proprio</i> inquiry into the effects of the NLEX-SLEX connector road and commuter railway projects on several barangays in the City of Manila.</p> <p>Rep. Lopez said that the Committee recommends that the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and the Philippine National Railways (PNR) provide the affected informal settler families (ISFs) with proper compensation and suitable relocation area, mindful of the rights of the ISFs to quality living conditions.</p> <p>Rep. Cristal Bagatsing (5th District, Manila) was not amenable to the content of the Committee Report as she expressed her sentiments at the way the NLEX-SLEX connector road and commuter railway projects were implemented. She lamented that the affected families are legitimate landowners and longtime residents of the area covered by the road and railway projects.</p> <p>Rep. Bagatsing claimed that to date, no dialogue has been conducted between the affected homeowners and the government proponents on the matter of relocation and compensation. She asserted that such dialogue must be conducted immediately in consideration of those who will be affected.</p> <p>On the other hand, Rep. Edward Vera Perez Maceda (4th District, Manila) expressed his support for the approval of the Committee</p>

Continuation... Metro Manila Development				<p>Report saying that the facts therein were accurate and the issues raised during the Committee's investigation were comprehensively discussed.</p> <p>Nevertheless, Rep. Maceda said that the manifestations of Rep. Bagatsing are with basis and so he suggested that the Committee bring to the attention of the project implementors the concerns of Rep. Bagatsing.</p>
Women and Gender Equality	HB 7179	Rep. Acosta-Alba	Promoting women participation and equitable representation in and by political parties, giving incentives therefor, creating the Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba (1st District, Bukidnon), will deliberate further on HB 7179 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Acosta-Alba, author of HB 7179, said that in encouraging increased women's political participation, it is critical to begin the whole process with the political parties – the primary and direct vehicle through which women can access elected office and political leadership. Hence, she said that her bill advocates gender equality in political participation and representation by creating an open environment in political parties for both men and women. Rep. Acosta-Alba noted that a bill with similar subject matter was approved at the Committee level in the House of Representatives during the previous Congress.</p> <p>Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan) said that the bill is not meant to discriminate men but it is merely to address a long-standing gender inequality in the political field.</p> <p>Rep. Rosanna "Ria" Vergara (3rd District, Nueva Ecija) said that the Philippines has been recognized by the World Bank to score relatively high in terms of political empowerment of women in Asia, with 30% of the country's elected officials being women. She believes that the bill will all the more strengthen women's political empowerment in the country.</p> <p>Expressing support for the bill were representatives from the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), Democratic Socialist Women of the Philippines (DSWP), and Commission on Audit (COA).</p> <p>COMELEC Law Department Director Esmeralda Amora-Ladera recommended the inclusion of a penalty provision against mishandling of funds from the proposed Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund. She likewise suggested that the PCW, instead of COMELEC, should be the agency to issue the certification to political parties that are qualified to receive incentives for the development and implementation of their women and gender and development (GAD) agenda.</p>

<p>Continuation... Women and Gender Equality</p>				<p>However, PCW Executive Director Kristine Chaves said that it should be the COMELEC since the latter already has the records of political parties. Chaves also proposed to increase the percentage of women participation in political parties from 30% to 40%. Reps. Roman and France Castro (Party-List, ACT-TEACHERS), as well as DSWP National Chair Elizabeth Angsioco, concurred with this suggestion.</p> <p>AKBAYAN Party-List Chair Emeritus Loretta Ann Rosales, who was also a former Member of Congress, said that it is more reasonable for the PCW to recommend the qualifications of a political party, but the COMELEC should still be the agency to issue the certification.</p> <p>University of the Philippines Political Science Associate Professor Jean Encinas-Franco lauded the proposal to incentivize political parties to develop GAD programs and field women candidates. She, however, fears that those who will benefit from the proposed law will again be women who already belong to influential political families. She suggested that priority should be given to those who have the leadership skills but have no financial resources to mount a campaign.</p> <p>Encinas-Franco further suggested the inclusion in the bill of a sunset provision that shall prescribe the actions to be undertaken next if the objective of the bill has already been achieved.</p> <p>Meanwhile, COA representative, Atty. Joan Quijano, said that the Women in Political Parties Empowerment Fund should be administered by the COMELEC, the lead agency under the proposed law.</p> <p>The resource persons were instructed to submit their position papers for consideration by the Committee.</p>
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AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
<p>Agrarian Reform</p>	<p>Briefing by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance extended by DAR to the agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) in this time of pandemic • Implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP)-related provisions of RA 11494 or the Bayanihan to Recover as One Act (Bayanihan 2) and RA 11469 or the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act (Bayanihan 1) 	<p>The Committee, presided by Rep. Tyrone Agabas (6th District, Pangasinan), listened to the briefing conducted by the DAR relative to the assistance extended to the agrarian reform beneficiaries during the pandemic and the implementation of the CARP-related provisions of Bayanihan 1 and 2.</p> <p>DAR Undersecretary Luis Meinrado Pañgulayan discussed the implementation of CARP under a new and better normal. He explained the important role of ARBs in ensuring the continuous supply of agricultural products particularly in critical areas despite the continued threat of COVID-19.</p> <p>Pañgulayan said that despite the pandemic, the DAR continues to deliver support services to the ARBs and continues to perform its</p>

Continuation...
Agrarian Reform

tasks to attain its “zero backlog” campaign. Some of the DAR’s activities include the conduct of inventory of government-owned lands for coverage under the CARP and the distribution of lands to qualified people affected by the pandemic, including the Balik Probinsya recipients, displaced overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), and those who graduated from agricultural courses but do not own a land.

With the implementation of Bayanihan 1, Pañgulayan said that the DAR’s priority actions were the issuance of identification cards to ARBs to facilitate the release of government subsidy and finding out the whereabouts and the status of all ARBs nationwide so as to provide them with the necessary support services during the pandemic. Likewise, DAR implemented “ARBold Move for Deliverance of ARBs from the COVID-19 Pandemic” also called ARBold Move. This project aims to provide immediate and essential support services to the ARBs and agrarian reform beneficiary organizations (ARBOs) to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pañgulayan mentioned that for 2021, DAR will implement the Mega Farm Project, which aims to encourage ARBs to enter into commercial and agri-venture arrangements, such as supply contracts, and shift from subsistence farming to trade and product exports.

Relative to Bayanihan 2, Pañgulayan said that the law’s provision condoning the interests, penalties, and surcharges on loans also provides financial relief to the ARBs during the national emergency insofar as their loans to acquire lands are concerned.

DAR Undersecretary Emily Padilla added that the Department extended farm productivity assistance to ARBs through the distribution of agricultural inputs for fast growing cash crops. Likewise, women in the agricultural sector were provided with livelihood support services to generate supplemental sources of income to meet the daily needs of their families.

Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC) Secretariat Director James Arsenio Ponce apprised the Committee of the support services extended to the ARBs by CARP-implementing agencies (CIAs), such as the Departments of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Trade and Industry (DTI), and Labor and Employment (DOLE).

On the query of Rep. Agabas relative to the seemingly conflicting provisions between Bayanihan 2 and RA 6657 (Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law), Pañgulayan explained that based on the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of Section 4(m) of the Bayanihan 2 that will be issued by DAR, the condonation of interests, penalties, and surcharges on loans used to acquire lands by ARBs shall be granted upon the approval of the loan restructuring application and all previous payments for the loan interest during the period covered will be deducted from the principal loan.

Atty. Marife Lynn Pascua, Assistant Vice President of the Landowners Assistance and Policy Department, Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), said that LBP is coordinating with the DAR on the finalization of the proposed IRR. Assuming that the proposed IRR will be signed by the DAR Secretary, as explained by Pañgulayan, the data on the Agrarian Reform receivables as of March 2020 are as follows: 1) total outstanding interest balance of P6.53 billion, broken down into 2.54 billion for amortizing ARBs and P3.98 billion for non-amortizing ARBs. These are unpaid interests which are subject to condonation; 2) total interest collections amount to P1.04 billion which will be applied to the principal. After application, there will be an excess payment of P203 million involving 26,178 ARBs.

Former House Member and now Chairman of the Board of the Federation of Free Farmers Leonardo Montemayor expressed

<p><i>Continuation...</i> Agrarian Reform</p>		<p>concern on giving priority to returning OFWs or the Balik Probinsya beneficiaries in the distribution of parcels of land by the DAR over landless farmers who should be the primary beneficiaries of the CARP.</p> <p>Pañgulayan clarified that the distribution of government-owned lands suitable for agriculture is based on EO 75, series of 2019, wherein qualified beneficiaries may include COVID-19 affected returning OFWs, Balik Probinsya beneficiaries, and several others.</p>
<p>Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Special Committee)</p>	<p>Briefing by the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA)/Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of the Philippines-Moro Islamic Liberation Front (GPH-MILF) Peace Process 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Esmael Mangudadatu (2nd District, Maguindanao and Cotabato City), listened to the presentation of the members of the BTA/BARMM on the status of the GPH-MILF peace process, focusing on the normalization process and on the issues discussed in the National Government-BARMM Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB).</p> <p>Rep. Mangudadatu informed the body of the Committee's continuing support to the implementation of the GPH-MILF peace agreement. In line with this, he said, the Committee has already started its deliberation on HB 4003, authored by Rep. Jose Christopher Belmonte (6th District, Quezon City), which seeks to establish a Transitional and Justice Reconciliation Program for the Bangsamoro. Likewise, House Concurrent Resolution 6, authored by Majority Leader Ferdinand Martin Romualdez (1st District, Leyte), which provides for the creation of Philippine Congress-Bangsamoro Parliament Forum, was also deliberated on by the Committee.</p> <p>BARMM Minister Mohagher Iqbal, who is also the chair of the MILF Peace Implementing Panel, said that both the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the MILF are exerting utmost efforts in the implementation of all components of the peace agreement, in general, and the normalization process, in particular. However, the implementation of these would take time because there are sets of procedures that need to be observed. Likewise, the COVID-19 pandemic has restricted the mobility of peace workers and seriously affected government resources. He calls on all stakeholders, including Congress to help achieve the components of the peace agreement.</p> <p>BARMM Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority (BPDA) Director General Mohajirin Ali said that the signing of RA 11054, or the Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, in 2018 was a milestone in the peace process. Integral to the peace agreement between the GPH and MILF is the Normalization Process, whereby communities can achieve their desired quality of life, which includes the pursuit of sustainable livelihood and political participation within a peaceful society.</p> <p>The Normalization Process has eight interrelated components, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of the Transitional Components of Normalization, Joint Normalization Committee (JNC), Joint Peace and Security Committee (JPSC), and Joint Peace and Security Teams (JPST); • Socio-economic development programs; • Confidence-building measures such as pardon and amnesty, as well as special programs for the six acknowledged camps of the MILF; • Decommissioning of MILF weapons and combatants; • Redeployment of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in the Bangsamoro; • Policing in the Bangsamoro; • Disbanding of private armed groups; and • Transitional Justice and Reconciliation program.

<p>Continuation... Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Special Committee)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues discussed in the National Government-BARMM Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB) 	<p>On the status of the JPST, Ali reported that since November 2018, there are 6,889 individuals who have undertaken JPST training. Meanwhile, the operationalization of the police force for the Bangsamoro is now being discussed by the IGRB.</p> <p>With regard to the decommissioning of the 40,000 MILF combatants, Ali said that only 12,145 were decommissioned; and out of the 7,500 weapons owned by the MILF, only 2,500 were decommissioned.</p> <p>For the social-economic component, Ali said that each decommissioned combatant will receive P1 million worth of monetary and non-monetary package: P100,000 cash advance; housing package equivalent to P500,000; and socio-economic and livelihood package of P400,000.</p> <p>Ali concurred with the statement of Igbal with regard to the reasons why it takes more time to implement the components of the peace process. He said that Congress can help expedite the process through legislation of policies and providing ample funds for the normalization process.</p> <p>BARMM Attorney General Sha Elijah Dumama-Alba reported on the following issues discussed in the IGRB: entry of members from the MILF and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) into the Philippine National Police (PNP); creation of inter-agency committee that shall conduct an inventory to ensure that the liabilities of the abolished Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) shall be assumed by the national government prior to the transfer of power to the BTA; and creation of various national government agencies' offices in the Bangsamoro, among others.</p> <p>Dumama-Alba also informed the Committee that under the Bangsamoro Organic Law, the National Government shall provide a special development fund (SDF) to the Bangsamoro government for the rebuilding, rehabilitation, and development of its conflict-affected communities in the amount of P50 billion for a period of 10 years, wherein P5 billion will be released annually. She reported that the Department of Budget and Management has already issued the Special Allotment Release Order (SARO) and Notice of Cash Allocation (NCA) in the amount of P5 billion and P2.5 billion, respectively, for the SDF allocation of BARMM. For the release of the remaining P2.5 billion, the BARMM must submit a cash program containing the cash requirements/schedule for the programs, projects and activities to be funded under the FY 2020 SDF.</p> <p>On the block grant, Dumama-Alba said that the SARO is being released annually, the NCA quarterly, but the actual cash transfer is released monthly. This is contrary to the provision in the Bangsamoro Organic Law that it shall be released without need of any further action, directly and comprehensively to the Bangsamoro Government.</p> <p>Under the law, the National Government shall provide an annual block grant which shall be the share of the Bangsamoro Government in the national internal revenue tax collections of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and collections of the Bureau of Customs. The amount of the block grant shall be equivalent to five percent of the net national internal revenue tax collection of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the net collection of the Bureau of Customs from the third fiscal year immediately preceding the current fiscal year.</p> <p>On the query of Deputy Speaker Mujiv Hataman (Basilan), Dumama-Alba replied that the BARMM stands by its position that the block grant should be released automatically to the Bangsamoro government. However, because BARMM was placed under the DBM's bureau processing the budget for local governments, the release of the block grant was likened to the release of the internal revenue allocation for local government units.</p>
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<p><i>Continuation...</i> Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (Special Committee)</p>		<p>Minority Leader Joseph Stephen Paduano (Party-List, ABANG LINGKOD) asked if the 12,145 decommissioned combatants have received the P1 million that should be provided to each of them under the peace agreement. Iqbal answered that though the government has not yet released the full amount for the decommissioning of all 40,000 combatants, the MILF understands that the government's coffers have been greatly affected by the pandemic.</p> <p>Rep. Eufemia "Ka Femia" Cullamat (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) asked about the BARMM's initiatives for the rehabilitation of the war-torn Marawi City. Ali said that BARMM earmarked P500 million for the Marawi rehabilitation.</p> <p>Earlier in the meeting, BTA Speaker Pangalian Balindong enumerated the various legislations that were filed in the BARMM Parliament, such as the Bangsamoro Electoral Code, Civil Service Code, and Local Government Code. He said that these were already referred to the appropriate committees which will deliberate on the matter.</p> <p>The Committee will invite the following agencies in its next meeting: Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Department of Finance, and DBM.</p>
	<p>Briefing on the Rapid Mid-Term Review on the Bangsamoro Transition Period</p>	<p>Mindanao Peoples Caucus (MPC) Secretary General Mary Ann Arnado presented the MPC's independent Rapid Review on the Bangsamoro Transition Period.</p> <p>Arnado reported that based on interviews that the MPC conducted, 34.5% of the 232 respondents answered that they are satisfied with the performance of the interim government during the mid-term transition; while 25.9% said they are not satisfied.</p> <p>Arnado said that the timeline of the transition is January 24, 2019 to June 30, 2022. She is of the opinion that the remaining period of transition is already too short and could no longer realistically deliver the remaining tasks and targets of the BTA. Hence, she suggested that the transition period be extended until 2025.</p> <p>MPC is a civil society organization of indigenous peoples, Bangsamoro, and Christian communities and leaders who have common vision for peace in Mindanao.</p>

DISCUSSION WITH AGENCIES/ENTITIES		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
<p>Higher and Technical Education</p>	<p>Report by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) on the status of implementation of various laws on the establishment of state colleges and the conversion of state colleges into state universities in the country; discussion of issues pertaining to CHED policies on the establishment/conversion of state colleges/universities</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Baguio City Rep. Mark Go, listened to the report of the CHED on the status of implementation of various laws on the establishment of state colleges and conversion of state colleges into state universities in the country, in line with the oversight function of the Committee.</p> <p>CHED's Coordination and Governance Division Director Luisa Valencia apprised the Committee of the status of implementation of 21 laws on the establishment of state colleges and conversion of state colleges into state universities in various parts of the country. She explained that a law converting a particular school into a university will not take effect until CHED has verified the school's full compliance with the standard requirements of the Commission to ensure the quality standards of higher education institutions (HEIs).</p> <p>She said that the Commission considers the following factors in determining the substantial compliance of schools with the requirements, as follows: enrolment and program offerings; faculty</p>

<p>Continuation... Higher and Technical Education</p>		<p>qualifications; research capability; learning resources and support structure; and linkages and outreach.</p> <p>Valencia reported that all the 21 schools that are covered by the laws being reviewed by the Committee have not fully complied with the CHED requirements based on the evaluation conducted by the CHED Central Office.</p> <p>While some schools have reportedly recently submitted updated documents to the CHED regional offices, Valencia said these will have to be validated by the CHED Central Office upon endorsement by its regional offices.</p> <p>School officials present in the meeting raised several issues pertaining to the difficulties in complying with CHED requirements, such as lack of funds to purchase books and establish libraries and laboratories, purchase of digital books instead of hard copies of books, lack of plantilla items appropriate for faculty members with postgraduate degrees, and CHED's moratorium on the offering of graduate programs yet these are required for the schools' conversion into state universities.</p> <p>Valencia said that the qualification requirement for faculty members hired before 2016 is covered by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) Memorandum Circular No. 22, series of 2016, which provides that "the education requirement for faculty positions/ranks in the state universities and colleges (SUCs) is primarily a master's degree in the program to which the item of the faculty position/rank belongs."</p> <p>CHED agreed to endorse to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) the proposed budget of SUCs for the creation of plantilla items for faculty members with postgraduate degrees, Valencia added.</p> <p>With regard to existing moratorium on the offering of graduate programs, Valencia said that CHED will issue a memorandum order exempting schools covered by conversion laws from the moratorium.</p> <p>Rep. Go assured the resource persons that he will personally discuss with CHED Chairperson J. Prospero de Vera III all issues raised. Based on the commitments made by school officials, he expressed optimism that the establishment of state colleges and conversion of colleges into state universities pursuant to the 21 laws under review will be completed by the first quarter of 2021.</p> <p>In the meantime, the CHED agreed to reschedule all validation visits of compliant schools to December of this year instead of January 2021, upon the request of Rep. Go.</p>
<p>People's Participation</p>	<p>Update on the clinical trials and availability of the COVID-19 vaccines in the market including the vaccine being developed by Russia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Science and Technology (DOST) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by San Jose Del Monte City Rep. Florida "Rida" Robes, listened to the report of the DOST and the DOH on developments regarding Russia's COVID-19 vaccine, called Sputnik V, and the government's plan of purchasing the vaccines.</p> <p>DOST Assistant Secretary for International Cooperation Leah Buendia informed the body that the Philippines is constantly coordinating with the Russian government regarding the status of its COVID-19 vaccine production. She said that at present, the Russian government is on Phase 3 of clinical trials for its COVID-19 vaccine. She said that this is also true for other vaccines that are being developed worldwide, thus no vaccines are being sold yet in the market to date.</p> <p>Buendia said that aside from Russia's Sputnik V, the Philippines is also looking at other vaccines such as those being produced by pharmaceutical companies Janssen Pharma of Johnson & Johnson and Sinovac Biotech Ltd. from Beijing, China.</p>

<p>Continuation... People's Participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Health (DOH) 	<p>On the query of the Members on the efficacy of the vaccine that will be produced by Pfizer, Buendia replied that the DOST has yet to receive the documentation on this new vaccine so it cannot validate its efficacy at this time.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there is already a timeline in the conduct of clinical trials in the Philippines.</p> <p>Buendia said that in a best-case scenario, when all documentations are completed and submitted by the vaccine manufacturers, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will be able to issue permits to conduct clinical trials within 21 days.</p> <p>Global Policy Group Division Chief Aleli Annie Grace Sudiactal of DOH's Bureau of International Health Cooperation discussed the government's options in purchasing the vaccines.</p> <p>Sudiactal reported that the vaccine can be accessed through the COVAX facility which can cover about 3 to 20% of the country's population with funding from multilateral banks such as the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).</p> <p>COVAX is a global initiative aimed at working with vaccine manufacturers to provide countries worldwide equitable access to safe and effective vaccines, once they are licensed and approved (<i>Source: WHO website</i>).</p> <p>Since the supply of vaccines that COVAX can provide would only cover up to 20% of the country's population, the government will also consider the option of dealing with other vaccine manufacturers – either by government-to-government procurement, direct contracting, domestic production, or foreign donations. The funding for this option can be sourced from the proposed P2.5 billion vaccine allocation under the 2021 General Appropriations Bill (GAB) or through local bank-facilitated loans from the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP).</p>
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