Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 17th CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

House of Representatives

Vol. 3 | **Tuesday, January 31, 2017** | *No. 64*

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). Everyone is requested to rise for the singing of the Philippine National Anthem.

Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.

PRAYER

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Please remain standing for a minute of silent prayer and meditation.

Everybody remained standing for the silent prayer.

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

REP. HERRERA-DY. 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.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve Journal No. 63, dated January 30, 2017, copies of which were placed on our desks.

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

REP. HERRERA-DY. 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 on First Reading and Message from the Senate, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 4816, entitled:
"AN ACT TO GRANT AMNESTY ON UNPAID ESTATE TAXES FOR TAXABLE YEAR 2016 AND PRIOR YEARS"
By Representative Romero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 4817, entitled:
"AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY TIBULOY, TORIL DISTRICT, DAVAO CITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE TIBULOY NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"
By Representative Ungab
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 4818, entitled:
"AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH

SCHOOL IN BARANGAY SALAYSAY, MARILOG DISTRICT, DAVAO CITY TO BE KNOWN AS SALAYSAY HIGH SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

By Representative Ungab

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 4819, entitled:

"AN ACT MANDATING THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF A ONE STOP GOVERNMENT SHOP FOR ALL FILIPINO WORKERS"

By Representative Gatchalian

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT AND THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS AFFAIRS

House Bill No. 4820, entitled:

"AN ACT EXTENDING THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, INC. (FORMERLY THE CATHOLIC WELFARE ORGANIZATION) TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND/OR TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED SEVENTY-FIVE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS FROM 04 AUGUST 2017 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

By Representative Salceda

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

House Bill No. 4821, entitled:

"AN ACT CREATING AN AGRICULTURAL PENSION FUND TO PROVIDE PENSION BENEFITS TO FARMERS AND FISHER FOLK"

By Representative Antonio

TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD AND THE COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES RESOURCES

House Bill No. 4822, entitled:

"AN ACT EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF ACTS CONSTITUTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND INCREASING THE PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS OF PROVISIONS OF R.A. 7877, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE R.A. 7877, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE 'ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT ACT OF 1995' "

By Representative Antonio

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

House Bill No. 4823, entitled:

"AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE PROVINCIAL ROADS FROM DAMOLOG, SOGOD TO BORBON AND TABOGON TO BARANGAY DAKIT, BOGO CITY IN THE 5TH AND 4TH DISTRICTS OF THE PROVINCE OF CEBU INTO NATIONAL ROADS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFORE"

By Representatives Salimbangon and Durano

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 4824, entitled:

"AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF ST. ANTHONY MOTHER AND CHILD HOSPITAL IN CEBU CITY, FROM TWENTY-FIVE (25) TO ONE HUNDRED (100), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

By Representative Abellanosa

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 4825, entitled:

"AN ACT PROMOTING QUALITY HIGHER EDUCATION AND CREATING A NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION LOAN PROGRAM, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

By Representative Cua

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

Rep. Jose Antonio "Kuya Jonathan" R. Sy-Alvarado for House Bills No. 3323, 3723, 4166, 4361, 4732, 4741, and 4800, and House Resolution No. 653;

Rep. Scott Davies S. Lanete, M.D. for House Bills No. 1940 and 4820;

Rep. Joaquin M. Chipeco Jr. for House Bill No. 684;

Rep. Marlyn L. Primicias-Agabas for House Bills No. 42, 4814, and 4815;

Rep. Christopher "Toff" Vera Perez De Venecia for House Bills No. 4105, 4351, 4570, 4571, and 468;

Rep. Raul "Boboy" C. Tupas for House Bills No. 4521, 4689, and 4800;

Rep. Strike B. Revilla for House Bills No. 948 and 2738;

Rep. Luisa Lloren Cuaresma for House Bills No. 4570 and 4571;

Rep. Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba for House Bills No. 492, 1208, 2286, 2318, 2319, 2474, 2953, and 3782;

Rep. Micaela S. Violago for House Bills No. 952, 2125, and 1165;

Rep. Rene L. Relampagos for House Bill No. 3578;

Rep. Arlene B. Arcillas for House Bills No. 4359, 4689, and 4800, and House Resolution No. 693;

Rep. Victoria Isabel G. Noel for House Bills No. 947 and 3564;

Rep. Rodel M. Batocabe for House Bills No. 1199, 1200, 1201, 1202, 1203, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2307, and 2340;

Rep. Manuel Jose "Mannix" M. Dalipe for House Bills No. 3699 and 4334;

Reps. Cesar V. Sarmiento, Alberto T. Ungab, Dale "Along" R. Malapitan, Ruby M. Sahali, Emmanuel F. Madrona, Jose Carlos L. Cari and Seth Frederick P. Jalosjos for House Bill No. 4174;

Reps. Romeo M. Acop, Joey Sarte Salceda, Sandra Y. Eriguel, M.D., Rose Marie "Baby" J. Arenas, and Evelina G. Escudero for House Bill No. 4689;

Rep. Ferdinand L. Hernandez for House Bills No. 4105 and 4689;

Rep. Michelle M. Antonio for House Bills No. 822, 2890, 3835, and 4689;

Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" A. Mariño for House Bill No. 1648;

Rep. Rosenda Ann Ocampo for House Bills No. 516, 4174, and 4689, and House Joint Resolution No. 4;

Rep. Teodoro "Ted" G. Montoro for House Bill No. 3280;

Rep. Alexandria P. Gonzales for House Bill No. 396;

Rep. Christopher S. Co for House Bill No. 4742;

Rep. Jose Christopher Y. Belmonte for House Bill No. 1697;

Rep. Lord Allan Jay Q. Velasco for House Bill No. 904;

Rep. Edcel C. Lagman for House Bill No. 3796;

Rep. Leo Rafael M. Cueva for House Bill No. 1920;

Rep. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D. for House Bill No. 387;

Rep. Suharto T. Mangudadatu for House Bill No. 4742;

Reps. Anthony M. Bravo, Ph.D., Richard C. Eusebio, and Orestes T. Salon for House Resolution No. 693;

Rep. Emmanuel A. Billones for House Bill No. 4689 and House Resolution No. 198;

Reps. Jose L. Atienza Jr., Eric D. Singson and Frederick "Erick" F. Abueg for House Bill No. 4105;

Rep. Eleanor C. Bulut-Begtang for House Bills No. 4570 and 4571;

Reps. Ronald M. Cosalan and Manuel Monsour T. Del Rosario III for House Bill No. 3254;

Rep. Jose T. Panganiban Jr., CPA, LLB. for House Bill No. 102;

Rep. Divina Grace C. Yu for House Bill No. 3426;

Rep. Eric D. Singson for House Bill No. 4570;

Reps. Arlene D. Brosas, Sarah Jane I. Elago, and Emmi A. De Jesus for House Resolution No. 649; and

Rep. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate for House Bill No. 64.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

Message dated January 23, 2017, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 1269, entitled:

"AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE REGISTRATION, LICENSURE AND PRACTICE OF FOOD TECHNOLOGY IN THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. HERRERA-DY. I move that we suspend the session, Mr. Speaker.

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

It was 4:04 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:42 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker.

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

ROLL CALL

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we call the roll.

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. 64, dated January 31, 2017:

PRESENT

Abaya
Abayon
Abellanosa
Abu
Abueg
Acharon
Acop
Acosta
Acosta-Alba
Advincula
Agarao
Aggabao
Aglipay-Villar
Albano
Alonte-Naguiat
Alvarez (P.)
Amante
Amatong
Andaya
Angara-Castillo
Aragones
Arbison
Arenas
Atienza
Aumentado
Baguilat
Banal
Barzaga
Bataoil
Batocabe
Bautista-Bandigan
Belaro
Belmonte (F.)
Belmonte (J.C.)
Belmonte (R.)
Benitez
Bernos
Biazon
Billones
Bolilia
Bondoc
Bordado
Bravo (A.)
Bravo (M.V.)
Brosas
Bulut-Begtang
Calderon
Caminero
Campos
Casilao
Castelo
Castro (F.L.)
Castro (F.H.)
Cayetano
Celeste
Cerilles
Chavez
Chipeco
Co
Cojuangco
Cortes
Cortuna
Cosalan
Crisologo
Cua
Cuaresma
Cueva
Dalipe
Daza
De Jesus
De Venecia
De Vera
Defensor
Del Mar
Del Rosario
Deloso-Montalla
Dimaporo (M.K)
Durano
Dy
Eriguel
Ermita-Buhain
Escudero
Estrella
Evardone
Fariñas
Ferrer (J.)
Ferrer (L.)
Ferriol-Pascual
Floirendo
Flores
Fortun
Fortuno
Fuentebella
Garbin
Garcia (G.)
Garcia (J.E.)
Garcia-Albano
Garin (R.)
Garin (S.)
Gasataya
Geron
Go (M.)
Gomez
Gonzaga
Gonzales (A.P.)
Gonzales (A.D.)
Gonzalez
Gullas
Hernandez
Herrera-Dy
Hofer
Javier
Kho
Khonghun
Lacson
Lagman
Lanete
Laogan
Lazatin
Leachon
Lee
Limkaichong
Lobregat
Lopez (B.)
Lopez (C.)
Lopez (M.L.)
Loyola
Macapagal-Arroyo
Malapitan
Manalo
Mangaoang
Mangudadatu (S.)
Mangudadatu (Z.)
Marcoleta
Marquez
Martinez
Matugas
Mellana
Mendoza
Mirasol
Montoro
Nava
Nieto
Noel
Nograles (J.J.)
Nograles (K.A.)
Nolasco
Oaminal
Olivarez
Ong (E.)
Ong (H.)
Ortega (P.)
Pacquiao
Paduano
Palma
Pancho
Panganiban
Panotes
Papandayan
Pimentel
Pineda
Plaza
Primicias-Agabas
Quimbo
Radaza
Ramirez-Sato
Ramos
Relampagos
Revilla
Roa-Puno
Robes
Rocamora
Rodriguez (I.)
Rodriguez (M.)
Romualdez
Romualdo
Roque (H.)
Roque (R.)
Sagarbarria
Salo
Salon
Sandoval
Santos-Recto
Sarmiento (C.)
Sarmiento (E.M.)
Savellano
Siao
Singson
Suansing (E.)
Suansing (H.)
Suarez
Sy-Alvarado

Tambunting
Tan (A.)
Tan (M.)
Tejada
Tiangco
Tinio
Tolentino
Tugna
Turabin-Hataman
Ty
Umali
Unabia
Ungab
Uy (J.)
Uy (R.)
Vargas
Vargas-Alfonso
Velarde
Velasco
Velasco-Catera
Veloso
Vergara
Villanueva
Villaraza-Suarez
Villarica
Villarin
Violago
Yap (A.)
Yap (M.)
Yu
Zamora (R.)
Zubiri

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). With 224 Members present, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. HERRERA-DY. I move that we recognize the Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Hon. Jose "Lito" L. Atienza Jr. is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We are questioning the count just announced by the Secretariat. We do not have that many Members on the floor. Our count only totalled 152 at this point. We do not want any inaccurate count on the presence of our Members since we are going to discuss very important matters this afternoon. Ang hinihingi ko po ay ulitin ninyo sapagkat mali ang bilang ninyo, at huwag ninyong uulitin ang mali sapagkat alam namin ang totoo.

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

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the Gentleman, the count by the Secretariat in the roll call is given the highest presumption of regularity because, after all, under the rules, it is the only count. In the previous Congresses, we have this precedent that those who are present in the Plenary Hall as well as those within the vicinity of the Session Hall are counted in the roll call, Mr. Speaker. So, …

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker ….

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Please, let the Dep. Majority Leader finish.

REP. ATIENZA. I thought he was finished.

REP. DEFENSOR. That is all, Mr. Speaker—that the roll call should be given the presumption of regularity and the Chair has already declared the existence of a quorum.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Chair has already ruled the presence of a quorum.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, we want to be heard and we want it to be placed on record that although we respect the count by the Secretariat, what we are pointing out is a very serious flaw—250 is very different from 152. Iyan po ay aming kinikuwestyon and since we are questioning it now, we are definitely asking for a recount. Masama po ba iyon? Mayroon po ba kayong itinatago na hindi ninyo gustong mabilad? Sabihin natin kung ilan po ang mga Miyembrong nandito ngayon at iyon po ang ating gawing basehan ng quorum. We are questioning …

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Chair has already declared the presence of a quorum, unless the Gentleman is raising a point of order.

Please state it correctly, but the Chair stands on its ruling.

REP. ATIENZA. Yes, we are raising a point of order because the count of the Secretariat is inaccurate. If we do a headcount now, I will be proven right. We only have 152 Members on the floor and not 230 plus as they had announced. Ito pong lahat ng pag-uusapan natin ay magiging iligal kapag ipinilit po ninyo na tayo ay magpulong ng wala pong quorum according to the truth and the reality. We would like to honor the pronouncement of the Secretariat but since it is way, way off the reality and the truth, then we are questioning it.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The point of order has been listened to and has been recorded. The Chair stands on its ruling. The point of order is out of order.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, we cannot take the decision of being declared out of order. We are in order. So, we are appealing the decision of the Chair.

Pagbigyan po naman ninyo na ang pag-umpisa ng ating sesyon ay mailagay natin sa tama. Hindi natin dadaanin ito …

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Do I take it to mean, Congressman Atienza, that the Representative is appealing the decision of the Chair?

REP. ATIENZA. Yes, we are appealing, doubly appealing, that we stand on the truth, on the side of the truth, and not make up a quorum where there is none.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Pursuant to the rules, there is an appeal from the ruling of the Chair. That is a matter that we now bring to the plenary. There is an appeal being raised—that we state the matter for the plenary's decision. There is an appeal on the declaration of a quorum. Sufficient grounds from our rules had been stated, including tradition, on why the quorum has been duly satisfied, but there is an appeal.

As many as are in in favor of the appeal, meaning that there is no quorum, please say *aye.*

FEW MEMBERS. *Aye.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). As many as are opposed, please say *nay.*

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Nay.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The *nays* have it; the appeal is lost.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that we take up …

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out and I would like to manifest that our recorders will make a report on this. I do not care if you insist and you defeat my motion. We will continue to question the validity and legality of this session that we are holding without a quorum.

Salamat po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Thank you very much. That manifestation is duly noted.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that we take up bills on Second Reading.

REP. VILLARIN. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Is there any objection?

REP. VILLARIN. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). What is the pleasure of the Gentleman from AKBAYAN Party-List?

REP. VILLARIN. Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a question of personal and collective privilege.

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

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, for our guidance, matters of personal and collective privilege are about the rights, the privileges, the responsibilities, the obligations of the Members of the House, individually or collectively. That is the nature of a personal and collective privilege.

May we know from the Gentleman the nature of his personal and collective privilege.

REP. VILLARIN. Well, Mr. Speaker, this issue is very personal to me and involves our members of the AKBAYAN in the tuna industry.

I was absent yesterday because I had to attend to a very pressing need of our workers, some of whom are detained in Indonesia. Their liberties have been curtailed, and the grievances that they have are very urgent and important, Mr. Speaker. I am not here just on my personal note but I am representing also the marginalized sectors, of which the AKBAYAN has stood for in the past.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the Gentleman, the matter does not qualify, based on our precedents in the past, as a personal and collective privilege. Besides, Mr. Speaker, the Dep. Majority Leader has a pending motion and under the rules, when we are about to take up urgent measures, Mr. Speaker, matters of personal and collective privilege cannot be entertained.

So, I would like to reiterate my motion, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. VILLARIN. Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. DEFENSOR. ... that we take up bills on Second Reading.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. VILLARIN. Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Congressman Villarin is recognized.

REP. VILLARIN. I understand that there are also matters of national import, Mr. Speaker, but, here, I am talking about the lives of our fisherfolk now detained in faraway Indonesia, the plight of our almost half-a-million tuna fishing workers. I personally believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is also due that we give time and attention to them as this is the only recourse that they have sought. I am appealing that, just for this moment, Mr. Speaker, we give time to discuss this very urgent issue, which is very personal to me.

REP. DEFENSOR. I agree with the Gentleman, Mr. Speaker, that the plight of the fisherfolk and the less privileged is very important to us, but it does not qualify as a matter of personal and collective privilege. Besides, Mr. Speaker, we are about to take up a very important measure. We are about to take up the Death Penalty Bill. We have been waiting for this Bill, Mr. Speaker. We have to start the debate on the Death Penalty Bill in this session, Mr. Speaker.

So, with the indulgence of the Gentleman, may we proceed to take up bills on Second Reading.

REP. VILLARIN. Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Without preempting the issue at hand, and only to ventilate, ...

REP. VILLARIN. I am only raising a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

It was 5:03 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:06 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, after conferring with the Honorable Villarin during the recess, with respect to his question of personal and collective privilege, I move that the Gentleman be given five minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The honorable Rep. Tomasito "Tom" S. Villarin of Party-List AKBAYAN is recognized to rise on a question of privilege.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. VILLARIN

REP. VILLARIN. Thank you, our gracious Speaker and our gracious Dep. Majority Leader.

Breaking the yoke of contractualization is easier said than done. It is deeply ingrained in several of our industries that thrive on the sweat of their workers who are paid starvation wages and are at the mercy of industry-wide policies of employers that connive to squeeze out blood from our workers. Take the case of the tuna industry, a major export industry that is rooted in Mindanao, the homeplace of our President.

General Santos City is home to some 200,000 workers in the tuna industry, based on estimates of a national labor center called Sentro. Many years back when tuna abounded, some fishermen were able to have a take-home pay of about P12,000, or a measly $255 after a month of being out at sea, but no longer these days as tuna catch is dwindling and there is a ban on the purse seine method of fishing. On bad days, a month's journey at sea could yield even zero income with no class A or sashimi-grade tuna catch.

The precariousness of their jobs and slave-like conditions of our workers belie the wealth generated by the tuna export industry here, which benefits from zero tariff on exports to Europe under the GSP+ scheme. GenSan is said to produce 65 percent of the country's total tuna catch, with six of the country's seven tuna canning firms located here. Government data also show that Philippine tuna exports mostly sourced from the city have reached $147 million in the first quarter of 2014 alone, according to a Business World news report.

Mr. Speaker, a case in point is the labor strike in the Citra Mina Group of Companies, the second biggest company in the tuna industry, involving all unfairly terminated regular workers, which started on the 13th of November 2013 at the CMGC Compound picket line in Barangay Tambler, General Santos City, which until today remains unresolved. But the sacking of these workers is just the tip of the iceberg in what seems to be a massive violation of workers' rights that prevails in the whole tuna industry.

The Citra Mina Group of Companies is the second largest seafood exporter of the Philippines. It has five interlocking corporations that mainly operate in one compound, with one family owner through interlocking boards of trustees, under one management and control system on their supervisory and rank-and-file employees. The five companies or corporations are as follows: 1) Citra Mina Seafood Corporation; 2) Mommy Gina Tuna Resources; 3) Philfresh Corporation; 4) Tuna Explorers

Inc.; and 5) Citra Mina Property Holdings Inc. Behind its success, however, is a grim reality of slave-like work and systematic violations of labor standards, including safety and health standards. Of the 3,200 employees, only around 500 are regular employees.

Around 2,000 of its fishers in the high seas are under the so-called "cabo" system. I call them our "sacadas of the high seas, " akin to the plight of our sugarcane workers. The sacadas of the high seas are handline fishermen as this method of deep-sea fishing is seen as more sustainable for the seas than purse seine fishing. This targeted fishing using a long rod is more likely to avoid juvenile by-catch. Younger fishes are needed to propagate the sea's tuna population.

To address labor concerns of our handline fishers, the DOLE or the Department of Labor and Employment, after conducting a study in 2015, issued an order holding tuna-exporting giants to account when labor violations are committed against these fishermen. It also mandated a fixed wage with added productivity-based incentives, aligned with the mandated regional minimum wage. It likewise assured them of regular employee benefits such as social and health insurance and 13th month pay, among others. Longliners are contracted on commission with no safety and protective equipment, among others. Fishing boats are hardly inspected for compliance with occupational safety and health standards as they are not considered "workplaces," according to labor standards.

However, the DOLE order covering handline fishing is without teeth, absent the sweeping inspections needed across the tuna industry to determine the genuine financial capacity of so-called boat operators, most often locals who are simply tapped as leadmen or cabo. Others are financed by the big tuna companies and taken in through "joint-venture" arrangements. These operators need to be genuinely and independently selling fish catch to companies to be considered legitimate labor contractors, instead of merely acting as agents whose operations are funded by and whose catch are exclusively provided to just one company. Mr. Speaker, to make matters worse, the Department Order No. 156-16 issued on December of 2015, namely, the rules and regulations governing the working and living conditions of fishers on board fishing vessels engaged in commercial fishing, was suspended pending the so-called consultations with the tuna industry.

Another set of tuna workers are those employed in the processing of tuna catch. This type of workers is hired through an in-house agency or under labor-only contracting setup.

In the canning factories, work is nonstop, with workers on a 12-hour shift to maintain the company's 24-hour operations. This is meant to boost production based on the tons of tuna processed each day. Workers are tasked to debone freshly caught tuna, and red meat is cut from the tuna's loin before it heads out to different sections of the factory where it is packed in tin cans, cooked via steaming machines, cooled down, labeled and shipped to buyers overseas. The workers employed usually come from the rural areas in communities straddling General Santos City, and numbering close to half a million doing multifarious jobs in canning factories, shipbuilding and repair factories, and machine repair and other jobs in support of the industry.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, in the Citra Mina case, it was reported by the union that every year, one of its workers die or at least four had died since 2011. All the families of these dead victims received no assistance from the company. It is also said that there are 14 missing workers and more than hundreds of workers who have been jailed in Indonesia for illegal fishing, without any assured assistance from the company for several months now. When the workers decided to reclaim their constitutional right by establishing their union, the company reacted quickly by sacking 238 regular workers to bust their union beginning the week after it was registered with the DOLE. Seventy-eight of these workers have stood their ground and are still occupying the picket line in the company. Now, more workers are joining the fight of the previously dismissed workers, with another 104 joining the picket line.

The case of Indonesia detaining our longline fishers for poaching is becoming a recurring incident. Some of our fisherfolk are even mauled in detention. There are still a number of them in Indonesian jails, one of whom is a boat captain who recently died in detention last December as the cost of repatriating them has increased and the DFA lacks funds for our longliners as it has to attend to the parallel pressing needs of our OFWs in the Middle East.

Another devious arrangement is the labor-only contracting scheme involving so-called labor cooperatives. Worse, the so-called labor cooperatives are the entities supplying workers to fishing canneries operating within the fishing industries, also under the labor-only contracting arrangement. Mr. Speaker, labor-only contracting scheme in the tuna industry as well as in all other industries is prohibited by law. In a specific case in the tuna industry, a Supreme Court decision was made on *Purefoods Corporation vs. NLRC* case that this labor-only contracting scheme among tuna workers was illegal and immoral. The DOLE came out with an administrative order targeting this illegal practice in the tuna industry but sadly, as I have mentioned earlier, it has no teeth. Now, that Department Order has been repealed or abrogated. Mr. Speaker, the AKBAYAN Party-List believes that we need to amend our half a century-old Labor Code dealing with contractual employment.

Another blatant practice in the industry against

workers is that of "blacklisting." The person blacklisted, together with their close relatives and friends, cannot anymore find employment in all other companies in the tuna industry in General Santos City. This is highly discriminatory and violates the basic right to be employed and the state's mandate to give full protection to labor.

Mr. Speaker, going back to my case in point, the Citra Mina Group of Companies does not only violate the rights of the workers, but also those of our consumers who should be afforded tuna fish and marine products in the local and global markets that are free from the blood and sweat of slave labor. These companies violated labor standards by capriciously and discriminately implementing non-payment of overtime work, non-payment of the night shift differential and under-computation …

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Gentleman is reminded to please wind up.

REP. VILLARIN. …. of the 13th month pay.

I am winding up, Mr. Speaker, and I am coming to my last point. Thank you for the reminder, Mr. Speaker.

The mandatory provisions on social security and protection are grossly neglected and violated by the management of the companies, especially for those workers in the high seas.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker. I urge this House, I urge Congress to undertake the following: first, to investigate the tuna industry practices of labor rights violations, particularly the illegal dismissal cases filed by the Citra Mina workers; second, to file human trafficking cases against Citra Mina and other companies who send out sacadas of the high seas; third, for the House to move for the lifting of the suspension of DOLE Department Order No. 156-16 as it pertains to the governing rules on the working and living conditions of longline fishers; fourth, for Congress to review the membership of the Philippines in the EU's GSP+ as it is a violation of the workers' rights because it constitutes a wrongful policy that falls within the purview of such trade agreement; and lastly, Mr. Speaker, the immediate enactment of legislation amending our Labor Code with regard to labor-only contracting.

Fighting inequality demands that we must respect and uphold the rights of our workers. Ending contractualization demands more from us than mere campaign promises.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker

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

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the matter raised …

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker.

REP. DEFENSOR. … by the Honorable Villarin to the Committee

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker.

REP. DEFENSOR. … on Rules.

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

REP. DEFENSOR. May we know the pleasure of the Gentleman, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. I rise to interpellate the distinguished Gentleman from AKBAYAN Party-List, if he so yields.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to ….

REP. VILLARIN. Mr. Speaker, I am open to interpellation.

REP. DEFENSOR. … the Honorable Lagman, as we had stated earlier, Mr. Speaker, under the rules, a question of privilege shall not be entertained when we are about to take up a very important measure, Mr. Speaker. We had given way to the Gentleman, Mr. Speaker, but we are about to take up a matter of great importance. So let me point out, with the indulgence of the Honorable Lagman, that a matter of personal and collective privilege is not debatable under our rules, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo.) The honorable Congressman Lagman is recognized.

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, we have been witness to countless speeches here of personal and collective privilege where debates ensued after the speech. So, I would like to claim my right to interpellate the distinguished Gentleman who has yielded.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

It was 5:25 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:30 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that we take up House Bill No. 4727 as reported out in Committee Report No. 47 by the Committee on Justice and that we kindly direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Congressman Atienza is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. I also would like …

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I have a pending motion and this is to take up the matter in the agenda, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Well, Mr. Speaker, my motion is ...

REP. DEFENSOR. This occupies a higher position or it is in our priorities, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. My motion, Mr. Speaker, is of the highest form. I would like to cite a very personal and very collective privilege dahil lahat tayo ay involved before this Body. Kung ayaw ninyong makinig, let it be on the record that you do not want to listen to something that questions the integrity of this Body. It bothers me and I would like to point it out, at the very least.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

It was 5:31 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:38 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, before we proceed, I move that we refer the matter of personal and collective privilege …

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. DEFENSOR. …raised by the Hon. Tom S. Villarin to the Committee on …

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Let the Dep. Majority Leader finish.

REP. DEFENSOR. …on Rules.

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

REP. DEFENSOR. I would like to reiterate ...

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. DEFENSOR. … my motion that we refer the matter raised by the Honorable Villarin to the Committee on Rules.

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

Yes, Congressman Atienza, you are recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Dep. Majority Leader.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). What is his pleasure?

REP. ATIENZA. There is an issue that bothers me personally, and it bothers a lot of us collectively. So, kailangan po namang ilabas namin ito upang mailagay natin sa ating records.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Is the Gentleman rising on a matter of personal and collective privilege?

REP. ATIENZA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Gentleman is recognized and has 10 minutes. Please proceed.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. ATIENZA

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po.

Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, all the national newspapers, also on national television, carried a very serious item where it was said that three Members of Congress—no, two in the beginning—two Members of Congress are either drug coddlers or drug lords themselves.

Iyon po ay nakakabahala sapagkat nandito tayo nagta-trabaho, tapos bigla na lamang tayong binansagan, na dalawa sa atin ay mga drug coddlers. Then after one week of ventilation in the papers, media and Internet, it was said, "no, it is not two, it is actually three, " so, three Members of our Body naman were branded or noted or qualified as drug coddlers. Iyon po ay isang bagay na napaka-seryoso na hindi natin puwedeng palagpasin. That is the reason I was insisting to be heard because what I am saying now, I am sure, is in the heart of each Member of Congress present today, especially, dahil ayaw nating pagdudahan tayo ng ating mga kababayan. Ayaw nating pagsuspetsahan tayo na mayroon tayong kinalaman sa droga.

The drug problem, Mr. Speaker, is the biggest problem of the nation now which has been destroying our economy, destroying the lives of every Filipino affected by the drugs. So, we cannot just stand by, and we cannot even work unless we help fight the drug problem in the country. As we have been repeatedly saying, we wish President Duterte all the best, we will support him in any legislative requirement that his campaign against drugs will require, because we realize that only he can head a campaign that he is now leading to confront the issue of drugs in our society and in the Filipino family. Sumisira po talaga ng pamilya, buhay at kaluluwa ng bawat biktima ang droga. I agree with the President when he says he has no mercy in his heart when it comes to anyone coddling drugs or in fact, being a drug lord himself. Kaya iyon pong sinabing dalawa sa ating mga Miyembro ay kasali sa problema, marahil sinasabing dahil Congressmen ay malawak ang kanilang operasyon, hindi po ba nakakabahala iyan? Lalo nang sinabing hindi dalawa pero tatlo, so three of our Members, according to them, are drug coddlers or drug lords themselves.

We have to clarify this, Mr. Speaker. We cannot be tackling very important measures in this Chamber unless this is addressed and confronted with the truth. Kailangan po naman malaman nating lahat kung tayo ay may kinalaman sa droga o wala, and in fairness to the three being pointed to now, let them defend themselves. Hindi puwedeng basta sasabihin na lamang na mayroon tayong mga Miyembro na drug lords without giving any opportunity to them to defend themselves. This is the opportunity, Mr. Speaker. Let them be pointed out and let them defend themselves inside and outside of Congress. Kung mayroon po silang kasalanan, magdusa sila. They do not deserve to be called Representatives of the people and Members of Congress if they have, in any way, any relation to the drug situation.

So, we support the President's campaign although we do not agree to the extrajudicial killings that are happening every night. We do not agree to vigilantism. We do not agree to the abuses being committed by the police right now on our people. We do not agree to the killings going on kung saan walang kalaban-laban ang mga mamamayan, lalo na ang mahihirap. Kaya kailangan po, kaliwanagan. Kailangan po, katotohanan. Kailangan po magsabi ang sinumang nagsabing mayroong mga Congressmen na kasali sa problema ng droga at namamahagi ng droga sa kanilang distrito o kanilang probinsiya.

We have to answer that question, Mr. Speaker, because otherwise—especially now that the President and General Bato Dela Rosa have announced a suspension of the campaign, to which we do not agree. We cannot agree that this campaign can be brought on and off based on the decision of one man. We agree with him that there is a problem. We support his efforts to curb and face this problem and so, we cannot relent now on the campaign simply because now the President realizes malaki ang problema niya sa kapulisan.

We have been shouting in this Hall that the Philippine National Police must first be reformed. Ang problema natin ay korapsyon sa loob ng kapulisan. Ako naman ay natutuwa—if I can only call up the President, I will congratulate him, "Now you are accepting, Mr. President, that there is corruption" dahil sabi niya na "at least 40 percent of our policemen are affected by corruption." Siguro mas malaki kaysa sa 40 percent, Mr. Speaker, baka mga 60 percent ang affected by corruption. So, we must address that problem and I am happy that he is now addressing it, but to suspend the campaign on drugs simply because General Dela Rosa is going to clean house, does not merit our agreement. Hindi po puwedeng itigil ang kampanya sa droga, subalit itigil nila ang extrajudicial killings. Itigil nila iyong mga pinapatay ng mga vigilantes dahil hindi na natin malaman kung iyan talaga ay ginawa ng mga vigilantes o iyan ay simple case of murder na pinapatay ang isang nilalang ng wala po namang kalaban-laban. We have had enough of this. Now is the time for a sane approach to the drug problem. Kailangan po nating pagtulong-tulungan and we are ready to help in every way. We would like to help to see that our country is liberated from the clutches of a culture of death.

Drug abuse, by itself, is death, Mr. Speaker. Anybody who gets affected by the drug situation, who takes drugs, is a dead man walking. Iyong solusyon nila na patayin, ito ay hindi po magbubunga ng maganda at tama. Sumunod po tayo sa tama, sa ating batas, sa batas ng tao, sa batas ng Panginoong Diyos na tayo ay rumespeto sa buhay ng bawat nilalang at hindi tayo maliligaw ng landas. Subalit ang sabihin nilang titigil na ang kampanya sapagkat nais nilang maglinis ng hanay nila, hindi po tama iyan, Mr. Speaker. That is practically saying that the drug situation is a whimsical, discretionary campaign na maaaring i-turn on at i-turn off. Hindi po, kailangan po tuloy-tuloy ito.

Now is the time for all of us to make our clear suggestion on how to do it even better. Pagtulong-

tulungan natin, ating isaayos ang kampanya. Linisin ang hanay ng Philippine National Police. Hindi sapat sabihing, "we will fire all those involved in the shenanigans." Bakit ganoon ang salita, "we will fire"? Ang gusto ko pong marinig, "ikukulong namin ang lahat ng mga pulis na nang-aabuso katulad noong mga gumawa ng pagpatay sa Koreano na kanilang kinidnap po upang kunan ng salapi." Iyon po naman ay mga mukha ng kasalukuyan na alam natin ang problema ay nasa kapulisan, nasa piskalya, nasa judiciary, nasa detention centers—iyan ang mga problema kaya lumalala ang krimen at ang problema sa droga sa ating bansa.

Why are we closing our eyes to this, Mr. Speaker? It is time to accept the challenge, and this reminder of this Representation intends to do just that—to wake up each and every one of us. The problem is one of a corrupt enforcement arm. We must clean it up. Kailangang linisin iyan pero hindi po pupuwede iyong titigil muna tayo sa kampanya para linisin natin ito. Iyong lahat nang kasangkot sa pinaslang na Koreano, ikulong na lahat iyan, litisin, bigyan ng araw sa korte at sentensyahan para makulong, at hindi po iyong labas-pasok sila sa Crame kasi baka isang araw ay wala na po dito ang mga iyan at sasabihin na lamang, "wala na sila, nakawala."

Ito ang sinasabi namin, Mr. Speaker, that the situation today requires wisdom. Kailangan pag-aralan po ito ng ating pinuno. No less than the President should use all the wisdom that God has given him, so that he may effectively prevent the spread of the drug problem in our country, and to start that, please name the three Congressmen, Mr. President. We are asking this of you in fairness to all the Members of Congress. Lahat tayong mga hinalal ng ating mga mamamayan, hindi puwedeng mayroong nakasabit po diyan na ulap na madilim. Binansagan na tayo ay mga drug pushers din kaya kailangan ilahad ng ating Pangulo kung sino ang mga ito at kailangan aksyunan ng ating Speaker. Let us prosecute the three Members of Congress if, indeed, there are three Members. Kung wala po naman, let this institution, the first and last bastion of democracy in the land, be free from this dark cloud of suspicion.

Hindi po maganda tatalakayin natin ang parusa ng kamatayan, the re-imposition of the death penalty while all of us are suspects, that we are also involved with the problem of drugs. Would we accept that, Mr. Speaker? That is the very reason I said that they should allow us to be heard before we even start discussing the death penalty. We cannot talk about anything, much less the death penalty in this Chamber, unless that issue is cleared and clarified, because then we can work with a clear conscience that what we are doing is not to favor the President, not to favor the Speaker. What we are doing is following our conscience that this is going to be good for the nation. Whether we are for or against the death penalty, we will have to respect each other's position if we are not tainted at all by the drug problem. Let all those who are cleared speak up, participate and vote on this issue, interpellate, argue for or against, if you are not part of the drug problem. But if the suspicion lingers on, Mr. Speaker, I will continue to question the proceedings that we are doing. Kung tatlo sa atin ay totoong kasali sa droga, tayo ay humaharap pa sa mas malaking kasalanan because, suffice it to say, being involved with the drug problem is a major violation—a violation of our oath, a violation of our laws; again, a violation of the law of the land and the law of the Almighty.

Mabuti sana ay tumugon ang kinauukulan at sabihin kung sino ang tatlong ito at sama-sama nating usigin upang malinis ang hapag bago tayo mag-usap ng tungkol sa death penalty.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity that you have given.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Maraming salamat po.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, before we proceed, may we acknowledge the presence of the guests of the Hon. Edcel Lagman in the gallery.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). I thought the Dep. Majority Leader was going to name the three Congressmen.

REP. DEFENSOR. No, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). He will please proceed.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, these are organizations which are against the death penalty. They are here to listen to the debate on the Death Penalty Bill. We have with us the following: In Defense of Human Rights and Dignity Movement; Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines; Task Force Detainees of the Philippines; Balay Youth and Adult Partners–Bagong Silang; CLC-Kayumanggi or Church Labor Conference; Freedom from Debt Coalition; Kanlungan; Medical Action Group; Human Rights Online Philippines; Children's Legal Rights and Development Center; KNK Children without Borders; Amnesty International Pilipinas; AKBAYAN; Sentro ng Nagkakaisang Manggagawa; Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates; Ex-Political Detainees Initiatives; Partido Manggagawa; Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances; Partido Lakas

ng Masa; Balay Rehabilitation Center Inc.; Focus on the Global South; Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearance; Sanggunian ng mga Mag-aaral ng mga Paaralang Loyola ng Ateneo de Manila; Guidon, Baliklaya; Ateneo Christian Life Community; Kongresong Pagkakaisa ng Maralitang Lungsod; KNK Philippines–Children without Borders; Philippine Action for Youth Offenders; Philippine Jesuits Prison Service; and the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Mangyaring tumayo ang lahat pong pinangalangang bisita ng ating Kgg. Edcel Lagman. *(Applause)* Welcome to the House of Representatives. Magandang hapon po sa inyo.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Also, Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of the guest of the Hon. Rogelio "Ruel" D. Pacquiao. We have the Vice Governor of Sarangani Province, the Hon. Elmer De Peralta.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The guest of the better-looking fighting pride of Sarangani, please stand. *(Applause)* Welcome to the House of Representatives.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, may we also respectfully acknowledge the presence of newly-appointed Presidential Legislative Liaison Office (PLLO) Undersecretary for the House of Representatives, Atty. Ryan Estevez, *(Applause)* and the new PLLO Asst. Sec. Romulo "Leo" Arugay. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). I invite the Members to pay close attention to our new Undersecretary for the PLLO. I wish him luck.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. May we know the pleasure of the Gentleman from Samar, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DAZA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). What is the pleasure of the Gentleman from the First District of Northern Samar?

REP. DAZA. Mr. Speaker, will the Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List yield to a few questions on the subject matter of his collective and personal privilege?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Will Congressman Atienza yield?

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, I have always respected the Gentleman from Northern Samar, so I welcome whatever he would like to ask on what I had stated.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The Gentleman will please proceed.

REP. DAZA. Thank you, Gentleman from the BUHAY Party-List, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to commend, for the record, the Gentleman for the matter he has brought up. In fact, during the past sessions, I was almost impelled to raise the same question. Since the Majority Leader has stated in the media that the three Members of the House in the narco-list, which list is with the Speaker, do not include any Member from the Visayas and I am from the Visayas, I thought that the Members from Luzon and Mindanao would rise to defend their integrity, as well as the reputation and integrity of the House. So, I would like to congratulate the Gentleman for rising this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, as stated by the distinguished Majority Leader, up for Second Reading is the measure to reimpose the death penalty. I would like to clarify, Mr. Speaker, what seems to be the belief that when a motion is put by the Majority Leader for a measure on Second Reading, a question of collective or personal privilege may not be raised. I would like to advert, Mr. Speaker, to Rule X, Section 53 which is the rule on Second Reading. What is striking in this rule and section is a phrase that reads, "subject to debate and pertinent motions."

For clarity, I would like to read a portion of Section 53, which is the rule on Second Reading and Debate. It says:

> A bill or joint resolution on Second Reading shall be read in full unless copies thereof have been distributed to the Members. The bill or joint resolution shall be subject to debate and pertinent motions.

The emphasis is on "pertinent motions." The question, therefore, is, what are the pertinent motions that may be raised at any time, whether it is a call for Second Reading or when there is a debate on a bill or measure under Second Reading?

I would refer to Rule XIII, Section 98. This rule, which is the Precedence of Motions, states at least 10 motions that are relevant not only during the debate on Second Reading but even before it. The Majority Leader was correct when he said that a motion on a question of privilege is non-debatable. Nevertheless, it can be raised; it is not barred by any rule from being raised simply because there is a bill or resolution on

Second Reading. The reason is simple, Mr. Speaker: the very essence of a question of personal and collective privilege is so clearly defined in Rule XIII, Section 102, which I shall read:

> *Questions of Privilege.* – Questions of privilege are urgent matters directly and principally affecting the duties, conduct, rights, privileges, dignity, integrity or reputation of the House or of its Members, individually or collectively. Subject to the ten-minute rule, every Member has the right to raise a question of personal or collective privilege.

So, I believe there is no ambiguity in our rules that when a Member is recognized to raise a question of collective or personal privilege, he has the right to do so. In this particular case, the subject matter involves a statement made by the Speaker himself that three Members of the House are in a narco-list in his possession. He began by saying there were two. Later, he clarified himself and said there were three. The Majority Leader, impliedly, before the media, confirmed but said that the men came from the Visayas.

We cannot continue to legislate, Mr. Speaker, under a cloud of speculation. We cannot continue to discuss, especially a matter of national importance such as the Bill on the reimposition of the death penalty when the House works under a cloud of speculation, when our fellow Members from Luzon and the Visayas are under suspicion of being in a narco-list. So, I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this statement in the question of personal and collective privilege made by the distinguished Gentleman from the BUHAY Party-List, is not only proper but it is also most eminent. Now, does the Gentleman agree, and perhaps he has already so stated, that even before we debate the Bill on the floor that is calendared for Second Reading, we must first cleanse, we must first reaffirm the integrity and credibility of the House and of all its Members.

Does he agree?

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, lahat po ng sinabi ng aking ginagalang na Kongresista—na aking hinangaan mula noon pa, 50 years ago, at hanggang ngayon sapagkat he is a man who is not only well-versed on parliamentary rules, but on how to make a Congress function well—tama po iyong sinabi niya. Iyon po naman ang aming tinuran, papaano tayo magta-trabaho tungkol sa death penalty kung tatlo sa atin ay kasali sa problema na gusto nating labanan? Papaano tayo boboto, papaano tayo magdedebate kung marami sa atin ay pinagsuspetsahang kasali sa problema? So, we urge the Speaker, before we even tackle the death penalty proposal on the floor, he should expose the names of the three that he mentioned and let an investigation be conducted, let the three defend themselves and if found guilty, let them suffer the consequences of their involvement with drugs.

Otherwise, I agree with the Gentleman, to every word he said obviously coming from experience. Ito pong taong ito ay Miyembro ng Kongreso ng ating bansa simula noong 1964 pa. Kuwentahin po ninyo iyon. Kaya iyong sinabi niya ay bunga ng kaalaman sa tamang asal at tamang sistema ng paggawa ng batas. Mayroon din siyang damdaming makabayan, katulad po nating lahat, na gagawa tayo ng batas ayon sa tamang paraan at hindi iyong mayroon tayong ulap na madilim na tumatakip at humahabol, na hindi nagbibigay liwanag sa ating kaisipan. We have to be free in our discussions and the Gentleman definitely will be heard, I am sure, with his words valuable in our deliberations on the death penalty.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue on and on. I would like to give the Gentleman more space and more time, but I notice we are now less than 100 on the floor. We do not have enough people, enough Members anymore. I move for adjournment. Let us continue tomorrow.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, with the indulgence of the Gentleman, before we part ways, can we take up one administrative matter, and we will just acknowledge the presence of some more guests, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

It was 6:09 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:09 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, my counters, who are strategically located, have sent me a message that we no longer have a quorum, but since the Dep. Majority Leader has made his appeal that there are certain matters that we would have to take up for the sake of those affected, then I withdraw my motion temporarily until the important matters are taken up.

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

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, before we part ways, may we acknowledge the presence of the

guests of the Hon. Anthony M. Bravo, Ph.D. and Hon. Sabiniano S. Canama. They are the leaders from various cooperatives, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The guests of the Honorable Savellano and—whose guests again, Dep. Majority Leader?

REP. DEFENSOR. The guests of the Hon. Sabiniano S. Canama and Hon. Anthony M. Bravo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). Welcome to the House of Representatives. Magandang hapon po. *(Applause)*

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REFERRAL OF HOUSE RESOLUTIONS ON INQUIRIES IN AID OF LEGISLATION

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, in accordance with our Rules Governing Inquiries in Aid of Legislation, I move that we refer the following House Resolutions to the appropriate Committees:

1. House Resolution No. 693, Inquiry re the plans and actions of the Department of Finance, the Land Bank of the Philippines, the Philippine Postal Corporation, and other concerned agencies to establish a bank for overseas Filipino workers, to the Committee on Banks and Financial Intermediaries;

2. House Resolution No. 694, Inquiry re the conspiracy among Winston Q8, Mawared Services, medical clinics, and others to extract illegal and exorbitant medical testing and certification fees from overseas Filipino workers bound for Kuwait, to the Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs;

3. House Resolution No. 712, Inquiry re 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 , to the Committee on Games and Amusements; and

4. House Resolution No. 715, Inquiry re the alleged irregularities in the conduct of Small Town Lottery operations of the 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, to the Committee on Games and Amusements.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until tomorrow, February 1, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Quimbo). The session is adjourned until tomorrow, February 1, at 4:00 p.m.

It was 6:11 p.m.

Published by the Publication and Editorial Service, Plenary Affairs Bureau
The ***Congressional Record*** can be accessed through the Downloads Center of the official website of the House of Representatives at **www.congress.gov.ph**

FLL/02012017/1545