



Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 17th CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

House of Representatives

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No. 63

CALL TO ORDER

At 4:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Romero "Miro" S. Quimbo called the session to order.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The session is now called to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). May we request everyone to rise for the singing of the Philippine National Anthem.

Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). May we kindly ask everyone to remain standing for today's prayer. May we call on the Hon. Ann K. Hofer from the Second District of Zamboanga Sibugay to lead today's Invocation.

Everybody remained standing for the Invocation.

INVOCATION

REP. HOFER. Lord God Almighty, who created the universe and all that is beautiful, help us maintain our sense of balance.

Help us to appreciate the beauty in others, not just in a beauty contest, but also in our daily life because beauty permeates all of Your creations.

At the same time, help us to balance it with what is in the Bible, particularly 1 Samuel, Chapter 16, Verse 7, which says:

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Don't judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Help us thus, Lord, to keep our hearts pure and pleasing in Your sight.

In our everyday work, help us strive to do good.

In our given calling, instill in us a resolve to uphold the truth, as we call to mind the words of the poet John Keats, "Beauty is truth, truth beauty."

Let our lives then, Lord, be filled with the beauty of sincerity and the truth that will balance us, so that when You look into our hearts, You will only see our beautiful desire to glorify and praise You, faithfully and forever.

Amen.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Amen. The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we defer the calling of the roll.

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

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve Journal No. 62, dated January 25, 2017.

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

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we now proceed to the Reference of Business and request that the Secretary General be directed to read the same.

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

The Secretary General is directed to read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 4798, entitled:

“AN ACT IMPOSING A LOGGING BAN IN CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY”

By Representative Rodriguez (M.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill No. 4799, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE CITY OF CAGAYAN DE ORO A MINING FREE ZONE”

By Representative Rodriguez (M.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill No. 4800, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR FREE PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Elago
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 4801, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10176 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT REVIVING THE OBSERVANCE OF ARBOR DAY BY AUTHORIZING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS THE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CELEBRATING THE DAY FOR TREE PLANTING AS AN ANNUAL EVENT AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Savellano
TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REFORESTATION

House Bill No. 4802, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING SUCCESSIONAL RIGHTS OF A LEGITIMATE BIOLOGICAL CHILD TO AN ADOPTED CHILD, AND AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE PROVISIONS OF THE DOMESTIC ADOPTION ACT AND THE FAMILY CODE”

By Representative Gatchalian
TO THE COMMITTEE ON POPULATION AND FAMILY RELATIONS

House Bill No. 4803, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE COCONUT LEVY ASSETS AS A TRUST FUND, PROVIDING FOR ITS MANAGEMENT AND UTILIZATION, AUTHORIZING THE PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE TO DISPOSE THE COCONUT LEVY ASSETS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Aglipay-Villar
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 4804, entitled:

“AN ACT TO RESTRUCTURE MANDATE AND REFOCUS THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE NEW IRRIGATION SYSTEMS, REMOVE ITS ROLE IN MAINTENANCE AND COLLECTION OF IRRIGATION AND OTHER SERVICE FEES, AND RENAME IT AS THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Aglipay-Villar
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 4805, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO PROMOTE URBAN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRY’S METROPOLITAN AREAS, TO ADDRESS FOOD SECURITY, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Aglipay-Villar
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 4806, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PHILIPPINE ABACA INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Aglipay-Villar
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 4807, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING OCTOBER TWENTY-SEVEN OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF SARANGANI”

By Representative Pacquiao
TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 4808, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE INCLUSION OF BLACK ISLANDS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SILAGO, PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN LEYTE INTO THE NATIONAL INTEGRATED PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM (NIPAS)”

By Representative Mercado
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill No. 4809, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTING A CANINE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM IN THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Biazon
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

House Bill No. 4810, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE USE, SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEMS (ENDS) AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Biazon
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 4811, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING AUTOMATIC PHILHEALTH COVERAGE FOR ALL ORPHANS, ABANDONED AND ABUSED MINORS, OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTHS AND STREET CHILDREN, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7875, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10606, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE ACT OF 2013”

By Representative Tan (A.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 4812, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE BAMBOO DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Aglipay-Villar
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 4813, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING REHABILITATION CENTERS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES NATIONWIDE”

By Representative Herrera-Dy
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 705, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE HOUSE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE CONTINUING DETERIORATION OF LAGUNA LAKE IN ORDER TO ENSURE ITS SUSTAINABILITY”

By Representative Biazon
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 706, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND/OR OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE CONDITIONS, RIGHTS, AND PRIVILEGES OF THE ELEVEN (11) MISSING STUDENT-CADETS UNDERGOING SHIPBOARD TRAINING WHO FELL VICTIMS TO THE MARITIME ACCIDENT SUFFERED BY M/V STARLITE ATLANTIC”

By Representative Manalo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 707, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND/OR OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SINKING OF THE M/V STARLITE ATLANTIC AS IT RELATES TO MARITIME SAFETY AND INTO THE CASE OF THE ONE (1) CONFIRMED DEAD CREW AND EIGHTEEN (18) MISSING CREW, ELEVEN (11) OF WHICH WERE STUDENT-CADETS TAKING THEIR ON-THE-JOB TRAINING ONBOARD THE ILL-FATED SHIP”

By Representative Manalo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 709, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STATUS OF THE INITIATIVES BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE LAGUNA LAKE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND THE GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL RELATIVE TO THE REHABILITATION OF LAGUNA DE BAY”

By Representatives Pineda, Belmonte (R.), Canama, Salo, Lopez (B.), Villarín, Bertiz, Montoro, Belaro, Lacson, Uybarreta, Salón and Lopez (M.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 710, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE PROPER HOUSE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE CHARGING OF PARKING FEES ON MALLS AND OTHER SIMILAR ESTABLISHMENTS INCLUDING GOVERNMENT FACILITIES WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ENACTING LEGISLATION TO REGULATE THE SAME”

By Representatives Pineda, Belmonte (R.), Canama, Salo, Lopez (B.), Villarín, Bertiz, Montoro, Belaro, Lacson, Uybarreta, Salón and Lopez (M.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 711, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONVEYING THE SINCEREST CONDOLENCES AND DEEPEST SYMPATHY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF FORMER MANILA MAYOR, FORMER MANILA CONGRESSMAN, AND FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION, GEMILIANO “MEL” C. LOPEZ, JR.”

By Representative Romero

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 712, entitled:

“RESOLUTION TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE ALLEGED FAILURE OF THE SMALL TOWN LOTTERY (STL) OPERATIONS OF THE PHILIPPINE CHARITY SWEEPSTAKES OFFICE (PCSO) IN GENERATING ITS PROJECTED INCOME RESULTING IN THE LOSS OF BILLIONS OF PESOS IN REVENUES ON THE PART OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND THE POSSIBLE USE OF ITS OPERATIONS FOR THE PROLIFERATION OF JUETENG AND OTHER ILLEGAL NUMBERS GAME IN THE COUNTRY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Manalo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 713, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

(AUP) ON ITS CENTENNIAL (100TH YEAR) ANNIVERSARY OF BEING A SCHOOL THAT TRAINS FOR SERVICE AND PREPARES FOR ETERNITY IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Abayon

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 714, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON METRO MANILA DEVELOPMENT TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DENR) ORDER TO CLOSE DOWN THE PAYATAS DUMPSITE”

By Representative Batocabe

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 715, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS TO CONDUCT, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE ALLEGED IRREGULARITIES IN THE CONDUCT OF SMALL TOWN LOTTERY OPERATIONS OF PCSO THAT REPORTEDLY RESULTED IN THE LOSS OF BILLIONS OF REVENUES OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND THE SUPPOSED EXPLOITATION OF SMALL TOWN LOTTERY OPERATIONS INTO FRONTS FOR ILLEGAL GAMBLING IN THE COUNTRY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Batocabe, Belaro and Bravo (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

Rep. Angelina “Helen” D.L. Tan, M.D. for House Bills No. 40, 163, 193, 298, 300, 304, 335, 352, 429, 440, 468, 489, 522, and 4774;

Rep. Joaquin M. Chipeco Jr. for House Bills No. 9, 2900, 3024, and 3040;

Rep. Rodrigo A. Abellanos for House Bills No. 4689 and 4800;

Rep. Manuel Jose “Mannix” M. Dalipe for House Bills No. 40, 2576, 3643, 3644, 3662, 3645, 3663, 3665, 3706, 4637, 3704, 4087, and 4090;

Reps. Juliette T. Uy, Isidro S. Rodriguez Jr., and Jesus “Boying” F. Celeste for House Bill No. 4689 and House Resolution No. 198;

Rep. Marlyn L. Primicias-Agabas for House Bill No. 1387;

Rep. Micaela S. Violago for House Bill No. 3518 and House Resolution No. 247;

Rep. Alexandria P. Gonzales for House Bills No. 477 and 2653;

Rep. Jose Antonio “Kuya Jonathan” R. Sy-Alvarado for House Bills No. 4586, 4588, 4590, 4601, 4640, 4740, 4744, 4745, and 4771, and House Resolution No. 553;

Rep. Rene L. Relampagos for House Bill No. 3403;

Reps. Rodol M. Batocabe, Ann K. Hofer, Lianda B. Bolilia, Orestes T. Salon, Luisa Lloren Cuaresma, Alex “AA” L. Advincula, Ma. Lucille L. Nava, M.D., and Lorna P. Bautista-Bandigan for House Bill No. 4689;

Rep. Carmelo “Jon” B. Lazatin II for House Bills No. 3730 and 4689;

Rep. Victoria Isabel G. Noel for House Bills No. 1595, 3620, 3835, and 4689;

Rep. Emmeline Aglipay-Villar for House Bill No. 328;

Rep. Sherwin N. Tugna for House Bill No. 2819;

Rep. Salvador B. Belaro Jr. for House Bills No. 3355, 3855, and 4689 and House Resolution No. 667;

Rep. Benhur B. Lopez Jr. for House Bill No. 3855 and House Resolution No. 667;

Reps. Alfredo A. Garbin Jr. and H. Harry L. Roque Jr. for House Bill No. 3855;

Rep. Bernadette “BH” Herrera-Dy for House Bills No. 3113, 3234, 3543, 3708, 3709, 4153, 4154, and 4155;

Rep. Jocelyn Sy Limkaichong for House Bills No. 37, 40, 2447, 2452, 2453, 2462, 2713, and 4689;

Rep. Manuel Monsour T. Del Rosario III for House Bill No. 1480;

Rep. Mario Vittorio “Marvey” A. Mariño for House Bills No. 221 and 1554;

Rep. Linabelle Ruth R. Villarica for House Bills No. 4, 269, 416, 1204, 2916, 3177, and 3222;

Reps. Kaka J. Bag-ao, Florida “Rida” P. Robes, Glona G. Labadlabad, Ramon V.A. “Rav” Rocamora, Winston “Winnie” Castelo, Sitti Djalia A. Turabin-Hataman, Shernee Abubakar Tan, Carlos Isagani T. Zarate, Lawrence H. Fortun, Nancy A. Catamco, Jorge “Bolet” Banal, Sherwin N. Tugna, and Anna Marie Villaraza-Suarez for House Bill No. 1166;

Reps. Greg G. Gasataya and Richard C. Eusebio for House Bill No. 56;

Rep. Alfredo A. Garbin Jr. for House Bill No. 953;

Rep. Luis Jose Angel N. Campos Jr. for House Bills No. 210, 479, 662, and 3518, and House Resolution No. 693;

Reps. Fredenil “Fred” H. Castro, Dale “Along” R. Malapitan, Orestes T. Salon, Abdullah D. Dimaporo, and Mohamad Khalid Q. Dimaporo for House Bill No. 4105; and

Rep. Christopher “Toff” Vera Perez De Venecia for House Resolution No. 663.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 58), re H.B. No. 4848, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE CITY OF BISLIG, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1897

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Pimentel

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 59), re H.B. No. 4850, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LOPEZ, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1750

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 60), re H.B. No. 4851, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ATIMONAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1738

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 61), re H.B. No. 4852, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF GUMACA, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1749

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 62), re H.B. No. 4853, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BAROBO, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1899

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Pimentel

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 63), re H.B. No. 4854, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TAGKAWAYAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1748

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 64), re H.B. No. 4855, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF QUEZON, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1734

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 65), re H.B. No. 4856, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN

THE MUNICIPALITY OF HINATUAN, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1898

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Pimentel

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 66), re H.B. No. 4857, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PEREZ, PROVINCE OF QUEZON, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1994

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 67), re H.B. No. 4858, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CALAUAG, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1736

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 68), re H.B. No. 4859, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PLARIDEL, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1735

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 69), re H.B. No. 4860, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF GUINAYANGAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1747

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 70), re H.B. No. 4861, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ALABAT, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1737

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 71), re H.B. No. 4862, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LIGAO, PROVINCE OF ALBAY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 672

Sponsors: Representatives Ferrer (L.), Nograles (K.) and Gonzalez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Public Order and Safety (Committee Report No. 72), re H.B. No. 4863, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE - CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION AND DETECTION GROUP (PNP-CIDG) BY RESTORING ITS AUTHORITY TO ISSUE SUBPOENA AD TESTIFICANDUM OR SUBPOENA DUCES TECUM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 35 (B)(4) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6975, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1990 ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 2993 and 4339

Sponsors: Representatives Acop and Matugas
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Floor Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session for a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The session is suspended.

It was 4:10 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:15 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The session is resumed.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move for the change of referral of the following measures:

1. House Bills No. 388, 1520 and 4206, amending the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000, from the Committee on Population and Family Relations, to the Committee on Revision of Laws;

2. House Bill No. 2324, extending the prescriptive period for the rectification of simulated births, from the Committee on Revision of Laws, to the Committee on Social Services;

3. House Bill No. 179, regulating public solicitations, from the Committee on Revision of Laws, to the Committee on Social Services;

4. House Bills No. 2977 and 3651, providing for a comprehensive nuclear regulatory framework, creating for the purpose the Philippine Nuclear Regulatory Commission, from the Committee on Government Reorganization, to the Committees on Government Reorganization, and Science and Technology;

5. House Bills No. 25 and 4369, providing for a comprehensive nuclear regulatory framework, creating for the purpose the Philippine Nuclear Regulatory Commission, from the Committees on Government Reorganization, and Energy, to the Committees on Government Reorganization, and Science and Technology;

6. House Bill No. 1691, providing for a comprehensive nuclear regulatory framework, creating for the purpose the Philippine Nuclear Regulatory Commission, from the Committee on Energy, to the Committees on Government Reorganization, and Science and Technology; and

7. House Bill No. 2732, providing for a comprehensive nuclear regulatory framework, creating

for the purpose the Philippine Nuclear Regulatory Commission, from the Committee on Science and Technology, to the Committees on Government Reorganization, and Science and Technology.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 713

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 713 as reported out by the Committee on Rules.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). 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. 713, entitled: A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES (AUP) ON ITS CENTENNIAL (100TH YEAR) ANNIVERSARY OF BEING A SCHOOL THAT TRAINS FOR SERVICE AND PREPARES FOR ETERNITY IN THE PHILIPPINES.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Floor Leader is recognized..

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 713

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 713.

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

House Resolution No. 713 is adopted.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Rep. Rose Marie “Baby” J. Arenas in the gallery. They are former

Congresswoman from the Third District of Pangasinan, Maria Rachel J. Arenas, Chairperson of the MTRCB; Annie Enriquez-Geron, Vice President, Public Services International Asia-Pacific; and Dr. Dario “Jun” Lapada Jr., President, CANCER Party-List. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). May we ask our visitors to please stand up. Welcome to the House of Representatives, the guests of the ever beautiful, the Hon. Rose Marie “Baby” Arenas. (*Applause*)

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, may we also acknowledge the guests of Magdalo Party-List Rep. Gary C. Alejano. They are Dr. Maximo De Chavez Ilag, Professor, Politics and Governance, Philippine Women’s University; and the class in Politics and Governance, Philippine Women’s University.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). To the guests of the Hon. Gary Alejano, magandang hapon po. Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

PRIVILEGE HOUR

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, today being a Monday, and pursuant to our Rules, I move that we open the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Privilege Hour is now open.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Lady from the Third District of Pangasinan, the Hon. Rose Marie “Baby” J. Arenas, be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The honorable Rep. Rose Marie “Baby” Arenas from the Third District of Pangasinan is recognized.

Everybody is advised to sit down and listen.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ARENAS

REP. ARENAS. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I love you. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, dear colleagues, there are important issues confronting an estimated 10 million overseas Filipino workers. Mr. Speaker, I seldom take the floor because I choose to express my legislative advocacies through committee work, but not this time, Mr. Speaker. I believe that addressing the difficult challenges confronting our overseas workers is every Filipino’s

concern, and that the protection of their rights and well-being must be everyone's business, particularly our people in the government.

Republic Act No. 7157, otherwise known as the "Philippine Foreign Service Act of 1991," gives mandate to the Department of Foreign Affairs to implement the three pillars of Philippine foreign policy, namely: 1. preservation and enhancement of national security; 2. promotion and attainment of economic security; and 3. protection of the rights and promotion of the welfare and interest of Filipino overseas workers. Napakahalaga po ng mga bagay na ito na harapin sa pagtatalaga ng sapat na pamamahala nang sa gayon ay hindi tayo magkakagulo at magsisihan pagdating ng oras kung kailan huli na ang lahat at hindi na natin magawang isalba ang ating mga OFWs na nasa gitna ng kamatayan o krisis.

One death is too many, Mr. Speaker. Last Tuesday, on January 24, 2017, this humble Representation took the initiative of organizing a special briefing for fellow legislators on the state of affairs of our OFWs deployed in over 100 countries. In particular, we wanted to know the situation of our workers in the Middle East, especially in Kuwait where almost 90 percent of them are employed as domestic helpers. That day, Mr. Speaker, none of the resource persons from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) had any clue about the execution that was to be carried out the next day. That was the day before the execution of OFW Jakatia Pawa.

Jakatia was a 44-year-old mother of two who was widowed when her husband was shot to death in Ipil, Zamboanga. She was also the sister of two men in uniform, a retired police officer and a Philippine Air Force colonel. She graduated from college and yet, she humbly but bravely faced the odds to work as a domestic helper in Kuwait. As you can see, Jakatia did not come from the most marginalized of our society and yet, Jakatia was powerless to fight the system that accused her of a crime she did not commit, a crime they could not prove was her doing. She suffered injustice, loneliness and fear in a Kuwaiti prison during the last seven years of her short life.

Is there a fate worse than death that awaits other victims, those of lesser means than Jakatia who were forced to work under the most abusive and oppressive conditions? Yes, there is and that is, to live daily through the hell of constant and unspeakable pain and fear from abuse just to have a job.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is, there are countries where our workers do not receive protection. Such is the case in Kuwait where there are no laws to protect our domestic workers and where no one is spared, just like Jakatia. This is sad. According to the POEA, 1.5 million Filipinos leave the Philippines every year. Of

those who leave, 30 percent or nearly three million are deployed in the Middle East. In 2016, Saudi Arabia topped the countries of destination with 183,517, followed by Kuwait with 63,167 OFWs. Of the top 10 most in demand skills, household services rank first in deployment. This is a job that is predominantly occupied by women.

According to a report by the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2015, there were a total of 207,655 Filipinos in Kuwait, of whom 198,432 are temporary migrants and 9,170 are irregular or undocumented workers. Records show that 84 percent of OFWs employed in Kuwait are household workers. While the Philippines has signed a memorandum of understanding on labor cooperation in 2012, domestic workers are not covered by Kuwait's labor law. In fact, there are reported and documented cases of contract violations; maltreatment; poor working and living conditions; underpayment or non-payment of salaries; non-payment of overtime, holiday pay, vacation leave, sick leave and other benefits; prolonged working hours and shortened rest hours; health and medical problems; and sexual, physical and verbal abuses. On top of these outrageous cases, Mr. Speaker, records show that in Kuwait alone, there were 251 cases of rape and 556 cases of sexually related abuses.

Mr. Speaker, we must not condone this diabolical treatment of our OFWs, of our women. We must not be silent, as such heinous crimes are condoned by countries like Kuwait. The government must act now. One death is too many, Mr. Speaker. Therefore, let us plug the loopholes now with the following measures: We must ban the deployment of OFWs to Kuwait and let such ban stay until we are in a position to guarantee the full protection of rights and well-being of our poor OFWs. We must direct all diplomatic and consular offices all over the world to render a periodic report on updated inventory and situation of all Filipinos in their respective countries.

Mr. Speaker, in Taiwan, two cases of death penalty were commuted to life imprisonment because of the diligent and timely intervention of the Manila Economic and Cultural Office. I believe that embassies should have a section referred to as "Attention to Nationals," where a duty staff officer is assigned, including an accessible ambassador, devoted to Filipinos in distress if we are to effectively protect them. Mr. Speaker, how many of our consular officers are prepared to visit OFWs in prison? This humble Representation has visited our OFWs in jail twice and the experience was heartbreaking; I felt so bad and I cried. I mentioned this to emphasize the urgency of these measures and recommendations.

I also propose to ensure the strict implementation of reportorial requirements of agencies on welfare incidents and as soon as possible, create an interagency task force; identify and eliminate all sources of vulnerabilities and

exploitation, starting with the abolition of recruitment fees and other related costs paid by the workers; develop model bilateral/multilateral labor agreements that will promote fair and ethical recruitment; implement mandatory designation of welfare officers in Philippine-licensed recruitment agencies; carry out the strict enforcement of penalties against erring employers and agencies; and impose mandatory pre-employment orientation seminars for domestic workers.

Mr. Speaker, I also propose that we fast-track the approval of House Bill No. 543, An Act Creating the Department of Overseas Workers and all other similar bills aimed at protecting OFWs. Let us strengthen our position by including, in the agenda of the coming ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly or AIPA, the resolution to promote fair and ethical recruitment in bilateral and multilateral labor agreements, and the expansion of current mutual recognition arrangements. With this urgent call, Mr. Speaker, we hope this will be the last. We hope there will be no more victims, no more deaths, no more orphans, no more tears.

Mr. Speaker, dear colleagues, I watched the news until the wee hours of the morning when the whole country anticipated the Miss Universe pageant. At one o'clock in the morning, President Rodrigo Duterte reiterated that he will serve the interests of the country with respect to the EDCA. At about two o'clock in the morning, video footages of OFWs sleeping in the streets of Jeddah were shown in the news. Why do we treat our OFWs unfairly? These people remit more than one trillion pesos annually, equal to one-third of the 2017 National Budget. Without these remittances, our country will suffer serious social and economic setbacks. They are not only victims in other countries; they are victims of our own, too.

My dear colleagues, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thank you for your support and to you, Mr. Speaker, I thank you. I submit. Marami pong salamat. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.) Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from the AKO BICOL Party-List, the Hon. Rodol M. Batocabe, for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The honorable Congressman Rodol "the Great Debater" Batocabe is recognized.

REP. BATOCABE. Thank you, "the Great Protector," Deputy Speaker Quimbo.

Will the Gentlelady from Pangasinan yield to a few questions?

REP. ARENAS. Yes, I will, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BATOCABE. First of all, let me commend the Honorable Arenas for taking up the cudgels for our oppressed OFWs. Indeed, it is about time that we again look at the plight of our OFWs and not just react after an unfortunate incident, like what happened to Mrs. Pawa.

Mr. Speaker, may I know what committee does the Representative head in the Seventeenth Congress? In the committee po?

REP. ARENAS. I am the Vice Chair for the OFWs.

REP. BATOCABE. Vice Chair for the OFWs?

REP. ARENAS. And Chairman of the IPRD.

REP. BATOCABE. The IPRD? What is the IPRD, the Inter-Parliamentary Relations and Diplomacy?

REP. ARENAS. Yes, Sir.

REP. BATOCABE. Now, as Chairman of the Committee on IPRD and Vice Chair of the Committee on OFWs, was the Representative furnished a list of OFWs who are in distress, particularly OFWs who had been convicted in foreign courts?

REP. ARENAS. Thank you, my esteemed colleague, Rep. Batocabe.

I think that is what I have wanted to do since the very start of the deliberations on the formation of the Department of Overseas Workers but the DFA, the POEA and the OWWA have never submitted a copy of what I have been asking for: an inventory of those in prison, inventory of those who are in death row, and inventory of Filipinos in their respective countries. I think the diplomats are busy with other things. They have no time.

REP. BATOCABE. In other words, what the Representative is saying here, Mr. Speaker, despite her requests as Chair of the Committee on IPRD, Vice Chair of the Committee on OFWs and as Representative of Pangasinan, she was never furnished any inventory of our OFWs in distress, and I surmise that included also the list of our OFWs in death row. Am I right, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ARENAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, my dear colleague. Yes, the Gentleman is right.

REP. BATOCABE. That is precisely the reason she is urging this Congress to require these agencies to report periodically regarding these OFWs in distress. Tama po ba?

REP. ARENAS. Yes.

REP. BATOCABE. That is also the reason she wants us to be apprised of the plight of our OFWs, so that we can react accordingly and not react after, let us say, somebody had been executed, like what happened to Mrs. Pawa.

REP. ARENAS. My dear colleague, that is what I want all of us here in Congress to address dahil po nakabisita na po ako sa mga preso at nakita ko po kung gaano kahirap at kasama ang kanilang sitwasyon. Kaya po, siguro, we can ask the Speaker, with his leadership, to allow us to visit, to actually see them because I do not think any ambassador would want to enter a jail in the way like I did at malaki po ang naging diperensya dahil po iyong death penalty recently sa Taiwan ay napa-commute po namin to imprisonment lamang because of our presence there. So, importante po iyong inyong suggestion. Can the Gentleman help us?

REP. BATOCABE. Dahil po kung bibigyan po tayo ng listahan ng ating mga kababayan, lalong-lalo na iyong mga nasa death row, tayo po ay puwedeng magtulungan, sa pamumuno po ninyo, gaya po ng pamumuno niya sa kanyang komite o bilang Vice Chair ng Committee on OFWs. Tayo po ay puwedeng may magagawa rin para hindi matuloy ang pagpataw ng kamatayan. Tama po ba iyon?

REP. ARENAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BATOCABE. At para hindi na lang po tayo, pagkatapos, ay magtuturuan at magsisisihan kung sino ang may kasalanan. Tama po ba?

REP. ARENAS. Yes po.

REP. BATOCABE. With that, Mr. Speaker, I do commend the Lady from Pangasinan and I do hope that we start taking action now by, first, taking into serious consideration the recommendations she has outlined in her privilege speech.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ARENAS. I thank the Honorable Batocabe. Maybe he can help us on the temporary ban of sending OFWs to Kuwait.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my dear colleague.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from the ACTS-

OFW, the Hon. Aniceto “John” D. Bertiz III for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Honorable Bertiz is recognized.

REP. BERTIZ. Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Thank you so much, Floor Leader.

Is the good Congresswoman from the Third District of Pangasinan willing to be interpellated by this Representation, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ARENAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Gentleman may proceed.

REP. BERTIZ. Mr. Speaker, unang-una po sa lahat ay nagpapasalamat ako mula sa aking puso bilang Kinatawan ng OFW dahil sa pagmamahal at malasakit po ng ating mahal na Representante from the Third District of Pangasinan. Mr. Speaker, in your opinion, are there prevailing factors in Kuwait that make our workers more vulnerable to abuse than in other countries?

REP. ARENAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, dahil po I, myself, I filed a case against them six years ago with the DFA in the Philippines because the crime was committed in the Philippines but up to now po, the DFA has not done anything regarding my complaint. When I became so emotional—thank you very much, my dear colleague—the Third Secretary of the Kuwaiti Embassy shouted at me and so, I would like to file a resolution to declare him *persona non grata* because not even one problem that we filed here in Manila was addressed by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

REP. BERTIZ. Thank you po. I know for a fact that, because of the new medical and visa system, the cost of deployment is higher by almost P10,000 per worker going to Kuwait. So, does she think that this is a factor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ARENAS. Yes, my dear colleague. Nagpapasalamat po ako sa inyo, Congressman Bertiz, for your courage and dedication dahil iyan po ang isang problema—kung bakit kailangan silang dumaan sa kamay ng mga foreign doctors or nurses for their medical check-up when we have able doctors and hospitals that can do it. Besides, napakalaki po ng cost at alam po ninyo, I do not think they even choose the right people, only the ones they want to choose.

Marami pong salamat, Congressman Bertiz.

Sana po ay ipagpatuloy ninyo ang inyong advocacy regarding this matter.

REP. BERTIZ. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the honorable Mme. Baby Arenas, sa palagay ninyo po ba, bilang Chairman ng Committee on Inter-Parliamentary Relations and Diplomacy po, malaki ang pagkukulang ng ating Department of Foreign Affairs at ng ating DOH kung bakit itong mga klase ng kartel at ng mga buwitre na nagpapahirap sa mga OFW, lalung-lalo na ang mga kartel ng mga medical clinics, ay pinapayagan?

REP. ARENAS. My dear colleagues, napakatama po ng sinabi ninyo. Iyan po ang complaint ng marami nating constituents. Salamat po at nabigyan ninyo ng pansin at sana naman po tayo ay magkaisa na—let us demand from the Department of Foreign Affairs the answers to our questions and to our complaints and maybe, we can ask Secretary Yasay to answer all of that because I have been sending messages and up to now, I do not have any answer, including po ang POEA at ang OWWA, pati ang Bureau of Internal Revenue kung nagbabayad sila ng correct taxes.

REP. BERTIZ. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Gusto ko lamang pong balikan ito dahil ako po mismo, bilang Representante ng ACTS-OFW, alam ko po ang kakulangan ng DFA, lalung-lalo na sa pumanaw na o iyong namatay nating kasamahan na si Jakatia Pawa. Alam naman po ng Foreign Affairs gabi pa lamang ay bibitayin na siya pero hindi man lang po pinarating sa pamilya na siya ay bibitayin noong araw na iyon. Alam ko rin po, Mr. Speaker, na noong nakaraang December 2016, nagbigay ng kanyang credentials ang bagong Ambassador ng Kuwait sa ating Presidente. Bakit nga po hindi man lang ito inilagay sa folder o sa report ng DFA, tulad nga po ng sinasabi ng ating mahal na Representante from the Third District of Pangasinan, kung ilang daan ang mga namamaltrato o ang mga nasa shelter ngayon—at dalawa po ang nasa death row—at bakit kinakailangan pang may mamatay bago pa lamang po iparating kay Presidente?

Sa tingin ko, ito po ay isang malaking pagkukulang ng DFA, hindi nila nagampanan ang kanilang trabaho. Sinusuportahan ko po, Mr. Speaker, ang rekomendasyon ng ating honorable Congresswoman Arenas sa pagpapatigil ng pagpunta ng mga domestic workers sa Kuwait at ganoon na rin po ang pagbuwag ng mga kartel na matagal nang nagpapahirap sa ating mga OFW, na ang pangalan po ng isa ay Winston Q8, na hinuhuthutan ang ating mga OFW at kumikita nang mahigit P10 milyon bawat araw, na pinaghahatian lang ng wawalong kumpanya at kadamay na rin po rito ang mga taong embahada at ganoon na rin po ang mga opisyal ng ating Department of Health.

Muli po, Mr. Speaker, mula sa aming puso sa inyong ACTS-OFW, nagpapasalamat po kami at

mayroon po tayong Kinatawan na isang Baby Arenas na nagmamalasakit sa ating mga OFW.

Maraming, maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, and Mme. Congresswoman Baby Arenas.

REP. ARENAS. Marami pong salamat, Mr. Speaker, my dear colleague. I think that with our participation, this will send a strong message to the Kuwait government on how valuable are our OFWs to us and that their dignity, life and security are far more valuable than their pay and remittances.

Marami pong salamat, Mr. Speaker. Marami pong salamat, my dear colleague, Congressman Bertiz. Marami pong salamat, my dear colleagues.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List, the Hon. Jose “Lito” L. Atienza Jr., for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Hon. Lito Atienza of Party-List BUHAY, the best-looking Representative in the city of Manila, is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, and coming from the best-dressed and better-looking Presiding Officer, I take that compliment as a well-meaning one. Salamat po.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Floor Leader, thank you for the opportunity. With the kind permission of my comadre whom I respect in her dedicated work as a Member of our Congress. With her permission, I would like to clarify certain matters.

REP. ARENAS. Marami pong salamat, my dear colleague.

REP. ATIENZA. Ito po bang kaso ng ating OFW na inyong dinadala rito sa ating hapag ay kilala ninyong personal?

REP. ARENAS. Hindi po, at hindi ko rin po alam na mayroong papatayin noong araw na iyon. Nagkaroon po kami ng miting with the OFWs, the POEA, the Department of Labor and the OWWA, hindi rin po nila alam.

REP. ATIENZA. Sa tingin po ba ng ating kagalang-galang na Congresswoman e talagang may kasalanan o mayroon pong duda na walang kasalanan?

REP. ARENAS. Mayroon pong duda, my dear colleague.

REP. ATIENZA. Sa kabila po ng pagdududa ng marami, siya po ay napipintong kitlin ang buhay.

REP. ARENAS. Opo, Congressman Atienza.

REP. ATIENZA. That is the very reason you are appealing that the Philippine government, hopefully the President no less, takes action to save the life of our country—babae po ba siya o lalake?

REP. ARENAS. Babae po.

REP. ATIENZA. The life of our countrywoman.

REP. ARENAS. Opo, babae po.

REP. ATIENZA. Opo. Naniniwala kayong mayroon namang katuwiran na makiusap tayo upang hindi siya kitilin at hindi siya ipadala sa gas chamber, bitayin o dalhin sa firing squad.

REP. ARENAS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Congressman Atienza, marami pong salamat dahil alam ko po walang nakipag-ugnayan kaya po natuloy iyong pagkitil sa kanyang buhay. Siguro po, puwede tayong dalawa makipag-miting sa kanila dahil nakita ko po sa Taiwan, dahil po sa close communication namin ay na-commute po sa life imprisonment ang death sentence noong isang OFW doon na Pilipina, babae rin po.

REP. ATIENZA. Sa inyong paniniwala, kung saka-sakaling hindi mapigil ang execution ng ating kababayan, ito ay malaking kawalan sa kanyang karapatang mabuhay, sa kanyang pamilya na umaasa, at sa ating bansa dahil po tayo mismo ay isang bansang Kristiyano at naniniwala tayo na hindi basta-basta dapat pinapatay ang sinuman.

REP. ARENAS. Opo, totoo po iyon, my esteemed colleague. Iyon nga po ang nakakalungkot na hindi lang po naman—their dignity of life and security are far more valuable than their pay and remittances kasi po, sa pag-alis nila dito sa ating bansa, iniiwan nila ang kanilang maybahay, iniiwan ang mga anak na maliliit, at iniiwan ang magulang na maysakit. Hindi po nila alam kung sa pagbalik nila ay nandidiyan pa po sila, o sila naman ay hindi nakalagay sa isang ataul na lamang. Malaki po ang risk tuwing umaalis sila ng bansa kaya sana po, sa ating mga diplomats all over the world, we must instruct and tell them to do their jobs at hindi lang po mamasyal at magbigay ng party at mag-attend ng parties.

REP. ATIENZA. Alam po ninyo, Mr. Speaker, iyong kaso po noong ating kababayan na na-execute noong nakaraang linggo ay hawig na hawig doon sa sinasabi ninyo, na sumusumpa ang mga nakakakilala sa

kanya na hindi niya ginawa iyong inaakusa sa kanya na pinatay niya iyong kanyang alaga. Ang sabi nga ng mga kaibigan niya, iyong mga nakakakilala sa kanya, pati na iyong kapatid niya na kabilang po sa ating hukbong sandatahan, ang sabi nga nila, hindi magagawa noong babaing iyon na pumatay ng kanyang batang inalagaan sa simula't simula.

REP. ARENAS. Opo, totoo po iyon.

REP. ATIENZA. Alam ninyo iyon, ano po.

REP. ARENAS. Opo, totoo iyon, esteemed colleague.

REP. ATIENZA. So, magkahawig po ito?

REP. ARENAS. Opo.

REP. ATIENZA. Samakatuwid, kung ito ay matutuloy, ang execution nitong ating kababayan ay isa na namang pagpatay, pagkitil, pagbawi ng buhay ng may buhay doon sa mga bansang nagpapairal ng death penalty ...

REP. ARENAS. Opo.

REP. ATIENZA. ...na sa tingin po nang marami ay hindi makatarungan, hindi tama at hindi dapat ginagawa.

REP. ARENAS. Opo. Kaya nga po sana, Mr. Speaker, my esteemed colleague from Manila, magtulungan po tayo na talagang siyasin ito, puntahan kung kailangan, dahil nakita ko po na kung tayo ay pupunta doon at makikipag-usap ay bibigyan po sila ng malaking tiyansa na mabuhay pa. Nakikita naman po ng gobyerno nila kung paano tayo ka-dedicated. Siguro po, kung ipaglalaman ninyo, mababawasan po ang magiging mga orphans at mga nanay na lumuluha, mababawasan po ang abuse at mababawasan ang kamatayan ng ating mga OFWs all over the world, my esteemed colleague, Congressman Atienza.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, I have to express the admirability of the position of our colleague. Kahanga-hanga po iyong kanyang pag-aalala na isang buhay na naman ang maaaring makitil sa lalong madaling panahon samantalang, malamang ay hindi po naman talagang ginawa ng ating kababayan batid sa kanyang kasong hinaharap.

So, we admire the Lady from Pangasinan for her efforts, but I would like to clarify this with her—because we will soon be, probably in the near future, facing the same situation in the country—kayo po ba ay naniniwala na ang parusang kamatayan ay karapat-dapat o hindi?

REP. ARENAS. Sa mga nakikita po natin, Mr. Speaker, mahal ko pong colleague from Manila, lalo po natin dapat pag-isipan iyan dahil alam po naman natin na sa ating bansa, dito sa ating pagka-Kristiyano ay tinitingala nating importante sa atin ang buhay ng isang tao, unless the justice system in our country is changed and everyone believes that the poor will have a chance. Nakikisang-ayon po ako sa inyo na hindi natin dapat isantabi lamang iyang panukala na iyan at bigyan natin ng pansin at pag-aralan muna po natin bago tayo kumitil ng buhay ng isang tao.

REP. ATIENZA. Ang akin pong tinutukoy, Mr. Speaker, ay iyong ating napipintong pag-uusap, pagtalakay dito sa ating Kongreso ng death penalty o restoration of the death penalty. Ang tanong ko po sa ating kagalang-galang na Kinatawan ng Pangasinan, siya po ba ay naniniwala na ito ay dapat nating ibalik sapagkat wala na po tayong death penalty ngayon, o naniniwala siyang hindi ito ang paraan upang harapin natin ang mga problema sa droga at sa kriminalidad sa ating bansa? Sang-ayon po ba siya doon sa mga tumatayo sa pagtatanggol ng buhay ng bawat nilalang, na hindi solusyon iyong patayin natin ang sino man, patawan ng kamatayan ang sino man sapagkat baka tayo magkamali sa ating mga desisyon ng korte katulad po ng inyong dinadala sa amin ngayon?

REP. ARENAS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang kong colleague from Manila, ako po ay sumasang-ayon sa inyo na dapat pa itong pag-aralan nang malawakan at hindi lang po basta-basta na tayo ay magsasalita at kikitilin ang buhay ng isang tao na hindi natin nabibigyan ng 100 percent na pag-aaral bago tayo mag-commit ng ganyang bagay, lalung-lalo na po na ang sabi ko kanina na ang justice system natin ay medyo po mahirap ispelingin. Kailangan po siguro pag-aralan po nating mabuti bago natin ito man lang pag-usapan dito sa ating Kamara.

REP. ATIENZA. So, ang inyong posisyon ngayon ay pag-aralan pa natin at huwag nating desidihan.

REP. ARENAS. Opo, pag-aralan po talaga nang one hundred percent or even one thousand percent, my dear colleague from Manila.

REP. ATIENZA. Ang aking imumungkahi sa aking kumadre, Congresswoman/Kinatawan ng Pangasinan, sana sa inyong pagmumuni-muni at pagdarasal ay mabigyan kayo ng kaliwanagan ng isipan na hindi kamatayan o pagpapataw ng kamatayan ang tunay na solusyon sa mga problema ng ating bansa. Dahil iyong ipinakiusap ninyo ngayon, pagdating po sa lalong madaling panahon, basta naipasa natin ang death penalty, hindi na tayo puwedeng makiusap maski na

kanino. Alam ba ninyo na mahigit isang daan ang mga Pilipinong nasa death row ngayon?

Sunud-sunod po iyan sa tatlong bansa sa Middle East. Iyan po ay mahirap na nating pakialaman o pakiusapan ang mga kinauukulan doon pagdating ng araw na tayo ay mayroon na ring death penalty dito.

REP. ARENAS. Tama po kayo.

REP. ATIENZA. Walang paraan at walang karapatan ang sinumang makiusap na ilitgas ang buhay ninuman kung tayo mismo ay pumapatay ng tao.

REP. ARENAS. Tama po kayo, my esteemed colleague.

REP. ATIENZA. Siguro, marahil, sasabihin ko sa ating kaibigang Kongresista na dito sa atin, nagkaroon na tayo ng death penalty noong araw. Alam po ninyo iyon.

REP. ARENAS. Opo.

REP. ATIENZA. Alam din ninyo, doon sa records po ng Korte Suprema, sa 900 kaso na inapela sa Korte Suprema, on the death sentences rendered in the lower courts, seven out of 10 were reversed by the Supreme Court.

REP. ARENAS. Opo.

REP. ATIENZA. In other words, iyong nangyari po kay Echegaray, dahil isa siya sa mga biktima ng misdelivery of justice, it was irreversible; si Echegaray ay pinatay sa pamamagitan po ng lethal injection.

REP. ARENAS. Opo.

REP. ATIENZA. Sa dalamhati ng kanyang pamilya, sa dalamhati ng bansa, wala pong nagawa kung hindi ipatupad ang desisyon na siya ay parusahan ng kamatayan. Subalit pagdaan ng panahon, napag-alaman na iyong paglilitis kay Echegaray ay may depekto at hindi po pala tama. Puwede po bang ibalik pa iyong buhay ni Echegaray pagkatapos malamang defective iyong legal procedure, na nawalan ng karapatan iyong tao, na-railroad ang desisyon, nabitay si Echegaray?

REP. ARENAS. Tama po kayo.

REP. ATIENZA. Iyong mga ganoong klase, Mr. Speaker, ang tinutukoy nating mga kadahilanan. Dahan-dahan tayo dito sa excitement ng restoration ng death penalty. I am appealing to my colleagues: let us go slow on this issue. Sabi nga ni Congresswoman Arenas, dahan-dahan lang, pag-aralan nating mabuti

at pag-usapan natin sapagkat una, hindi na tayo puwedeng makiusap sa anumang bansa para sa ating mga kababayan maski na alam nating sila ay biktima ng hindi makatarungang desisyon; pangalawa, dito sa ating bansa mismo, katulad po ng aking binanggit, sa Korte Suprema mismo ay mayroong mga kaso na isinampa na binaligtad ng Korte Suprema ang desisyon, na kung nasunod ang lower courts at hindi nakapag-apela ang mga kinauukulan ay napatay na rin sila.

So, killing anyone is not a foolproof solution to the growing problem of criminality and the runaway drug problem in the country, na dito sa ating bansa mismo, nangyayari po iyong patayin ang mga walang sala dahil lamang po sa sila ay pinatawan ng isang korte sa kakulangan nila ng paraang makadepensa sila ng tama. Kung kayo ay makakakuha ng abogadong mamahalin, palagay ko, makakagawa kayo ng depensang tama. Kung kayo ay may salaping pambayad sa pulis—alam naman natin ang pulis ngayon, mayroon talagang diperensiya, kaya galit na galit si Pangulong Duterte dahil napag-aalaman niya na maraming kriminal sa hanay ng ating kapulisan, at iyon po ang sinabi niya—bakit natin bibigyan ng mas malaki pang paraan ang kapulisan kung sila mismo ang nagiging problema? Tapos, bibigyan pa natin ng armas para takutin, gipitin at hingan ng salapi ang walang kalaban-labang Pilipino.

So, I am appealing to the Lady that at this point, while she is appealing to us, we are appealing to her—open up your heart, open up your mind on this issue. Hindi pa naman natin pinagdedebatehan ito pero sana ay maghanda-handa kayo ng inyong posisyon. It is not enough to say that we have not decided yet as we are using our conscience on the matter ...

REP. ARENAS. Okay.

REP. ATIENZA. ... because this is an issue of life or death of a person. This is an issue that will not be restored by anyone in the future. Kung mali ang desisyon, patay na ang biktima at wala na pong paraan upang buhayin siya.

Ang utos po ng ating Panginoon ay bigyan natin ng pahalaga—huwag tayong papatay—at bigyan natin ng paraan, repormahin natin ang ating sistema. I hope and pray we will be together ...

REP. ARENAS. Opo.

REP. ATIENZA. ... in defending life when the time comes to discuss the issue of the death penalty in our country. Otherwise, the appeal you are making now will be rendered an empty statement if you support the death penalty here in our country while you appeal to other governments which we feel are unjustly killing our people probably to cover up for their own faults, errors and crimes at ang binibigyan

ng sisi ay iyong Pilipinong namamasukan lang bilang isang domestic helper.

Let us study this measure, as you have said, and I agree with you, and that should be the case with all our colleagues. Pag-aralan nating mabuti ang isyung ito dahil hindi ito ang solusyon. Mawawalan nang paraan upang ang mga kababayan nating agrabyado doon at mga kababayan natin ditong maa-agrabyado dahil lang sa kahirapan, dahil po sa ating kapusukan. Restoring the death penalty is a major error on the part of this Congress if we engage in it.

Again, I will reiterate my respect for your position, Mr. Speaker. Alam kong nanggagaling sa iyong puso iyan. Sana po ay iyong pinanggagalingan ng inyong pagpapahalaga sa buhay ng ating kababayan sa Saudi Arabia ngayon ang siya ring mamamagitan sa inyo kapag tayo rito ay magbobotohan na on the issue of the death penalty.

REP. ARENAS. Marami pong salamat.

REP. ATIENZA. I know your intentions are very clear and very clean. I still congratulate you for your efforts. Maraming salamat sa pagkakataon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to clarify matters with my comadre, the Gentlewoman from Pangasinan, a very diligent Member of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Congresses to which we both belong.

Salamat po.

REP. ARENAS. Marami pong salamat, my colleague. Pag-aaralan ko po iyan, pangako ko po sa inyo. Napakahalaga po ng inyong mga sinabi. Marami pong salamat, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from the KABAYAN Party-List, the Hon. H. Harry L. Roque Jr., for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Hon. Harry Roque of KABAYAN is recognized.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Floor Leader.

Will the Lady from Pangasinan still yield to a few more points of interpellation.

REP. ARENAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Now, I heard earlier that you had filed a case against a Kuwaiti diplomatic official. Did I hear it right, Mr. Speaker.?

REP. ARENAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is correct.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, if the Lady will reveal, may we know exactly the rank of this Kuwaiti diplomatic agent in the Philippines?

REP. ARENAS. Mr. Speaker, my dear colleague, iyang kaso po ay anim na taon na mula noong nag-file ako sa ambassador ng Kuwait at sa Kuwait government. Nagpadala po ako ng sulat sa ministro at sa lahat ng kinaaukulan, including their OWWA-POEA, pero po ang malungkot ay hanggang ngayon ay wala pa hong resolusyon. Two weeks ago nga po, nagharapan na naman po kami sa DFA, Department of Foreign Affairs, kung saan ako po ay sinigawan ng Third Secretary ng Embassy of Kuwait na naging para pong representative nila doon sa hearing, at lalo po akong nag-alala nang katakut-takot dahil kung dito po sa loob ng DFA, ang isang lawmaker ay nasigawan lamang, ay talaga pong marami pang nakakulong ang hindi mabibigyan ng pag-asa at katarungan dahil po sa dito sa ating mismong bayan ay hindi tayo mapakinggan at mabigyan ng hustiya ng ating Department of Foreign Affairs.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, will the Lady, for the record, state the name of this Third Secretary of the Kuwaiti Mission who had the temerity to shout not just at a Member of this august Chamber but at one of the most distinguished Members of this august Chamber.

REP. ARENAS. Mr. Speaker, ang abogado ko po ay nagpa-file na ngayon—hindi ko po matandaan ang pangalan pero alam ko po na we are going to file a case to declare him *persona non grata* not only for myself as this is an insult sa ating bayan, lalung-lalo na po sa kababaihan. Hindi ko po maalala ang pangalan dahil dalawang linggo lang po yata iyan dito pero sobra pong hindi ko po masabi ang mga kabastusan na ginagawa nila sa ating bayan.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, this is clearly a reason for alarm, given that the Lady is not just representing a district but is representing this august Chamber in her transaction with the Department of Foreign Affairs. That is why my next question, Mr. Speaker, is, to the knowledge of the distinguished Lady from Pangasinan, has there been a pending motion adopted by this House in support of her prayer that this Kuwaiti diplomat be declared *persona non grata*?

REP. ARENAS. Mr. Speaker, my esteemed colleague, iyon lang po sana ang aking prayer at hiling na dito man lang sa Pilipinas ay mabigyan sila ng parusa sa pang-aabuso nila sa mga kapwa nating Pilipino. Iyon po ay tatanawin kong utang na loob, at hindi lamang po

ako dahil iyan po ang magiging patakaran na susundin ng ating gobyerno on how they deal with the OFWs all over the world, including this Representation.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, Mr. Speaker, given the fact that apparently, this august Chamber has not had the opportunity to speak as one institution to demand that this Kuwaiti diplomatic official be declared *persona non grata*, at the right time we should refer the speech of the Lady from Pangasinan to the appropriate committee so that we can speak with one voice, protect not just one of our own, but protect this august Chamber of Congress, Mr. Speaker, particularly against abusive foreigners who should know better than to disrespect a duly-elected Representative of the people.

Before I end, I have one more question, Mr. Speaker, and that has to do with what is known as the decking system being required by Kuwait authorities. Mr. Speaker, does the Lady from Pangasinan know about this decking system as far as the medical examinations being done by health centers is concerned?

REP. ARENAS. Mr. Speaker, my dear colleague, iyan po sana ang gusto ko pang malaman dahil po balitang-balita na po iyan at ang natatamaan po niyan ay iyong mas mahirap pa sa mga mahirap. Kaya nga po bukas daw po, si Congressman Bertiz ay mayroong hearing regarding this, at sana po lahat tayo ay mag-attend dahil po ang dinig ko, sobrang abuso na po ito. Hindi natin ho siguro dapat ito palagpasin dahil nga po nagkakaroon tayo ng Miss Universe beauty pageant, nagkakaroon tayo ng mga state visit, nagkakaroon tayo ng mga exchange of meetings pero hindi po napapag-usapan ang kalagayan ng OFWs. The way I have seen it in six years when I was assigned by our President to Taiwan, I have seen their loneliness, their plight, at mga pang-aapi, mga pang-aabuso against them. Kaya nga po hinihiling ko sa ating mga colleagues, sana naman po, kahit isang minuto ng ating oras dito sa ating plenary, ay i-dedicate natin to help them because they are now all over the world, and if you will see the prisons where I had been to, siguro po ay talagang maiiyak kayo the way I did. Noong nakita naman po ng mga gobyerno ng mga bayan na iyan, kung saan ang Kongresista ay pumapasok sa loob ng preso at kinakausap ang ating mga kababayan at binibigyan sila ng pansin, medyo po natakot sila at nabuksan po ang mga mata nila na siguro naman, karapat-dapat nilang mahalina at respetuhin ang mga mahihirap na Pilipino natin na OFWs all over the world.

Iyon lamang po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, this practice of decking had been declared illegal by no less than our Supreme Court. I take it from the answer of the Lady from Pangasinan, and by way of confirmation that, as

far as she knows, the decking system, albeit illegal, persists in the country today.

REP. ARENAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). That, again, is a real cause of concern because, apparently, again, a foreign government has substituted its wisdom and judgment against a lawful decision made by the highest court of our land, the Supreme Court no less. That is why, I look forward to the hearing that the Lady mentioned which will be held tomorrow, if I am not mistaken.

REP. ARENAS. Yes, it is headed by Congressman Bertiz.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, it is my firm conviction that no foreign power can breach lawful decisions of our Supreme Court because those decisions of our Supreme Court form part of the laws of the land.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further questions to the Lady from Pangasinan. I would like, however, to commend her for her concern for the OFWs. We all know that the Lady from Pangasinan does not have to, if she does not wish to care about the welfare of our OFWs, being the paragon of high society in the Philippines. But I am very, very happy, Mr. Speaker, that despite her many blessings, her heart is still for our Filipino overseas contract workers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Lady from Pangasinan.

REP. ARENAS. Thank you, my esteemed colleague. Marami pong salamat, Congressman Harry Roque. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Lady from GABRIELA Party-List, the Hon. Emmi A. De Jesus, for her interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Hon. Emmi De Jesus from Party-List GABRIELA and from the Second District of Marikina is recognized.

REP. DE JESUS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ikinagagalak ko po na makapag-interpellate sa aking colleague na naninindigan para sa ating mga OFWs at alam kong nakahanda naman kayong tanggapin ang aking interpellation.

Una po, kasama ako doon sa unang bahagi ng ipinatawag ni Congresswoman Baby, Tita Baby, na consultation kaugnay ng kalagayan ng ating mga OFWs.

In fact, if I am not mistaken, Congresswoman Tita Baby Arenas, hindi po ba iyong unang bahagi ay magandang larawan pa nga ang kanilang ibinigay kaugnay ng status noong ating mga manggagawa sa Kuwait?

REP. ARENAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DE JESUS. Mr. Speaker, kaya kasama ako sa nagulantang nang malaman ko, on that same day na iyon, na may isang Jakatia Pawa na, sa pagkakaalam pa po namin, ay nakaamba na bitayin. Tinawagan ko po siya—nakaabot po ba sa aking kapwa Kinatawan na ako po ay tumawag para ipatanong kung iyon ay nabalitaan na niya?

REP. ARENAS. Opo, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for attending the meeting, marami pong salamat, Congresswoman Emmi. Nagulat din po ako dahil hindi alam ng POEA at ng OWWA, at nalaman lang po ito noong kayo po ay tumawag on that same day po na iyon. Marami pong salamat.

REP. DE JESUS. Kaya noong malaman ko po iyon, Mr. Speaker, ang una ko pong ginawa ay maglabas ng isang pahayag sa media na mananawagan pa sana kay Presidente Duterte na to exert all effort. Bago po iyong pahayag na iyon, nag-initiate akong tumawag sa opisina ng Migrante International at doon ko nalaman na nagpress conference na pala ang Department of Foreign Affairs na sinabing nabitay na.

Kaya isa rin po ako sa nagulantang doon sa same day na mayroon pang effort at ang inilabas na naming pahayag ay kaugnay na noong pagkakabitay. Ang gusto ko lang po sanang itanong sa ating kagalang-galang na kasamahan dito sa Kongreso, naniniwala po ba kayo na higit na bulnerable ang kababaihang OFW kapag sila po ay lumalabas para maghanap ng ikabubuhay?

REP. ARENAS. My dear colleague, Congresswoman Emmi, sobra po akong naniniwala. Tayo po ay magkasama sa China, naalaala ba ninyo na ang sabi ng consul general ay maraming kababaihan ang nakakulong, na nakasalang na sa death penalty, pero wala pong nakikipag-ugnayan na galing sa DFA, POEA or OWWA. Siguro po, alam naman ninyo na kapag malapit nang mahatulan, doon lang sila lahat kumikilos. Kaya po, marami pa ring salamat sa inyong panunungkulan. Alam ko naman na matindi ang advocacy ng GABRIELA Party-List regarding sa kababaihan all over the world. Kaya po umaasa din po ako sa inyo na tayo ay magkakatulangan regarding the plight of our poor women all over the world.

REP. DE JESUS. Ang gusto ko lang pong bigyan din ng diin, Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman Tita Baby,

ito pong vulnerability sa kasalukuyang panahon naman, hindi naman ito bago and, in fact, panahon pa ni Flor Contemplacion, Sarah Balabagan at marami pang kababaihan natin ang naging biktima ng iba't ibang anyo ng karahasan. Hanggang ngayon, marami sa kanila ang iniuwi na nasa kabaong na. Naniniwala rin po ba ang ating Kinatawan, Mr. Speaker, na ang tulak talaga sa mga kababaihan ay dahil sa kawalan ng kanilang oportunidad na magtrabaho dito sa loob ng ating sariling bayan?

REP. ARENAS. Totoo po iyon, Mr. Speaker. Iyon din naman po ang aking gusto sanang imungkahi kapag tayo ay nangangampanya, na bigyan natin sila ng livelihood, na kayang-kaya po naman nating gawin dito kung tayo ay magkakaisa. Kamukha po ng 80,000 na nandoodon po abroad, 10 percent are in shelters right now na gusto na rin pong umuwi. So, ayaw na rin po nilang magtrabaho doon. Kaya nga po, hindi lang naman suweldo o pera ang kanilang habol. Ang gusto rin po naman nila ay magkaroon sila ng dignity na makauwi man lang dito na parang isang taong hindi isang pulubi na pumipila kagabi, nasa telebisyon, dahil sa walang makain.

REP. DE JESUS. Mr. Speaker, ito po ang gusto kong bigyan ng pansin, lalung-lalo na sa kabila ng pagiging bulnerable ng ating mga kababaihan, iyong push for them to be forced to look for jobs abroad. Alam din natin na karamihan sa mga kababaihang lumalabas ay mga ina, mga nagmamahal at naghahangad ng kabutihan ng kanilang pamilya pero sila po ay napipilitan. Ang gusto ko rin po sanang mabigyang-pansin, hindi magwawakas ang ating efforts dito sa Kongreso na pigilan lamang at tanggalan ng karapatan ang mga bansa na tumanggap dahil kahit doon sa mga bansa na alam na nilang bawal, napipilitan pa rin silang lumabas.

Kaya bilang huling bahagi, Mr. Speaker, Tita Baby, siguro, higit na dapat nating bigyang-pansin ay ang pagtitiyak na iyong isinisigaw ng ating migrante sana ay mabigyang-buhay, “Trabaho sa Pinas, hindi sa labas.” Ibig sabihin po nito, hamon sa atin din ito kung paano ba natin titiyakin na magpapaunlad tayo ng industriya, na tayo ay tutulong doon sa pagtitiyak ng reporma, para ang mga kababayan natin ay hindi na mapipilitang lumabas ng bansa sa kabila ng mga nakaambang panganib.

Kaya, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Congresswoman, kinikilala ko po ang ating pagsisikap na sana, maliban doon sa pagpaparusa sa mga nakagawa ng kasalanan sa ating mga kababayan, ay maging higit na mapagbantay tayo doon sa mga patakaran na lalong magpapahirap sa ating mga kababayan upang sila ay mapilitang lumabas ng bansa para tumulong sa paghahanap-buhay.

Iyon lamang po, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Congresswoman, at kaisa ninyo po ako sa laban na ito.

Maraming salamat po.

REP. ARENAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, my honorable colleague, Tita Emmi.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, there being no other Member who wishes to interpellate, I move that we refer the speech of the Hon. Rose Marie “Baby” J. Arenas and the interpellations thereon to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chairs hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. ARENAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the Privilege Hour.

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

The Privilege Hour is suspended.

ROLL CALL

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we call the roll of Members.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). 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. 63, dated January 30, 2017:

PRESENT

Abaya	Advincula
Abayon	Agarao
Abellanos	Aggabao
Abu	Aglipay-Villar
Abueg	Albano
Acharon	Almario
Acop	Almonte
Acosta	Alonte-Naguiat

Alvarez (F.)	Crisologo	Lacson	Rocamora
Alvarez (P.)	Cua	Lagman	Rodriguez (I.)
Amatong	Cuaresma	Lanete	Rodriguez (M.)
Angara-Castillo	Cueva	Laogan	Roman
Antonio	Dalipe	Lazatin	Romualdez
Aragones	Daza	Lee	Romualdo
Arbison	De Jesus	Lobregat	Roque (H.)
Arcillas	De Venecia	Lopez (B.)	Roque (R.)
Arenas	De Vera	Lopez (C.)	Salo
Atienza	Defensor	Lopez (M.L.)	Salon
Aumentado	Del Mar	Macapagal-Arroyo	Sandoval
Bagatsing	Del Rosario	Malapitan	Sarmiento (C.)
Baguilat	Deloso-Montalla	Manalo	Sarmiento (E.M.)
Banal	Dimaporo (A.)	Mangaoang	Savellano
Bataoil	Dimaporo (M.K.)	Mangudadatu (Z.)	Siao
Batocabe	Durano	Marcos	Silverio
Bautista-Bandigan	Dy	Mariño	Singson
Belaro	Elago	Marquez	Suansing (E.)
Belmonte (F.)	Enverga	Martinez	Suansing (H.)
Belmonte (J.C.)	Erice	Mellana	Suarez
Belmonte (R.)	Eriguel	Mirasol	Sy-Alvarado
Benitez	Ermita-Buhain	Montoro	Tambunting
Bernos	Escudero	Nieto	Tan (M.)
Bertiz	Espina	Noel	Tejada
Biazon	Estrella	Nogralles (J.J.)	Teves
Billones	Evardone	Nogralles (K.A.)	Tiangco
Bolilia	Fariñas	Nolasco	Tinio
Bondoc	Fernando	Nuñez-Malanyaon	Tolentino
Bordado	Ferrer (J.)	Oaminal	Tugna
Bravo (A.)	Ferrer (L.)	Olivarez	Tupas
Bravo (M.V.)	Ferriol-Pascual	Ong (E.)	Ty
Brosas	Floirendo	Ong (H.)	Umali
Bulut-Begtang	Flores	Ortega (P.)	Unabia
Cagas	Fortun	Pacquiao	Ungab
Calderon	Fortuno	Paduano	Uy (J.)
Calixto-Rubiano	Fuentebella	Palma	Uy (R.)
Caminero	Garbin	Pancho	Vargas
Campos	Garcia (G.)	Panganiban	Vargas-Alfonso
Canama	Garcia (J.E.)	Panotes	Velarde
Cari	Garcia-Albano	Papandayan	Velasco
Casilao	Gasataya	Pichay	Velasco-Catera
Castelo	Geron	Pimentel	Veloso
Castro (F.L.)	Go (A.C.)	Pineda	Vergara
Castro (F.H.)	Go (M.)	Plaza	Villanueva
Cayetano	Gomez	Primicias-Agabas	Villaraza-Suarez
Celeste	Gonzaga	Quimbo	Villarica
Cerifica	Gonzales (A.P.)	Radaza	Violago
Cerilles	Gonzales (A.D.)	Ramirez-Sato	Yap (A.)
Chavez	Gonzalez	Ramos	Yap (M.)
Chipeco	Gullas	Relampagos	Yu
Co	Hernandez	Revilla	Zamora (M.C.)
Cojuangco	Herrera-Dy	Roa-Puno	Zubiri
Collantes	Hofer	Robes	
Cortes	Kho		
Cortuna	Khonghun		
Cosalan	Labadlabad		

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Mr. Speaker, the roll call shows that 233 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). With 233 Members responding to the call, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of the guests of BH Party-List Rep. Bernadette “BH” Herrera-Dy as follows: Barangay Captain Ryan L. Navero, Kagawad Hernan “Etok” Aguirre and Kagawad Adrian “Ian” Sayson.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The guests of the Hon. Bernadette Herrera-Dy, nasaan po kayo? Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the Privilege Hour.

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

PRIVILEGE HOUR

Continuation

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, since the Privilege Hour has expired, I move that the Privilege Hour be extended for another hour to allow the Gentleman from the First District of Samar to avail of the Privilege Hour.

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

The Privilege Hour is extended by 30 minutes.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that the Gentleman from the First District of Samar, the honorable Rep. Edgar Mary S. Sarmiento, be recognized for his privilege speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The honorable Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento of the First District of Western Samar ay ginkikilala para magyakan na niya privilege.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. SARMIENTO (E.)

REP. SARMIENTO (E.). Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon my dear colleagues.

I stand here not only as a Member of this august Body, but as a citizen of this Republic that I love the most. The news of the heinous kidnap-slay case of Korean national Jee Ick-Joo and other Korean nationals that allegedly was perpetrated by police officers has rocked the nation recently. I personally sympathize

with the people of South Korea and the Korean-Filipino community for this very unfortunate event. Crime happens daily everywhere and this should not be. However, what should not have happened at all is for crime to be perpetrated by the protectors of the people and the enforcers of the law.

I firmly believe that those involved in these cases do not represent our entire PNP, but with President Duterte himself believing that almost 40 percent of our police force is involved in activities, that makes them unworthy to be called protectors of the people. My question is, what do we do now? *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* Who will guard the guards themselves? When a law enforcement officer commits a crime against a foreigner, it is our dignity, the citizens of this land, that is at stake.

I am in support, Mr. Speaker, of the directive of President Rodrigo Duterte to momentarily hold the campaign against drugs and for the PNP to focus first on cleansing its ranks. The PNP Chief disbanded the AIDG today to give way to a new command that will weed out the policemen involved in the drug trade. This is an opportunity for the PNP, and perhaps with the help of the Legislature, to see to it that reorganization is needed in streamlining, with good deeds as their intention, the operations of our drug agencies, including the PDEA, the Dangerous Drugs Board, the PNP and the NBI.

May I also call on the Internal Affairs Service and the National Police Commission to strengthen their resolve in taking decisive action against erring police officers. They should do it now, Mr. Speaker. We have no need for police officers who do not have the heart to serve their duties; those who do not live according to the core values of being pro-country and pro-people. I am pleading, Mr. Speaker, and hoping that what I am saying today will resonate to those who are tasked to enforce the laws and protect the people. Please, I am pleading: bring back the Filipinos’ trust and respect to all of you members of the Philippine National Police.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you so much, my dear colleagues.

Good afternoon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of Honorable Sarmiento (E.) to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we

adjourn session until four o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, January 31, 2017.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). There is a motion to withdraw.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I withdraw that. I move for a few minutes suspension of the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The session is suspended.

It was 5:38 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:39 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The session is resumed.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Before

you proceed, Floor Leader, the Members are advised to please listen to the Floor Leader.

Go ahead, the Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we terminate the Privilege Hour.

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

The Privilege Hour is terminated.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session and resume tomorrow at four o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, January 31, 2017.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Unless there is an objection from Cong. Rodolfo T. Albano III? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The session is adjourned until Tuesday, January 31, 2017, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

It was 5:40 p.m.