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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Government Enterprises and Privatization	HB 1390	Rep. Sacdalan	Implementing the Mindanao River Basin Rehabilitation and Development Program, creating for this purpose the Mindanao River Basin Development Authority, defining its powers and functions, and providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Eric Olivarez (1st District, Parañaque City), approved HB 1390 subject to style.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bill were the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) Region 12 and 13 Field Offices as well as DENR's River Basin Control Office (RBCO).</p>
	HBs 2649, 3858 & 7627	Reps. Canama, Agabas, and Garin (S.)	Strengthening the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC), repealing for the purpose PD 1467, or the law creating the PCIC, prescribing its powers and activities, providing for its capitalization and for the required government premium subsidy, as amended by PD 1733 and RA 8175	<p>The Committee approved the three bills as a consolidated measure subject to style.</p> <p>Rep. Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBISW-OWA), author of HB 7627, said that her bill seeks to extend insurance coverage not only to farmers but also to fisherfolk. Aside from rice and corn, the bill expands the insurance coverage being provided by PCIC to other types of crops such as high value commercial crops, livestock, aquaculture and fishery, agroforestry, and forest plantations. The bill also seeks to strengthen the PCIC by increasing its authorized capital stock from P2 billion to P10 billion.</p> <p>Rep. Garin explained that the passage of the proposed law would be very timely and beneficial to the agriculture sector considering the estimated P5 billion damage to crops due to the two major typhoons that recently hit the country. The proposed expansion of insurance coverage or protection against losses would also help stabilize the income of agricultural producers and promote the flow of credit in the countryside.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bills were the PCIC, Department of Agriculture (DA), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP).</p>
	HB 5634	Rep. Nograles (J.F.F.)	Enhancing the protection and development of the Sierra Madre Region, creating the Sierra Madre Development Authority, defining its powers and functions and providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 5634 subject to style.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bill were the DENR Region 2 Field Office, DENR-RBCO, and Cagayan Province Governor Manuel Mamba.</p>
	HBs 6644 & 6667	Reps. Tan (A.S.) and Haresco	Amending PD 252, otherwise known as the Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC) Law, as amended by PD 1071, or the law revising the Charter of	<p>The Committee approved the two bills as a consolidated measure.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bills were the DA, NEDA, DENR's Biodiversity Management</p>

Continuation... Government Enterprises and Privatization			the PITC (by expanding the role of PITC to serve as the government's supply chain manager in the stockpiling of strategic and critical materials needed in times of national emergency or natural disasters)	Bureau (BMB) and the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP).
	HB 7745	Rep. Garcia (J.E.)	Creating the Regional Investment and Infrastructure Coordinating Hub (RICH) of Central Luzon and providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 7745 subject to style.</p> <p>Rep. Jose Enrique "Joet" Garcia III (2nd District, Bataan), author of HB 7745, informed the body that the bill is a refiled bill from HB 8637 which was approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Philippines in the 17th Congress but was vetoed by the President on March 13, 2019. However, he assured the body that the issues and concerns relative to HB 8637 were already addressed in HB 7745.</p> <p>He explained that the establishment of RICH will maximize and harness infrastructure development and organization of the interconnecting highways, railways, seaports, and airports in Central Luzon to encourage capital flow, effectively address bottlenecks and decongest Metro Manila, lay the foundation for long-term growth of Central Luzon, and increase the productivity of the people and their individual and family income thereby improving the quality of life.</p> <p>Expressing their support to the bill were the Department of Tourism (DOT), Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), and the Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan (AFAB).</p>
	HB 7872	Deputy Speaker Escudero	Merging the National Parks Development Committee (NPDC) and Nayong Pilipino Foundation (NPF) into the Urban Parks Development Authority (UPDA)	<p>The Committee approved HB 7872.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon), author of HB 7872, said that her bill seeks to streamline and strengthen the functional and structural organizations of the NPDC and NPF by merging the two entities and forming the UPDA. The proposed UPDA will be an attached agency of the DOT which shall complement the latter's programs and activities and shall ensure the development and maintenance of all urban parks in the country.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bill were the NPDC and the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB).</p> <p>NPF Executive Director Karen Malilong-Isberto proposed that the bill be studied first by a technical working group (TWG). However, the Chair requested the NPF to just submit its recommendations to further refine the bill.</p>
Ways and Means	Substitute Bill to HBs 4175, 6214, 6285, 7249, 7256,	Reps. Haresco, Duterte, Bautista, Olivarez,	Creating the Boracay Island Development Authority, defining its powers and functions, and providing funds therefor	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2 nd District, Albay), approved with amendments the tax provision of the substitute bill.

Continuation... Ways and Means	7280, 7294, 7313 & 7360	Marquez, Villafuerte, Tambunting, Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, and Rep. Garcia (J.E.)		<p>At the outset, Rep. Salceda stated that the substitute bill was referred to the Committee to review the provision granting fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to the proposed Boracay Island Development Authority.</p> <p>Committee Senior Vice Chair, Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), said that while awaiting for the passage of the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) Bill, the second package of the Duterte administration's Comprehensive Tax Reform Program (CTRP), the Committee suggested that the tax provision of the proposed law should be amended to read as follows: "Registered enterprises of the Boracay Islands Special Economic and Tourism Zone may be entitled to existing pertinent fiscal and non-fiscal incentives granted under Executive Order 226, as amended, otherwise known as the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, and to such other fiscal incentives as may be provided by law."</p> <p>Department of Finance (DOF) Information and Liaison Office Director Juvy Danofrata deferred to the decision of the Committee on how the tax provision of the proposed law will be implemented vis-a-vis the CREATE Bill.</p>
	HB 7351, in consolidation with HBs 984, 2901 3751, 7523 & 7978	Rep. Cuaresma, Deputy Speaker Romero, Rep. Cabochan, Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, Reps. Umali (A.) and Tambunting	Providing income tax relief to medical frontliners for the taxable year 2020	<p>The Committee approved HB 7351 in consolidation with HBs 984, 2901, 3751, 7523, and 7978, subject to style and amendment. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>Rep. Salceda said that the bills seek to grant preferential tax treatment to both medical and non-medical frontliners during this COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that these bills also provide additional remuneration above those already provided under the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act, for the risks taken by the frontliners while rendering services during the pandemic.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Suansing informed the body that the Committee prepared a draft consolidated bill with HB 7351 as the lead bill. She said that in consideration of the huge revenue impact of exempting all medical and non-medical frontliners from paying their income tax for year 2020, the Committee suggested that medical frontliners be exempted from paying 25% of income tax for the said period instead. This will be more feasible, according to Rep. Suansing.</p> <p>Rep. Alfonso Umali Jr. (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro), author of HB 7523, said that his bill provides that the hazard pay of frontliners should not be included in the computation of the gross income during a national emergency.</p>

Continuation... Ways and Means				<p>Danofrata appreciated the Committee's suggestion to revise the tax exemption, adding that exempting all medical and non-medical frontliners from paying their income tax for year 2020 would entail a P9-billion revenue loss for the government. With regard to the proposal of Rep. Umali, she said that it will entail a revision of the Tax Code.</p> <p>Philippine Medical Association (PMA) representative, Dr. Noemi Sarabia, expressed support for the proposed law. She said that medical doctors are financially burdened at this time of pandemic, especially since most of their patients are indigents.</p> <p>Rep. Stella Luz Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City) inquired on whether specialists, such as cosmetic surgery practitioners and dentists are covered by the proposed law.</p> <p>Sarabia said dentists should be covered because they are exposed to patients who may be COVID-19 positive but asymptomatic. On the other hand, she believes that cosmetic surgery practitioners should not be covered.</p> <p>Rep. Quimbo suggested that the pertinent provision should have a more specific language to limit its coverage and avoid confusion.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Ways and Means (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to HB 6516	Rep. Salceda	Penalizing bulk cash smuggling into or out of the Philippines	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), will deliberate further on the draft Substitute Bill to HB 6516 in its next meeting.</p> <p>The TWG is tasked to reconcile concerns between eradicating bulk cash smuggling and safeguarding the welfare of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who also fall under the category of persons transporting foreign currencies. Likewise, the TWG is expected to formulate mechanisms to deal with cases involving staggering amounts such as the smuggling of more than P80 billion worth of foreign currency into the country last year allegedly by four syndicates.</p> <p>Rep. Ron Salo (Party-List, KABAYAN) expressed his concern over the apparent lowering of the threshold for someone to be convicted of money laundering. He said that as presently worded, the proposed law provides that the mere failure to declare imported foreign currencies in excess of \$10,000 renders the importer already criminally liable and can be imprisoned from 7 to 14 years. He said that this law may put at</p>

<p>Continuation... Ways and Means (Technical Working Group)</p>				<p>risk OFWs who have no intention to launder money but just failed to declare the amount of money they are bringing home to their family. Under existing law, there is a need to establish unlawful activity before a person can be charged of money laundering.</p> <p>Rep. Salo proposed that the failure to declare the amount in excess of \$10,000 should just result in civil liability. However, he added, if the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) was able to establish that an unlawful activity was done by the importer of the money, then the latter should be held criminally liable.</p> <p>Baguio City Rep. Mark Go and Muntinlupa City Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon agreed to the proposal of Rep. Salo.</p> <p>Rep. Biazon further pointed out that penalizing the non-declaration of foreign currencies in excess of the allowable amount does not solve the problem of bulk cash smuggling. In fact, he said, importers of foreign currencies in bulk will simply declare the amount to avoid prosecution.</p> <p>Rep. Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA) suggested a gradual imposition of penalties, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importation of foreign currencies of \$10,000 and below – no customs declaration shall be required; • Importation of more than \$10,000 to \$100,000 – the amount shall be declared otherwise it will be forfeited; and • Importation of more than \$100,000 – declared or not declared, this will be considered outright smuggling which is a criminal offense. <p>Rep. Garin also proposed that those who habitually import bulk cash should be registered with the appropriate government agency. Likewise, Rep. Biazon said that those who engage in bulk money transfer should be regulated and the receiver of the money should also declare the amount they receive.</p> <p>AMLC Secretariat Executive Director Mel Georgie Racela is amenable to the suggestions of Reps. Garin and Biazon. Racela suggested that the threshold for imposing outright smuggling be increased to \$200,000.</p>
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