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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Civil Service and Professional Regulation	Substitute Bill to HBs 1877, 7265, 7431, 7289, 1567, 3477, 4371, 5321, 7281 & 7344	Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, Reps. Tambunting, Angara, Gaité, Deputy Speaker Santos-Recto, Reps. Tan (A.S.), Villafuerte, and Majority Leader Romualdez	Providing for a comprehensive nursing law towards a quality health care system, appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Iligan City Rep. Frederick Siao, approved the Substitute Bill to the 10 nursing law measures.</p> <p>Rep. Ferdinand Gaité (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA), raised concerns on the proposed law based on his consultation with the Filipino Nurses United (FNU) and other workers in the sector. One of these is the provision requiring nurses to undertake a continuing professional development (CPD) prior to the renewal of their Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) license. This is an unnecessary requirement for the actual practice of the nursing profession, he stressed.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rufus Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City) commented that the concerns raised by Rep. Gaité were already comprehensively discussed during the technical working group meetings on the matter. Hence, the Deputy Speaker pushed for the approval of the proposed law.</p>
	Substitute Bill to HBs 2844, 5008 & 6636	Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, Reps. Gonzales (A.), and Cabochan	Regulating the practice of environmental engineering in the Philippines, and providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 2844, 5008 and 6636, subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Philippine Society of Sanitary Engineers (PSSE), Inc. President Virginia Rocabo expressed reservations on the proposed law. She opined that the practice of environmental engineering is already covered by RA 1364 or the Sanitary Engineering Law, thus the law may just be amended to include additional regulatory measures.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, author of HB 2844, said the measure is precisely intended to make environmental engineering a separate profession from sanitary engineering.</p> <p>PRC Civil Engineering (CE) Board Chair Praxedes Bernardo objected to the definition of "Water Supply Engineering" under the bill which makes it a branch of environmental engineering. She said that water supply engineering has always been under the practice of civil engineering.</p>
	Substitute Bill to HBs 5132, 5505 & 5865	Reps. Dalog, Gonzales (A.), and Tutor	Regulating the registration, licensure, and practice of physical therapy in the Philippines, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 5132, 5505 and 5865, subject to style and amendment.

Continuation... Civil Service and Professional Regulation	HR 341	Deputy Speaker Marcoleta	Urging the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to revolutionize civil service in the Philippines by devising a meaningful reward system to promote efficiency, integrity, responsiveness, and courtesy among civil servants and establishing an efficient deterrent to curb the bane hounding the civil service, which commonly, takes the form of graft and corruption	<p>The Committee adopted HR 341.</p> <p>CSC Public Assistance and Information Office Director Maria Luisa Salonga-Agamata said the CSC welcomes the resolution.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rodriguez inquired on what the CSC has done so far to make the civil service more efficient and effective and what meaningful reward systems have been put in place for public servants.</p> <p>Salonga-Agamata said that since 1966, the CSC has been granting incentive awards to government workers for their outstanding performance, which were then already at the level of the Presidential Award. She disclosed that from 1966 to 1975, a total of 129 awards were given out. She did not provide data on the number of awards given for the years after that, but she said that the CSC's incentive awards continue up to this time.</p> <p>CSC Human Resource Policies and Standards Office Director Rodolfo Encajonado said that in addition to these awards, the CSC also implements the "Program to Institutionalize Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management" (PRIME-HRM), with the objective of achieving excellence in human resource management in the public sector through assessment, assistance, and awarding processes.</p> <p>Rep. Siao requested the CSC to submit a written report on the various initiatives it is undertaking to further enhance the service and promote integrity and competence among the civil servants in the country.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rodriguez also requested the CSC to submit a draft legislative measure that will unify all the awards being given and strengthen the rewards system of the government.</p>
Disaster Resilience	HBs 7174 & 7412	Rep. Vargas and Deputy Speaker Villanueva	Prohibiting the active use and display of commercial billboards during typhoons	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Lucy Torres-Gomez (4th District, Leyte), approved the consolidated version of HBs 7174 and 7412 and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>The DPWH and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) expressed their support for the bills.</p> <p>The Committee also agreed to include the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and other relevant agencies among the agencies that will craft the Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR) of the proposed law.</p>
	HB 8076	Rep. Robes	Providing for a national emergency recovery program	The Committee approved HB 8076. The Secretariat was directed to transmit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations for review of its funding provision.

Continuation... Disaster Resilience				<p>San Jose del Monte City Rep. Florida "Rida" Robes, author of HB 8076, said that her bill seeks to grant the President the power to extend the validity of appropriations for projects that are implemented to respond to a national emergency for a period of not more than two years. According to Rep. Robes, this will ensure the continuous and unhampered implementation of such programs allowing for a wider latitude to hurdle the adverse impact of the national emergency and consequently move the country towards recovery.</p> <p>The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said that the proposed law should be in line with the existing emergency rehabilitation and recovery programs of concerned agencies such as those of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).</p> <p>Rep. Robes said that she is amenable to the suggestion of the DBM.</p>
	HR 1354	Deputy Speaker Villar	Expressing the collective support and commendation to the men and women in uniform, local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs), and other private organizations and individuals for their valiant efforts in helping our countrymen in the rescue and relief operations during the recent typhoons that hit the Philippines	<p>The Committee adopted HR 1354 and the corresponding draft Committee Report.</p> <p>Expressing gratitude to the author and the Committee for coming up with such a measure were the Armed Forces of the Philippines, (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), and the Philippine Red Cross (PRC).</p> <p>Rep. Juliet Marie De Leon Ferrer (4th District, Negros Occidental) also thanked the frontliners for their service to the country.</p>
	HB 938	Rep. Cabochan	Granting disaster service volunteers paid leave during period of disasters	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to deliberate further on the three bills.
	HB 5042	Rep. Nieto	Providing for a Magna Carta for Rescue Workers	Rep. Manuel Cabochan III (Party-List, MAGDALO), author of HB 938, was designated as TWG Chair.
	HB 7921	Rep. Tambunting	Granting daily allowance to service volunteers during period of disasters	<p>In his sponsorship remarks, Rep. Cabochan said that his bill grants public and private employees paid leave from work to participate in specialized disaster relief services for the Philippine Red Cross (PRC). He said this is essential so that employees will be encouraged to assist the PRC in times of disasters. He also said that employees who possess skills that can be useful to disaster operations deserve to be granted this kind of benefit.</p> <p>On the other hand, Rep. John Marvin "Yul Servo" Nieto (3rd District, Manila), author of HB 5042, said that his bill aims to promote and improve the social and economic well-being of rescue workers through better living and working conditions and terms of employment. It also aims to develop the skills and capabilities of rescue workers in order for them to be more responsive and better equipped to deliver lifesaving services and programs.</p>

Continuation... Disaster Resilience				<p>Expressing their support for the bills were the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) and the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA). However, they also recommended to expand the coverage of HB 938 to other kinds of volunteers not just those volunteering for the PRC.</p> <p>PRC Secretary General Elizabeth Zavalla recommended that HB 938 be reviewed further in view of its ramifications on the operations of the PRC. She said that while the PRC supports the proposal that public and private employers should grant paid leaves to employees who will do volunteer work, this requirement may not be applicable to the PRC's own set of regular volunteers. She explained that the PRC is <i>sui generis</i> in nature or a class of its own, and so it may not be subject to a government regulation requiring the grant of paid leaves to its volunteers.</p> <p>Further, Zavalla said that the PRC has its own guidelines for their volunteers, adding that the PRC is under the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and is working with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).</p> <p>The CSC agreed that HB 938 should be studied further. However, the CSC supports HB 5042.</p>
	HR 771	Rep. Crisologo	Encouraging the LGUs to use their local disaster risk reduction and management fund (LDRRMF) to control the spread of COVID-19 in their communities	<p>The Committee decided to table HR 771 considering that a DBM Circular on the matter has already been issued.</p> <p>DBM Local Budget Circular No. 124, dated March 26, 2020, provides the policy guidelines on the provision of funds by LGUs for programs, projects and activities (PPAs) to address the COVID-19 situation.</p> <p>The DBM Circular states that “the funding requirements for such PPAs shall be charged against the available and unencumbered funds of the LGUs, including their respective LDRRMFs, subject to existing budgeting, accounting, and auditing laws, rules and regulations.”</p>
Justice	HB 7668	Rep. Veloso	Amending Articles 183 and 184 of Act No. 3815, as amended, otherwise known as the Revised Penal Code (by increasing the penalty for perjury or providing false testimony)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Vicente “Ching” Veloso III (3rd District, Leyte), approved the Committee Report on HB 7668.</p> <p>The Committee Vice Chair, Rep. Jonathan Keith Flores (2nd District, Bukidnon), presided over the meeting in behalf of the Chair who had problems with his internet connection during the virtual meeting.</p>
	HBs 2286, 3137, 3318, 4154, 4458, 5377, 5559 & 7870	Reps. Dimaporo, (M.K.) Limkaichong, Loyola,	Creating additional branches of the Regional Trial Court (RTC), Family Court, and Municipal Trial Court (MTC) in certain parts of the country, amending for the purpose Batas Pambansa Blg. 129,	The Committee approved the Committee Reports on the eight bills.

Continuation... Justice		Haresco, Deputy Speaker Yu, Rep. Babasa, and Deputy Speaker Legarda	otherwise known as the Judiciary Reorganization Act of 1980, as amended, and appropriating funds therefor	
	HB 5064	Rep. Garin (S.)	Granting Filipino citizenship to Liang Xi Wu	<p>The Committee approved the Committee Report on HB 5064.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rufus Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City) inquired as to the grounds for granting Filipino citizenship to the applicant, such as what he has done and contributed to merit the rights of a Filipino citizen.</p> <p>Rep. Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA), author of HB 5064, said that Liang was born to a Filipino mother and has been in the Philippines since he was 12 years old. Rep. Garin added that the applicant has already submitted all the documents required in the grant of Filipino citizenship and she confirmed that he does not have any derogatory record with law enforcement agencies and other authorities.</p> <p>On the query of Deputy Speaker Rodriguez as to why Liang did not apply for naturalization as Filipino citizen early on, Rep. Garin said that the applicant was overwhelmed by the process that he would undergo. Rep. Garin also surmised that applying for citizenship could not have been the priority of the applicant before.</p>
	HBs 3013, 4063, 4147, 6067 & 6068	Reps. Tiangco, Palma, Cari, and Mercado	Creating additional branches of the RTC, Metropolitan Trial Court (MeTC), Family Court, and MTC in certain parts of the country, amending for the purpose Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, as amended, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HBs 3013, 4063, 4147, 6067, 6068 and 5883.</p> <p>Expressing support for the bills were the representatives from the Supreme Court - Office of the Court Administrator (SC-OCA), Department of Justice (DOJ), and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).</p>
	HB 5883	Rep. Abueg-Zaldivar	Creating a Shari'a Judicial District comprising the Province of Palawan and the City of Puerto Princesa, further amending for the purpose Articles 138, 147, and 150 of PD 1083, otherwise known as the Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines, as amended, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>SC-OCA Court Management Office OIC, Atty. Marilou Marza-Anigan, said that the creation of additional courts in different parts of the country would help decongest the overburdened courts and would also contribute in the speedy disposition of cases.</p> <p>DOJ State Counsel Leilani Aspiras proposed that additional prosecutor positions should likewise be created as new courts are also being created, in line with Sec. 8 of RA 10071, otherwise known as the Prosecution Service Act of 2010.</p> <p>Based on Sec. 8 (The Provincial Prosecutor or City Prosecutor) of this law, there shall be a Provincial Prosecutor or City Prosecutor, as the case may be, for each province or city "who shall be assisted by at least one Deputy</p>

Continuation... Justice				Provincial Prosecutor or Deputy City Prosecutor and such number of assistant and associate prosecutors as provided for hereinafter.”
	HBs 5951, 7284, 7427 & 8144	Deputy Speaker Puno, Reps. Romualdez (Y.M.), Lopez (M.), and Gasataya	Granting Filipino citizenship to Angelo Kouame and Bienvenido Marañon Morejon, respectively	<p>The Committee deferred the approval of the Committee Reports on the four bills until the authors become available to answer the queries of the Members.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rodriguez manifested that the attendance of the authors is important in the deliberation of measures granting Filipino citizenship.</p>
	HB 1816	Deputy Speaker Pacquiao (R.)	Transferring the seats of two new RTCs from the Municipality of Alabel, Province of Sarangani to the Municipalities of Kiamba and Malungon, Province of Sarangani, amending for the purpose RA 10123 and further amending Batas Pambansa Blg. 129, as amended, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee deferred consideration of HB 1816.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rogelio Pacquiao (Saranggani), author of HB 1816, through a letter addressed to the Chair, requested the deferral of the consideration of his bill. He cited the need to first conduct further research on the matter to ensure that the bill will be able to serve the best interest of the people in the area.</p>
Ways and Means	HR 227	Rep. Suansing (E.)	Investigation into the implementation of Section 150-B (Excise Tax on Sweetened Beverages) of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997, as amended by RA 10963, otherwise known as the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay), will prepare the draft Committee Report on the results of its investigation pursuant to HR 227.</p> <p>Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), author of HR 227, underscored the need to address issues pertinent to product certifications being issued by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), particularly on sweetened beverages (SBs), which serve as basis for the grant of tax exemption by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).</p> <p>Rep. Suansing explained that there were companies who were exempted from the payment of excise tax because of their declaration that they are not using high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) in manufacturing their products, which were certified by the FDA as such after supposedly verifying the content of these products. However, the BIR found out during its audit that these companies have on-hand stocks of HFCS indicating that their products are sweetened beverages and therefore taxable under Section 150-B of the NIRC.</p> <p>She believes there is a need to upgrade the product certification process of the FDA to enable it to accurately detect the presence of HFCS in beverages so that the collection of excise tax on SBs by the BIR will be improved.</p> <p>FDA Director General Rolando Enrique Domingo admitted that the FDA lacks the equipment to accurately verify the content of a product such as the presence of HFCS. However, he apprised the body that the FDA</p>

<p>Continuation... Ways and Means</p>				<p>will be able to procure the necessary equipment by end of this year with the issuance of the Special Allotment Release Order (SARO) for this purpose by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) in mid-November. He added that another equipment is set to be donated by the World Health Organization (WHO) for the same purpose.</p> <p>BIR OIC-Assistant Commissioner for Legal Service Larry Barcelo assured the Committee that the revenue target from the collections of the excise tax on SBs will be met once the FDA already has the proper equipment for the accurate verification of product contents.</p> <p>Rep. Sergio Dagooc (Party-List, APEC) suggested that the FDA accredit more private laboratories capable of product content verification in order to expedite the certification process of the FDA.</p> <p>Given the positive developments that were reported by the resource persons, Rep. Suansing said that she is hopeful that the target revenues from the excise tax on SBs will be met for the year 2021.</p>
	<p>HR 556</p>	<p>Deputy Speaker Pichay</p>	<p>Inquiry into the unabated smuggling of goods into the country by unscrupulous operators of customs bonded warehouses (CBW) to the detriment of local manufacturers and producers and the Philippine economy, with the end in view of recommending measures to stop smuggling using the warehousing system by revisiting the provisions of the Customs Modernization Tariff Act on bonded warehouses and limiting the type, nature and number of bonded warehouses</p>	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the issues raised relative to HR 556 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Suansing said that the Committee already conducted five meetings relative to HR 556, wherein the last meeting emphasized the need to finalize the audit reports prepared by the Bureau of Customs (BOC).</p> <p>BOC Assistant Commissioner Vincent Philip Maronilla presented the compliance audit reports on Mofels Food International Corporation (Mofels) and Petrotrade Philippines, Inc. (Petrotrade).</p> <p>According to Maronilla, initial findings show that Mofels failed to pay the correct duties and taxes. Thus, the BOC's Post Clearance Audit Group (PCAG) recommends the issuance of a demand letter against Mofels for the payment of P2.7 billion representing deficiencies in custom duties and taxes, including penalties and interests, covering the years 2017 to 2019. The PCAG also recommends the suspension or cancellation of the accreditation of Mofels as an importer.</p> <p>In addition, Mofels' case will be referred to the Bureau Action Team Against Smugglers (BATAS), the BOC's anti-smuggling task force, to investigate further the liabilities of the company outside the three-year audit period.</p> <p>With regard to Petrotrade, Maronilla explained that the company is a Private Bonded Warehouse, which is a warehouse facility</p>

<p>Continuation... Ways and Means</p>				<p>licensed by the BOC to import, receive, and store articles for its products intended for domestic consumption. However, based on the compliance audit by PCAG, Petrotrade's operations involve the importation of industrial fuel oil (IFO) and supplying this to foreign vessels and not for domestic consumption, thus violating its License to Operate as a Private Bonded Warehouse.</p> <p>Maronilla said that PCAG recommends the issuance of a demand letter against Petrotrade amounting to P3.2 billion representing deficiencies in customs duties and taxes including penalties and interest.</p> <p>On the compliance audit conducted on Chevron, the BOC requested for more time before the submission of its audit report to be able to first reconcile their findings with other data and submissions.</p> <p>The Committee approved the motion of Rep. Stella Luz Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City) to request Speaker Lord Allan Jay Velasco to issue a <i>subpoena duces tecum</i> to the three companies to expedite the investigation and filing of appropriate charges by the BOC.</p> <p>Meanwhile, BOC Deputy Commissioner Edward James Dy Buco gave an update on the warehousing system in the BOC. He said that an online Inventory Management System (IMS) for CBWs, which can be accessed 24/7, was established to monitor in real-time the status and accounting of raw materials from the time of transfer to the CBW up to the exportation of finished goods.</p> <p>He also mentioned that as of December 15, there are only 150 CBWs operating nationwide from the 456 CBWs that were identified prior to the conduct of an inquiry by the Committee pursuant to HR 556.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Jose "Jun" Ong Jr. (2nd District, Northern Samar) on the benefits of closing down the CBWs, Dy Buco said that companies such as those involved in the importation of Jet A-1 fuels are now paying their taxes and duties in full as they are no longer benefiting from warehouse privileges.</p> <p>Under Section 812 of RA 10863 or the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA), "goods duly entered for warehousing in CBWs shall be exempt from duty and tax within the allowed period for storage unless withdrawn for consumption, exportation or transit to a free zone or another CBW, in which case, such withdrawal will be subject to the applicable rules and regulations on the liquidation of the warehousing entry."</p> <p>Rep. Suansing asked how much revenue is expected to be gained by the government in</p>
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Continuation... Ways and Means				<p>terms of tax collection given that about 306 CBWs were closed down.</p> <p>Dy Buco said that BOC is expecting a collection of around P6 to P10 billion in duties and taxes from the importation of JET A-1 fuels.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Welfare of Children (Technical Working Group)	Substitute Bill to HBs 5581, 6153, 6160, 6221, 6258, 6265, 6267, 6289, 6304, 6488, 6544, 6681, 7240, 2282 & 2349	Reps. Romualdez (Y.M.), Lim, Castelo, Tan (A.), Defensor (M.), Roman, Alonte, Deputy Speaker Yu, Reps. Ferrer (J.M.), Garin, Suarez (A.), Hofer, Vergara, Acosta-Alba, and Deputy Speaker Escudero	Codifying the alternative child care laws and providing funds therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Rosanna "Ria" Vergara (3rd District, Nueva Ecija), will deliberate further on the substitute bill.</p> <p>In today's meeting, the TWG listened to the presentation of the Office of the Court Administrator (OCA) of the Supreme Court on the current judicial procedure on domestic adoption, as well as the presentation of the National Prosecution Service of the Department of Justice (DOJ) on the challenges being encountered with regard to adoption cases.</p> <p>Representing the OCA, Presiding Judge Jose Lorenzo de la Rosa of Branch 4 of the Manila Regional Trial Court outlined the whole judicial process involved in an adoption case, from the filing of petition to publication and notice, order of hearing, jurisdictional hearing, trial, judgment or decree of adoption, to the issuance of a certificate of finality.</p> <p>Rep. Paul Ruiz Daza (1st District, Northern Samar) asked about the processing time for adoption cases.</p> <p>Dela Rosa replied that it takes four months to one year to process adoption cases. The lengthy process could be attributed to the courts' heavy caseload; the lack of preparation by the parties concerned; and the "indifference of some judges towards children."</p> <p>DOJ National Prosecution Service Assistant State Prosecutor Claire Pagayanan mentioned the challenges that the DOJ encounters in handling adoption cases. Some of these are the public prosecutors' lack of formal authority to represent the State in adoption cases (The Office of the Solicitor General has this function but in practice, this was delegated to the DOJ); absence of character references to which the DOJ may refer in assessing the applicants; and lack of access to the social case study report which can be helpful when the adoption case is presented to the court.</p> <p>Pagayanan opined that judicial process should be maintained in adoption to ensure the safety</p>

<p>Continuation... Welfare of Children (Technical Working Group)</p>				<p>and well-being of children. Likewise, she said the judges, through the hearings, will be able to determine what is best for the child.</p> <p>National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) Commissioner Samer Allong explained the relevant provisions of the Shariah Law under PD 1083 on adoption. He stated that there is no adoption in any form under this law. A Muslim can only guide and support the child, but he or she cannot adopt that child.</p> <p>Inter-Country Adoption Board (ICAB) Executive Director Bernadette Abejo said that an administrative proceeding for inter-country adoption, through the ICAB, is for the best interest of the child. For one, the ICAB will not allow inter-country adoption without the consent of the adopter's country and that the adoptee will be allowed entry to the country of the adoptive parents.</p> <p>Inter-country adoption involves the adoption of a Filipino child by a foreigner or a Filipino citizen permanently residing abroad.</p> <p>On the other hand, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) - Office of Consular Affairs (OCA) Director Jim Minglana said that the DFA supports the proposed legislation seeking to codify all laws on alternative child care. Minglana reported that the DFA is coordinating with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in handling cases of Filipino children abandoned in a foreign country.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their position papers on the proposed law.</p>
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