



# Congressional Record

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

## House of Representatives

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No. 50

### CALL TO ORDER

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

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

### NATIONAL ANTHEM

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

*Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Please remain standing for the Invocation to be led by our Congresswoman from the Lone District of Davao Occidental, the Hon. Lorna P. Bautista-Bandigan.

*Everybody remained standing for the Invocation.*

### INVOCATION

REP. BAUTISTA-BANDIGAN. Let us put ourselves in the presence of God.

Our most gracious Heavenly Father, we thank You for giving us the opportunity to be in the Philippine House of Representatives to serve our people through the passage of laws that will serve the nation's best interest and change our country for the better.

O Lord, we humbly ask that You bless each one of us with Your wisdom so that we may understand and decide according to Your will.

We lift up to You all the elected officials and every department of our government to work in harmony for the effective and efficient implementation of services the Filipinos need.

Instill in us the desire to do what is right, fair and just to our fellowmen who put their trust in us.

Make us compassionate to those who have less in life. Make us Your channels of grace and mercy so that the beauty of the character of our Lord Jesus Christ will be seen in us, now and always.

Amen.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Amen.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

### ROLL CALL

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

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

The Secretary General will please call the roll.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is reflected in Journal No. 50, dated January 16, 2018.\**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Mme. Speaker, the roll call shows that 222 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). With 222 Members responding to the call, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we defer the approval of the Journal of the previous session.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

\* See ANNEX (printed separately)

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

The Secretary General will please read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

*The Secretary General read the following House Bill and Resolutions on First Reading, Communication, Subpoena Duces Tecum and Committee Report, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:*

BILL ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 6924, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE DEFENSE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Alvarez (P.), Fariñas, Garcia (G.), Alvarez (M.), Sema, Loyola, Almario, Zamora (M.C.) and Teves

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 1575, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE VIOLENT DISPERSAL OF RESIDENTS DURING A DEMOLITION IN BRGY. MABINI, SAN JOSE, OCCIDENTAL MINDORO”

By Representative Elago  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1576, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON DEATH THREATS AND INTIMIDATING MESSAGES RECEIVED BY A STUDENT LEADER FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES DILIMAN”

By Representative Elago  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1577, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE ILLEGAL ARREST AND HARASSMENT OF A YOUTH RESIDENT AFTER THE

VIOLENT DEMOLITION OF HOUSES IN BRGY. MABINI, SAN JOSE, OCCIDENTAL MINDORO”

By Representative Elago  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1578, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE OPERATIONS AND TRANSACTIONS OF AVION BUSINESS PROCESS OUTSOURCING CORPORATION, A LOCAL COMPANY BASED IN LAOAG CITY, ILOCOS NORTE, AND OTHER BUSINESS PROCESS OUTSOURCING COMPANIES, WHICH MAY BE INVOLVED IN OR LINKED TO CHILD PORNOGRAPHY, PROSTITUTION AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING”

By Representative Fariñas  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMUNICATION

Letter dated January 3, 2018 of Salvador C. Medialdea, Executive Secretary, Office of the President, Malacañang, transmitting two (2) original copies of Joint Resolution No. 1 which was signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, entitled:

“JOINT RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE INCREASE IN BASE PAY OF MILITARY AND UNIFORMED PERSONNEL IN THE GOVERNMENT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”  
TO THE ARCHIVES

SUBPOENA DUCES TECUM

Pursuant to Section 150, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives transmitting the Subpoena *Duces Tecum/Ad Testificandum* dated 6 November 2017 issued by Executive Clerk of Court III, Isobel Maria Providencia T. Solis, re: Criminal No. SB-16-CRM-1297, directing Evelyn G. De Jesus, Director II, Human Resource Management Service, House of Representatives to appear before the Sandiganbayan, Seventh Division, Fourth Division Courtroom, 4th Floor, Sandiganbayan Centennial Building, Commonwealth Avenue cor. Batasan Road, Quezon City on 4th day of December 2017, at 8:30 in the morning, then and there to bring the original copy of attached document (Exhibit “B-4”) and to appear and testify on the above-numbered case.

Pursuant to Section 151, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives transmitting the Subpoena

*Duces Tecum* dated 5 December 2017 issued by Officer-in-Charge Maria Janina J. Hidalgo, General Investigation Bureau-C, Field Investigation Office II, Office of the Ombudsman, re: Case No. FF-C-14-0480 directing Honorable Karlo Alexei B. Nograles, Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, to submit within three (3) days from receipt of this Subpoena, the following documents:

1. Clear and certified true copies of the following documents relative to the allocation of funds under Special Allotment Release Order ROCS-08-04094 dated 7 May 2008 amounting to P4.8 Million issued in the name of Congressman Al Francis Bichara (Bichara), 2nd District of Albay:
  - 1.1.1. Letter of Bichara stating his list of priority projects chargeable to his PDAF, addressed to the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives;
  - 1.1.2. Indorsement from the House of Representatives to the Department of Budget and Management, with attached list of priority projects; and
  - 1.1.3. All communication letters and memoranda issued pertaining to the above-mentioned SARO.
2. Attestation/Certification by the Records Custodian under the seal of his/her office that he/she certified and has the custody of the foregoing documents, and that the copy/copies submitted is/are correct copy/copies of the original, or a specific part thereof, as the case may be.

#### COMMITTEE REPORT

Report by the Committee on Transportation (Committee Report No. 570), re H.B. No. 6938, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE SPECIAL PROTECTION OF CHILD PASSENGERS IN MOTOR VEHICLES”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 1319 and 5595

Sponsors: Representatives Sarmiento (C.) and Velarde

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6908  
ON SECOND READING

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we

consider House Bill No. 6908, contained in Committee Report No. 551, as reported out by the Committee on Labor and Employment.

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

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6908, entitled: AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE SECURITY OF TENURE OF WORKERS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES.”

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The period of sponsorship and debate is now open.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Randolph S. Ting, Chairman of the Committee on Labor and Employment, for his sponsorship speech. I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Honorable Ting is recognized for his sponsorship speech.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. TING.

REP. GULLAS. Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

Noong Abril 2016, isa sa pinakamahalagang tinuran ng ating mahal na Pangulo noong panahon ng kanyang kampanya ay ang pagbatikos sa walang katapusang pag-employo sa ating mga kababayan ng mga kompanya bilang kontraktuwal na manggagawa.

\* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

Naging determinado siya na labanan at wakasan ang kontraktuwalisasyon. Marami ang nakiisa sa ganitong layunin sapagkat maliwanag na kinakailangan na ng pagbabago at kailangang matigil na ang pang-aabuso sa ating mga manggagawa. Napakarami na sa kanila ang nilalamon ng isang hindi makatarungang sistema, sistemang hindi ipinagkakaloob ang seguridad sa trabaho at mga benepisyong karapat-dapat nilang tinatanggap.

Mme. Speaker, as fate would have it, President Duterte won and together with it came his promise to give the final blow to this monster, the practice of the so-called “endo.” On August 2016, when the House Committee on Labor and Employment was constituted, we immediately worked towards resolving this injustice that our workers have faced for so long. This move was made to provide legislative support towards the realization of this important campaign promise of the President.

Mme. Speaker, dahil sa aming kagustuhang matugunan agad ang problema ng kontraktuwalisasyon, buong taon ng 2017 ay sinikap naming idaos ang sunod-sunod na mga public hearing at mga konsultasyon upang makabalangkas ng isang makabuluhan, makatarungan at napapanahong batas na makakapagpabuti ng kalagayan ng ating mga manggagawa. Ngayon, sa pagbubukas ng bagong taon at pagbabalik ng Kongreso sa session, taas-noong isinusulong ng Komite ng Panggagawa at Empleyo ang panukalang batas na siniyasat at pinagdebatehan nang mabuti, ang House Bill No. 6908 under Committee Report No. 551, entitled: AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE SECURITY OF TENURE OF WORKERS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES.”

This legislation expressly prohibits labor-only contracting and defines its existence. It also introduces a new provision requiring all persons or entities doing business as job contractors to obtain a license from the Department of Labor and Employment. As additional protection to employees, it declares that the violation of substantive or procedural due process is equivalent to illegal dismissal. Through this Bill, the classification of employees has been clarified and simplified. The benefits of relievers, project and seasonal employees have been made consistent with the principle that all workers must be treated alike, all their benefits made to be at par with that of regular employees. As additional safeguard in preventing the occurrence of 5-5-5 and “endo,” the proposed law, first, entitles an employee who has rendered at least one month of service to a termination pay of one-half month salary; and second, it provides administrative penalties of a fine and a possible closure of business for those engaging in prohibited contract arrangements.

Mme. Speaker, para sa ating bayan at mga manggagawa na siyang kaakibat natin sa pagpapayaman ng ating bansa, hinihiling naming lahat, sampu ng mga miyembro ng Committee on Labor and Employment, na harinawa ay maging karapat-dapat ito sa inyong suporta at pagpapatibay.

We earnestly seek your approval of this Bill.  
Maraming salamat po.

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

REP. ROA-PUNO. Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Tomasito “Tom” S. Villarín of AKBAYAN Party-List for his sponsorship speech. I so move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Hon. Tom Villarín of Party-List AKBAYAN is recognized.

#### SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. VILLARIN

REP. VILLARIN. Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

Mme. Speaker, my dear colleagues, para ho sa isang manggagawang nagpapaaral ng kanyang mga anak, nagpapagamot ng kanyang mga mahal sa buhay, at nagsisikap na itaguyod ang kanyang pamilya araw-araw, wala nang mas nakakatakot pa kundi ang “endo.” That we as a people have been able to coin that term “endo” or end of contract attests to the fact that many Filipino workers have been struggling with the exploitative practice of labor contractualization for a long time. Make no mistake, contractualization as a way to skirt our laws that protect the welfare of our workers is the worst form of labor injustice.

Mme. Speaker, in past Congresses, attempts were made in this august Chamber to provide in law what our workers lack in life. However, much to our workers’ frustration, such attempts have failed. Now, my dear colleagues, under the Seventeenth Congress, we have the chance to make it right for our workers. Let me enumerate the salient points of this proposed law.

First, the Bill prohibits hiring workers for limited periods of time under the so-called “fixed-term employment contracts.” This prohibition addresses one of the principal forms of contractualization which is the hiring workers under 5-5-5 arrangement.

Second, the Bill changes the definition of prohibited arrangements known as “labor-only contracting.” Sa ilalim ho ng kasalukuyang panukala, ang contractor ay ituturing na labor only at bawal kung ito ay walang sapat na kapital o kagamitan—“labor only.” Bawal din ang contractor kung ito ay walang kontrol sa mga manggagawang mismong nagtatrabaho. Dagdag pa

sa “labor only” ay bawal din ang contractor kung ang gawain nito ay direktang kaugnay sa negosyo ng principal. In short, itong tatlong elemento ay dapat magkakasama doon sa pag-define natin ng “labor-only contracting” at hindi one of the three na arrangements. By providing that any one of these acts constitutes prohibited “labor-only contracting,” our workers are finally protected against this malevolent but unfortunately, widespread practice.

Third, the measure imposes administrative penalties on employers who continue to violate the workers’ right to security of tenure. This changes the present situation where employers exploit workers by hiring them under fixed-term contracts or under labor-only arrangements, without fear of any liability at all. In view of these proposed measures, this Bill is not only what our workers want but also what our workers need. Kung sakaling hindi mapasakanila ang kailangan at karapat-dapat na mapasakanila, hindi natin sila masisisi kung tuluyan na silang mawalan ng kumpiyansa sa Kongresong ito. Hindi natin sila masisisi kung tuluyan na silang mawalan ng pag-asa na may tutulong pa sa kanila.

Clearly, the enduring system that makes the few rich and powerful is the same system that subjects many to unparalleled abuse and exploitation. As their duly elected Representatives, it is incumbent that we make the system fair. Gawin nating patas. Sa ngalan ng pagiging patas, anumang kakulangan sa buhay ay dapat punan sa batas.

Maraming salamat po. Magandang hapon.

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

#### SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6908

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 6908. I so move, Mme. Speaker, Your Honor.

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

#### APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve Journal No. 49 dated January 15, 2018. I so move, Mme. Speaker, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. Journal No. 49 is hereby approved. The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move to suspend the session.

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

*It was 4:24 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 4:26 p.m., the session was resumed.*

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, we would like to acknowledge the presence of some guests in the gallery. In the gallery are the guests of the honorable Deputy Speaker Raneo “Ranie” E. Abu. They are the Tulong Dunong Scholars of the Second District of Batangas headed by Ms. Emerine Legaspi, the coordinator of Congressman Abu’s scholars.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Will the guests of Deputy Speaker Raneo Abu please rise? Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*) The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6772 ON SECOND READING

#### PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 6772, contained in Committee Report No. 509, as reported out by the Committees on Natural Resources, Appropriations, and Ways and Means.

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

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

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

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

\* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6772, entitled: AN ACT ENSURING THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7586, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTEGRATED PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM ACT OF 1992.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The period of sponsorship and debate is now open.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Arnel U. Ty, the honorable Chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources, for his sponsorship speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Hon. Arnel Ty is recognized for his sponsorship speech.

REP. TY. Thank you, Mme. Speaker. The Chairman and the members of the Committee on Natural Resources are ready to defend the Bill and also, Mme. Speaker, we would like to recognize one of the Sponsors of the Bill, Rep. Josephine Ramirez-Sato, who will also answer questions regarding the said Bill.

Mme. Speaker, we would like to also request that we acknowledge the presence of one of the authors, Rep. Ramirez-Sato, who will also defend the said Bill.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Nene Sato for her sponsorship speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Hon. Nene Sato is recognized for her sponsorship speech.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF  
REP. RAMIREZ-SATO

REP. RAMIREZ-SATO. Thank you very much, honorable Speaker. Hon. Arnel Ty, Chairperson of the Committee on Natural Resources, all the coauthors

of this Bill, my fellow advocates in environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation, good afternoon.

I am pleased to sponsor House Bill No. 6772, entitled: AN ACT ENSURING THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7586, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTEGRATED PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM ACT OF 1992. This Bill expanding the National Integrated Protected Areas System or E-NIPAS is both timely and urgently needed. It is timely since we recently commemorated the International Human Rights Day last December 10, 2017. As the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides in Article II, Section 16, “The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.” This E-NIPAS Bill, first and foremost, aims to contribute and uphold the right of every Filipino to a healthy and ecologically balanced environment. It is urgently needed because the Philippines is described as one of the biodiversity hotspots and belonging to one of the 17 megadiverse countries in the world. The Philippines is host to 70 to 80 percent of the world’s life forms and is believed to harbor more diversity of life than any other country on earth on a per hectare basis. However, it is very unfortunate that our country is losing its biodiversity at unprecedented scale. The unmitigated and destructive human activities have put the country in a biodiversity crisis that would take decades to reverse.

Article XII, Section 4 of the 1987 Constitution states that, “The Congress shall, as soon as possible, determine by law the specific limits of forestlands and national parks, marking clearly their boundaries on the ground.” To this end, Republic Act No. 7586, otherwise known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act of 1992 or the NIPAS Act, was passed establishing a system of protected areas within the classification of national park as provided for in the Constitution. The system consists of all areas or islands in the Philippines proclaimed, designated or set aside pursuant to the law, presidential decree, presidential proclamation or executive order, as a national park, game refuge, bird and wildlife sanctuary, wilderness area, strict nature reserve, watershed, mangrove reserve, fish sanctuary, natural and historical landmark, protected and managed landscape or seascape as well as identified virgin forest before the effectivity of the NIPAS Act. The NIPAS Act also provides for the integration of additional areas into the system through a lengthy and careful inclusion procedure. This includes the conduct of suitability assessments, publication and public hearings, which then leads to the issuance of a presidential proclamation and culminates in the final declaration and classification of the land by Congress as a national park.

Since 1992, the year the NIPAS Act became law, 113 had been declared, through presidential proclamations, as protected areas. Out of these 113 proclaimed protected areas, only 13 protected areas have finally proceeded to be legislated by Congress as such in more than 20 years since the NIPAS Act was passed. It is highly imperative, therefore, that the proclaimed protected areas, after the effectivity of the Act, are finally declared as such through congressional fiat as required by the NIPAS Act and as mandated by the Constitution. Further, there are many proclaimed protected areas in the country categorized as initial components that are still unproclaimed under the E-NIPAS Law. These are also identified as key biodiversity areas in the country that is home to endemic and critically-endangered species of flora and fauna.

In this light, Mme. Speaker, House Bill No. 6772 or the E-NIPAS Bill will: 1. Effectively strengthen the management of protected areas; 2. Rationalize and update the protected area management plans; 3. Clearly define the prohibited acts in all protected areas; 4. Ensure participation of indigenous peoples in decision-making for areas under their ancestral domain; and 5. It would institutionalize the budgets for protected areas under the yearly General Appropriations Act.

The following are the highlights of this Bill, Mme. Speaker:

In terms of coverage, the Expanded NIPAS Bill will add 94 new protected areas that were previously declared national parks through presidential proclamation. These protected areas span 15 regions across 53 provinces and cover a total land area of 3,096,846 hectares or approximately 10 percent of our country's total land area. The Protected Area Management Board or the PAMB, tasked to provide overall management and supervision of each protected area will be strengthened and will have an updated composition. In order to ensure efficient day-to-day operations, a Protected Area Management Office or PAMO for each of the protected area, headed by a Protected Area Superintendent with a permanent plantilla position, will be established and a full staff complement will also be appointed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The Protected Area Management Plan that details the long-term framework for the management of each protected area and that guides the preparation of its annual operation plans and budget will also be updated to ensure that climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction and management, waste sewerage and septic management, and gender and development shall form part of the innovative management techniques to be adopted and implemented. This will ensure that the Protected Area Management Plan is harmonized with the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan required under the IPRA Law.

This E-NIPAS Bill will strengthen and uphold the indigenous peoples' right to self-determination.

Ancestral domains, lands of customary rights, shall be accorded due recognition. As part of heritage preservation and the need to conserve biologically-significant areas, ancestral domains occupied and conserved by indigenous peoples and communities shall be recognized, respected, developed and promoted in accordance with the indigenous peoples' knowledge, systems, practices and customary laws. The E-NIPAS Bill will usher in a stricter policy regime for protected areas. Dito po sa expanded NIPAS, sinisigurado nating may ngipin ang batas by expanding and clearly defining new prohibited acts within the protected areas, including the ban on mining, even exploration activities, quarrying, bioprospecting, fishing, poaching and introducing GMOs and other invasive species of flora and fauna.

Provisions imposing stricter fines and penalties for violators, including perpetual disqualification from any public office in case the violator is a government officer, personnel or elected official, are also included.

As in all other pieces of legislation, funding will be a key issue especially in implementing conservation and protection activities. To this end, the E-NIPAS ensures an effective, predictable and reliable funding and financing mechanism for protected areas through the Integrated Protected Area Fund, a trust fund for each protected area derived from the income, fees, donations and grants. These will also ensure annual appropriations from the General Appropriations Act under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources since most of the declared national parks have little or no budget allocation as they are not yet included in the NIPAS. Upon enactment of this Bill, all the 94 new protected areas will have annual appropriations in the GAA.

Mme. Speaker, Your Honors, we all know how unique, beautiful and diverse our country is, but we also have heard of the unfortunate stories on the seemingly wanton acts that spoil and destroy our environment and biodiversity. These must be addressed and stopped urgently and immediately. We are therefore talking here of the patrimony of our nation, the legacy we have to pass on to our children and our children's children.

In view of all these, Mme. Speaker, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

Thank you very much, Mme. Speaker.

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

#### SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6772

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 6772. I so move, Mme. Speaker, Your Honor.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6573

*Continuation*

#### PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we take up an item in the Unfinished Business and continue the consideration of House Bill No. 6573 contained in Committee Report No. 431 and direct the Secretary General to read only the title of the measure.

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6573, entitled: AN ACT PROHIBITING HAZING AND REGULATING OTHER FORMS OF INITIATION RITES OF FRATERNITIES, SORORITIES, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8049 ENTITLED "AN ACT REGULATING HAZING AND OTHER FORMS OF INITIATION RITES IN FRATERNITIES, SORORITIES, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR."

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

*It was 4:43 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 4:44 p.m., the session was resumed.*

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the Bill is that we are in the period of sponsorship and debate. I move that we recognize the Chairman of the Committee on Justice, the Hon. Reynaldo V. Umali.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER. (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Hon. Reynaldo Umali, Chairman of the Committee on Justice, is recognized.

REP. UMALI. Mme. Speaker, I am ready to answer any interpellation or question that may be raised before the Plenary.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, with no other Member who wishes to interpellate or to speak against the measure, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, with no Committee or individual amendments, I move that we close the period of amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection?

REP. DAZA. Mme. Speaker, objection.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). What is the pleasure of the Honorable Daza?

REP. DAZA. Yes, I would like to request for a copy of the Committee Report so that I will be given a chance to look over the provisions and decide whether I will propound questions and interpellate the distinguished Chairman of the Committee on Justice.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, copies of the Committee Report have been distributed weeks ago or even months before, even before the break, that is why we took it up under the Unfinished Business, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Honorable Daza is recognized.



REP. DAZA. Yes, I am not disputing the statement of the Majority Leader, but everybody knows that during the recess, all the papers on the desk were removed. So, may I request for a deferment, for a few minutes, of the consideration of this Report because I see that it is a thick report, it is 56 pages. I would like to have time to go over the report.

I therefore request for a deferment for a few minutes on the consideration of this Bill.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, copies of the Committee Report were given before the break, months before the break. In fact, the Sponsor has already given his sponsorship speech months ago, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Honorable Daza is recognized.

REP. DAZA. Well, what is the pleasure of the Majority Leader? I am only requesting for a deferment for some minutes on the consideration of this Committee Report. I saw a copy of this on my desk before the adjournment and then after adjournment, all the papers on my desk were removed.

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

#### SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6573

REP. GULLAS. To give way to our colleague, I move that we temporarily suspend the consideration on House Bill No. 6573. I so move, Mme. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. DAZA. Thank you.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 286 ON SECOND READING

#### PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 286, contained in Committee Report No. 439, as reported out by the Committees on Justice, and on Appropriations.

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

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 286, entitled: AN ACT CREATING AN ADDITIONAL BRANCH OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE PROVINCE OF MOUNTAIN PROVINCE TO BE STATIONED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PARACELIS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14 PARAGRAPH (A) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980", AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Chairman of the Committee on Justice, the Hon. Reynaldo V. Umali.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Hon. Rey Umali is recognized.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that the Explanatory Note of the Bill be the sponsorship speech of the Honorable Umali.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, with no Member who wishes to interpellate or to speak against the measure, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

\* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, with no Committee or individual amendments, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we vote on House Bill No. 286 on Second Reading. I so move, Mme. Speaker, Your Honor.

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

#### VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). As many as are in favor of House Bill No. 286, please say *aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). As many as are against, please say *nay*. (*Silence*)

#### APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 286 ON SECOND READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The *ayes* have it; the motion is approved

House Bill No. 286 is hereby approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we include the additional coauthors of House Bills No. 4387, 5723, 5808, 6323, 6743, 6769, 6770, 6772, 6907, and House Resolutions No. 1194 and 1521, as contained in the list of members to be submitted by the Committee on Rules.

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

#### OMNIBUS CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL BILLS ON SECOND READING

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move that we consider Bills under the Calendar of Business for Thursday and Friday. These are all local bills, Mme. Speaker. Pursuant to our rules, allow me to put forth an omnibus motion for the consideration of the following: House Bills No. 6758, 6759, 6605, 165, 6780, 6781, 6782, 6795, 6796, 6797, 6798, 6799, 6800, 6801, 6820, 6915, 6917, 6918, 6919, 6920, 6921, 6927, 6928, 6929, 6930, and 6932. I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the omnibus motion for the consideration of all the 26 Bills is approved.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate and consider the respective Explanatory Notes of the Bills as the sponsorship speeches on the said measures.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, since no Member wishes to interpellate or speak against the measures, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The period for sponsorship and debate is closed.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

The period of amendments is now open.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, with no Committee or individual amendments, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we vote on Second Reading on the following local Bills:

House Bills No. 6758, 6759, 6605, 165, 6780, 6781, 6782, 6795, 6796, 6797, 6798, 6799, 6800, 6801, 6820, 6915, 6917, 6918, 6919, 6920, 6921, 6927, 6928, 6929, 6930, and 6932. I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

#### VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). As many as are in favor of approving on Second Reading the aforementioned 26 Bills, please say *aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). As many as are against, please say *nay*. (*Silence*)

#### OMNIBUS APPROVAL OF LOCAL BILLS ON SECOND READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The ayes have it; the motion is approved.\*

The aforementioned 26 Bills are now approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 1521

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 1521 and direct the Secretary General to read only the title of the measure.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 1521, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BID OF THE SAMAHANG BASKETBOLNG PILIPINAS (SBP) TO HOST THE 2023 FIBA WORLD CUP, AND ENJOINING THE GOVERNMENT TO

EXTEND ITS FULL ASSISTANCE TO THE SBP'S EFFORTS.

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

#### ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 1521

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 1521. I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

House Resolution No. 1521 is hereby adopted. The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### OMNIBUS CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE RESOLUTIONS

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, we have 20 resolutions in our Business for the Day with similar characteristics. These are all Resolutions congratulating medal winners in recent national competitions. Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider these Resolutions. Pursuant to our rules, allow me to put forth an omnibus motion for the consideration of the following Resolutions: House Resolutions No. 1526, 1527, 1528, 1529, 1530, 1531, 1532, 1533, 1534, 1535, 1536, 1537, 1538, 1539, 1540, 1541, 1542, 1543, 1544 and 1545.

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

#### OMNIBUS ADOPTION OF HOUSE RESOLUTIONS

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we adopt the aforementioned Resolutions.

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

The aforementioned Resolutions are hereby adopted. \*

#### CONSIDERATION OF CTTEE. RPT. NO. 495 ON H. RES. 646

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider the findings and recommendations contained in Committee Report No. 495 on House Resolution No. 646.

\* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Committee Report No. 495 on House Resolution No. 646, entitled: RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE HOUSE COMMITTEE(S) TO CONDUCT A PROBE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE PERSISTENT DELAYS IN THE ISSUANCE OF PASSPORTS TO FILIPINO APPLICANTS AND THE UTILIZATION OF THE PASSPORT REVOLVING FUND.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we adopt the findings and recommendations contained in Committee Report No. 495 on House Resolution No. 646.

ADOPTION OF FINDINGS AND RECOM. IN  
CTTEE. RPT. NO. 495 ON H. RES. NO. 646

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

The findings and recommendations contained in Committee Report No. 495 on House Resolution No. 646 are adopted.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6573  
*Continuation*

PERIOD OF AMENDMENTS

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 6573 as embodied in Committee Report No. 431.

May we request that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

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

the motion is approved.

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6573, entitled: AN ACT PROHIBITING HAZING AND REGULATING OTHER FORMS OF INITIATION RITES OF FRATERNITIES, SORORITIES, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8049 ENTITLED "AN ACT REGULATING HAZING AND OTHER FORMS OF INITIATION RITES IN FRATERNITIES, SORORITIES, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR."

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Chairman of the Committee on Justice, the Hon. Reynaldo V. Umali.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Chairman of the Committee on Justice, the Hon. Reynaldo Umali, is recognized.

REP. UMALI. Thank you, Mme. Speaker. I have conferred with the Honorable Daza and we have discussed the matter. This Representation has no objection to the request of the Honorable Daza and we agreed to delete paragraph (b) of Section 12 in Committee Report No. 431. This is to remove any obstacle for the approval of this particular Committee Report, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, we have no objection to the amendment.

With that, Mme. Speaker, with no more Committee or individual amendments, I move that we close the period of amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the period of amendments is now closed.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve on Second Reading House Bill No. 6573, as amended. I so move.

\* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

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

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). As many as are in favor of House Bill No. 6573, as amended, please say *aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). As many as are against, say *Nay*. (*Silence*)

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6573, AS AMENDED,  
ON SECOND READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The *ayes* unanimously have it; the motion is approved.

House Bill No. 6573, as amended, is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H. CT. RES. NO. 9  
*Continuation*

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, under the Calendar of Unfinished Business, I move that we continue the consideration of House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 and direct the Secretary General to read only the title of the measure.

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Concurrent Resolution No. 9, entitled: CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO CONSTITUTE THE CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES AS A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROPOSING AMENDMENTS TO, OR REVISION OF, THE 1987 CONSTITUTION.

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

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the measure is that we are in the period of sponsorship and debate. With that, Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Chairman of the Committee

on Constitutional Amendments, the Hon. Roger G. Mercado. I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Amendments, the Hon. Roger Mercado, is recognized.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GULLAS. I move that we recognize the Hon. Ariel “Ka Ayik” B. Casilao of ANAKPAWIS Party-List for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Hon. Ariel “Ka Ayik” B. Casilao is recognized.

REP. CASILAO. Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

Ilang araw na rin po na sunod-sunod sa headlines ng media ang usapin ng pagbabago ng ating Konstitusyon. Marami po ang tanong ng ating mga kababayan: Una, papaano baguhin ang 1987 Konstitusyon? Pangalawa, ano ang laman ng posibilidad ng mga probisyon na aamyendahan sa bawat artikulo ng kasalukuyang Konstitusyon? Pangatlo, ano ang kinabukasan nito?

Mme. Speaker, I have here Committee Report No. 110 on House Concurrent Resolution No. 9, convening Congress as a Constituent Assembly. In my Political Science days, Mme. Speaker, may kakaunti tayong kaalaman kung ano ang pinapahintulutan ng ating Konstitusyon sa pamamaraan ng pagbabago nito, sa pag-amyenda at pagrebisa o sadyang pagbuo ng bagong Konstitusyon.

Totoo sa kasalukuyang Konstitusyon, tatlong pamamaraan ang sinasabi ng ating Saligang Batas: una, by Constituent Assembly kung saan lahat tayong mga Mambabatas sa dalawang Kapulungan ay pupulungin at tayo mismo ang bibigyan ng obligasyon at karapatan bilang halal ng bayan para pag-aralan ang bawat linya, ang bawat titik, at bawat mensahe ng bawat seksyon, artikulo ng ating Konstitusyon. Pangalawang pamamaraan ay ang pagbuo ng isang Constitutional Convention at ito ang ginawang daan at iniluwal ang 1987 Constitution na kung saan pinag-aralan ng iba’t ibang sektor na hinalal, pinaggugulan ng panahon, rekurso at lumabas nga ang 1987 Constitution. Ang pangatlong pamamaraan, ito ang sinasabing People’s Initiative.

Mme. Speaker, malinaw po sa House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 na ito ay committee report hango sa halos 28 na iba’t ibang mga resolusyon, mga panukala ng ating mga kasamahang Mambabatas para sa tunguhing baguhin o amyendahan ang ating

Konstitusyon. Ang unang-unang katanungan ko po, sa aking pagbasa, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, marami din naman dito ang nanawagan mula sa ating mga kasamahan na ang daang tatahakin para amyendahan o baguhin ang ating Konstitusyon ay sa pamamaraang Constitutional Convention.

Now, may I know, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, how did it—papaano po nagkaroon ng kaisahan na magiging pangunahin ang pagbubuo ng Constituent Assembly, bagkus, sa kahalagahan at importansiya na hindi ang mga Mambabatas ang aamyenda kundi itong tinatawag na Constitutional Convention? Bakit hindi natin gawin ang ginawa noong iniluwal ng 1987 Constitution? May I know the very reason, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, among other proposals like the Constitutional Convention, bakit po mas pangunahin na itinutulak ang Constituent Assembly?

REP. MERCADO. Thank you very much, Honorable Casilao. The parliamentary procedure of our Congress has been adopted and our Committee followed the procedure that, when bills are referred to our Committee on Constitutional Amendments, or resolutions for that matter, they will be subjected to a thorough discussion by the members, with the participation of the experts regarding the matter that is being discussed, like former Constitutional Convention delegates, Justices of the Supreme Court, political scientists from renowned universities. After that, the Committee will vote on what is presented.

In this case, we were presented with the Resolution calling for the amendment of our Constitution through the Congress upon a vote of three-fourths of all its Members. So, it is very clear that it will be through the Constituent Assembly, and the voting resulted in favor of convening both Houses of Congress into a Constituent Assembly. Hence, we now have this in front of us, for approval by our Members of the House of Representatives: CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO CONSTITUTE THE CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES AS A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROPOSING AMENDMENTS TO, OR REVISION OF, THE 1987 CONSTITUTION.

Thank you very much.

REP. CASILAO. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor. If I may quote, and I believe this is one of the strongest points in pushing for the convening of Congress as a Constituent Assembly as manifested in this Resolution, second to the last paragraph, it states:

Whereas, a constituent assembly is the preferred mode of introducing amendments to the Constitution since it is deemed the most expeditious, open and least costly among the options contemplated.

Now, I may not get the very clear, exact and precise statistics. May I know, Mr. Sponsor, Mme. Speaker, how much is the comparative costing of convening a constituent assembly vis-à-vis the Constitutional Convention. What is the disparity in probable government resources to be spent in the vote modes that we are probably selecting or debating?

REP. MERCADO. I appreciate the very important question of our colleague. This is the summary estimate of budgetary requirements as of 10 January 2018: if we hold the Constitutional Convention, it will cost a total of P11 billion, whereas if we constitute our Houses into a constituent assembly, we will only spend P204 million—P204 million vis-à-vis the P11 billion if we will constitute a Constitutional Convention.

REP. CASILAO. There was one time in a Committee meeting that I attended on these deliberations, Mr. Sponsor, Mme. Speaker, and at that time, the statistics presented were eight billion pesos versus two billion pesos. Although there is a very major difference from the numerical statistics that you are presenting now that, if through the CA, the Con-Ass, this Congress will deliberate to amend the Constitution, we will just be spending P204 million, am I correct?

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

REP. CASILAO. Compared to the P11 billion if we convene a Constitutional Convention. Now, Mme. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, while not mainly debating on the savings that we could have via a Constituent Assembly, but is it not fair also that Congress, in previous years and even for 2018, approved and allocated billions of pesos that are, in my personal term, in the parlance of my political organization, as being anti-people and useless, and that government resources, taxpayers' money, were allocated? For example, the P30 billion in paying big business under the Risk Management Fund in favor of foreign-owned corporations, is that not a waste of money compared to the eight billion pesos or even P11 billion to be spent on the framers, the people who will be tasked to study, amend or draft a new Constitution who are not coming from Congress, but who are independent and have the capacity, the integrity, and the capability to present a more favorable, balanced new Constitution? I cannot understand, Mr. Sponsor, Mme. Speaker, that Congress has been in a yearly appropriation deliberation where there are billions of pesos wasted for allocation, not for public interest, but mainly to favor certain sectors of our society. Here, we give weight, heavy weight on the savings that the government could save by virtue of selecting the mode of changing the Constitution via a Constituent Assembly.

Now, saving, Mr. Sponsor, Mme. Speaker, vis-à-vis doing an act, especially a very important act, in amending our Constitution, is it not right that we spend more on a mode, for example, on a Constitutional Convention but the result and the output would be accurately reflecting the interest of the majority of our Filipino people?

REP. MERCADO. Thank you, Mme. Speaker, my colleague. We are only talking about the Members of the present Seventeenth Congress where we believe that the Members have the capacity, the experience and the desire to express their service to the people by providing them with, perhaps, the best Constitution so far that we can imagine, and the expense is only a minor matter. For me, it is the Members who are patriotic, who are willing to sacrifice, who are willing to give way in order that we can have a new Constitution—and this is now our chance, the mode is perfect. The capacity, the membership—look at the Members now, we are all willing to go hand in hand and provide the necessary changes, if there are changes. After we deliberate intelligently, we give time and effort to produce good amendments, if there are amendments to be made, and submit them to our people for their approval.

REP. CASILAO. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mme. Speaker. Now, may I know the time frame because in House Concurrent Resolution No. 9, it was stated therein, the most expeditious—as the Chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Amendments said, there had been deliberations definitely. If this Resolution will be approved and we convene Congress to act as a Constituent Assembly, what is the timeline or what is the time frame we can expect Congress to deliberate, amend, ratify or create a new Constitution? How long will it take, in accordance to your computation, Mme. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MERCADO. Thank you, Mme. Speaker. This Representation, as the Chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Amendments, would say that we will take this important matter one step at a time. Therefore, we will have to approve first the mode of amending our Constitution, and then submit it to the Senate of the Republic of the Philippines for their concurrence. After their concurrence, we can now set the date on when we can start our work and provide for the different things that need to be done in order to complete our work, and we will work with speed and caution in such a way that we will not be blamed for any hasty decisions. It will be open, transparent, honest, and everybody is even welcome to provide the necessary suggestions or provisions that would buttress and make our Constitution more applicable in order that the goal, which is to make our country self-reliant, competitive and progressive, can be achieved.

REP. CASILAO. Mme. Speaker, hindi ko po narinig sa ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor ang eksaktong sagot na ninanais na marinig ng taong-bayan. Ang tanong po, ano ang binabalak na timeline?

I understand that in the event that House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 is adopted by this House and the same Resolution in Senate is adopted, immediately, ilang araw po iyong magko-convene ang ating Kongreso para maging isang ganap na Constituent Assembly? At ganoon, kapag naconvene na po iyan, ilang araw ba ang kakainin?

I understand, Mme. Speaker, na mayroon na pong nailatag dahil hindi naman po tayo mag-uusap dito ng Concurrent Resolution convening Congress as a Constituent Assembly kung wala pang nata-target na timeline. Mme. Speaker, I am very confused Mr. Sponsor. Marami pong lumalabas na balita na nagmumula mismo sa liderato ng ating Kongreso na nais magkaroon na ng ratification or ng plebisito sa darating na Mayo 2018. Kung ganoon, at ito po ay nagmumula sa liderato ng ating Kongreso, na magkakaroon na ng bagong Konstitusyon na isasalang o isasabay sa inaprubahan nating postponement ng barangay election, at ang itinakda nating araw ay sa Mayo 2018, aba, Mme. Speaker, January po tayo ngayon— Enero, Pebrero, Marso, Abril, at kapag sa target na Mayo 2018, apat na buwan lang, Mme. Speaker, po ang ilalaan ng Kongresong ito para talakayin ang isang napakaselang dokumento at napaka-importanteng dokumento.

That is why, Mme. Speaker, my confusion stemmed from that statement of our leadership, of the House leadership. Kung ganoon po ba, kaya po ba ng Kongresong ito na talakayin ang bawat artikulo ng ating Konstitusyon sa loob lamang ng apat na buwan? How can we say that in four months, sa loob ng apat na buwan mula doon sa statement ng ating kagalang-galang na liderato ng Kongreso—hindi po ba expeditious na sobra na iyan? Sobrang pagmamadali po iyan. Pangalawa, ano po ang maaasahan nating mga seksyon na aamyendahan natin kung tayo po ay nakatali sa loob ng apat na buwan? Ibig sabihin po ba noon, Mme. Speaker, mayroon na pong nakahanda na mga specific proposed amendments per provision, per line, per article of the Constitution? Ang mga iyan po, kapagka tayo ay na-convene na, ang Kongreso ay awtomatikong na pong ihahapag at pagbobotohan ng mayorya, na alam naman po natin sa loob ng Kapulungang ito ay mayroon talagang hawak ang super majority coalition. Kung ano man ang nilalaman ng binabalak na mga amyenda na iyan, kahit pa ito ay kontra mamamayan, wala tayong magagawa kung hindi sumunod sa direktiba ng nakararami sa mayorya, partikular ng liderato ng Kongreso. On that, Mme. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I would like to be clarified dahil gusto ko pong manggaling sa inyo mismo, bilang Chairman ng komiteng nagtalakay ng mga probisyon,

ng mga panukala—28 na panukala—at naggugol ng panahon.

I understand your sacrifice, the colleagues who participated in almost whole-day deliberations, from creating subcommittees until present and in changing the mode, we have here the proposal of House Concurrent Resolution No. 9. Nais ko pong maging makatotohanan tayo. Tayo po ay hinalal ng bayan. Nandiyan po ang kamera ng ating mga media. Kaya po ba, Mr. Sponsor, Mme. Speaker, na ang lalamanin ng mga amyenda at ng ating posibleng bagong Konstitusyon ay maisasabay na sa darating na halalang pambarangay sa Mayo 2018?

REP. MERCADO. Thank you very much, Mme. Speaker. Kung sana ay ipasa na lang natin ito ngayon, anyway, hindi naman ito controversial, just to convene both Houses into a Constituent Assembly, at kung mapakiusapan natin ang ating mga kasama dito na hindi na lang sila mag-interpellate, na sana wala na para maka-save tayo ng time at siguro, next week ay maka-convene na tayo. Doon, siguradong makakarami tayo ng produkto na magagawa at madi-discuss na natin iyong mga probiso na pertinente at importante para sa—for the good and information of our Members.

REP. CASILAO. Ang tinatanong ng Kinatawang ito, Mme. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, requires and needs a direct answer from the Chairperson and the Sponsor.

REP. MERCADO. Yes, Mme. Speaker, because our leaders promised our people to give them the right structure fitting to the Filipino character, at nakita natin sa ating Presidente na gusto niyang mabigyan ng immediate solution ang problema sa employment, problema sa kahirapan, problema sa droga, problema sa ating peace and order. Kaya this is now the right moment na matulungan natin siya. Sino sa atin dito sa Kongreso ang hindi gustong makatulong sa ating mga kababayan? If there is anybody who wants results as fast and as soon as possible, there is nobody but the Members of Congress who represent and bring the voice of our people in these Halls of Congress. Kaya when it comes to how we will complete this and the timeline, kung matapos ito in one month, why not? Basta maganda lang ang pagkagawa. Kung matapos ito kasabay na sa barangay elections, sinong hindi papayag? Para matapos na ito at makita natin ang mga kagandahan na makikita natin sa kabayan-bayanan ng ating bansang Pilipinas.

REP. CASILAO. Mme. Speaker, the categorical answer of our distinguished colleague is, blatantly and clearly, saying that at the soonest possible time, the better. This Representation begs to disagree, Mme. Speaker, dahil napakadelikado po ito, bagamat tayo, totoo po, tayo ay halal ng bayan pero iyon pong sabihin natin ...

REP. MERCADO. Mme. Speaker, ...

REP. CASILAO. ... the soonest possible time ...

REP. MERCADO. With due respect to our colleague, ang masasabi ko lang is, if there is a will, there is a way.

REP. CASILAO. Yes, Mme. Speaker, I fully agree. I fully agree that if there is a will, there is a way pero sana naman po iyong will to find a way in the soonest possible time ay hindi po masasakripisyo ang batayan at napakahalagang laman dahil kinikilala natin ang ating Konstitusyon bilang pangunahing dokumento, bilang pinaka-importanteng dokumento. Iluluwal diyan ang pang-araw-araw na mga batas, hindi lamang sa usaping personal, hindi lamang sa usaping porma ng ating gobyerno, ng ating ekonomiya, kung hindi ang pangkabuuan na. Kapag ito po ay mamadaliin natin, na ang mga proposed amendments naman ay hindi maisasalang sa isang transparent, deliberative—presenting various and not only expert opinions, cause and effect, tila hindi naman po kaaya-aya na mamadaliin natin ang isang napakahalagang dokumento para lamang makamit natin ang anumang deadline na itinakda.

Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, please understand, the expeditious approval of a new Constitution, wherein kung mayroon na pong nakahanda na very particular amendments for every article ay hindi na ito masasalang sa labas ng Kapulungang ito, at hahayaan lamang na ang Kapulungang ito ang may responsibilidad o obligasyon na magtalakay at hindi iugnay ito sa kanyang constituents.

I understand, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, there were proposals in one of the Committee deliberations that I observed, if we go for a Constituent Assembly, the President will appoint 25 expert personalities who have the capability, integrity, expertise in various fields. Na kapag tayo po ay binuo bilang Con-Ass, mayroon pong 25 katao na, maliban sa tinalakay ng Kongreso, ng komite o ng sub-komite, mayroon din tayong pakikilingan na mga opinyon ng ibang mga tinatawag nating resource persons. Hindi po ba naging bahagi iyan sa pagtalakay ng komite, Mme. Speaker, na magkakaroon, labas sa mga Miyembro ng Kongreso at Senado, mayroong i-a-appoint si Pangulong Duterte na magiging batayan at magpapanukala din ng kanilang mga opinyon o mga proposal at magiging kabahagi ito ng pagdedebatehan ng Kongreso? Is it not part of the proposal, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. MERCADO. Ang atin pong period, parliamentary status nitong ating panukala, which is House Concurrent Resolution No. 9, is that, we are just proposing to adopt the Constituent Assembly mode of amending. It is only the first step. We are still not in



the Constituent Assembly proper where Your Honor's concerns will be properly deliberated, Mme. Speaker.

REP. CASILAO. Yes, but my question, basically, forms part of the concurrent resolution, Mme. Speaker, because I asked particularly if we will be convened into a Constituent Assembly, it is also a mode. While we are only limited to three modes in changing our Constitution, there were proposals, concrete proposals that to be very transparent, in order for us to be very transparent and not only relying on the opinion and probably, the knowledge of each Member of Congress when we will be convened as a Constituent Assembly, there will also be 25 appointees at ang ginawang titulo nga noon ay parang "Conscience Committee."

REP. MERCADO. Mme. Speaker, wala pa naman iyong sinasabing 25-person commission, wala pa namang na-appoint. Also, our Congress is separate from the executive branch. We should make our work limited within the powers and prerogatives of the legislative department.

REP. CASILAO. Yes, totoo po iyon, Mme. Speaker, but dahil nga po tayo ay nagtatalakay ngayon ng moda, the mode of changing our Constitution, hindi po ba naging konsiderasyon iyon ng komite na labas o maliban sa mga Miyembro ng Kongreso ay ang panukalang kabahagi ng House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 na ito ay magkakaroon din ng iba pang mga tao o personalidad na uupo bilang isang—iyon nga ang terminong tawag dati ay "Conscience Committee" na maglalahad din ng kanilang expert opinion.

Siguro sa pamamaraan, and my question would be fitting doon sa pagiging pag-convene na natin dahil posible, malaki ang posibilidad na sa ating pagtatalakay to convene us, we can collectively vote and agree that, aside from us, there will be another source of opinion, expert opinion na magiging bahagi ng ating official deliberation.

REP. MERCADO. Well, Mme. Speaker, my dear colleague, it is the procedure that when our Congress deliberates bills and resolutions, we always invite experts as our guests and reference persons in order to give us ideas which can help us make better or good laws. So, when we convene as a Constituent Assembly, definitely, all sectors of our society, the experts especially, or perhaps this commission, we can invite them so they may provide us with a better understanding of the workings and the principles which we can support and place in our proposed Constitution. All of them will be invited and included. This will be a transparent, honest and open discussion. There will be or we have rules on these, we have rules for the Constituent Assembly proper and there are committees

that will be created for all of these. In the meantime, all our guests, resource persons, will be invited to provide good recommendations on many aspects that can help us prepare and make the best Constitution that we can have.

REP. CASILAO. Does it mean, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, and this is a hypothetical question, iyon po bang natalakay sa mga subcommittee, the recommendations of the subcommittee will form part, but only as a record, to be the basis of our deliberation once we are convened as a Constituent Assembly?

REP. MERCADO. The output of our subcommittees and our Committee on Constitutional Amendments will only be a draft and temporary. If ever it can serve, it will serve as a guide in order that we can give priority to the provisions and articles that need to be given more time, attention and intelligent deliberation. So, all of these are not final yet. We will welcome those people who want to submit recommendations and proposals, but the finality of this will be when the Constituent Assembly approves our Constitution.

After that, it will be submitted to our people in a referendum and plebiscite, and that will be the final decision, the people's voice is the final decision.

REP. CASILAO. Ang hindi po malinaw sa akin at malamang hindi rin malinaw sa karamihan sa atin, Mme. Speaker, while the rules will be crafted upon adopting the Resolution, is it not proper to state at the moment that once we are convened, will the two Houses vote separately or jointly?

REP. MERCADO. I want to be specific on this, that we must not make interpretations when the law is very clear. That is the process of legal interpretations. When it is very clear, you should not attempt to make other interpretations. It is very clear, and we are limited to this and we have to support this, that under Article XVII, on AMENDMENTS OR REVISIONS, "Section 1. Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution may be proposed by: (1) The Congress, upon a vote of three-fourths of all its Members x x x." Any layman can understand this, it is very simple, "The Congress, upon a vote of three-fourths of all its Members x x x."

Is there any other interpretation aside from that, "the Congress"? The Congress constitutes the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Republic of the Philippines, and upon a vote of three-fourths of all its Members, amendments or revisions can be done.

REP. CASILAO. Well, Mme. Speaker, I will not belabor my colleague and the distinguished Sponsor on this because it will probably fall on a constitutional

question or it is more a legal question—interpreting the laws, of course, it is a sole jurisdiction of Congress, of the Senate, of the Supreme Court, whether or not we have similar interpretation of the expressed provision of the Constitution.

Again, as I understand the very position of the Chairperson and the distinguished Sponsor, if ever that any proposed amendment that we will be deliberating, after the result of consulting the opinions of experts' and resource persons in approving such proposed amendment, for example, an amendment to Article I, Article II or Article III, then, all Members, both the Lower House and the Senate, in accordance with his interpretation, to the interpretation of my distinguished Sponsor, will be voting jointly, although the Senate, our counterpart, is still in the process also of probably seeking clarification with regard to the manner of voting in the event that a proposed amendment is already on the table and ready for voting.

Now, again, Mme. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, this may be the question which the framers of the 1987 Constitution missed out—that in the event that both Houses will be voting jointly, talaga pong insignificant ang number ng Senado. We have—I do not know if I am correct—we have 294 Members of the Lower House and we have 22 Members of the Senate. Kahit na po gaano nila talakayin ang mga posibleng amyenda ng Konstitusyon sa kanilang bahay, at anuman ang pagtatalakay natin sa ating bahay, sa ating Kapulungan, pero kapag naghapag na po ng mga proposed amendments, talaga pong mababalewala ang magiging sentimyento, collective sentiment ng Senado, dahil they will be overwhelmed by the sheer number of Congress. Two-thirds of 294 ...

REP. ERICE. Mme. Speaker, point of order.

REP. MERCADO. Ang masasabi ko lang, Mme. Speaker, is that ...

REP. ERICE. Mme. Speaker, point of order.

REP. MERCADO. ... it is best that we do not speculate ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). What is the point of order?

REP. ERICE. Napakahalaga po ng pinag-uusapan natin, na mahalaga na tayo po ay may quorum kung pag-uusapan ang Charter change. Kanina pa po ako nag-iikot, ang Miyembro po na naririto ay ranging from 90 to 102 and we need 143 Members in order

to continue transacting business. So, may I move for a roll call.

Thank you.

REP. BONDOC. Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. BONDOC. We second the motion of the Honorable Erice for a roll call of the Members. I so move, Mme. Speaker.

#### ROLL CALL

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

The Secretary General will please call the roll.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is reflected in Journal No. 50, dated January 16, 2018.\**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. The roll call shows that 186 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). With 186 Members responding to the call, the Chair hereby declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CONSIDERATION OF H. CT. RES. NO. 9

##### *Continuation*

#### PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. BONDOC. Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider once more House Concurrent Resolution No. 9. Could the Secretary General be directed to read the title of the Resolution.

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

The Secretary General is directed to read the title of the Resolution.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Concurrent Resolution No. 9, entitled: CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO CONSTITUTE THE CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES AS A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROPOSING AMENDMENTS TO, OR REVISION OF, THE 1987 CONSTITUTION.

\* See ANNEX (printed separately)

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

REP. BONDOC. Mme. Speaker, our parliamentary status is that we are in the period of interpellation.

Mme. Speaker, I move to close the period of interpellation. I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). Is there any objection?

REP. CASILAO. Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The Chair hears none; ...

REP. CASILAO. Objection, Mme. Speaker.

REP. BONDOC. Mme. Speaker, ...

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

REP. BONDOC. ... there is an objection from the Hon. Ariel “Ka Ayik” B. Casilao. I move that he be given five minutes to explain his objection.

REP. CASILAO. Yes, Mme. Speaker. We were interrupted; before the motion of our colleague to call the roll, there was an ongoing interpellation. In fact, the hour that is supposed to be consumed for my slot for interpellation, may remainder pa po na 15 minutes. What would be the status if we suspend the session? Do I still avail of the continuing time or the remainder of my minutes for interpellation, Mme. Speaker?

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

REP. BONDOC. Mme. Speaker, my motion is in order—with already more than two speeches against the measure and so, at any time, there can be a motion to close the debate. So, now, my having proposed the motion that we close the period of interpellation, ...

REP. TINIO. Point of order.

REP. BONDOC. ... there has been an objection ...

REP. TINIO. Point of order, Mme. Speaker.

REP. BONDOC. ... and now, Mme. Speaker, we will divide the House.

REP. TINIO. Point of order, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker.

REP. TINIO. Point of order, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). There is a motion ...

REP. BONDOC. Mme. Speaker, ...

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

REP. BONDOC. ... voting cannot be interrupted. He can raise the point of order...

REP. TINIO. Point of order, Mme. Speaker.

REP. BONDOC. ...after our vote is taken.

REP. TINIO. Point of order, Mme. Speaker.

REP. BONDOC. So, to state the parliamentary status, Mme. Speaker, ...

REP. TINIO. The motion is not in order, Mme. Speaker, ...

REP. BONDOC. ... we are in the period of voting and ...

REP. TINIO. ... so we cannot vote if the motion is not in order.

REP. BONDOC. Voting cannot be interrupted, Mme. Speaker, so I ask my colleague ...

REP. TINIO. We have not yet commenced voting, Mme. Speaker, ...

REP. BONDOC. ... to please give me the courtesy of the floor ...

REP. TINIO. ...so, point of order.

REP. BONDOC. ... and he can raise his point of order after the voting.

REP. TINIO. I cannot raise my point of order, Mme. Speaker, ...

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker.

REP. TINIO. ... afterwards because ....

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). We are now in the process ...

REP. TINIO. ...I am contending ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... of voting. There is no interruption ...

REP. TINIO. ... the motion is out of order, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... that will be entertained by the Chair.

REP. TINIO. There have been no ...

*VIVA VOCE VOTING*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). As many as are ...

REP. TINIO. ... speeches again ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... in favor ...

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker.

REP. TINIO. ... because we have been only ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... of the motion ...

REP. TINIO. ... conducting interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... to approve ...

REP. TINIO. There have been no speeches ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... House Concurrent Resolution, ...

REP. TINIO. ... to say for or against, Mme. Speaker, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... to close the period ...

REP. TINIO. ... but the period of debate ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... of interpellation and debate, ...

REP. TINIO. ...has not even commenced, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... say *aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The *ayes* have it; ...

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... the period for interpellation is now closed.

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker.

REP. BONDOC. Mme. Speaker, I move ...

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

REP. BONDOC. ... for the approval of House Concurrent Resolution No. 9. I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

*VIVA VOCE VOTING*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). As many as are in favor of approving House Concurrent Resolution No. 9, say *aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

ADOPTION OF H. CT. RES. NO. 9

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). The *ayes* have it; House Concurrent Resolution No. 9 ...

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, G.). ... is hereby adopted.

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. BONDOC. Mme. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until four o'clock tomorrow afternoon, Wednesday, January 17. I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

*It was 6:06 p.m.*