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No. 56

CALL TO ORDER

At 4:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn F. Garcia called the session to order.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is now called to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Everybody will please rise to sing the Philippine National Anthem.

Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Everybody will please remain standing for the prayer to be led by the Hon. Len B. Alonte-Naguiat, the Representative from the Lone District of Biñan City.

Everybody remained standing for the Invocation.

INVOCATION

REP. ALONTE-NAGUIAT. Dearest Lord, on this final day of plenary for 2016, we ask that You guide us in fulfilling our duties as duly-elected Representatives of our respective constituencies. Bless our discussions and deliberations in this august Chamber that they may be fruitful, collaborative, critical, concise and crucial, not for the service of ourselves, but of the Filipino people.

Help us remember that we are stronger together than when we are apart; that public service is not “us versus them,” rather it is “us versus the many problems that plague our country like crime, poverty, inequality and social injustice.”

Guide us to be partners for genuine reform and enlighten us that change can only be fulfilled if we do our jobs dutifully, truthfully and to the best of our abilities.

Bless all the resolutions and the bills we will be tackling on the floor today, O Lord.

Bless the Speaker, the Deputy Speakers, the Majority Leader, The Minority Leader, the Floor Leaders, the Sponsors, the interpellators and all those who toil in moving each measure through the legislative pipeline.

Most importantly, dear Lord, help us remember that everything we do is for Your greater glory and that beyond all our external forces, change always starts from within.

These we ask through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Amen.
The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Good afternoon, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Good afternoon.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we defer the calling of the roll.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. DEFENSOR. Likewise, Mme. Speaker, I move that we defer the approval of the Journal.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. DEFENSOR. I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General will please read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary General read the following House Bills and Resolutions on First Reading, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 4663, entitled:
“AN ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO BEATRIZ BERTA OLGADO ROXAS”
By Representative Limkaichong
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 4664, entitled:
“AN ACT MANDATING TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO CREATE DIVERSE SPORTS PROGRAMS, TO ESTABLISH SPORTS CLUBS, TO INITIATE SPORTING EVENTS EVERY ACADEMIC TERM, AND TO REQUIRE TERTIARY EDUCATION STUDENTS TO ENGAGE IN AT LEAST ONE SPORT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”
By Representative Romero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 4665, entitled:
“AN ACT INCREASING THE CAPITALIZATION OF THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION (NIA), TO PROMOTE RURAL DEVELOPMENT BY PROVIDING FOR AN ACCELERATED PROGRAM, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”
By Representatives Romero and Pineda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 4666, entitled:
“AN ACT RATIONALIZING THE SALE OF SUBDIVISION LOTS AND CONDOMINIUMS, INCREASING ITS PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”
By Representatives Romero and Pineda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 4667, entitled:
“AN ACT RATIONALIZING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ECONOMIC

STANDARDS AND SOCIALIZED HOUSING PROJECTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Romero and Pineda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 4668, entitled:
“AN ACT RENEWING THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO SARRAGA INTEGRATED AND MANAGEMENT CORPORATION UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7478 TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN, FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES, RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES”
By Representative Romualdo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

House Bill No. 4669, entitled:
“AN ACT RECOGNIZING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES, PRESCRIBING REQUIREMENTS, GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS FOR THEIR OPERATION, PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”
By Representative Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 4670, entitled:
“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE REAPPORTIONMENT OF THE LONE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF AKLAN”
By Representative Marquez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 4671, entitled:
“AN ACT TO FURTHER EXPEDITE THE DISPOSITION OF JUDICIAL CASES INVOLVING VIOLATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9165, ENHANCE ITS EFFICACY AGAINST DANGEROUS DRUGS, AND AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 90 AND 92 THEREOF”
By Representative Garcia (J.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON DANGEROUS DRUGS

House Bill No. 4672, entitled:
“AN ACT TO RATIONALIZE THE COLLECTION OF THE TAX ON BUSINESS UNDER SECTION 143 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE,

AND AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
SECTION 150 THEREOF”

By Representative Garcia (J.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL
GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 4673, entitled:

“AN ACT RENAMING THE ENTIRE BOHOL
CIRCUMFERENTIAL ROAD IN THE
PROVINCE OF BOHOL INTO GOV. ERICO
B. AUMENTADO HIGHWAY”

By Representative Macapagal-Arroyo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS
AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 4674, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE WORK
SCHEDULE AND OTHER TERMS OF
ENGAGEMENT GOVERNING CINEMA/
RADIO/TELEVISION/ THEATER AND
OTHER MEDIA PERSONNEL WHO ARE
COVERED BY A SERVICE OR TALENT
CONTRACT AND PROVIDING PENALTIES
FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Nieto, Maceda and Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND
EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 4675, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE DONATION
OF ALL SURPLUS OR LEFT OVER BUT
STILL EDIBLE FOODS TO CHARITABLE
INSTITUTIONS AND FOUNDATIONS
BY ALL RESTAURANTS, HOTELS,
SUPERMARKETS, FAST FOOD
CHAINS AND OTHER SIMILAR FOOD
ESTABLISHMENTS AND PROVIDING
PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF”

By Representatives Nieto and Maceda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON POVERTY
ALLEVIATION

House Bill No. 4676, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE SPECIAL
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN
SITUATIONS OF ARMED CONFLICT
AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR
VIOLATIONS THEREOF”

By Representatives Nieto and Maceda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF
CHILDREN

House Bill No. 4677, entitled:

“AN ACT UPGRADING THE CARAGA
REGIONAL HOSPITAL IN SURIGAO

CITY, SURIGAO DEL NORTE AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Bag-ao
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 4678, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE LONE LEGISLATIVE
DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF GENERAL
SANTOS”

By Representative Acharon
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL
GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 4679, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY
OF THE ADELA SERRA TY MEMORIAL
MEDICAL CENTER IN TANDAG CITY,
PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, FROM
TWO HUNDRED (200) TO FIVE HUNDRED
(500) BEDS, UPGRADING ITS SERVICES
AND FACILITIES, AUTHORIZING
THE INCREASE OF ITS MEDICAL
PERSONNEL AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representatives Pichay and Pimentel
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 624, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE
RESIGNATION OF COMMISSION
ON HIGHER EDUCATION (CHED)
CHAIRPERSON DR. PATRICIA B.
LICUANAN”

By Representatives Salo and Lacson
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND
TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Resolution No. 625, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE
COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS’
AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT AN IMMEDIATE
INQUIRY ON AND ASSESSMENT OF
THE EFFORTS OF THE PHILIPPINE
GOVERNMENT TO RESPOND TO
THE NEEDS OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO
WORKERS (OFWs) AFFECTED BY THE
CRISIS IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI
ARABIA, WITH THE AIM TO DEVELOP
APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO ASSIST
OFWs IN DISTRESS IN THE MIDDLE
EAST”

By Representatives De Jesus, Brosas, Zarate, Tinio,
Castro (F.L.), Casilao and Elago
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 626, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION STRONGLY URGING PRESIDENT RODRIGO R. DUTERTE TO IMMEDIATELY RELEASE ALL MILITARY AND POLICE PERSONNEL WITH PENDING CASES IN COURT OR WERE CONVICTED IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR MANDATED DUTIES UNDERTAKEN UNDER INTERNAL SECURITY OPERATIONS (ISO), AS A RECIPROCAL ACTION FOR THE RELEASE OF 20 NDF CONSULTANTS AND THE IMPENDING RELEASE OF MORE CPP-NPA-NDF PRISONERS AS PART OF THE CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES OF THE ONGOING GRP-NDF PEACE TALKS”

By Representatives Alejano, Acop, Bataoil, Espino and Tupas
TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND UNITY

House Resolution No. 627, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE LIFTING OF QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS ON RICE AND ASSESS ITS IMPACT ON LOCAL RICE PRODUCTION”

By Representative Geron
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 628, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION AND IN THE EXERCISE OF ITS REVIEW FUNCTIONS, ON THE LACK OF PROPER ACCOUNTING ON THE PROCEEDS OF BY DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES CONCERNED RELATING TO THE PROCEEDS DERIVED FROM AGRICULTURAL COMPETITIVENESS ENHANCEMENT FUNDS CREATED UNDER THE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8187”

By Representative Geron
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 629, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE TOLL REGULATORY BOARD (TRB) AND THE STAR INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (SIDC)

TO INSTALL ADDITIONAL ROADWAY LIGHTING FOR APOLINARIO MABINI SUPERHIGHWAY (AMS) OR THE SOUTHERN TAGALOG ARTERIAL ROAD (STAR)”

By Representative Mariño
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Resolution No. 630, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE APPROPRIATE HOUSE COMMITTEE, TO LOOK INTO, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE PLANNED CONVERSION OF THE RIZAL MEMORIAL SPORTS COMPLEX INTO A COMMERCIAL CENTER”

By Representative Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 631, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION FOR THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO EXPRESS ITS APPROBATION ON THE LAUNCH OF THE PILIPINONG MAY PUSO FOUNDATION AT THE GARDEN PAVILION OF WATERFRONT HOTEL, DAVAO CITY ON NOVEMBER 11, 2016 IN HONOR OF THE LATE MRS. SOLEDAD ROA DUTERTE, THE MOTHER OF PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE”

By Representative Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 632, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE (PAF) FOR PROMPTLY CARRYING OUT THE RESCUE OF FILIPINO SEAMAN JAIME JEROME WHO NEEDED MEDICAL TREATMENT WHILE ON BOARD M/V MARLENE D'AMATO ITALIAN SHIP WHILE CROSSING THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA ON DECEMBER 8, 2016 DESPITE HARSH SEA CONDITIONS”

By Representative Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

House Resolution No. 633, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING ATTY. RHIO FUENTES-NUYLAN FOR BEING AWARDED THE TOP PERFORMING STUDENT FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN LAW AND FINANCE DURING THE COMMENCEMENT

EXERCISES AT THE ESTEEMED QUEEN MARY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON ON DECEMBER 6, 2016”

By Representative Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Resolution No. 634, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEES ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND AGRARIAN REFORM TO CONDUCT A JOINT INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SHOOTING OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS OF MADAUM AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES ASSOCIATION, INC. (MARBAI) IN TAGUM CITY, DAVAO DEL NORTE ON DECEMBER 12, 2016, WOUNDING SEVEN (7) BY ARMED SECURITY GUARDS OF LAPANDAY FOOD CORPORATION (LFC) OWNED BY THE LORENZO FAMILY”

By Representatives Casilao, Zarate, De Jesus, Tinio, Brosas, Castro (F.L.) and Elago
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 635, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEMISE OF FORMER CONGRESSMAN RICARDO C. SILVERIO SR. OF THE THIRD DISTRICT OF BULACAN”

By Representatives Sy-Alvarado, Pancho, Silverio, Villarica, Robes, Lazatin, Macapagal-Arroyo, Gonzales (A.D.), Bondoc, Tugna, Angara-Castillo, Suansing (E.), Violago, Vergara, Antonino, Chavez, Cojuangco, Yap (V.), Villanueva, Roman, Garcia (J.), Khonghun, Deloso-Montalla, Romero, Marcoleta, Montoro, Herrera-Dy and Elago
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

Rep. Jose Antonio “Kuya Jonathan” R. Sy-Alvarado for House Bills No. 4531, 4543, 4545, 4546, 4550 and 4552;

Rep. Manuel Jose “Mannix” M. Dalipe for House Bills No. 1387, 1849, 3621, 3630, 3739, 3745, 3753, 3929, 3931, 4013, 4363, 4508 and 4509;

Rep. Strike B. Revilla for House Bills No. 2173 and 2546;

Rep. Gus S. Tambunting for House Bills No. 2608, 2612, 2613 and 2614;

Rep. Harlin Neil J. Abayon III for House Bill No. 64;

Rep. Elisa “Olga” T. Kho for House Bill No. 53;
Rep. Gabriel H. Bordado Jr. for House Bills No. 115, 3936, 3937 and 3938;

Rep. Ramon V.A. “Rav” Rocamora for House Bill No. 52;

Rep. Xavier Jesus D. Romualdo for House Bill No. 2871;

Rep. Benjamin C. Agarao Jr. and Carmelo “Jon” B. Lazatin for House Bill No. 4174;

Rep. Alfredo A. Garbin Jr. for House Resolution No. 251;

Rep. Abdullah D. Dimaporo for House Bill No. 492;

Rep. Marlyn L. Primicias-Agabas for House Bills No. 4054, 4562, 4603, 4607, 4608, 4628, 4638 and 4640,

Rep. Arnolfo “Arnie” A. Teves Jr. for House Bill No. 115;

Reps. Abdullah D. Dimaporo, Suharto T. Mangudadatu, Johnny Ty Pimentel, Melecio J. Yap Jr. and Wilter “Sharky” Wee Palma II for House Bills No. 2318, 2319, 2474, 2953 and 3782;

Rep. Jocelyn Sy Limkaichong for House Bills No. 2318, 2319, 2953 and 4532;

Rep. Frederick W. Siao for House Bills No. 2318, 2319, 2474 and 2953;

Rep. Francisco Jose F. Matugas II for House Bills No. 2318, 2474, 2953 and 3782;

Reps. Jose T. Panganiban Jr., CPA, LLB. and Lawrence H. Fortun for House Bills No. 2319, 2474 and 2953;

Rep. Juliette T. Uy for House Bills No. 2318 and 2319;

Rep. Roy M. Loyola for House Bill No. 3931;

Rep. Manuel T. Sagarbarria for House Bills No. 4337 and 4521;

Rep. Edward Vera Perez Maceda for House Bill No. 4534;

Rep. Florida “Rida” P. Robes for House Bills No. 4631 and 4637 and House Joint Resolution No. 10;

Rep. Emmanuel A. Billones for House Bill No. 4532;

Rep. Mark O. Go for House Bills No. 3113, 3234, 3543, 3709 and 4154;

Rep. Aniceto “John” D. Bertiz III for House Bills No. 3113, 3234, 3543, 3708, 3709, 4153, 4154 and 4155;

Rep. Lorna P. Bautista-Bandigan for House Bills No. 1667, 1668, 1669, 1670, 1671, 1672, 1675, 1677, 1678, 1679, 1680, 1681, 1682, 1683, 2228, 2234, 2235, 2236, 3130, 3133, 3134, 3819, 3820, 3821, 3822, 3823, 3824, 3826, 3827, 3828 and 3829;

Rep. Manuel F. Zubiri for House Bills No. 1667, 1668, 1669, 1677, 2228, 2234, 2236, 3820 and 3824;

Rep. Orestes T. Salon for House Bills No. 1667, 1668, 1669, 1672, 1677, 2228, 2234, 2236, 3130, 3820, 821, 3822, 3824, 3827, 3828 and 3829;

Rep. Lianda B. Bolilia for House Bills No. 1671, 1672, 1675, 1678, 1679, 1680, 1681, 1682, 1683, 2228, 2235, 3133, 3819, 3821, 3822, 3823, 3824, 3827, 3828 and 3829;

Rep. John Marvin “Yul Servo” C. Nieto for House Bills No. 2158, 4113, 4631 and 4637 and House Joint Resolution No. 10;

Rep. Rodel M. Batocabe for House Bills No. 192, 193, 194, 1301, 1302, 1563, 2330 and 3771 and House Resolution No. 558;

Rep. Anthony M. Bravo for House Bills No. 192, 193, 194, 1301, 1302, 1563 and 2330 and House Resolution No. 558;

Rep. Marisol C. Panotes for House Bills No. 1554, 1555, 1853, 2141, 2318, 2319, 2474, 2633, 2953, 3556, 3557, 3632, 3782, 3945 and 4127;

Rep. Gerald Anthony “Samsam” V. Gullas Jr. for House Bill No. 64;

Rep. Manuel Jose M. Dalipe for House Bill No. 3671;

Reps. Pantaleon D. Alvarez, Karlo Alexei B. Nograles, Mylene J. Garcia-Albano, Alberto T. Ungab, Antonio R. Floirendo Jr., Mercedes “Didi” C. Cagas, Lorna P. Bautista-Bandigan, Corazon T. Nuñez-Malanyaon and Joel Mayo Z. Almario for House Bill No. 4633;

Reps. Bellaflor J. Angara-Castillo and Gabriel H. Bordado Jr. for House Bill No. 4575;

Reps. Francisco Jose F. Matugas II and Johnny Ty Pimentel for House Bills No. 1554, 1555, 2141, 3556, 3557, 3632, 3945 and 4127;

Rep. Lorna P. Bautista-Bandigan for House Bills No. 1554, 1555 and 1853;

Rep. Edgar Mary S. Sarmiento for House Bills No. 3557, 3632 and 4127;

Rep. Richard C. Eusebio for House Bills No. 1853 and 3556;

Rep. Manuel Luis T. Lopez for House Bill No. 1554;

Rep. Horacio P. Suansing Jr. for House Bill No. 1853;

Rep. Carlito S. Marquez for House Bill No. 3858; and
Rep. Corazon T. Nuñez-Malanyaon for House Bills No. 2318, 2319, 2474, 2953, 3782 and 4521.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

PRIVILEGE HOUR

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, with the leave of the House, I move that we hold a Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Chair declares a Privilege Hour.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, first to avail of the Privilege Hour, I would like to move for the recognition of the Gentleman from Party-List ACTS-OFW, the Hon. Aniceto “John” D. Bertiz III.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Hon. Aniceto Bertiz III, Representative of Party-List ACTS-OFW is hereby recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DEFENSOR. I move for the suspension of the session, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is suspended.

It was 4:09 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:10 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is resumed.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, may we now proceed with the privilege speech of the Hon. Aniceto “John” D. Bertiz III.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Hon. Aniceto Bertiz III is again recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. BERTIZ

REP. BERTIZ. Thank you, Mme. Speaker, and good afternoon to my fellow honorable Representatives.

Mme. Speaker, I rise on a question of personal privilege.

We all know and have realized by now the gravity of the illegal drug trade. It took a mayor from Davao City to win the Presidency for us to realize the drug epidemic that surrounds us. However, there is a war that also needs to be fought—against crime that turns children into commodities, women into slaves, and men into disposable, and cheap tools. We must intensify our war against human trafficking.

Human trafficking is a US\$32-billion industry worldwide. It is the third largest transnational crime next to drug trafficking and arms smuggling.

Mme. Speaker, we cannot and should not be a nation of slaves or become a country known for debt bondage, sexual exploitation and selling of children.

Republic Acts No. 9208 and 10364 define human trafficking as:

The recruitment, obtaining, hiring, providing, offering, transportation, transfer, maintaining, harboring or receipt of persons (referred to as ACT) with or without the victim's consent or knowledge, within or across national borders by means of threat, or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person, or, the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person (referred to as the MEANS), for the purpose of exploitation x x x or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, servitude or the removal or sale of organs (referred to as the PURPOSE).

A conviction requires that the three elements—the act, the means and the purpose—must be present for this crime to fall under Republic Acts No. 9208 and 10364. Despite our laws, human traffickers do not feel threatened at all. Why should they? Only 282 human trafficking cases resulted in conviction since 2005.

Kaya siguro, Mme. Speaker, pinagtatawanan lang tayo ng mga nagdadala ng ating mga kababaihan at kabataan mula sa Luzon at Visayas at Mindanao hanggang sa Tawi-Tawi upang isakay sa kumpit patungo ng Sabah. Doon sa Sabah pinagtatrabaho sila bilang mga bar girls at mga prostitute, at kapag pumalag ay binubugbog, pinapagamit ng droga and, worst, pinapatay nang hindi alam ng mga kamag-anak. Minsan hindi sa Sabah nagtatapos ang biyahe.

Katulad ni Laida Hajan ng Sulu, ang alam ng kanyang pamilya ay sa United Arab Emirates siya papunta ngunit nasa Iraq na pala, biktima ng human trafficking. Namatay siya dahil sa matinding karamdaman, ngunit umabot ng dalawang buwan sa morgue. Bakit? Dahil ang pangalan niya sa passport ay inilihim ng kanyang Iraqi agent at patay na pala si Laida. Salamat sa ating embahada sa Iraq sa pangunguna ni Chargé d'Affaires Elmer G. Cato, at nakauwi at naipalibing ang labi ni Laida noong Oktubre.

One of the worst forms of human trafficking is child trafficking. This includes the use of children for cyber pornography, including cybersex.

Fourteen-year old Andrea worked in a cybersex den against her will. It was her cousin who brought her there. She thought she would be working as a domestic worker in the city. The owner of the cybersex den would charge US\$56 a minute for Annalyn to follow the instructions typed by pedophiles around the world. Whatever they typed, she did. She had no choice.

Mga kasama, kung ang conversion rate natin sa US\$1 ay P49, mahigit sa P2,700 ang kinikita ng cybersex operator kay Andrea kada minuto. Daig pa ang call center. Ang tanging puhunan ng katulad niya ay wi-fi, computer na may webcam, at mga inosenteng bata na ang edad ay magmula siyam na taon hanggang 17 anyos at mga magulang na pabaya.

Mme. Speaker, as an OFW advocate, I have personally handled cases where minors were recruited from Mindanao, given authentic passports with falsified birthdates and brought to Manila for deployment as domestic workers abroad.

Can you imagine, dear colleagues, how vulnerable these minors would be once they get to the Middle East or any other Asian country to work as domestic workers?

Kung may mga nanay na ginagahasa nga at pinapatay, ano pa kaya ang mga menor de edad?

Yet, this is the work of unlicensed illegal recruiters who bypass instructions from the POEA or the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, in order to profit from the dreams of poor and jobless Filipinos, young and old.

A licensed recruitment agency has to submit—I am sorry, let me point out first the difference between a licensed recruitment agency and an unlicensed illegal recruiter. A licensed recruitment agency has to submit financial statements, SEC registration, the name of its office staff and officers; undergo ocular inspections; deposit an escrow account in the bank with an accredited bank; and undergo a panel interview before the POEA under the Department of Labor and Employment. Nearly every move of the licensed agency is closely monitored, and even its Facebook account is subject to POEA scrutiny.

The unlicensed illegal recruiters have no office. They can move freely from province to province and simply knock on anyone's door offering fake jobs with fake salaries and demand payments upfront, only to disappear with the money.

This is precisely what Ozmando Hibalag did. He entered social media sites; offered fake jobs in Germany, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand; and collected amounts ranging from P75,000 to P300,000 per victim, most of whom were based in Davao City. When he was arrested, Hibalag readily confessed, but hardly showed any remorse for what he did.

Makikita ninyo po na ang mga biktima ng human trafficking ay galing po sa Mindanao at Visayas.

Human trafficking syndicates rely on these unlicensed illegal recruiters to entice victims because of greed and for the purpose of exploitation.

Mme. Speaker, I feel that we owe it to the private recruitment industry to make that distinction crystal clear because these licensed agencies are legitimate and vital stakeholders in overseas employment.

We have achieved so much in 2015, and it would be a waste to lose the momentum now.

Today, the Philippines is the only country in Southeast Asia in the Tier 1 category of the United States Global Report on Human Trafficking. This makes us at par with Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United States in the fight against human trafficking. We may lose this ranking unless the government mobilizes its resources against human trafficking syndicates.

From 62 convictions in 2015, we were only able to obtain 28 convictions this year. In fact, we have yet to obtain any conviction this year for forced labor trafficking. Surely, we could do more.

We need to stop corruption that begins with a simple, yet insidious, act of letting a minor obtain a passport or, worse, allow Indonesians to journey to Mecca as Filipinos with DFA-issued passports.

We need to legislate a Trafficking in Person Victim Assistance Act that would specify and institutionalize government aid for human trafficking survivors. We need to train and tap our barangays as the primary watchdogs against unlicensed illegal recruiters and cybersex operators, while encouraging the Department of Labor to establish more one-stop shops and processing centers nationwide.

Allow me to show more grave pictures we have gathered.

(Slide presentation)

That is a Filipina who was trafficked in the Middle East for organ trade in our bilibid prisons—sex trafficking involving minors.

Dear colleagues, Mme. Speaker, the time to end human trafficking is now.

Maraming salamat po. Maligayang pasko sa inyong lahat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. To interpellate, Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from COOP-NATCCO, the Hon. Anthony M. Bravo, Ph.D.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Hon. Anthony M. Bravo from COOP-NATCCO Party-List is recognized.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

Good afternoon distinguished Sponsor, Mme. Speaker, my dear colleagues. Will the distinguished Sponsor, the Representative of ACTS-OFW, entertain some questions from this Representation?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, kindly educate this Representation if there is a difference between human trafficking and human smuggling, although I believe that there is almost a similarity.

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker. People smuggling and human trafficking are linked. There are fundamental differences between the two. People smuggling involves migrants being facilitated entry in another country with an agreement with the handler although through illegal means; whereas human trafficking must have the threat or use of force, coercion and deception against a victim.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

I believe human trafficking is a worldwide problem and there is an international agency tasked to monitor human trafficking. Does the Gentleman believe in this, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker. Actually, we are the only Southeast Asian country that is in Tier 1, and we might lose this very soon because of the very low percentage of conviction of human traffickers in our country.

REP. BRAVO (A.). My question is, have there been instances wherein foreigners were convicted of crimes against our countrymen? What is the penalty for foreigners violating our laws against human trafficking, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, unfortunately, nakakalungkot, sa dami ng mga nahuhuling foreign traffickers, especially in cybersex and forced labor, wala po tayong conviction of foreigners at napakababakung meron man. Kailangan kasing mabuo ang tatlong elemento bago ma-charge ng human trafficking—the acts, the means and the purpose of exploitation.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Ibig sabihin, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, mukhang maluwag ang ating justice system pagdating dito, kapag foreigners ang nakagawa ng ganitong usaping kriminal.

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker. Ito po ang sakit ng ating gobyerno. Napakaraming biktima—ilang libo ngayon ang ating distressed and undocumented workers sa ibang bansa, lalo na sa Middle East—na nagkakaroon ng pasaporte, lalung-lalo na ang ating mga kabataang kababaihan na galing sa Mindanao. Nagpabaya ang National Commission on Muslim Filipinos sa mga kabataang ito. Paano sila naisyuhan ng passport? Paano rin sila humaharap sa mga tiwaling empleyado ng DFA

lalung-lalo na sa Mindanao na sa harapan mismo nila, ang mga kabataan na may edad na 23 o 24 ay naisyuhan ng passports?

Only last year, Mme. Speaker, we were able to rescue more than 26 minors aged 13 to 16 years old, holding 23 passports, genuine passports issued by the Mindanao DFA. The passports are being issued by the NCMF which was previously known as the Commission on Muslim Filipino.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Relative to Republic Act No. 9208 and Republic Act No. 10364 which the distinguished Sponsor mentioned a while ago or the laws defining human trafficking, may I know what is the penalty for human trafficking.

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, trafficking is punishable by 20 years imprisonment and a fine ranging from P1 million to P2 million. These are enumerated as trafficking under the pretext of overseas and domestic employment, trafficking using mail-order bride scheme, trafficking through real simulated marriages, trafficking using tours and travel consisting of tourism packages, maintaining or hiring a person for prostitutions or pornography, trafficking through adoptions, trafficking a child engaged in armed conflict in the Philippines or abroad, trafficking through debt bondage and involuntary servitude, and trafficking children for the worst form of child labor.

Another form is acts promoting trafficking punishable by 15 years imprisonment and a fine of P500 thousand to P1 million, which covers the following: to knowingly lease or sub-lease any house, building or establishment for the purpose of promoting trafficking in persons; to produce, print, and distribute unissued fake, tampered counselling certificate, registration, stickers, certificates, et cetera; and to advertise, publish, print, broadcast, distribute or cause the advertisement thereof.

The last is qualified trafficking. If any of these conditions are present as applied in Section 4, Acts of Trafficking, the penalty will be life imprisonment and a fine of P2 million to P5 million, covering the following conditions: the trafficked person is a child; the adoption is effected through Republic Act No. 8043; the crime is committed by a syndicate, with three or more conspiring, confederating with one another in a large scale; the offender is an ascendant sibling or a spouse, guardian or person who exercise any, et cetera.

So, bago po ma-commit ang life imprisonment, we have to complete the three elements: the acts, the means and purpose of exploitation, which is nalalampasan lalung-lalo na, babalikan ko, Mme. Speaker, ang pag-convict sa mga foreigner because gumagamit po sila ng dummy Filipinos as entities and business owners.

Napakababa, Mme. Speaker, na ang isang menor de edad, siyam na taon hanggang 17 anyos ay ginagamit

sa cybersex, dinadala sa ibang bansa para maging prostitute pero walang convictions. Napakababa po ng conviction rate natin.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, for such very comprehensive information provided to this Representation.

Mme. Speaker, the distinguished Sponsor mentioned a while ago that since 2005, there were only 282 human trafficking cases that resulted in convictions. Am I correct, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Do we have data or statistics on how many cases were filed at that time, because for one, we can see the conviction rate of these human traffickers?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, Your Honor. According to the IACAT, there were 3,000 cases filed but only less than 280 have successfully earned conviction. This is because of the lack of funds for our victims. That is why during the budget deliberations, Mme. Speaker, I proposed that a Victim Assistance Fund shall be given to the POEA so that we can able to pursue the traffickers and criminals.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Mme. Speaker, as the distinguished Sponsor mentioned, what is the reason for such a very low conviction rate?

REP. BERTIZ. Basically, it is because of the three elements of human trafficking. Karamihan po sa mga biktima ay nababayaran, lalung-lalo na ang mga magulang at ang mga kabataang nabibiktima. Dahil nga po ito sa kakulangan ng pondo para sa Victim Assistance Program na maprotektahan ang mga biktima.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Mme. Speaker, in the distinguished Sponsor's opinion, has there been an improvement or effort to curb human trafficking in our country? Was there any improvement in the effort of the government to curb human trafficking?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, it is so sad; unfortunately, bumababa po, mas lalong bumababa ang ating convictions and fight against human trafficking because as of this year, we still have no convictions. Although the Philippine National Police, as well as the other government agencies, the IACAT and immigration, have already apprehended so many traffickers, especially with the involvement of some government officials who issue passports to minors. Until now, we have no convictions.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

The Gentleman mentioned a while ago that the punishment for human trafficking ranges from six years, as a minimum, up to life imprisonment as maximum depending on the degree of participation and on the manner of commission of the crime. Am I right, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker.

REP. BRAVO (A.). With the magnitude of the effect brought about by such an “epidemic,” does the distinguished Sponsor, Mme. Speaker, not think that it is now high time to include the crime against human trafficking as one of the heinous crimes so as to be included in the proposed death penalty bill?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, it is about time that human trafficking and child pornography are not only given life imprisonment. In my personal opinion, I will push that human trafficking and child pornography be included as heinous crimes and be made part of the death penalty bill.

REP. BRAVO (A.). That is if the death penalty bill will pass in this Congress.

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Mme. Speaker, I laud the distinguished Sponsor for bringing up this issue of human trafficking, and I support his advocacy against human trafficking.

Thank you very much, Mme. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. BERTIZ. Thank you, Congressman Bravo. Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Next to interpellate, Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from KABAYAN, the Hon. H. Harry L. Roque Jr.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Hon. Harry Roque from the Party-List KABAYAN is recognized.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker. Thank you, Dep. Majority Leader.

Will the Gentleman from the OFW Party-List yield to a few more questions?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). The Gentleman earlier mentioned a Tier 1 on trafficking. Can the Gentleman explain what this Tier 1 is, and who makes the classification under this Tier 1?

REP. BERTIZ. As of today, the Philippines is the only country in Southeast Asia that has a Tier 1 category in the United States Global Report on Human Trafficking. This is basically because of our IACAT and the different government agencies that fight against human trafficking. But, Mme. Speaker, the only problem is that we might lose this Tier 1 category because of a very low conviction rate. As I mentioned, we had 62 convictions only in 2015.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mme. Speaker, I take it therefore that Tier 1, according to the US State Department, is actually an excellent mark as far as anti-human trafficking is concerned. Is this correct, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, this is the highest rank based on the United States Global Report Against Human Trafficking.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mme. Speaker, may I know since when have we achieved this Tier 1 level for human trafficking.

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, since 2015. But since then, we had 62 convictions only and we are in danger of losing this Tier 1 category.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Prior to 2015, Mme. Speaker, what was the tier classification of the Philippines for anti-human trafficking?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, as far as I know, we were on Tier 3 then.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Oh, I take it that it was only in 2015, Mme. Speaker, that we actually achieved a mark of “excellent,” and prior to this year, we had a “very poor” mark for human trafficking then?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, this is basically the strengthening of the organizations. The Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking has been strengthened and formed, especially our awareness in the passing of the very strict law in terms of illegal recruitment which is very near or something like a similar offense to human trafficking. This is the establishment of the POEA, and also we are coordinating with different international agencies against human trafficking, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). The Gentleman from the OFW Party-List also mentioned earlier, Mme. Speaker, that we have had only 61 convictions. May I know if the 61 convictions are on a per-annum or bi-annual basis?

REP. BERTIZ. The 62 convictions, that is the total in 2015, Mme. Speaker, and we only have 28 convictions this year or in 2016, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mme. Speaker, in order to appreciate how bad this record is by way of conviction, would the Gentleman from the OFW Party-List have figures to indicate how many cases of human trafficking we have recorded? How many cases of human trafficking have been filed so that we can compare it with the number of convictions for human trafficking? Only if the figures are readily available, Mme. Speaker.

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, my apologies. For sex trafficking, we have around 224 to 247 cases filed from 2005 to 2010, but with only 37 convictions; from 2011 to 2016, there were 187 filed cases but with only 52 convictions. In 2016, there are only 26 convictions. In cybersex, 22 have been reported but only one conviction in 2005 until 2010. In 2011 to 2016, there are 21 reported but only two convictions for child cybersex. For labor trafficking, we have 13 reported between 2005 to 2010 but with only two convictions. In 2011 to 2016, we have a total of 11. In 2015, there are three convictions and zero in 2016. These are some of the reasons we are in danger of losing the Tier 1 category in human trafficking or in our fight against human trafficking, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). So may I know, Mme. Speaker, if the Gentleman from ACTS-OFW will agree that, roughly, our conviction rate is a measly 10 percent by way of an average figure compared to the total number of cases that are pending?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, these data are the cases that prospered. We are talking about—the cases filed were more than 4,000 from 2005-2010; unfortunately, the total number of child labor cases convictions is only 40. The reason why, out of the 3,000 plus cases that have been filed, only less than 200 succeeded. Basically, most of the victims, either they are no longer interested with the case or the suspect or the culprit himself or the human trafficker was able to reach out with the parents or guardians and nabayaran po ang biktima kaya po napakababa ng ating convictions.

REP. ROQUE (H.). So, I am very alarmed by this figure, Mme. Speaker. Apparently, despite the fact that human trafficking is modern-day slavery, our conviction rate is as low as 1 to 1.5 percent which is no different

from our conviction rate for extralegal killings, which is at 1 percent, according to one report.

Now my question, Mme. Speaker, is, why is this the case? What do you think we should initiate in Congress to improve the conviction rates, not just for human trafficking or modern-day slavery, but also for extralegal killings?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, this is basically because of the penalties under the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act. The reason I would like that, if the death penalty bill will be passed in this august Chamber, is that I will push that human trafficking and child pornography be included.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, I do not want to dwell on the issue, Mme. Speaker, of the death penalty but may I know from the Gentleman from the ACTS-OFW Party-List whether poor investigation and the failure to investigate properly on these cases of human trafficking are partly responsible for this measly one to one point five percent conviction rate.

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, I agree.

REP. ROQUE (H.). May I know also, Mme. Speaker, if, in addition to poor investigation, poor prosecution on the part of the National Prosecution Service is also responsible for this 1 to 1.5 percent conviction rate for human trafficking.

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, I agree.

REP. ROQUE (H.). As far as the courts are concerned, would the Gentleman from ACTS-OFW Party-List, Mme. Speaker, know how long these very few cases of conviction last before our courts?

REP. BERTIZ. Averagely, Mme. Speaker, it takes years. The reason is that we are losing the victims and we can no longer pursue with the case being filed, and also, the involvement of some government officials, especially in the Immigration and the DFA, and in our borders who are involved in these human trafficking activities, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, I am happy, Mme. Speaker, that the Gentleman from ACTS-OFW mentioned the participation of the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation, as well as the DFA. I have noticed, actually, when I depart from our airports that—to the credit of Immigration officials—they now exercise more control and supervision on individuals who are departing from our airports. I have witnessed, for instance, young females being subjected to thorough investigation on where they are headed and why they are headed for that

particular destination. My question, though, is, what should Immigration agents in our port of departure do furthermore in order to reduce the incidence of human trafficking other than interrogating our citizens intending to leave to their intended destination and purpose of travel without violating the citizens' right to travel which has been recognized in the Bill of Rights as well as in our jurisprudence?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, this is the problem because in the absence of Shared Government Information System for Migration, most of the human traffickers or syndicates can run away with the identifications of their victims. But, if we have an integrated Shared Government Information System, that includes the NBI clearance, the birth certificate, the contract issued by POEA, as well as the registration of the employer, we will be able to do something with regard to the victims of human trafficking. And, also, the use of backdoors and undocumented young females coming from the Mindanao, they are altering their birth certificates which, as I have mentioned earlier in my speech, we were able to investigate that most of the members of the NCMF were involved in this issuance of passports for the women of Mindanao especially the underage, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, Mme. Speaker, I commend the Gentleman from ACTS-OFW because he was able to pinpoint or suggest two solutions to this very serious problem of modern-day slavery, the first of which, he referred to as the shared information system.

Now, if the Gentleman from ACTS-OFW knows, why is this shared information system not currently in place given the gravity of our problem on human trafficking?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, based on Republic Act No. 10022, Shared Government Information System has already been enacted into law since 2005 and the lead agency was supposedly the DFA. Also, during the budget deliberations, this Representation asked the DFA why the budget has been released but the Shared Government Information System for Migration was not able to implement, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). So, Mme. Speaker, I would like to know, what was the response of the DFA on why they have not implemented this shared information system despite the fact that, apparently, the budget has been released for this undertaking? And, Mme. Speaker, if the Gentleman from ACTS-OFW knows, how much was the budget allotted for this shared information program?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, initially, the budget will be coming from the Philippine Charity

Sweepstakes, with an initial seed fund of P1 million and shall be increased once the system or program has been implemented. The Shared Government Information System for Migration consists of nine government agencies and a total of 17 agencies including their line government agency, Mme. Speaker. After 20 years, ngayon na lang po ulit pinag-uusapan ang Shared Government Information System, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mme. Speaker, may I ask the ACTS-OFW Party-List Representative, what should be done, once and for all, to fully implement a program that has been funded by Congress? I understand that the resources are there, they could have fully implemented the program. But, what can we do now to compel the DFA to actually implement this program?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, we already filed a resolution investigating why the Shared Government Information System for Migration has not been implemented in the past and the budget has been utilized. The allocated budget has been utilized. Not only P1 million, according to the DFA, but they have released the budget from the PCSO amounting to P1.6 million or more, using that project category which is the Shared Government Information System for Migration.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, Mme. Speaker, given the fact that there is a pending resolution to study and investigate why this information sharing system has not been implemented, if, after a hearing on this Resolution we find that there is dereliction of duty, would the Gentleman from ACTS-OFW be willing to initiate criminal charges for dereliction of duty against those who have failed to implement a very important program to curtail human trafficking already funded by this august Chamber of Congress?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, this Representation would, because it really affected thousands or, as of now, after 20 years, millions of OFWs who have been victimized, and not only OFWs but children who are being trafficked for prostitution because of the absence of the Shared Government Information System for Migration. Kung ito po ay napatupad, lahat po ng mga problema natin lalung-lalo na sa pag-issue ng DFA sa 177 Indonesians ay hindi sana mangyayari dahil po lahat ng agencies, we have one common information database para po sa ating mga nag-a-apply or sa ating mga kababayan na gustong lumabas ng bansa.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, Mme. Speaker, the Gentleman from ACTS-OFW also mentioned that another aspect to combat human terrorism is some sort of syndicate

operating in the passport office of the Department of Foreign Affairs. Could the good Gentleman from ACTS-OFW share with more particularity the operations of this syndicate, and how the issuance of passports enables human trafficking to persist?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, basically because of the demand of our workers, Filipino workers, especially our women in Mindanao, as we know that most of them do not have birth certificates. Their birth records are just certified by the office of the NCMF so that they will be able to get passports. But just because of the huge demand and the foreign interventions in recruiting all these workers or women, fina-falsify po nila ang kanilang mga birth certificate at kasabwat po rito ang ibang mga tiwaling empleyado ng Department of Foreign Affairs lalung-lalo na sa Mindanao dahil alam naman nila na menor de edad ang nasa harap nila pero ang mga iniisyung passport ay 23 and above. Hindi lamang po iyon, ginagamit din po ito para maka-issue ng mga pasaporte galing sa Indonesia.

Iyong namatay sa Mecca last year holding a Filipino passport na babae ay walang nagke-claim po sa ating embahada, ngunit after several months, an Indonesian family came over to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia to claim the body, meaning, na-notify sila ng mga kasabwat nilang sindikato rito sa ating gobyerno dito sa Mindanao na ang kanilang anak ay namatay. It is not only the issue of trafficking, but it is already an issue of national threat and security po.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mme. Speaker, I am very much alarmed at this declaration made by Honorable Bertiz that birth certificates are being falsified for preparation of Philippine passports. I was under the impression, Mme. Speaker, that you cannot procure a Philippine passport unless you have an NSO certification that one's passport is, in fact, authentic. So, how are they able to use falsified birth certificates that have enabled these syndicates to pass off minors as adults? Paano po ang ginagawa nila? Hindi naman po bibigyan ng certification ng NSO iyong birth certificate na iyon. So, paano po nakakalusot iyong mga falsified na mga birth certificate?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, tulad nga po ng nasabi ko kanina, ito po ay binubuo ng mga sindikato sa loob mismo ng ating ahensya kaya po may mga naiisyuhang menor de edad na mga pasaporte. At ito po ang dapat—dahil nga po isa po sa mga probisyon ng mga trafficking in persons that if the involved person is a member of the government, ang penalty po ay life imprisonment.

Kaya ang sa akin po, hindi lamang po life imprisonment dahil po once na inisyuhan mo ng passport ang isang menor de edad at binyahe mo sa

ibang bansa, isa lang po ang patutunguhan nito, ang mamolestiya o ang magahasa siya dahil sa kanyang murang edad. At ganoon na rin po, napakalaki ng bilang ng mga biktima na hindi nabibigyan ng katarungan dahil nga po napakababa ng convictions against these human traffickers.

REP. ROQUE (H.). What is the legal basis, Mme. Speaker, that we use to prosecute criminally these individuals who resort to falsifying documents in the preparation of the Philippine passport? And, Mme. Speaker, I would like to know too if there has been any formal investigation within the passport office of the DFA to uncover and unravel individuals behind this nefarious scheme in the issuance of passports using falsified documents.

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, in the past, we already filed a complaint in the office of the Department of Foreign Affairs and, as of now, Mme. Speaker, iyong mga pangalang ibinigay natin ay tinanggal lang pero hindi po nakasuhan or nakulong man lang.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, Mme. Speaker, while I have no further questions to the Gentleman from ACTS-OFW, I would like to commend the Hon. Aniceto “John” D. Bertiz III for publicizing and articulating one of the most serious threats to the human rights of our fellowmen, that of human trafficking. Worldwide human trafficking is recognized as one of the most serious international crimes because it constitutes modern-day slavery. At this time of the Internet, at this time when boundaries have, for all intents and purposes, given way to an international community, I find it unacceptable that human slavery in the form of human trafficking continues to persist.

I would hope that with this privilege speech of Honorable Bertiz, we would finally conduct an honest-to-goodness investigation on the individuals behind the nefarious schemes of issuing Philippine passports on the basis of falsified documents because, as I said earlier, Your Honors, Mme. Speaker, they are principals in the modern-day crime of slavery.

So, again, I commend the Honorable Bertiz and thank this honorable Body for your time and indulgence.

Good afternoon, Mme. Speaker.

REP. BERTIZ. Thank you so much, Mme. Speaker, and thank you so much to Honorable Roque and Honorable Bravo.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. ... I move that we recognize the Hon. Edcel C. Lagman for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The distinguished Gentleman from Albay, the Hon. Edcel C. Lagman, is recognized.

REP. LAGMAN. Thank you, Mme. Speaker. Will the distinguished Gentleman yield to a few questions.

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. May we know who is in charge of rating countries under Tier 1, 2 or 3?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, it is the United States Global Report on Human Trafficking.

REP. LAGMAN. May I get your answer again.

REP. BERTIZ. Sorry, Mme. Speaker. It is the United States Global Report on Human Trafficking that gives the rating for countries fighting against human trafficking, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. I am in full support of the campaign of the distinguished Gentleman against human trafficking, but I am just concerned why is the United States the self-appointed guardian on the campaign against human trafficking.

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, it is not only the United States but it also consists of other member-countries of the United Nations in the fight against worldwide human trafficking issues, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. But I am informed that it is the United States which is the principal country making this rating. Is that correct?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. LAGMAN. My question is, why is it the United States, why should it not be a global organization which should be in charge of making these ratings? Should the Philippines submit itself to the rating procedures of the United States?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker. My apologies, but my data say that it is the United States who is leading this rating of the country for human trafficking problems, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. May we know, Mme. Speaker, for how long has this been happening that it is the United States which makes the ratings?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, I do not have—my apologies to Honorable Lagman but I do not have the data on when it began, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. Are other countries, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Gentleman, not resisting or objecting to the role of the United States as the guardian in safeguarding our countries from human trafficking?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, it is not only our country that is being rated, but European countries, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and Japan as well, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. I know that, Mme. Speaker. But are these countries not resisting? Is there an international covenant on human trafficking which would assign the United States as the rating agency?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker. It is under the United Nations' UNHR—I am sorry, Mme. Speaker, but I do not have the rating, but there is an international organization's rating for the country against the fight for human trafficking, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. In that international covenant, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Gentleman, is the United States designated as the rating country or agency?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker. It is the United States which issues the global report on human trafficking, but it consists of international organizations, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. My question is, whether in that international covenant, the United States is designated as the agency or country which should make the ratings.

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, I think it is not only the United States, but they are the ones that issue the global report on human trafficking, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. I think that does not answer the questions, my question, Mme. Speaker. May we know whether in that international covenant, the United States is specifically designated to make the ratings. According to the distinguished Gentleman, it is the United States that is making the ratings.

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, my apologies to Honorable Lagman. I do not have the data on whether

it is only the United States that is making the rating, but the global report on human trafficking consists of reports from different countries, different organizations, Mme. Speaker, because they get reports from each country, especially their government agency handling the borders, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. May we know, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Gentleman, what are the standards being used in making the ratings?

REP. BERTIZ. I am sorry, Mme. Speaker, I am sorry Honorable Lagman.

REP. LAGMAN. May we know what are the standards being used by the United States in making the ratings?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, yes, the report divides nations into tiers based on their compliance and standards outlined in the TVPA, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Tier 1 countries are those whose governments fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards. Tier 2 countries are those whose governments do not fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards. Tier 2 watch list countries are those whose governments do not comply with the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts. Tier 3 countries are those whose governments do not comply at all with the minimum standards and efforts to do so.

REP. LAGMAN. In other words, countries are rated in accordance with their compliance with certain standards. But my question is: What are the standards?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, I have the data. It is quite long. It will be an honor for me to provide the Honorable Lagman the standards.

REP. LAGMAN. But can we just specify, most probably, three standards being used in rating countries like the Philippines?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker. I will provide it to the Gentleman, but at the moment, it is not in my data.

REP. LAGMAN. You know, I am asking for these questions to be answered now, not later, because these are very important questions. What are the standards?

REP. BERTIZ. Ah...

REP. LAGMAN. I heard the distinguished Gentleman say earlier that conviction frequencies may be one of the standards. Is that correct?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker. Actually, Mme. Speaker based on the report, it is the US State Department which rates the human trafficking standards, Mme. Speaker, or it is the US State Department office that monitors how they combat trafficking in persons and gives it its standards, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. But again, I go back to my original question. Why in heaven's name should the State Department of the United States be in charge of making these ratings? Why are we submitting to the rating standards being used by the State Department of the United States?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, may I request for a one-minute suspension of the session as I am going to get the data to be provided, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is suspended.

It was 5:07 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:08 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is resumed.

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, my apologies. My answer to Honorable Lagman is the Trafficking Provision Act of 2000, from which I quote:

Minimum standards. For purposes of this chapter, the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking applicable to the government of a country of origin, transit, or destination of victims of severe forms of trafficking are the following:

(1) The government of the country should prohibit severe forms of trafficking in persons and punish acts of such trafficking.

(2) For the knowing commission of any act of sex trafficking involving force, fraud, coercion, or in which the victim of sex trafficking is a child incapable of giving meaningful consent, or trafficking which includes rape or kidnapping or which causes a death, the government of the country should

prescribe punishment commensurate with that for grave crimes, such as forcible sexual assault.

(3) For the knowing commission of any act of a severe form of trafficking in persons, the government of the country should prescribe punishment that is sufficiently stringent to deter and adequately reflects the heinous nature of the offense.

(4) The government of the country should make serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons.

REP. LAGMAN. Well, on the part of the Philippines, there are existing laws which would comply to those standards. Is that not correct, distinguished Gentleman?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. We have laws against human trafficking. We have laws for the protection of children and the disadvantaged sectors. We have laws against rape and kidnapping. We also have laws providing for the adequate punishment for the offenders or violators of our laws on human trafficking. All of these have been complied with by the Philippines. Have we not?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, but the only problem we are facing right now is, with very few convictions, we might lose our Tier 1 category, Mme. Speaker. It is basically stated in our law that the reason why we were able to get Tier 1 is because of the provisions of the law that if the three elements in human trafficking are there, the punishment will be from six years to life imprisonment, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. Well, the standards only call for adequate punishment; it does not call for the supreme punishment of the death penalty. Does it, distinguished Gentleman?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, it is basically because of our very low conviction rate that those syndicates and traffickers are not afraid to traffic our children and use them for sexual exploitation, selling of organs and forced labor in other countries, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. But, Mme. Speaker, distinguished sponsor, in these standards, the distinguished Gentleman has enumerated the rate of conviction is not among the standards. Is that correct?

REP. BERTIZ. Those were, Mme. Speaker, the ones that I mentioned were just the basic requirements. Ang sa akin lang po, Mme. Speaker, kaya ko po ipinaglalaban

na ito ay mapabilang sa death penalty, kung ito man ay maipapasá, ay dahil na rin po sa na-experience sa haba ng panahon ng mga biktima ng human trafficking, lalung-lalo na po ang forced prostitution po sa mga kababaihan na galing po sa Mindanao at sa ibang parte ng Pilipinas, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. Well, that is the personal experience of the distinguished Gentleman, but it would not justify the imposition of the supreme penalty of death. Anyway, we are going to debate on the death penalty sometime next year, but I would like to impress that the rate of conviction should not be a principal standard because in the conviction of the accused, there are many variables involved: one, most probably, the inefficiency of the prosecution; two, the competence of the defense; three, the fact that most probably, the person accused has not violated the anti-trafficking laws; and four, most probably, these were miscarriages of justice because of the inefficiency of the justice system.

So, I would recommend that the rate of conviction should not be a principal standard for rating countries like the Philippines, whether it is under Tier 1, 2, or 3.

May I know, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Gentleman, what is the government agency in charge of our campaign and prosecution of human traffickers?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, we have the IACAT or the Inter-Agency Council for Trafficking, which includes the DOJ, Department of Labor, Bureau of Immigration, and the local governments, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. In the case of the IACAT, which is the principal agency in charge? Is it not the Department of Justice?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, it is the Department of Justice.

REP. LAGMAN. Now, in the prosecution of offenders of anti-trafficking laws, what is the role of the Prosecution Service under the Department of Justice?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, for the prosecution, it is the recommendations of the council—sometimes, it is recommended by the Immigration or the POEA, if the involved is the licensed agency. The National Bureau of Investigation also is the one endorsing all these cases of human trafficking, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. The question merely is, are government lawyers under the Prosecution Service being availed of in order to help in the prosecution of cases on anti-human trafficking?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, this is also the fruit of that. We do not have a victim assistance program or funds. That is the reason why we are losing the victims or the witnesses and their cases are not being pushed through, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. In the cases filed against offenders for violation of laws against human trafficking, what is the percentage of the prosecution being represented by private prosecutors and being represented by public prosecutors?

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, most of the victims of human trafficking are from very poor provinces. Most of the victims, they do not have a private counsel or the cases are not filed by the private prosecutor, Mme. Speaker. So, this is the problem, that we do not have funds for these victims, or in the absence of the victim's protection programs, the case is not being pursued anymore, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. In other words, there is no proper assistance on the part of the government, more particularly, the Prosecution Service, in pursuing cases against human traffickers.

REP. BERTIZ. Mme. Speaker, we have under the DOJ and the PAO, but the problem, Mme. Speaker, is because of poverty, sa kahirapan ng mga biktima, hindi na po tumutuloy ang mga biktima na ipursige ang kaso. Most of them are from the provinces. Ang iba po sa kanila ay kapag biktima na po sila ng sex trade o prostitution, itinutuloy na lang po, especially itong mga kabataang ito na wala na pong nagpoprotekta.

In terms of forced labor naman po, Mme. Speaker, sa kahirapan na rin at walang pondo na nakalaan sa kanila para ipursige ang kanilang kaso, naghahanap na lang po sila ng ibang trabaho at mapapasukan, at nabibiktima na naman po nitong human trafficking or forced labor, Mme. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. Will the distinguished Gentleman call on the Department of Justice to employ their public prosecutors, including the public prosecutors in the provinces, to assist the victims of human trafficking and to prosecute the offenders, for they should not only look at the drug addiction or the drug menace, but there are other problems which the Department of Justice should channel their resources, like prosecuting human traffickers?

REP. BERTIZ. Yes, Mme. Speaker, I totally agree with the Hon. Edcel Lagman.

REP. LAGMAN. Well, on that note, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Gentleman, thank you for entertaining my interpellation.

But let us look at the situation where the United States has assumed guardianship over human trafficking.

Thank you.

REP. BERTIZ. Thank you so much, Mme. Speaker. Thank you so much, Rep. Edcel Lagman. Maraming salamat po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the Honorable Bertiz, together with the interpellations, to the Committee on Rules.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, before we proceed, let us acknowledge the presence of the guests of the honorable Dep. Minority Leader H. Harry L. Roque Jr. They are Mr. Christian Schneider, Ms. Christine Schneider, Ms. Salome Von Orelli and Mr. Urs Von Orelli. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The guests of the honorable Dep. Minority Leader Harry Roque, please rise. Welcome to the House of Representatives.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we terminate the Privilege Hour

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Privilege Hour is terminated.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move for a suspension of the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is suspended.

It was 5:21 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:23 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is resumed.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the Additional Reference of Business.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General will please read the Additional Reference of Business.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary General read the following House Resolution on First Reading, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding reference:

RESOLUTION

House Resolution No. 637, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF FORMER REPRESENTATIVE RICARDO C. SILVERIO, SR. OF THE THIRD DISTRICT OF BULACAN DURING THE NINTH, TENTH AND ELEVENTH CONGRESSES”

By Representatives Alvarez (P.), Fariñas and Suarez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

ROLL CALL

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we call the roll.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General will please call the roll.

The Secretary General called the roll and the result is as follows, per Journal No. 56, dated December 14, 2016:

PRESENT

Abaya	Adiong
Abayon	Advincula
Abellanosa	Aggabao
Abu	Aglipay-Villar
Abueg	Albano
Acharon	Alejano
Acop	Almario
Acosta	Almonte

Alonte-Naguiat	Cua
Alvarez (P.)	Cuaresma
Amatong	Cueva
Angara-Castillo	Dalipe
Antonino	Dalog
Antonio	Daza
Aragones	De Jesus
Arbison	De Venecia
Arcillas	De Vera
Arenas	Defensor
Atienza	Del Mar
Bag-ao	Del Rosario
Bagatsing	Deloso-Montalla
Banal	Dimaporo (A.)
Barzaga	Dimaporo (M.K.)
Bataoil	Durano
Batocabe	Dy
Bautista-Bandigan	Elago
Belaro	Enverga
Belmonte (F.)	Erice
Belmonte (J.C.)	Eriguel
Belmonte (R.)	Ermita-Buhain
Benitez	Escudero
Bernos	Espina
Bertiz	Espino
Billones	Estrella
Bolilia	Eusebio
Bondoc	Evardone
Bordado	Fariñas
Bravo (A.)	Fernando
Bravo (M.V.)	Ferrer (J.)
Brosas	Ferriol-Pascual
Bulut-Begtang	Floirendo
Cagas	Flores
Calderon	Fortun
Calixto-Rubiano	Fortuno
Caminero	Fuentebella
Campos	Garbin
Canama	Garcia (G.)
Cari	Garcia (J.E.)
Casilao	Garcia-Albano
Castro (F.L.)	Garin (R.)
Castro (F.H.)	Garin (S.)
Catamco	Gasataya
Cayetano	Gatchalian
Celeste	Geron
Cerafica	Go (A.C.)
Cerilles	Go (M.)
Chavez	Gomez
Chipeco	Gonzaga
Co	Gonzales (A.P.)
Cojuangco	Gonzales (A.D.)
Collantes	Gonzalez
Cortes	Gorriceta
Cortuna	Gullas
Crisologo	Hernandez

Herrera-Dy	Plaza	Velasco-Catera	Violago
Hofer	Primicias-Agabas	Veloso	Yap (A.)
Jalosjos	Quimbo	Vergara	Yap (M.)
Javier	Radaza	Villafuerte	Yap (V.)
Kho	Ramirez-Sato	Villanueva	Yu
Khonghun	Ramos	Villaraza-Suarez	Zamora (M.C.)
Labadlabad	Relampagos	Villarica	Zarate
Lacson	Revilla	Villarin	Zubiri
Lagman	Roa-Puno		
Lanete	Robes		
Laogan	Rocamora		
Lazatin	Rodriguez (I.)		
Lee	Rodriguez (M.)		
Limkaichong	Roman		
Lopez (B.)	Romero		
Lopez (M.L.)	Romualdez		
Macapagal-Arroyo	Romualdo		
Maceda	Roque (H.)		
Madrona	Roque (R.)		
Malapitan	Sacdalán		
Manalo	Sagarbarria		
Mangaoang	Salimbangon		
Mangudadatu (S.)	Salo		
Mangudadatu (Z.)	Salon		
Marcoleta	Sambar		
Marcos	Sandoval		
Mariño	Santos-Recto		
Marquez	Sarmiento (E.M.)		
Martinez	Savellano		
Matugas	Sema		
Mellana	Siao		
Mercado	Singson		
Mirasol	Suansing (E.)		
Montoro	Suansing (H.)		
Nava	Suarez		
Nieto	Sy-Alvarado		
Noel	Tan (M.)		
Nogralés (J.J.)	Tan (S.)		
Nogralés (K.A.)	Tejada		
Nolasco	Teves		
Nuñez-Malanyaon	Tiangco		
Oaminal	Tinio		
Olivarez	Tolentino		
Ong (H.)	Tugna		
Ortega (P.)	Tupas		
Ortega (V.N.)	Ty		
Pacquiao	Umali		
Paduano	Unabia		
Palma	Ungab		
Pancho	Unico		
Panganiban	Uy (J.)		
Panotes	Uy (R.)		
Papandayan	Uybarreta		
Pichay	Vargas		
Pimentel	Velarde		
Pineda	Velasco		

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Mme. Speaker, the roll call shows that 256 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). With 256 Members present, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

REP. FARIÑAS. Mme. Speaker, I move for the election of the following Members to their respective committees:

The Majority Leader, Rep. Rodolfo C. Farinas, read the names of the House Members elected to the various committees, per Journal No. 56, dated December 14, 2016.

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

as member:

Rep. Arthur C. Yap vice Rep. Manuel Jose “Mannix” M. Dalipe

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

as member:

Rep. Ben P. Evardone

COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

as member:

Rep. Micaela S. Violago vice Rep. Jum J. Akbar

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BASES CONVERSION

as Vice Chairperson:

Rep. Victor A. Yap

as member:

Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES RESOURCES

as Vice Chairperson:
Rep. Sabiniano S. Canama

as members:
Rep. Ann K. Hofer
Rep. Ariel "Ka Ayik" B. Casilao
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON AGRARIAN REFORM

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza vice Rep. Jum J. Akbar

COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTS

as member
Rep. Rodolfo T. Albano III

COMMITTEE ON GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

as Vice Chairperson:
Rep. Arnel M. Cerafica vice Rep. Rodolfo T. Albano III

as members:
Rep. Aurora Enerio Cerilles
Rep. Rodolfo T. Albano III

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

as members:
Rep. Gus S. Tambunting
Rep. Carlos Roman L. Uybarreta
Rep. Rodel M. Batocabe
Rep. Jesulito A. Manalo
Rep. Manuel Jose "Mannix" M. Dalipe

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FOOD SECURITY

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EAST ASEAN GROWTH AREA

as member:
Rep. Rogelio "Ruel" D. Pacquiao vice Rep. Jum J. Akbar

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

as Vice Chairperson:
Rep. Mark O. Go

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION

as member:
Rep. Mark O. Go

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

as members:
Rep. Dennis C. Laogan
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

as Vice Chairperson:
Rep. Manuel Jose "Mannix" M. Dalipe

as member:
Rep. Carlos O. Cojuangco

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

as members:
Rep. Ben P. Evardone
Rep. Mark O. Go
Rep. Arlene D. Brosas

COMMITTEE ON INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMMUNITIES AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

as member:
Rep. Ariel "Ka Ayik" B. Casilao

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION
AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

as Vice Chairperson:
Rep. Rose Marie “Baby” J. Arenas

as member:
Rep. Ben P. Evardone

COMMITTEE ON INTER-PARLIAMENTARY
RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY

as member:
Rep. Manuel Jose “Mannix” M. Dalipe

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND
EMPLOYMENT

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

as members:
Rep. Erlpe John “Ping” M. Amante
Rep. Strike B. Revilla
Rep. Mark O. Go

COMMITTEE ON MINDANAO AFFAIRS

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON MUSLIM AFFAIRS

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND
SECURITY

as Vice Chairperson:
Rep. Erico Aristotle C. Aumentado vice Rep.
Manuel Jose “Mannix” M. Dalipe

as members:
Rep. Carlos Roman L. Uybarreta
Rep. Manuel Jose “Mannix” M. Dalipe

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL
RESOURCES

as members:
Rep. Mark O. Go vice Rep. Rodolfo T. Albano III
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS AFFAIRS

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE’S PARTICIPATION

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION

as member:
Rep. Arlene D. Brosas

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REFORESTATION

as member:
Rep. Pablo C. Ortega

COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

as Vice Chairperson:
Rep. Franz E. Alvarez

as member:
Rep. Divina Grace C. Yu

COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

as member:
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

as members:
Rep. Ben P. Evardone vice Rep. Jum J. Akbar
Rep. Carlos Roman L. Uybarreta
Rep. Mariano Michael M. Velarde Jr.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND
HIGHWAYS

as member:
Rep. Gus S. Tambunting

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS
AFFAIRS AND WELFARE

as members:
Rep. Sandra Y. Eriguel, M.D.
Rep. Pablo C. Ortega
Rep. Mark O. Go
Rep. Joseph Sto. Niño B. Bernos
Rep. Manuel Jose “Mannix” M. Dalipe
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER
EQUALITY

as member:

Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL

as member:

Rep. Adbullah D. Dimaporo

COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

as Chairperson:

Rep. Divina Grace C. Yu vice Rep. Aurora Enerio Cerilles

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

as member:

Rep. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 617

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 617.

May I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection to the motion? (*Silence*) Hearing none, the Secretary General is directed to read ...

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, can we please direct the Secretary General to read the title of the resolution before we proceed to the approval?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). There was an earlier motion that the Secretary General should read, and I had not yet ruled on the motion which is why I am ruling on the motion.

REP. DEFENSOR. I am sorry, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection to the motion? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.*

The Secretary General is directed to read the title of House Resolution No. 617.

With the permission of the Body, and since copies of the measure have been previously distributed, the Secretary General read only the title thereof without prejudice to inserting its text in the Congressional Record.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 617, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF MRS. ILUMINADA PEREZ VARGAS, MOTHER OF REPRESENTATIVE BABY ALINE VARGAS-ALFONSO OF THE SECOND DISTRICT OF CAGAYAN, AND WIFE OF FORMER REPRESENTATIVE FLORENCIO L. VARGAS.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 617.

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 617

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

House Resolution No. 617 is hereby adopted.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 637

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 637.

May I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.*

The Secretary General is directed to read only the title of the measure.

With the permission of the Body, and since copies of the measure have been previously distributed, the Secretary General read only the title thereof without prejudice to inserting its text in the Congressional Record.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL, House Resolution No. 637, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF FORMER REPRESENTATIVE RICARDO C. SILVERIO, SR. OF THE THIRD DISTRICT OF BULACAN DURING THE NINTH, TENTH AND ELEVENTH CONGRESSES.

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 637 in consolidation with House Resolution No. 635.

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 637

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

House Resolution No. 637 is adopted, in consolidation with House Resolution No. 635.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

CHANGE OF REFERRAL OF CERTAIN MEASURES

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move for the change of referral of the following measures:

1. House Bill No. 294 – abolishing Irrigation Service Fees from beneficiaries of irrigation systems funded and constructed by, or under the administration of the National Irrigation Administration, from the Committee on Public Works and Highways to the Committee on Agriculture and Food;

2. House Bill No. 3429 – establishing, institutionalizing Grassroots Participatory Budgeting, from the Committee on Appropriations to the Committees on People’s Participation and Appropriations;

3. House Bill No. 2596 – granting free tertiary education to the top five percent graduates of public science high schools pursuing a degree in the field of Science And Technology, Mathematics and Engineering, from the Committee on Basic Education and Culture to the Committees on Higher and Technical Education and Basic Education and Culture;

4. House Bill No. 2984 – granting scholarships to children of small famers and small-scale fisherfolk, from the Committee on Basic Education and Culture to the Committee on Higher and Technical Education;

5. House Bill No. 3753 – establishing a free medicine assistance program for the poor, from the Committee on Poverty Alleviation to the Committee on Health;

6. House Bill No. 374 – amending Articles 96 and 124 of the Family Code of the Philippines, from the Committee on Revision of Laws to the Committee on Women and Gender Equality; and

7. House Bill No. 375 – amending Articles 14, 211, and 225 of the Family Code of the Philippines, from the Committee on Revision of Laws to the Committee on Women and Gender Equality.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DEFENSOR. I move for a few minutes of suspension, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is suspended.

It was 5:40 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:42 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is resumed.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the Additional Reference of Business, and for this purpose, please direct the Secretary General to read the title of the resolution.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Secretary General will please read the title of House Resolution No. 638.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary General read the following House Resolution on First Reading, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding reference:

RESOLUTION

House Resolution No. 638, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF HONORABLE RICARDO ‘CARDING’ C. SILVERIO, SR.”

By Representative Macapagal-Arroyo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. I move that House Resolution No. 638 be deemed consolidated with House Resolutions No. 637 and 635.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move for a few minutes of suspension.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is suspended.

It was 5:44 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:52 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is resumed.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve Journal No. 55 for the session on December 13, 2016.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; Journal No. 55 for the session held on December 13, 2016 is hereby approved.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, in accordance with our Rules, I move that we authorize all Committees to conduct meetings or public hearings, if deemed necessary, during the House recess from December 17, 2016 to January 15, 2017.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DEFENSOR. I move for a few minutes of suspension of the session, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is suspended.

It was 5:53 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:01 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is resumed.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we take up the Additional Reference of Business, and for this purpose, please direct the Secretary General to read the same.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Secretary General is directed to read the Additional Reference of Business.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary General read the following House Resolutions on First Reading, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 639, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE CONGRATULATIONS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO EDUARD FOLAYANG OF BAGUIO CITY FOR WINNING AGAINST SHINYA AOKI IN THE ONE CHAMPIONSHIP’S LIGHTWEIGHT BELT AT THE SINGAPORE INDOOR STADIUM”

By Representative Go (M.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 640, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEMISE OF FORMER AKLAN CONGRESSMAN ALLEN S. QUIMPO”

By Representative Marquez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 641, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF HONORABLE ALLEN S. QUIMPO, FORMER REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LONE DISTRICT OF AKLAN DURING THE NINTH, TENTH AND ELEVENTH CONGRESSES”

By Representatives Alvarez (P.), Fariñas and Suarez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 641

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 641.

May I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.*

The Secretary General is directed to read only the title of the measure.

With the permission of the Body, and since copies of the measure have been previously distributed, the Secretary General read only the title thereof without prejudice to inserting its text in the Congressional Record.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL, House Resolution No. 641, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF HONORABLE ALLEN S. QUIMPO, FORMER REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LONE DISTRICT OF AKLAN DURING THE NINTH, TENTH AND ELEVENTH CONGRESSES.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 641 in consolidation with House Resolution 640.

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 641

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

House Resolution No. 641, in consolidation with House Resolution No. 640, is hereby adopted.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. FARIÑAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until January 16, 2017, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Happy holidays to all!

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The session is adjourned until January 16, 2017, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

It was 6:04 p.m.

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)