



# Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 17<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

## House of Representatives

Vol. 4

Monday, May 8, 2017

No. 86

### CALL TO ORDER

*At 4:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Frederick "Erick" F. Abueg called the session to order.*

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

### NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). Everybody is requested to rise for the singing of the National Anthem.

*Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). Please remain standing for a minute of silent prayer and meditation—I stand corrected, we will have the Invocation to be led by the Hon. Arlene B. Arcillas.

*Everybody remained standing for the Invocation.*

### INVOCATION

REP. ARCILLAS. Let us submit ourselves in the presence of our God Almighty.

Dear Lord, we are gathered here today to honor You and praise Your glory. Please accept our deepest gratitude for all the blessings You continue to bestow upon us in Your mighty goodness and unconditional love. Even when oftentimes we are not worthy of Your absolute love, You always keep us under Your care and affection, and never fail to manifest Your presence especially when we need You most.

We are here today, gathered as Your faithful people, asking for Your mercy and benedictions, begging for Your kindness and understanding, and praying for Your clemency and love.

Teach us to always be kind to each other and know that although our emotions and actions differ at times, we have similar intentions and that is to promote goodness and justice to all.

As Your children, we never cease to be faced with social, political, economic and environmental challenges. We acknowledge that these challenges make us stronger and firmer in love and faith. But we need You always to be with us in order that we will not falter, that we will not get lost, that we will not be afraid, and that we will make only decisions that will follow Your will and Your wishes.

We are a people who depend on You for guidance and wisdom. We pray that You will lead us always to the way of the righteous for the well-being of all. We ask these in the name of the Almighty God. Amen.

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

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we defer the calling of the roll.

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

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we defer the approval of the Journal of the previous sessions.

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

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.  
I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Secretary General will please read the Reference of Business.

### REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

*The Secretary General read the following House Bills and Resolutions on First Reading, Messages from*

*the Senate and Committee Reports, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:*

**BILLS ON FIRST READING**

House Bill No. 5514, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II AS A PUBLIC OFFICE AND THE FUNDS ENTRUSTED TO IT AS PUBLIC FUNDS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3518”

By Representative Acop  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND WELFARE

House Bill No. 5515, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ESSENTIAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Suansing (E.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 5516, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING THE NORTH COTABATO MULTI-MEDIA ADVERTISING CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO BROADCASTING STATIONS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Catamco  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

House Bill No. 5517, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER OF EVERY YEAR AS THE NATIONAL MALUNGGAY MONTH”

By Representative De Venecia  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 5518, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE EDADES AND BERNAL MUSEUM IN THE CITY OF DAGUPAN, PROVINCE OF PANGASINAN, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative De Venecia  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5519, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING MALUNGGAY (MORINGA) AS ‘THE NATIONAL

VEGETABLE OF THE PHILIPPINES’ ”

By Representative De Venecia  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 5520, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING THE IMPOSITION OF THE CAPITAL GAINS TAX ON THE TRANSFER OF TAX DECLARATION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 24 (D) AND 27 (D) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997”

By Representative Alvarez (P.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 5521, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9184, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION, STANDARDIZATION AND REGULATION OF THE PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT’ AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Alvarez (P.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 5522, entitled:

“AN ACT ADJUSTING THE AMOUNTS OR THE VALUE OF PROPERTY ON WHICH A PENALTY IS BASED, AND THE FINES IMPOSED UNDER THE REVISED PENAL CODE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ACT NO. 3815, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE REVISED PENAL CODE’, AS AMENDED”

By Representative Chipeco  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

**RESOLUTIONS**

House Resolution No. 940, entitled:

“RESOLUTION STRONGLY URGING THE CONCERNED TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES TO IMPLEMENT THE PLANS, PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS THAT WILL IMPROVE THE CONNECTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE COUNTRY’S NAUTICAL HIGHWAYS”

By Representative Sarmiento (C.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Resolution No. 941, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE

APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY ON THE UNDERWATER-THEMED PARK PROJECT OF CORAL WORLD PARK UNDERSEA RESORTS AND NICKELODEON IN CORON, PALAWAN”

By Representative Biazon  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 942, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEMISE OF HIS EXCELLENCY ALFONSO T. YUCHENGCO ALSO KNOWN AS ‘AY’, PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR”

By Representative Olivarez  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 943, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONFERRING THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF ACHIEVEMENT TO HIS EXCELLENCY ALFONSO T. YUCHENGCO ALSO KNOWN AS ‘AY’, PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR”

By Representative Olivarez  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 944, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEMISE OF MR. MARIANO QUE, FOUNDER OF MERCURY DRUG CORPORATION”

By Representative Olivarez  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 945, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEMISE OF MR. ROBERTO EDUARDO ‘BOBBY’ ABOITIZ, PRESIDENT OF THE RAMON ABOITIZ FOUNDATION INCORPORATED (RAFI)”

By Representative Olivarez  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 946, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE COMMITTEE ON METRO MANILA DEVELOPMENT TO INQUIRE INTO THE OPERATIONS OF ONLINE GAMING FIRMS INSIDE PEZA-ACCREDITED BUILDINGS”

By Representative Batocabe  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 947, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE HOUSE COMMITTEES, TO DIRECT THE COMMISSION ON AUDIT (COA) TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE AUDIT OF THE AFP/PNP HOUSING PROGRAM BASED ON ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 9 DATED 11 APRIL 2011 IN ORDER TO AID CONGRESS IN COMING UP WITH SOUND HOUSING POLICIES THAT WOULD BENEFIT THE UNIFORMED PERSONNEL OF THE COUNTRY AS WELL AS TO HOLD ACCOUNTABLE, IF PROVEN TRUE, CONCERNED HOUSING OFFICIALS, PRIVATE DEVELOPERS, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO CONNIVED TO PROFIT FROM SUCH HOUSING PROGRAMS”

By Representative Alejano  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 948, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE ALLEGED SECRET DETENTION FACILITY OF THE MANILA POLICE DISTRICT STATION 11. WHERE 12 DRUG SUSPECTS WITH HORRIFIC TALES OF TORTURE, ILL-TREATMENT AND EXTORTION, WERE DISCOVERED IN A RECENT RAID CONDUCTED BY THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS”

By Representative Roque (H.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 949, entitled:

“RESOLUTION STRONGLY URGING THE CONCERNED TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES TO ADDRESS THE SAFETY RISKS AND OTHER ISSUES BROUGHT ABOUT BY ADVERTISEMENTS ALONG THE MRT 3 LINE”

By Representative Sarmiento (C.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Resolution No. 950, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE PROVIDED UNDER R.A. 9745, OR THE ANTI-TORTURE ACT OF 2009, TO CONVENE IN ORDER TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF THE ANTI-TORTURE LAW BY SOME MEMBERS OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL

POLICE AND TO DETERMINE WHETHER SUCH PRACTICES ARE OF WIDESPREAD USE IN OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES”

By Representative Rocamora  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

House Resolution No. 951, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD, AND HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FOOD SECURITY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, REGARDING THE POSSIBLE EXISTENCE OF RICE SHORTAGE IN THE PHILIPPINES IF THE DIRECTIVE OF PRESIDENT RODRIGO DUTERTE TO TEMPORARILY HALT THE IMPORTATION OF RICE IS CARRIED OUT”

By Representative Lopez (M.L.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 952, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION POSTHUMOUSLY COMMENDING 2LT ESTELITO SALDUA JR., SGT JOHN DEXTER DUERO, CORPORAL MELJUN CAJABAN AND SWAT SPO2 REY ANTHONY NAZARENO FOR THEIR GALLANTRY IN ACTION WHICH FOILED THE PLAN OF THE ABU SAYYAF FORCE THAT LANDED IN BARANGAY INNABANGA, BOHOL FOR POSSIBLE TERRORISTIC ATTACK AT THE ASEAN SUMMIT AND KIDNAPPING HOSTAGES FOR RANSOM”

By Representative Alejano  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

House Resolution No. 953, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON AGRARIAN REFORM TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, TO DETERMINE THE ACTUAL REMAINING HECTARAGE OF DAVAO PENAL COLONY (DAPECOL) AND URGING FOR THE DEED OF TRANSFER FROM DAPECOL - BUREAU OF CORRECTIONS (BUCOR) TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM (DAR), PARTICULARLY THE 5,212.46-HECTARES LAND UNDER THE JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT (JVA) BETWEEN BUCOR AND THE TAGUM AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, INC. (TADECO), FOR THE

PURPOSE OF LAND DISTRIBUTION TO QUALIFIED FARMER-BENEFICIARIES”

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

House Resolution No. 954, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON AGRARIAN REFORM TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE POSSIBLE MISCONDUCT AND CONTEMPT BY THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE REGION XI OFFICE (PRO XI) DUE TO ITS FAILURE TO PROVIDE POLICE ASSISTANCE ON THE APRIL 18, 2017 - EXECUTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM’S (DAR) WRIT OF INSTALLATION OF 159 AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES BELONGING TO THE MADAUM AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES ASSOCIATION, INC. (MARBAL) ON THE 145-HECTARES LAND IN BRGY. SAN ISIDRO, TAGUM CITY, DAVAO DEL NORTE, WHICH WAS STRONGLY OPPOSED BY THE LORENZO-OWNED LAPANDAY FOODS CORP. WHICH DEPLOYED ABOUT 800 ARMED GUARDS AT THE DISPUTED LANDS”

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

House Resolution No. 955, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE COMMITTEE ON AGRARIAN REFORM TO CONDUCT A JOINT INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE MARCH 22, 2017-ABDUCTION OF ROMMEL TUCAY, PEASANT ORGANIZER OF ALYANSA NG MGA MAGBUBUKID SA GITNANG LUSON (AMGL), BY ELEMENTS OF AFP AND PNP IN CARRANGALAN, NUEVA ECIJA”

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

House Resolution No. 956, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STATUS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RA 10816 OR

THE 'FARM TOURISM DEVELOPMENT  
ACT OF 2016'

By Representative Garin (S.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 957, entitled:

"RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE  
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL  
EDUCATION TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,  
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE DIRE  
CONSEQUENCES OF THE COMMISSION  
ON HIGHER EDUCATION ORDER TO  
CLOSE THE VARIOUS BUKIDNON STATE  
UNIVERSITY EXTERNAL STUDIES  
CENTERS (BSU-ESCs) TO STUDENTS AND  
COMMUNITIES IN MISAMIS ORIENTAL"

By Representative Uy (J.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 958, entitled:

"RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE  
ON GAMES AND AMUSEMENT AND  
OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES  
TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID  
OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED  
IRREGULARITIES IN THE OPERATIONS OF  
THE SMALL TOWN LOTTERY (STL) AND  
THE CONTINUED PROLIFERATION OF  
ILLEGAL NUMBERS GAMES DESPITE THE  
EFFORTS OF THE PHILIPPINE CHARITY  
SWEEPSTAKES OFFICE (PCSO)"

By Representatives Pineda, Belmonte (R.),  
Canama, Salo, Lopez (B.), Villarín, Bertiz,  
Montoro, Belaró and Salón  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 959, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES EXPRESSING  
PROFOUND CONDOLENCES ON THE  
DEMISE OF HONORABLE MARK  
JIMENEZ, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
6TH DISTRICT OF MANILA"

By Representative Olivarez  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 960, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE  
OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE  
ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN  
INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION,  
INTO THE SECRET DETENTION CELLS  
ALLEGEDLY MAINTAINED BY THE  
PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE"

By Representative Baguilat  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 961, entitled:

"RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN  
INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION,  
BY THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE OF  
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ON CONVERTING EXISTING COAL-  
FIRED POWER PLANTS INTO LIQUEFIED  
NATURAL GAS POWER PLANTS"

By Representative Suarez  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 962, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION HONORING MR. ROBERTO  
EDUARDO MELENDEZ ABOITIZ,  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD AND  
PRESIDENT OF THE RAMON ABOITIZ  
FOUNDATION INC. AND CO-CHAIRMAN  
OF THE METRO CEBU DEVELOPMENT  
AND COORDINATING BOARD, HIS  
LEADERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION IN  
BUSINESS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
AND EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON  
HIS DEMISE"

By Representatives Del Mar, Durano, Salimbanon,  
Garcia (G.), Abellanosa, Gullas, Radaza, Cortes  
and Calderon  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

Reps. Orestes T. Salón, Melecio J. Yap Jr., Pablo C.  
Ortega, and Edgar R. Erice for House Bill No. 2881;  
Rep. Micaela S. Violago for House Resolutions  
No. 673 and 674;

Rep. Franz E. Alvarez for House Bills No. 1068  
and 4975;

Reps. Joseph Stephen S. Paduano, Aurora Enerio  
Cerilles, and Henry S. Oaminal for House Bill No.  
4174;

Reps. Benhur L. Salimbanon, Ramon "Red"  
H. Durano VI, Gwendolyn F. Garcia, Rodrigo A.  
Abellanosa, Aileen C. Radaza, Jonas C. Cortes, Gerald  
Anthony "Samsam" V. Gullas Jr., and Peter John D.  
Calderon for House Bill No. 148;

Rep. Edward Vera Perez Maceda for House Bills  
No. 62, 286, 3282, and 3718;

Rep. Geraldine B. Roman for House Bills No. 2286,  
2627, 2628, and 2881;

Reps. Wilfredo S. Caminero, Fredenil "Fred" H.  
Castro, Julieta R. Cortuna, Luis Jose Angel N. Campos  
Jr., Luis "Jon-Jon" A. Ferrer IV, Jesulito A. Manalo,  
Arnel M. Cerafica, Rodante D. Marcoleta, and Lorna  
C. Silverio for House Bill No. 4774;

Rep. Salvador B. Belaró Jr. for House Bills No.  
4774 and 5045, and House Resolution No. 16;

Rep. Joaquin M. Chipeco Jr. for House Bill No. 269;

Rep. John Marvin “Yul Servo” C. Nieto for House Bills No. 12, 512, 942, 2917, and 5165;

Rep. Eleanor C. Bulut-Begtang for House Bills No. 13 and 267;

Reps. Alfred D. Vargas and Jorge “Bolet” Banal for Resolution of Both Houses No. 2;

Rep. Noel L. Villanueva for House Bills No. 11 and 12;

Rep. Lord Allan Jay Q. Velasco for House Bill No. 11;

Rep. Deogracias Victor “DV” B. Savellano for House Bills No. 5015, 5066, 5067, and 5068;

Rep. Gerald Anthony “Samsam” V. Gullas Jr. for House Resolutions No. 827 and 878;

Rep. Jose Antonio “Kuya Jonathan” R. Sy-Alvarado for House Bills No. 5188, 5190, and 5191;

Rep. Michelle M. Antonio for House Bill No. 931;

Rep. Delphine Gan Lee for House Bill No. 292;

Rep. Leo Rafael M. Cueva for House Bills No. 4113, 4759, and 4812;

Rep. Kaka J. Bag-ao for House Bill No. 4184;

Rep. Ronaldo B. Zamora for House Bill No. 180;

Rep. Florencio T. Flores Jr., M.D. for House Resolution No. 198;

Rep. Jesus “Boying” F. Celeste for House Bills No. 3398 and 4569; and

Rep. Gwendolyn F. Garcia for House Bill No. 5089.

#### MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Message dated May 2, 2017, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 1354, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH POLICY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENHANCING THE DELIVERY OF INTEGRATED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, PROMOTING AND PROTECTING PERSONS UTILIZING PSYCHIATRIC, NEUROLOGIC AND PSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH SERVICES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

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

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Message dated May 2, 2017, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 1355, entitled:

“AN ACT ADOPTING INNOVATION AS VITAL COMPONENT OF THE COUNTRY’S DEVELOPMENT POLICIES TO DRIVE INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT, PROMOTE THE GROWTH AND NATIONAL

COMPETITIVENESS OF MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

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

TO THE COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Message dated May 2, 2017, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 14, entitled:

“AN ACT ADJUSTING THE AMOUNT INVOLVED, VALUE OF PROPERTY OR DAMAGE ON WHICH A PENALTY IS BASED AND THE FINES UNDER ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED PENAL CODE”

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

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 199), re H.B. No. 5551, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING SEPTEMBER 2 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBAY, INCLUDING THE CITIES THEREIN, IN COMMEMORATION OF THE BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF SIMEON A. OLA, TO BE KNOWN AS ‘SIMEON OLA DAY’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 67

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Salceda

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 200), re H.B. No. 5552, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING APRIL 3 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBAY, INCLUDING THE CITIES THEREIN, IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY, TO BE KNOWN AS ‘ALBAY DAY’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 70

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Salceda

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 201), re H.B. No. 5553, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING SEPTEMBER 2 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF IFUGAO, IN COMMEMORATION OF THE SURRENDER OF GENERAL TOMOYUKI YAMASHITA, COMMANDER OF THE JAPANESE IMPERIAL ARMY IN THE PHILIPPINES, IN KIANGAN, IFUGAO”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1602

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Baguilat

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 202), re H.B. No. 1865, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING MARCH 21 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAN FABIAN, PROVINCE OF PANGASINAN, IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY”

recommending its approval with amendments

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and De Venecia

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 203), re H.B. No. 2131, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JULY 22 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CLAVERIA, PROVINCE OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL, IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY, TO BE KNOWN AS ‘ARAW NG CLAVERIA’ ”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Uy (J.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 204), re H.B. No. 2132, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JUNE 15 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF OPOL, PROVINCE OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL, IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY, TO BE KNOWN AS ‘ARAW NG OPOL’ ”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Uy (J.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 205), re H.B. No. 5554, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING DECEMBER 9 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF DINAGAT ISLANDS IN COMMEMORATION OF THE BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF RUBEN EDERA ECLEO, SR.”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2268

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Bag-ao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 206), re H.B. No. 5555, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JUNE 15 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA AND ANGELES CITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE ‘MT. PINATUBO MEMORIAL DAY’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2270

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Gonzales (A.D.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Legislative Franchises (Committee Report No. 207), re H.B. No. 5556, entitled:

“AN ACT EXTENDING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO ISLA COMMUNICATIONS, CO., PRESENTLY KNOWN AS INNOVE COMMUNICATIONS, INC., AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7372, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE ISLA COMMUNICATIONS CO. A FRANCHISE TO INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES WITHIN THE TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES AND INTERNATIONAL POINTS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2617

Sponsors: Representatives Alvarez (F.) and Umali

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Legislative Franchises (Committee Report No. 208), re H.B. No. 5557, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING IGNITE TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INCORPORATED A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 4515

Sponsors: Representatives Alvarez (F.) and Oaminal

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Legislative Franchises (Committee Report No. 209), re H.B. No. 5558, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING THE GOLDEN NATION NETWORK, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS WITHIN THE PHILIPPINES”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 4657

Sponsors: Representatives Alvarez (F.) and Lobregat

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Legislative Franchises (Committee Report No. 210), re H.B. No. 5559, entitled:

“AN ACT EXTENDING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO ERMITA ELECTRONICS INCORPORATED, PRESENTLY KNOWN AS G. TELECOMS INC., AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8196, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE ERMITA ELECTRONICS, INCORPORATED, A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS IN THE PHILIPPINES’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 4658

Sponsors: Representatives Alvarez (F.) and Lobregat

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Legislative Franchises (Committee Report No. 211), re H.B. No. 4136, entitled:

“ANACTRENEWINGFORANOTHERTWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO MANILA BROADCASTING COMPANY UNDER REPUBLIC ACT 7816, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE MANILA BROADCASTING COMPANY A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL TELEVISIONANDRADIOBROADCASTING STATIONS WITHIN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ ”

recommending its approval with amendments

Sponsors: Representatives Alvarez (F.) and Salimbangon

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 212), re H.B. No. 5562, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING APRIL 5 OF EVERY YEARASPECIALNONWORKINGHOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF PANGASINAN IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY, TO BE KNOWN AS THE ‘PANGASINAN DAY’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2794

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Bataoil

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 213), re H.B. No. 5563, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING APRIL 21 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ORANI, PROVINCE OF BATAAN, IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY, TO BE KNOWN AS ‘ORANI FOUNDATION DAY’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 3282

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Roman

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 214), re H.B. No. 5564, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 3 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE CITY OF CABANATUAN, PROVINCE OF NUEVA ECIJA, IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY”



recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 3400

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Vergara

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 215), re H.B. No. 3404, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING AUGUST 30 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE CITY OF MANDAUE, PROVINCE OF CEBU, IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS CHARTER DAY”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Cortes

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 216), re H.B. No. 3526, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JUNE 20 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF GUINAYANGAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON, IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 217), re H.B. No. 5565, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JANUARY 24 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN AND THE CITY OF PUERTO PRINCESA IN HONOR OF THE MARTYRDOM OF GOVERNOR HIGINIO ACOSTA MENDOZA SR., TO BE KNOWN AS ‘GOVERNOR HIGINIO ACOSTA MENDOZA, SR. DAY’”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 4272

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Acosta

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 218), re H.B. No. 5566, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING NOVEMBER 2 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF MISAMIS

OCCIDENTAL IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY, TO BE KNOWN AS ‘ARAW NG MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL’”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 4490 and 4972

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Almonte

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Transportation and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 219), re H.B. No. 5568, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) SATELLITE OFFICE IN TICAPO ISLAND, PROVINCE OF MASBATE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 3553

Sponsors: Representatives Sarmiento (C.), Nograles (K.A.) and Bravo (M.V.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

#### PRIVILEGE HOUR

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

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

The Chair declares a Privilege Hour.

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Gentleman, our Dep. Majority Leader, from Party-List LPGMA, the Hon. Arnel U. Ty, be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). Rep. Arnel U. Ty, Dep. Majority Leader, from Party-List LPGMA, is now recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. TY

REP. TY. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to speak about the abuses committed by some PNP personnel against our LPG sector.

Mr. Speaker, in the last six months, there have been unauthorized police activities in the LPG sector. Police personnel, assisted by some retired and dismissed police personnel, have been conducting flagging

down operations and seizure or forcible purchase at unreasonable low prices of LPG cylinder in the retail market. Helpless drivers, small business owners of LPG trucks and their helpers had been accosted, told to load and unload LPG cylinders and transfer them to the vehicle truck of this syndicate. And they are just paid only a fraction of the retail price of LPG cylinders, or in some instances, these are confiscated outright. This is happening on the roadside and not where we should be confiscating them—at the nearest precinct station.

The Department of Energy is the government agency authorized to implement laws and issuances with respect to the LPG sector. Yet, no coordination is made with the DOE as regards these police operations. These continue to this day and remain unchecked, as these abuses of police officers will adversely affect the LPG sector.

As Representative of Liquefied Petroleum Gas Marketers' Association or LPGMA, I am calling for an investigation of these activities to deter commission thereof in the future. These illegal activities will hurt most especially the small retailers of the LPG. These will disrupt the supply of LPG to the consumers as the LPG has been considered an essential commodity that affects even the ordinary people, particularly in urban areas.

For this reason, Mr. Speaker, may I ask for the appearance of police officials in this regard so that they may explain the nature of their operations and, if found not in accordance with law, all their personnel who violate should be charged and should cease and desist from engaging in said illegal operations.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, dear colleagues.

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, may I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of the Speaker, Hon. Pantaleon D. Alvarez, the Royal Norwegian Ambassador, His Excellency Erik Forner and party. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). The guests of Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez will please rise. *(Applause)* Welcome to the House of Representatives.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the Hon. Arnel Ty to the Committee on Rules.

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

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Antonio L. Tinio from the ACT TEACHERS Party-List to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). The honorable Rep. Antonio L. Tinio from the ACT TEACHERS Party-List is now recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. TINIO

REP. TINIO. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Magandang hapon po sa mga Kinatawan at mga panauhin sa Kapulungang ito.

Noong isang linggo, Mayo 1, ginunita ng libu-libong Pilipino ang Araw ng Paggawa sa pamamagitan ng malalaking kilos-protesta. Sa Maynila, tinatayang 45,000 ang nagmartsa mula Welcome Rotonda papuntang Liwasang Bonifacio hanggang sa Mendiola. Dagdag dito ang libu-libo pang manggagawa, empleyado ng gobyerno, kabilang ang mga guro at kawani sa mga pampublikong paaralan, magsasaka at pesante, kababaihan, kabataan at iba pang mga sektor na nagtipun-tipon sa iba't ibang sentro ng protesta sa iba pang panig ng bansa.

Libu-libo po, Mr. Speaker, nguni't sa iisang tinig lamang, pinaugong nila sa buong kapuluan ang mga panawagan para sa sahod, trabaho at karapatan. Bilang isa sa mga lumahok sa kanila at Kinatawan ng mga manggagawa sa sektor ng edukasyon, hayaan ninyo akong ulitin sa Kapulungang ito ang isa sa pangunahin nilang mga panawagan: ang pagtaas ng sahod.

Mariing demand ng mga manggagawa sa pribado at pampublikong sektor ang pagtaas ng sahod—substansyal na pagtaas, hindi barya-barya, isang living wage na makaagapay sa nagmamahalang mga bilingin at hindi “libing wage” na hindi makatugon sa kanilang pang-araw-araw na pangangailangan. Mr. Speaker, malayung-malayo ang kasalukuyang minimum wage na naglalaro sa arawang P260 hanggang sa P491, sa daily living wage na tinatantiyang at least P1,019 para sa isang pamilyang may limang miyembro. Kaya naman, noong Mayo 1, idiniin ng mamamayan ang panawagan para sa national minimum wage na P750 kada araw para sa pribadong sektor at P16,000 kada buwan para sa mga kawani sa gobyerno. Naniniwala ang Kinatawng ito na napapanahon nang ipatupad ang isang national minimum wage dahil ito ang kailangan ng mga mamamayan, lalo na ang mayorya nating mga kababayan na naghihirap. Kaya, panawagan namin kay Pangulong Duterte na gawing legislative priority ng kanyang administrasyon ang panukalang imandato ang national daily minimum wage na P750 para sa mga manggagawa sa pribadong sektor. Kailangan din na kagyat na ipasá ng Kongresong ito ang mga panukalang rebisahin ang Salary Standardization Law upang itaas sa P16,000 per month ang minimum na suweldo ng mga kawani sa gobyerno o Salary Grade 1, mula sa kasalukuyang P9,981, at partikular sa sektor ng edukasyon, itaas sa P25,000 ang minimum na suweldo ng mga pampublikong guro o Salary Grade 11, mula sa kasalukuyang P19,620.

Mr. Speaker at mga kasamahan, nababahala kami na sa Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 o ang legislative and policy blueprint ng pamahalaang Duterte, walang inilahad na plano para sa tama o disentang pasahod at salary increase para sa manggagawa natin sa pribado at pampublikong sektor. Bilang mga Kinatawan ng mga guro at kawani sa basic at tertiary education, na sa pampublikong sektor ay bumubuo sa mayorya ng mga empleyado, ako at ang kapwa Kinatawan ko mula sa ACT TEACHERS Party-List na si Hon. France L. Castro ay matagal nang nananawagan para sa isang makabuluhang salary increase gaya ng nauna ko nang nabanggit. Gusto naming makita na si Pangulong Duterte ay may solidong commitment na itaas ang sahod ng mga manggagawa at empleyado sa pribado at sa pampublikong sektor. At kaugnay ng suweldo ng mga manggagawa at empleyado sa pampublikong sektor, lalong kailangan ang malinaw na commitment dito ni Pangulong Duterte dahil may pananaw ang kasalukuyang Budget Secretary niya na si Secretary Diokno na masyado na umanong mataas ang sinusuweldo ng mga government employees lalo na iyong nasa mababa at panggitnang antas. Totoo, kabilang ang Salary Standardization Act amendments sa LEDAC priorities ng kasalukuyang administrasyon pero kung pagbabatayan ang naunang pahayag ni Kalihim Diokno dito sa Kongreso, ito ay nasa balangkas pa rin at walang ipinag-iba sa salary standardization ng nakaraang administrasyon.

Para sa amin, hindi ito nakasasapat bilang tugon sa panawagan ng ating mga guro at kawani dahil, una, ito ang panukalang barya-baryang salary increase—tinatayang P500 per month lamang para sa mga low-and middle-level employees gaya ng mga guro, mga nurse sa gobyerno, at iba pa na tingi-tingi pa mula 2016 hanggang 2019. Samantala, doble o aabot sa triple pa nga ang increase para sa mga may mataas na posisyon sa gobyerno at mataas na opisyal.

Isa pa, balak ng SSL na nasa balangkas noong nakaraang administrasyon nina dating Pangulong Aquino at DBM Secretary Abad na ipatupad ang sistemang pasahod sa ilalim ng Executive Order No. 201, series of 2016 at EO 80, series of 2012, na imbes o sa halip na substansyal na itaas ang suweldo, magbibigay ng mga bonus at insentibo batay sa performance ng kawani. Ang sistemang pasahod na ito ay katulad ng wage policy sa pribadong sektor na sinimulan ng two-tiered wage system ng Department of Labor and Employment kung saan mapapanatiling maliit ang sahod o mapapanatiling mababa ang sahod, ang minimum wage, dahil itinutulak ang antas ng minimum wage sa antas ng poverty level at nagtutulak sa manggagawa na kamtin o higitan pa ang nakatakdang output bago bigyan ng bonus o insentibo. Sa ibang salita, pagtitipid sa labor cost ng kapitalista habang pinipiga ang lakas ng manggagawa.

Ang mukha ng wage policy na ito, iyong two-tiered wage system, ang equivalent nito sa pampublikong sektor ay ang Performance-Based Incentive System na, ayon sa EO No. 201, series of 2016 ay binubuo ng Productivity Enhancement Incentive o PEI at Enhanced Performance-Based Bonus. Ito raw ay “in recognition of government personnel who play a greater role and carry heavier responsibility in attaining performance targets and delivering results.” Kakabit nito ang Strategic Performance Management System o SPMS, “a mechanism that links employee performance with organizational performance to enhance the performance orientation of the compensation system.”

Kung tatanungin ang ating mga kawani, ang mga sistemang ito ay mga neo-liberal na mekanismong mapanlinlang at mapanghati sa kanilang hanay, mga pamamaraan na higit na pagsasamantala sa mga kawani sa publikong sektor na hinango mula sa pamamaraan ng pribadong sektor. Magbibigay ng insentibo para kunwari ay itataas ang kikitain mo, pero dudugin ka muna sa pagtatrabaho para matapatan o mahigitan ng ahensya ang “performance targets,” na parang hindi pa labis ang pagtatrabaho mo sa bigat ng work load mo. Mas mataas na insentibo para sa mga mababangong performance statistics pagdating ng panahon ng assessment, o kaya ay kompetisyon sa pagitan ng mga dibisyon o opisina sa halip na pagtutulungan at iisang kilos para sa serbisyong publiko. Lahat ng ito, habang iniisnab ng gobyerno ang matagal nang panawagan para sa pagtaas ng suweldo—tanungin ang public school teachers, at sasabihin nila sa inyo na ang RPMS ay “Regulasyong Pahirap kay Ma’am at Sir,” hindi Results-Based Performance Management System na nadagdag pa sa kanilang tambak nang clerical at administrative work, bukod sa kanilang pagtuturo.

Para sa Kinatawanang ito, dapat nang ibasura ang mga mekanismo gaya ng two-tiered wage system sa pribadong sektor at panukalang Productivity Incentives Bill para din sa pribadong sektor, at Performance-Based Incentive System, SPMS, RPMS, at PBB sa pampublikong sektor. Pakinggan natin ang maliwanag na kahilingan ng mga mamamayan para sa nakabubuhay na sahod, at para sa isang polisiyang peryodikong mag-aangat sa kita ng mga Pilipino kasabay ng pagmahal ng presyo ng mga bilihin na batay sa pangangailangan ng kanilang mga pamilya.

Ang mga panawagang ito ay tumutugma sa pinakahuling Ulat ng Bayan national survey ng Pulse Asia Research, Inc., na nagsasabing mga isyung pang-ekonomiko ang nais ng mga Pilipino na kagyat na resolbahin ni Pangulong Duterte at ng kanyang administrasyon. Sa partikular, ang pagtaas ng sahod ang nangungunang interes ng 43 percent ng mga Pilipino. Sinusundan ito ng panawagang kontrolin ng pamahalaan ang inflation, 41 percent, at ang paglikha ng mga trabaho, 39 percent.

Naniniwala ang Kinatawang ito na ang mga nangungunang interes sa ngayon ng mga Pilipino ay siya ring dapat nangungunang prayoridad ng administrasyon ni Pangulong Duterte. Kaya, sa Kapulungang ito, nananawagan ako sa lahat ng mga kapwa kong Mambabatas, na ipatupad ang national minimum wage na P750 kada araw, P16,000 minimum monthly salary para sa mga kawani ng gobyerno, at P25,000 naman para sa Teacher I.

Maraming salamat po.

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the Honorable Tinio to the Committee on Rules.

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

REP. MERCADO. At this juncture, Mr. Speaker, may I respectfully move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of our Deputy Speaker, the Hon. Frederick "Erick" F. Abueg, the Hon. Gil "Kabarangay" P. Acosta and the Hon. Franz E. Alvarez of Palawan, the following: honorable Board Member Winston Arzaga, Barangay Captain Angelita B. Dalam, Kagawad Arnel O. Dalma, Kagawad Reynaldo Y. Tepait, Kagawad Ricardo R. Rosales, Kagawad Bariri D. Dabantes, Kagawad Teresita M. Ibarra, Kagawad Ernesto G. Elibeto, and Kagawad Luzviminda D. Elibeto of Barangay Luzviminda, province of Palawan.

I so move, Mr. Speaker. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). The guests of the Representatives of the three districts of the province of Palawan, welcome to the House of Representatives.

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I now move for the recognition of the Gentleman from the Third District, Negros Oriental, the Hon. Arnolfo A. Teves Jr. for his privilege speech.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). The honorable Rep. Arnolfo "Arnie" A. Teves Jr. of the Third District of Negros Oriental is recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. TEVES

REP. TEVES. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon. And good afternoon everybody.

I rise here again today to bring to attention the fact that in Region VII, mayroon pa rin kaming drug testing. Sa tingin ko, nakalimutan na ng buong Pilipinas iyong drug testing sa LTO, but in Region VII, it is still being implemented. So, I would like to bring this to the attention of the nation, and I would like to ask

why it is still being implemented in Region VII. We, in Negros Oriental which is already part of the Negros Island Region or Region XVIII, all our constituents who seek to have a license or who deal with the LTO are still mandated or obliged to take the drug test. Ang rason nila sa akin, mayroon daw TRO dahil may kaso iyong isang entity laban sa LTO. At sabi daw ng korte ay dapat ipagpatuloy ang drug testing. Ang tanong ko, bakit nagdurusa ang taumbayan dahil sa kaso ng dalawang ito? What am I trying to drive at? What was the original intention of the drug testing? To be able to test if people are using drugs or not?

Now, ang nakita ko, itinigil na nga sa buong bayan dahil, I think, it is unconstitutional. Ang pakay na lang nila ngayon is maipagpatuloy ang negosyo. Ayaw nilang matigil iyong negosyo nila sa drug testing, hindi ko alam kung kausap ng LTO or kumikita ba ang taga-LTO dito, basta gusto kong malaman, ng taumbayan at malaman ng ating Committee on Transportation na sa Region VII, mayroon pa ring drug testing. Hinihiling ko sana na matigil na ito kaagad at kung mayroon man silang kaso ay huwag nang idamay ang taumbayan.

That is all for now, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the Hon. Arnolfo Teves to the Committee on Rules.

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

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Gentleman from the Party-List MAGDALO, the honorable Rep. Garci C. Alejano, be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). Rep. Gary C. Alejano of the Party-List MAGDALO is now recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ALEJANO

REP. ALEJANO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I just would like to correct that my first name is Gary po.

Mr. Speaker, my esteemed colleagues and countrymen, a pleasant day to everyone.

I rise today concerning the recent incident of harassment of Filipino fishermen by the Chinese Navy in the West Philippine Sea.

In an archipelagic country like the Philippines, fishing is one of the main sources of livelihood. Many of our coastal provinces have fishing communities that rely heavily on fish stocks and other marine life. Therefore,

accessibility to fishing grounds is of high importance and must be ensured at all times. However, this is not the case in the West Philippine Sea where some of our fishermen are still being restricted access from our very own waters.

Since 2012, Chinese forces have been occupying the Scarborough Shoal and have established essentially a blockade in the area. The Scarborough Shoal, an area which is well within the 200-nautical mile, Exclusive Economic Zone of the Philippines, is a prime fishing ground. The Chinese Coast Guard has maintained its presence around the shoal as well as in other waters in the West Philippine Sea preventing Filipino fishermen from going near it for fear of being harassed. In fact, there have already been a number of reported cases of Filipino fishermen being harassed by the Chinese Coast Guard and Navy in the past.

The most recent one before the Union Banks incident was last September when Chinese Coast Guard vessels prevented Filipino fishermen from fishing in the Scarborough Shoal. The fishermen pleaded to allow them to fish but the Chinese Coast Guard continued to put pressure on them causing them to leave out of fear.

If we may recall last October, after his state visit in China, the President proudly announced that Filipino fishermen could go back and fish again in our waters in the West Philippine Sea. This seems to be after seeking permission from China to let our fishermen fish in the waters that are actually within our very own EEZ. Despite the assurance of the President, there still have been incidents of Chinese harassments on Filipino fishermen.

On April 19, 2017, a television news program initially reported the alleged harassment of the Filipino fishermen by the Chinese Coast Guards in the Union Banks. The Union Banks is a large atoll in the center of Spratly Islands in the West Philippine Sea located 180 nautical miles west of Palawan which is within the Philippines' EEZ.

The news report immediately caught my attention because of the alarming incident. I then decided to meet with the fishermen involved. On April 22, I personally visited the Sisiman Village in Mariveles, Bataan to talk with the local fishermen involved in the reported incident. Allow me to relay the incidents that happened in Union Banks based on the testimonies of the fishermen. On March 27, *Princess Johanna*, a fishing boat with a crew of 25 left Mariveles to sail to Union Banks. They usually visit the Union Banks every year or when catch is scarce in their traditional fishing grounds, among them is the Commodore Reef in the Spratly Islands. On April 5, they arrived in Union Banks; when they arrived the fishermen noticed that there were already erected concrete structures which were not present last year. Thirty minutes after dropping anchor, a gray

speedboat with a crew of seven in camouflage uniform approached them and immediately fired shots into the air. Photographs of soldiers of the People's Liberation Army and Navy of China in uniform were presented to them as they confirmed that they resemble the ones they encountered in Union Banks.

The crew scampered and hid in the boat. They stayed on the opposite side of the boat from where the gray speedboat was. They remained at the opposite side from where the gray speedboat was whenever it moves around.

The crew of the gray speedboat tried to speak with the fishermen but it was in a language unfamiliar to them. Aside from the gray speedboat, the fishermen also noticed the presence of a gray ship nearby. The fishermen confirmed that, indeed, it was a gray ship after some photographs were shown to them by this Representation.

Instead of hauling in the anchor, the fishermen cut it off and sailed right away. They were chased down by the gray Chinese speedboat while firing shots into the air. However, they also noticed that there were shots fired near the boat or the *katig* of the boat. This implies that there may be an intention to damage the boat, or even worse, to harm the crew of the boat.

The fishermen immediately went back to Mariveles after that incident and decided to keep the issue to themselves as they are clueless on what action to take and for fear of retaliation from the Chinese. The story only went public after a member of the boat owners' association in the village told the story to a local journalist. When the story finally reached the attention of the government, some personnel of the Philippine Coast Guard went to Mariveles to investigate and ask the fishermen about the incident. Members of the Philippine Coast Guard even chided the fishermen why they told the media first about the incident rather than report it to them. The fishermen told them that they do not know what to do.

The *Princess Johanna* boat and some of its crew sailed out again to fish on April 19. However, two fishermen decided to stay behind because of the trauma they experienced in Union Banks. The fishermen shared that there were also other incidents in the past when some members of their association experienced harassment while fishing in Scarborough Shoal and First Thomas Shoal by the Chinese Coast Guard using water cannon and firing warning shots in the air. Aside from the instances of harassment, the fishermen are also alarmed with the environmental impact of the activities conducted by the Chinese in the sea. Many of the coral reefs have already been destroyed due to sea activities made by the Chinese.

The dialogue with the fishermen of Mariveles revealed that the harassment incident in the Union Banks was instigated by the Chinese Navy and not the

Chinese Coast Guard as earlier reported. This revealing information makes the incident more unsettling than previously thought. A white ship refers to the coast guard. Meanwhile, the gray ship, as what the fishermen confirmed to have seen in Union Banks, refers to the navy of any country. The function of the coast guard is more to enforce maritime law and conduct search and rescue while the navy is for war fighting.

The presence and involvement of the Chinese Navy, a war fighting force, in the recent aggressive action of China against our fishermen should raise huge concern. For one, the action of the Chinese Navy could trigger the Mutual Defense Treaty and may further escalate tension in the West Philippine Sea area. Another equally important concern is the plight of our fishermen. Chinese forces continue to prevent them from fishing in the area, thereby affecting largely their livelihood. It is also our fishermen who are taking the brunt of Chinese presence in the area.

The actions of the Chinese forces run counter to the Permanent Court of Arbitration's decision which held that Filipinos have traditional fishing rights in the West Philippine Sea. However, as we all know, the President himself deliberately chose not to recognize the Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling which could have been our card and leverage at the very least in ensuring that Filipino fishermen maintain access to their source of livelihood.

Aside from the implications of the situation in the West Philippine Sea, the Union Banks incident also exposed the inadequacy of communication and reporting mechanism between the concerned government agencies and Filipino fishermen affected by the harassment of Chinese forces. The Mariveles fishermen raised that their only communication with the government agency is with the PAGASA which provides weather updates. They could not contact the Philippine Coast Guard since it only uses a short-distance radio communication. The fishermen even bragged that they are very much advanced than the Philippine Coast Guard, our own coast guard, because they have a marine band that can connect them internationally. Furthermore, when asked if there was any instance that they were met by local government agencies regarding the issue of competing claims in the West Philippine Sea, their answer is "none." No one came to them to discuss their role on the issue and what to do in case they encounter any form of harassment from other claimant States, considering that fisherfolk are one of the main stakeholders in the issue.

Now, let us see what we can learn from the Union Banks incident. Despite our supposedly renewed and warmer relationship with China, they are still waging aggressive actions in the West Philippine Sea. Regardless of the standing of the Philippine-China relations, China will continue

its expansionism and assertion of control in the Southeast Asian and Pacific regions to achieve their strategic objectives.

It is highly important that all stakeholders on the competing claims in the West Philippine Sea be introduced and educated regarding the issue. This in turn calls for a comprehensive and clear strategy on the West Philippine Sea issue which will guide the actions of all stakeholders, from national level agencies, local government units, and down to every fisherman that may be affected. The strategy should detail, including but not exclusive, how the livelihood of the affected fishermen will be supported and how their safety at sea will be ensured.

We should give proper attention on modernizing our security forces, particularly the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine Coast Guard. During this critical period, as the country is snared in maritime disputes with neighboring countries, instruments of government for protection of our territory and its citizen should be strengthened.

To my colleagues here in Congress, I call on this Body to consider the gravity of the Union Banks incident. This recent case of harassment on our fishermen instigated by the Chinese Navy, no less, should be condemned in the strongest terms. A diplomatic protest should be filed accordingly against China for harassing Filipino fishermen within the EEZ of the Philippines. The House of Representatives, through its appropriate committee, should also conduct an inquiry on the incident in order to identify possible policy actions, especially on establishing a strategy that will guide the actions of stakeholders and would capacitate concerned government agencies. On my end, this Representation has already communicated with concerned Executive departments and local government units to call their attention and cooperation in addressing the issue at hand. I do hope that the same will be favored by this august Body.

Let us not forget the people on the ground facing the everyday consequences of policy decisions. More than the State leaders and officials, it is the people that most deserve the attention and fervent support.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). The Honorable Roque is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, may I know if the good Gentleman from MAGDALO Party-List will yield to a few points of interpellation.

REP. ALEJANO. This Representation is honored to receive questions from the Party-List KABAYAN, Cong. H. Harry L. Roque Jr.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, before I proceed with my interpellation, I would like to commend the good Gentleman from MAGDALO, because I think this is the first time that one of our colleagues has spoken up on this very important topic of fishing and the exercise of the country's sovereign rights over its exclusive economic zone. But, in the course of his privilege speech this afternoon, the good Gentleman from MAGDALO discussed fishing in both Panatag Shoal as well as in the disputed Spratly Islands.

So my first question of course to the good Gentleman, Mr. Speaker, is that if the good Gentleman agrees that, in fact, although, there are issues concerning fishing and sovereign rights in both Panatag, otherwise known as Scarborough and in the Spratlys, that the nature of, and extent of our fishing rights in these two distinct geographical areas are separate and distinct. Would the good Gentleman agree with this conclusion?

REP. ALEJANO. Mr. Speaker, as far as I understand it, in the ruling of the PCA that was given in favor of the Philippines, the Hague has provided that the Philippines has exclusive rights over our exclusive economic zone. That is as far as I understand it, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, Mr. Speaker, perhaps, let me elucidate a bit on the decision of the UN Tribunal on the Law of the Sea on our arbitration with China.

What the good Gentleman from MAGDALO stated earlier, in fact, is the rule that is recognized in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and that is in the exclusive economic zone, coastal States have sovereign rights which include the right to explore and exploit the natural resources thereat including fishing. But the ruling of the tribunal is, in so far as the Scarborough Shoal is concerned, that it is traditional fishing ground, not just of Filipino fishermen, but of Chinese and Vietnamese fishermen as well. That is why earlier, I asked the Gentleman from MAGDALO to confirm that the nature of the fishing rights of the Philippines in Scarborough differs from the Spratlys because according to that arbitral tribunal, we cannot claim exclusive fishing rights in Scarborough since it was recognized as traditional fishing right not only of Filipino fishermen but of Chinese and Vietnamese fishermen as well. Therefore, the distinction between these two areas is that Spratlys being contested, it is our position that we have exclusive fishing rights in our EEZ in the Spratlys, whereas, we cannot assert this exclusivity in the Scarborough, precisely because, the UN Tribunal for the Law of the Sea had already ruled that it is covered by traditional fishing rights.

REP. ALEJANO. Thank you for that information, Mr. Speaker. But nonetheless, considering that that area is a traditional fishing ground for the claimant States like Vietnam, China and the Philippines, we should have free access to those areas without being physically harassed especially by the Chinese Coast Guard and the Chinese Navy. That is what I am concerned about because before the issue went out in the open, and became internationalized, before fishermen from this country freely fished in these areas without harassment from anybody else especially from China.

REP. ROQUE (H.). The Gentleman, Mr. Speaker, is correct in that the tribunal, after it had ruled that it is traditional fishing rights of the Philippines, China and Vietnam, ruled that it was unlawful therefore for China to have excluded our fishermen from fishing in Scarborough. But my point, Mr. Speaker, is, despite the ruling that it was unlawful for China to exclude us, nonetheless, as far as the Scarborough Shoal is concerned, we cannot claim to have exclusive right to fish in the area because it is a right that we share with China and Vietnam so much so that neither China, Vietnam nor the Philippines can exclude any of the fishermen from fishing in the Scarborough Shoal. Is this not an accurate restatement of the ruling of the UNCLOS tribunal, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ALEJANO. Yes, thank you for that information, Mr. Speaker. It is specifically stated in the lawfulness of China's action regarding traditional fishing rights and the Gentleman from KABAYAN is correct that China had interfered with these rights and restricted access to our fishermen; and that our country should assert that our fishermen should not only be given free access to the area, but our government must have a course of action in order to support our fishermen going to these areas.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Therefore, because of the different nature of the controversy that we have in the Scarborough, we have actually pending in this Chamber a resolution authored by this Representation asking already the Executive to convene a special committee that could negotiate with both China and Vietnam on the issue of joint fishing in the Scarborough because after all, even China and Vietnam, adversaries as they are because of the Spratlys, have successfully concluded a joint fishing and a joint maritime patrol agreement despite their unresolved controversy over the Spratlys.

Now, may I know if the good Gentleman from MAGDALO supports this initiative to already formalize and implement the ruling of the UNCLOS tribunal, to implement the regime of joint fishing in the Scarborough Shoal as well? At least, I should say.

REP. ALEJANO. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I support that initiative. Actually, we are hopeful of the proposed code of conduct that will be accordingly completed within the year as something that is enforceable or workable within the claimant States in order to lessen the instability in South China Sea. So, I agree with the proposal of the Gentleman from KABAYAN but I just would like to inform the Body that right now, some of the fishermen from Zambales and Pangasinan are fishing in Scarborough but the number of activities have been reduced because they cannot even go inside the lagoon of the Scarborough Shoal considering the fact that that area is very harsh—the weather condition in that area is very harsh and their only opportunity to seek refuge is within the shoal. However, there is a Chinese Coast Guard guarding the mouth of that Shoal and that our fishermen have to go back to mainland Philippines in order to seek shelter from any bad weather coming to that area.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, in fact I confirm that I have received the same information that although our fishermen have since been allowed to fish in the area of Scarborough, the Chinese have not allowed, in fairness, any fishermen to enter the lagoon. That includes Chinese fishermen which, I think, is a violation also of the ruling of the arbitral tribunal because the Tribunal, when it ruled that the Scarborough was a traditional fishing ground did not distinguish between the lagoon within Scarborough and the waters outside of the lagoon. But my question is, as far as Spratlys is concerned, it being contested between at least five claimant countries, will the Gentleman agree that the issue of fishing is far more difficult to resolve as in fact the issue of fishing inevitably is intertwined with the issue on conflicting claims to islands which generate this maritime territory in the first place? Will the Gentleman from MAGDALO agree with this conclusion?

REP. ALEJANO. Yes. I agree, Mr. Speaker, considering the fact that the presence of the claimant States in the area is not only on the issue of sovereignty on those areas, but also the protection of their own fishermen and the exploitation of that area for the benefit of their own citizens. I agree that coming to an agreement for fishing rights in those areas will unnecessarily drag the issue of sovereignty therein.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the Gentleman from MAGDALO knows about this fact, but we do not have to go far from this august Chamber of Congress to realize that China's conduct in compelling us to restrain from the exercise of our sovereignty has reached this very hall of Congress.

If the Gentleman from MAGDALO is not cognizant of this fact, the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, and I believe Mr. Speaker is a member

of that Body, was scheduled to conduct a formal committee hearing in the island of Kalayaan, which is in the disputed Spratlys area. We made it as far as Puerto Princesa, but we were unfortunately prevented from going to the island because of a confluence of events, including weather conditions and the threat from China that we should not proceed with the investigation.

Does the Gentleman know about this fact?

REP. ALEJANO. I am not aware of the specifics of that fact, Mr. Speaker, but I have heard about that, that contingents from Congress planned to visit Pag-asa Island but were prevented, due to bad weather, as I have heard it from the news, from proceeding to Pag-asa in order to visit our troops there, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). So, may I know from the good Gentleman from MAGDALO if he agrees with my observation that it is very important, as a matter of asserting Philippine sovereignty over Kalayaan, that this Chamber, this august Chamber of Congress proceed with its planned public hearing on the proposed creation of the West Philippine Sea Development Authority to be held in the island of Kalayaan itself, ...

REP. ALEJANO. I agree.

REP. ROQUE (H.). ... despite protestations from China, and despite warnings from the Department of National Defense.

REP. ALEJANO. Yes, I agree, Mr. Speaker. In fact, in the last Congress, I requested the Department of National Defense and the Department of Foreign Affairs to allow Members of Congress to visit our troops in the Kalayaan in order to show support for our troops, to assert our claims there, and to boost the morale of our troops and to show the international community that we are determined in asserting our rights in West Philippine Sea.

However, with the same reasons given to Congressman Roque, there are other reasons why we could not proceed to Pag-asa Island. But I guess, Mr. Speaker, it is high time that our country show to the world that we are serious in our claims on West Philippine Sea. And Pag-asa is part of the occupied islands of the Philippines. We are not going to other islands that are occupied by any country. Pag-asa is part of our territory as per Republic Act No. 9522.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, and my last question to the Gentleman from MAGDALO, if he will agree with my assertion that even under a threat from China that they will shoot down the plane carrying the Congressmen intending to hold the public hearing in



the province in the island of Kalayaan, that we should nonetheless persist, as an act of patriotism, in order to assert Philippine sovereignty in the disputed Spratlys Group of Islands.

REP. ALEJANO. Yes, Mr. Speaker. In fact, those actions are non-military. As claimed by some of our Filipino brothers, we should not make any statements, we should not take any actions that will provoke China because we cannot afford to go to war with China. I must emphasize that options are available in asserting our rights over West Philippine Sea without resorting to war. In fact, increasing our civilian activities like research, tourism activities, and fishing activities over those areas would strengthen our claims. Those activities' increase in number would show that we are really determined in asserting our rights in the West Philippine Sea.

REP. ROQUE (H.). I have the same conclusion, Mr. Speaker, as the Gentleman from MAGDALO, that a public hearing of Congress in Kalayaan will bolster our claim to the Spratlys because that is a very strong evidence of the exercise of legislative jurisdiction, a public hearing conducted in what is truly and uncontroverted to be Philippine territory. Now, our good Chairman of the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization informed me that our next meeting is on May 17, but may I know from the Gentleman from MAGDALO, if we have the opportunity to conduct the hearing or a public hearing on the bill in Kalayaan, can we look forward to the pleasure of his company on this visit?

REP. ALEJANO. It would be my honor, Mr. Speaker, to go to Spratlys, especially Pag-asa, in order to visit our troops there, in order to show to them that Congress, as an institution, is behind our troops there. You know, those areas are isolated and they are replaced once every four to six months and with our presence there, definitely, it will boost their morale. I would like to thank the Gentleman from KABAYAN for considering my support in that very noble initiative.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, Mr. Speaker, I have no further questions for the Gentleman from MAGDALO, Congressman Alejano, and I would like to reiterate my commendation to him for discussing this very important issue that involves not just national security but national sovereignty, territory and patrimony, as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ALEJANO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that support from Congressman Harry Roque.

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, there being no other Member who wishes to interpellate the Hon.

Gary C. Alejano, I move that we refer the speech of the Honorable Alejano to the Committee on Rules.

REP. ALEJANO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MERCADO. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). There is a motion to refer the speech and the interpellation to the appropriate committee. Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Lady from the Party-List KABATAAN, the honorable Rep. Sarah Jane Elago, be recognized to avail the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). The honorable Rep. Sarah Jane I. Elago of the Party-List KABATAAN is now recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ELAGO

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, good afternoon.

In December last year, the Filipino youth celebrated and embraced a mighty development: the inclusion of an P8.3-billion appropriation in the 2017 National Budget to cover the tuition fees of over 1.4 million students of 114 SUCs in the country. This potentially makes the Philippines at par with some of the great nations of the world—including Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Germany—when it comes to providing free tuition in state schools.

Mr. Speaker, with this, the Philippine Congress has set in motion the reversal of the long-standing state policy of leaving public college to the grasps of commercialization. This simple yet game-changing move has shattered the illusion cast by naysayers and conservatives who have long sought division and spread cowardice by saying that this is not possible.

Mr. Speaker, we must note, however, that the move to introduce free tuition is no gift. This development did not spring from just the benevolence of our colleagues in Congress, especially in the Senate. In fact, this is a victory for the student and youth movement which has long fought for the right to education. This is a recognition of the long-standing clamor of the Philippine student movement for the government to veer away from letting schools charge and profit from public higher education.

Mr. Speaker, it all seemed too good to be true, but when the budget was signed, the President inked a dangerous caveat—that it shall be implemented conditionally, to benefit the poor but deserving.

It took the CHED and the DBM almost six months to put their brains together to think of an ingenious way of following the President's order while upholding the façade that they are for free education. And it does not need a genius, however, to uncover their lies.

The IRR or the implementing guidelines of the free tuition policy promised free tuition for all those who are under the 4Ps and for those who are recipient of the Student Financial Assistance Programs or StuFAPs. The remaining eligible students will be ranked according to their capita household income, similar in essence to UP's socialized tuition system or STS. For non-StuFAP beneficiaries, sadly, the CHED and DBM did not provide any other option aside from hoping for extra slots, or for their income to be low enough for them to be considered poor. Despite these, CHED admits that not all enrollees for the next academic year will receive free tuition.

The IRR of the free tuition policy just operationalized its prioritization of the poor but academically able by adopting the Listahanan 2.0 database management system, used under the 4Ps, to discriminate against the poor. It uses a much-taunted proxy means test or PMT that assigns weights to certain factors related to welfare, much to the tune of MORES-SEC being employed by UP or the Socialized Tuition System. The PMT is a metric pushed by the World Bank to determine beneficiaries of social protection programs under its wing.

By subjecting the FTP or the free tuition policy to the 4Ps, it will only serve to justify this flawed poverty alleviation measure and further absolve the government from resolving the roots of poverty, in this case, the lack of education of its citizens. Now, 4Ps without the context—support of national industrialization, rural development, among others, will just breed discontent among the people. It will only paint the illusion that people get by, while failing to breach the chains of social inequality.

Just like the 4Ps, the FTP will surely earn criticism for attempting to target the poor, instead of utilizing its funds to provide access to all enrollees of 114 SUCs, as what students previously demanded. The CHED and the DBM intend that students compete for their FTP slots and other merit-based programs under the StuFAPs to just access higher education in SUCs.

The FTP clearly wants to subject SUC students to socialized tuition. Learning from the experience of the UP by subjecting students to a competition of poorest of the poor to prove their worthiness, this has resulted in the edging out of the poor by those coming from the upper or middle class who has relative capacity to comply with various requirements imposed by their respective SUCs.

This has grossly resulted in UP's collection of no less than P11 billion from tuition and other school fees

from students. According to CHED's own estimates, at least one million students are expected to enroll in academic year 2017-2018, and the FTP can only shoulder 85 percent of this number, with the computation of P9,345 tuition for 40 units in the next academic year. The remaining 15 percent who are not qualified will probably pay for the full cost of their education.

Worse, the FTP only covers tuition fees and risks bloated collection of other school fees (OSF). For 2017, the DBM estimates a total OSF collections of P4.47 billion. And this figure might go up as we expect SUCs to offset profit losses that will be incurred from the implementation of the policy. There are other red flags.

This has implications in special cases such as in Cagayan State University, which is the only SUC with zero tuition, and in UP, which reaches tuition in excess of P15,000 per semester, as well as a small number of scholarship beneficiaries.

With the FTP, or the free tuition policy, setting the ground for institutionalized reliance on prioritization schemes instead of providing for universal access to education poses added danger as it will set the pretext for our future legislative efforts. In the guise of "social justice" and "prioritizing the poor," the IRR has fine-tuned "free tuition" to be consistent with the current neoliberal policies.

Thus, we call on all our colleagues, students, youth, and the general public to solidly follow through on this initial victory, to continue our fight for free education and demand no tuition collection for the next school year, 2017-2018.

Ang sigaw ng mga iskolar ng bayan, ang sigaw ng kabataan: walang koleksyon, libreng edukasyon dapat nang maipatupad!

Maraming salamat, G. Ispiker. At nananawagan din tayo, sa darating po na Mayo 10, sa buong bansa, magkakaroon ng pambansang araw ng pagkilos ang ating mga iskolar ng bayan at kabataan upang muling manawagan: walang koleksyon, libreng edukasyon.

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

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the Hon. Sarah Jane Elago to the Committee on Rules.

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

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, we have some guests from the local government unit of Batangas City, guests of the Hon. Harry Roque. I move that we acknowledge the presence of the following: Vice Mayor Doc Jun Berberabe, Christopher Gambol, Dante

Valenzuela, Jeff Berberabe, Michael Cascalla, Gloria Lagdameo and Jojo Mercado.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). Guests of the Hon. Harry Roque, welcome to the House of Representatives.

#### APPROVAL OF THE JOURNALS

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve Journal No. 84, dated May 2, 2017, and Journal No. 85, dated May 3, 2017.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; Journal No. 84 of May 2, 2017 and Journal No. 85 of May 3, 2017 are hereby approved.

#### ROLL CALL

REP. MERCADO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we call the roll.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). 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. 86, dated May 8, 2017:*

#### PRESENT

Abayon  
Abellanos  
Abu  
Abueg  
Acharon  
Acop  
Acosta  
Advincula  
Agarao  
Aggabao  
Aglipay-Villar  
Albano  
Alejano  
Almonte  
Alonte  
Alvarez (F.)  
Alvarez (P.)  
Amatong  
Andaya  
Angara-Castillo  
Antonino

Antonio  
Aragones  
Arbison  
Arcillas  
Arenas  
Atienza  
Aumentado  
Bagatsing  
Banal  
Bataoil  
Bautista-Bandigan  
Belaro  
Belmonte (J.C.)  
Benitez  
Bernos  
Bertiz  
Biazon  
Billones  
Biron  
Bolilia  
Bondoc

Bordado  
Bravo (A.)  
Brosas  
Bulut-Begtang  
Cagas  
Calderon  
Calixto-Rubiano  
Caminero  
Campos  
Castelo  
Castro (F.L.)  
Castro (F.H.)  
Catamco  
Celeste  
Cerilles  
Chipeco  
Co  
Cojuangco  
Collantes  
Cortuna  
Cosalan  
Crisologo  
Cua  
Cuaresma  
Cueva  
Dalipe  
Daza  
De Jesus  
De Vera  
Del Mar  
Deloso-Montalla  
Dimaporo (A.)  
Durano  
Dy  
Elago  
Erice  
Eriguel  
Ermita-Buhain  
Escudero  
Espina  
Espino  
Estrella  
Fariñas  
Fernando  
Ferrer (J.)  
Ferrer (L.)  
Fortun  
Fortuno  
Fuentebella  
Garbin  
Garcia (G.)  
Garcia (J.E.)  
Garcia-Albano  
Garin (R.)  
Garin (S.)  
Gasataya

Gatchalian  
Geron  
Go (M.)  
Gonzaga  
Gonzales (A.P.)  
Gonzales (A.D.)  
Gonzalez  
Gullas  
Hernandez  
Herrera-Dy  
Hofer  
Jalosjos  
Javier  
Kho  
Khonghun  
Labadlabad  
Lacson  
Lagman  
Lanete  
Laogan  
Lazatin  
Leachon  
Lee  
Limkaichong  
Lobregat  
Lopez (B.)  
Lopez (C.)  
Lopez (M.L.)  
Loyola  
Macapagal-Arroyo  
Maceda  
Malapitan  
Manalo  
Mangaoang  
Mangudatu (S.)  
Marcoleta  
Marcos  
Martinez  
Mercado  
Mirasol  
Montoro  
Nieto  
Noel  
Nogralas (J.J.)  
Nogralas (K.A.)  
Nolasco  
Nuñez-Malanyaon  
Oaminal  
Olivarez  
Ong (E.)  
Ong (H.)  
Ortega (P.)  
Ortega (V.N.)  
Pacquiao  
Paduano  
Palma

Pancho	Suansing (H.)
Panganiban	Suarez
Papandayan	Sy-Alvarado
Pichay	Tambunting
Pimentel	Tan (A.)
Pineda	Tan (M.)
Plaza	Tejada
Primicias-Agabas	Teves
Quimbo	Tiangco
Radaza	Ting
Ramirez-Sato	Tinio
Ramos	Tolentino
Relampagos	Tugna
Revilla	Tupas
Roa-Puno	Turabin-Hataman
Robes	Ty
Rocamora	Umali
Rodriguez (I.)	Unabia
Rodriguez (M.)	Unico
Roman	Uy (J.)
Romualdez	Uy (R.)
Roque (H.)	Vargas
Roque (R.)	Velarde
Sacdalan	Veloso
Sagarbarria	Vergara
Sahali	Villafuerte
Salimbangon	Villanueva
Salo	Villaraza-Suarez
Salon	Villarica
Sambar	Villarin
Sandoval	Yap (A.)
Santos-Recto	Yap (V.)
Sarmiento (C.)	Yu
Sarmiento (E.M.)	Zamora (M.C.)
Savellano	Zamora (R.)
Silverio	Zarate
Singson	Zubiri
Suansing (E.)	

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. The roll call shows that 229 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). With 229 Members present, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

#### ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE COMMISSION ON APPOINTMENTS

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move for the election of the following Members to the Commission on Appointments:

*The Deputy Majority Leader read the names of the House Members elected to the Commission on Appointments, per Journal No. 86, dated May 8, 2017.*

Rep. Seth Frederick P. Jalosjos vice Rep. Rodolfo T. Albano III; and

Rep. Rodolfo T. Albano III vice Antonio R. Floirendo Jr.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until tomorrow, May 9, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abueg). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the session is adjourned until May 9, 2017, tomorrow, Tuesday, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

*It was 5:30 p.m.*