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No. 29

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Rose Marie “Baby” J. Arenas called the session to order.

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

NATIONAL ANTHEM

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

Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Please remain standing for the prayer to be led by the Hon. Maria Lourdes R. Aggabao.

Everybody remained standing for the Invocation.

INVOCATION

REP. AGGABAO. Merciful Father, we give You thanks for another day. As we come together at the end of our work week, we ask for Your guidance as we continue our work as legislators.

May we always remember that public office is a public trust, and that what we do in these hallowed halls of Congress impact on the lives of the Filipino people.

Guide us always and draw us ever closer to You as we go about the many tasks before us today.

Help us make thoughtful and just decisions, and empower us to discern properly so that what we do reflects Your holy will.

Our country faces many challenges for these are difficult times, but we place our trust in You and that through You, with the promptings of the Holy Spirit, we believe we will be able to resolve them.

All these we humbly ask in the name of the Father,

the Son and the Holy Spirit, through the intercession of our Blessed Mother, Queen of Heaven and Earth.

Amen.

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

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

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

REP. HOFER. Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. HOFER. Mme. Speaker, I move for the deferment of the approval of the Journal of the previous session.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. HOFER. Mme. Speaker, I move that we now proceed with the Reference of Business, and may we request that the Secretary General be directed to read the same.

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

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 8542, entitled:

“AN ACT EXEMPTING FROM INCOME TAX THE COMPENSATION GIVEN TO PERSONS RENDERING ELECTION SERVICE FOR LOCAL OR NATIONAL ELECTIONS”

By Representatives Tinio and Castro (F.L.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 8543, entitled:

“AN ACT RECOGNIZING FAITH ACADEMY AS AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION OF INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER AND PROVIDING FOR MECHANISMS ON THE GRANT OF CERTAIN PREROGATIVES CONDUCIVE TO ITS GROWTH”

By Representative Lanete
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 8544, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL ANTI-DOPING POLICY IN SPORT IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AGAINST DOPING IN SPORT, ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL ANTI-DOPING ORGANIZATION, PROVIDING FOR ITS POWERS, FUNCTIONS AND MANAGEMENT, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Roa-Puno
TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 8545, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 43 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10963 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘TAX REFORM FOR ACCELERATION AND INCLUSION (TRAIN)’ ”

By Representative Villarín
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 8546, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SEC. 61 OF RA 10963, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘TAX REFORM FOR ACCELERATION AND INCLUSION (TRAIN) LAW’, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE THE NATIONAL

INTERNAL REVENUE CODE (NIRC) OF 1997, EXEMPTING INDIGENTS FROM THE PAYMENT OF DOCUMENTARY STAMPTAX IMPOSED ON CERTIFICATES, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Ortega (V.N.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 8547, entitled:

“AN ACT PROMOTING THE CREATION OF GREEN-COLLAR JOBS, PROVIDING A STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Nieto
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 8548, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE OF KASAMBAHAYS AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE SEC. 24 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10361, ALSO KNOWN AS THE ‘DOMESTIC WORKERS ACT’ OR ‘BATAS KASAMBAHAY’ ”

By Representative Nieto
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 8549, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING THE OMNIBUS ELECTION CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES TO INSTITUTIONALIZE ELECTORAL DEBATES AND TO COMPEL THE ATTENDANCE OF CANDIDATES THERETO”

By Representative Rocamora
TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND ELECTORAL REFORMS

House Bill No. 8550, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE BUREAU OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE (BLGF), TO AUGMENT AN EFFECTIVE REORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN THE GOVERNMENT MACHINERY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Romero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 8551, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING POLYTECHNIC

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES-SAN JUAN CAMPUS IN THE CITY OF SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA TO BE KNOWN AS 'PUP-SAN JUAN CAMPUS' APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

By Representative Zamora (R.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 2289, entitled:

"RESOLUTION CONVEYING THE COLLECTIVE FELICITATIONS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CARLOS EDRIAD YULO IN HIS OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AT THE RECENT ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN DOHA, QATAR"

By Representative Vargas
TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 2290, entitled:

"RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT AND THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE RECENT DEATH OF EMERITA GANNABAN, AN OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKER IN SAUDI ARABIA"

By Representative Vargas
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 2291, entitled:

"RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE PROTECTIONS GRANTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ADMINISTRATION, OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND THE MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY AGAINST THE ABANDONMENT OF SEAFARERS IN LIGHT OF THE ABANDONMENT OF THE 21 FILIPINO SEAFARERS IN KAKINADA PORT, INDIA"

By Representative Manalo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 2292, entitled:

"RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY'S ("MARINA") DECISION TO SUSPEND THE CONDUCT OF THEORETICAL EXAMINATIONS FROM 29 DECEMBER 2018 TO 30 APRIL 2019, AND ITS IMPACT ON THE DEPLOYMENT OF SEAFARERS"

By Representative Manalo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 2293, entitled:

"RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE ATHLETES AND COACHES OF THE PHILIPPINE PARALYMPIC TEAM FOR WINNING MEDALS IN THE THIRD ASIAN PARALYMPIC GAMES HELD FROM OCTOBER 6 TO 13, 2018 IN JAKARTA, INDONESIA, AND THE OFFICIALS OF THE PHILIPPINE PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE (PPC) LED BY ITS PRESIDENT, MR. MICHAEL BARREDO, FOR THEIR EFFECTIVE MENTORSHIP AND UNWAVERING SUPPORT"

By Representative Estrella
TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 2294, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION URGING THE COMMITTEE ON DANGEROUS DRUGS TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PROLIFERATION OF PROHIBITED DRUGS IN THE SAMAR SUB-PROVINCIAL JAIL LOCATED IN CALBAYOG CITY AND THE SUBSEQUENT RAID CONDUCTED THEREIN IN VIEW OF IMPROVING THE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES IN CONDUCTING JAIL RAIDS"

By Representative Sarmiento (E.M.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 2295, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE HOUSE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY TO LOOK INTO THE KILLINGS IN SAGAY CITY, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL"

By Representatives Benitez and Paduano
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report by the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization (Committee Report No. 924), re H.B. No. 8552, entitled:

“AN ACT FURTHER STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE COCONUT AUTHORITY (PCA), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 4 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1468, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘REVISED COCONUT INDUSTRY CODE’, AS AMENDED”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 8079, in consolidation with House Bill No. 8062

Sponsors: Representatives Sacdalan, Panganiban and Rocamora

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Housing and Urban Development (Committee Report No. 925), re H.B. No. 8553, entitled:

“AN ACT PRESCRIBING THE MECHANISMS TO FACILITATE THE DISPOSITION OF IDLE GOVERNMENT-OWNED LANDS FOR SOCIALIZED HOUSING”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 228, 1724, 2125 and 2807

Sponsors: Representatives Benitez, Singson, Biazon, Ocampo and Castelo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Ways and Means (Committee Report No. 926), re H.B. No. 8554, entitled:

“AN ACT ENHANCING REVENUE ADMINISTRATION AND COLLECTION BY GRANTING AMNESTY ON ALL UNPAID INTERNAL REVENUE TAXES IMPOSED BY THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR TAXABLE YEAR 2017 AND PRIOR YEARS”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 3655, 3832, 4011, 4133, 4412 and 7105

Sponsor: Representative Suansing (E.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. GARCIA (J). Mme. Speaker, I move for

the approval of Journal No. 27, dated November 12, 2018.

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GARCIA (J). Mme. Speaker, I move for a suspension of the session.

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

It was 3:08 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:24 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Deputy Speaker Pia S. Cayetano. They are the First Year Master in Public Administration students of Taguig City University. They are: Laurence M Vivencio, Paulino Ayang-Ang and all the First Year MPA students.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The presence of the guests of the Honorable Cayetano is acknowledged. Please rise. Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we now proceed to the consideration of measures under the Calendar of Business.

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

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 8554 ON SECOND READING

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 8554, contained in Committee Report No. 926, as reported out by the Committee on Ways and Means.

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

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

The Secretary General is requested 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. 8554, entitled: AN ACT ENHANCING REVENUE ADMINISTRATION AND COLLECTION BY GRANTING AMNESTY ON ALL UNPAID INTERNAL REVENUE TAXES IMPOSED BY THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR TAXABLE YEAR 2017 AND PRIOR YEARS.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Chairperson of the Committee on Ways and Means, the honorable Rep. Estrellita B. Suansing, for her sponsorship of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The Hon. Ging Suansing is now recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. SUANSING (E.)

REP. SUANSING (E.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

I stand before this august Chamber with the hope of your support for the Tax Amnesty Act of 2018. Benjamin Franklin has often been quoted to have stated, "Nothing can be more certain in this world than death and taxes." Thus, a taxpayer who has been remiss in his or her legal duty to declare assets and pay the correct taxes should always be given relief from one of the veins in one's life.

This Bill gives a chance to the erring taxpayers to come forward, start with a clean slate and be 100-percent tax compliant in the future. For both formal and informal sectors, they will be absolved by settling

all their undeclared assets and previous unpaid taxes without fear of civil, criminal, or administrative penalties.

The government has projected to raise an additional P114.8-billion revenues, clear case backlogs in both administrative and court proceedings, and enhanced revenue administration by having a wider tax base. The last amnesty we had in this country was in 2007 under Republic Act No. 9480, where there were about 25,017 applicants which resulted in a collection that amounted to P7.2 billion, translating to 0.07 percent of the gross domestic product. For the next 10 years, this will be the next amnesty that we will be applying in conjunction with one of President Rodrigo Duterte's legislative priorities. This measure is divided into three-parts. The first part provides for Estate Tax Amnesty. For two years, the authorized administrator or executor or, in the absence thereof, the legal heirs and recognized successors may avail of Estate Tax Amnesty at the rate of 6 percent of the net estate per taxable year 2017 and prior years. Estate taxes have a very small percentage of the tax collection in the Bureau of Internal Revenue. This means that despite the increase in the number of deaths, there is a greater percentage of the legal heirs who did not file the required estate tax return. Few may have known that even if the estate is exempted from taxes, legal heirs must still file the estate tax return. Once the heirs have failed to file a return within a certain period, penalties and interests will be incurred. To these, the heirs will now be non-compliant, hence, preventing the heirs to use their properties and, as the time goes by, such properties will become idle and unproductive. More idle and unproductive properties are not good for the economy as more income opportunity will be lost. To unlock this impasse, we need this Estate Tax Amnesty to be passed immediately.

The second part of this Bill is the General Tax Amnesty. This encompasses all national, internal revenue taxes like income tax, value-added tax, donors' tax, percentage tax, documentary stamp tax, excise tax, among others. However, this Bill specifically excludes the value-added tax and excise tax collected by the Bureau of Customs. It will be a one-time opportunity for the erring taxpayer to file and pay their tax returns within one year, worry-free from any penalties, surcharges even criminal, civil or administrative cases as long as the declaration is truthful and honest. At a rate of 2 percent of the total assets, the taxpayer will have a cordial relationship with tax authorities within one year and may move forward with a clean slate.

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

Lastly, the third part of this Bill and, perhaps, the most exceptional feature of this amnesty Bill is the tax amnesty on delinquencies. This type of amnesty aims to decongest the dockets of the BIR, the Regional Trial Courts, the Court of Appeals, and the Supreme Court relating to those delinquent accounts with final assessments, those that have become final and executory, and those with pending tax evasion cases. The government is moving forward from these unending and tiring pursuit of non-compliant citizens by encouraging the taxpayer to merely pay at a rate of 40, 50, 60, respectively, of the basic which excludes the penalties and surcharges, should there be any imposition or decision to pay.

I am urging every Member of this august Chamber to positively act on this measure in the spirit of reconciliation and national unity between the government and the citizenry, and likewise as a means of increasing the level of tax consciousness.

Thank you, Mme. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished colleagues.

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. 8554

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, considering that the Hon. Edcel C. Lagman has signified his intention to interpellate but would need more time to review the Bill, I move for the suspension of the consideration of House Bill No. 8554.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GARCIA (J.). I move for the suspension of the session, Mme. Speaker.

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

It was 3:33 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:55 p.m., the session was resumed with Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo presiding.

THE SPEAKER. The session is resumed.

REP. ANDAYA. Mme. Speaker, we are in receipt of a Certification issued by the Commission on Elections, dated November 9, 2018, certifying Mr. Pepito M. Pico as the next-in-line nominee of the Democratic Independent Workers Association, Inc. (DIWA) Party-List in the House of Representatives and that Mr. Pepito M. Pico can assume the position vacated by Rep. Emmeline Aglipay-Villar.

Mme. Speaker, pursuant to the aforementioned Certificate, I move that we allow Mr. Pepito M. Pico, Representative of the Party-List Democratic Independent Workers Association, Inc. (DIWA), to take his oath in open session.

There being no objection, Mme. Speaker, may we direct the Secretary General to call the Representative of Party-List DIWA to take his oath before this Body.

Representative Pepito M. Pico, with the members of his family, ascended the rostrum and took his oath of office as Representative of DIWA Party-List of the House of Representatives before Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

THE SPEAKER. Please raise your right hand and read your oath.

REP. ANDAYA. Will everyone please rise.

OATH-TAKING

“I, Pepito M. Pico, of 76-E Malalusan St. Brgy. 32, Bacolod City, having been elected as Representative of Democratic Independent Workers Association, Inc. (DIWA) Party-List of the House of Representatives, hereby solemnly swear that I will well and faithfully discharge to the best of my ability the duties of my present position and of all others I may hereafter hold under the Republic of the Philippines; that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Philippines; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the laws, legal orders, and decrees promulgated by the duly constituted authorities of the Republic of the Philippines; and that I impose this obligation upon myself voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

So help me God.” (*Applause*)

THE SPEAKER. Congratulations! (*Applause*)

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ANDAYA. Mme. Speaker, in order to allow our Members to meet and extend their greetings to

the Hon. Pepito M. Pico of Democratic Independent Workers Association, Inc. Party-List, may I move that we suspend our session for a few minutes.

I so move.

THE SPEAKER. The session is suspended.

It was 3:58 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:01 p.m., the session was resumed.

RECONSIDERATION OF THE RATIFICATION OF CONF. CTTEE. RPT.

ON H.B. NO. 5745 AND S.B. NO. 1233

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

REP. ANDAYA. Mme. Speaker, on October 10, 2018 we ratified the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 5745 and Senate Bill No. 1233 on the Coconut Farmers and Industry Development Trust Fund Act.

With leave of the House, Mme. Speaker, I move that we reconsider the ratification of the said Conference Committee Report.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mme. Speaker, may I request that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Deputy Speaker Rose Marie “Baby” J. Arenas from the municipality of Bayambang, headed by Vice Mayor Raul Sabangan: Atty Raymundo Bautista, Legal Officer and Chief of Staff of the Mayor; SB Member Philip Dumalanta; SB Member Martin Terrado; SB Member Amory Sunio; SK Federation Gabriel Fernandez; Dr. Henry Fernandez, Consultant; Levin Uy, Consultant; Dr. Nicolas Miguel, Consultant; Dr. Pedro Zaragoza, Consultant; Mr. Pascual Manalang, Consultant; Annie E. De Leon, Municipal Assessor; Luisita B. Ranan, Municipal Treasurer; Joven C. Lasquite, Administration Aid; and Wenchy Artacho, Barangay Kagawad—all guests of Deputy Speaker Rose Marie “Baby” J. Arenas.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Please rise and thank you for coming to the House of Representatives. To all our Municipal Mayors and

officials of Bayambang, thank you for coming. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 8554

Continuation

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 8554, contained in Committee Report No. 926, as reported out by the Committee on Ways and Means.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill 8554, entitled: AN ACT ENHANCING REVENUE ADMINISTRATION AND COLLECTION BY GRANTING AMNESTY ON ALL UNPAID INTERNAL REVENUE TAXES IMPOSED BY THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR TAXABLE YEAR 2017 AND PRIOR YEARS.

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the interpellation.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to interpellate or speak against the measure, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Is there

any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Chairperson of the Committee on Ways and Means, the honorable Rep. Estrellita B. Suansing for the Committee amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The Honorable Suansing is recognized.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

REP. SUANSING (E.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

On page 2, line 47, insert a new SECTION 7, to read as follows: SEC. 7. PRESUMPTION OF CORRECTNESS OF THE ESTATE TAX AMNESTY RETURNS. – THE ESTATE TAX AMNESTY RETURNS FILED SHALL BE PRESUMED AS TRUE AND CORRECT EXCEPT WHERE THE NET ESTATE ARE PROVEN TO BE UNDERSTATED BY THIRTY PERCENT (30%) OR MORE. THE PROOF OF UNDERSTATEMENT OF ESTATE TAX AMNESTY RETURNS SHALL BE ESTABLISHED BY THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE IN A PROCEEDINGS INITIATED BY THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE OR ANY OF ITS AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES OR THIRD PARTY.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the Committee amendment, as stated by the Honorable Suansing.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, may we hear the additional amendments from the Honorable Suansing.

REP. SUANSING (E.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Honorable Suansing is recognized.

REP. SUANSING (E.). On page 4, lines 35 and 36, delete the phrase “a third-party informer, or at the instance of a party other than”. The Section now reads: THE STATEMENT OF TOTAL ASSETS FILED SHALL

BE PRESUMED AS TRUE AND CORRECT EXCEPT WHERE THE TOTAL ASSETS ARE PROVEN TO BE UNDERSTATED BY THIRTY PERCENT (30%) OR MORE. THE PROOF OF UNDERSTATEMENT OF STATEMENT OF TOTAL ASSETS SHALL BE ESTABLISHED BY THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE IN A PROCEEDINGS INITIATED BY THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE OR ANY OF ITS AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES OR THIRD PARTY.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the Committee amendment, as stated by the Honorable Suansing.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Honorable Suansing for additional amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The Honorable Suansing is recognized for further amendments.

REP. SUANSING (E.). In addition, Mme. Speaker, we will add the phrase and accordingly renumber the sections of the Bill.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the Committee amendment, as stated by the Honorable Suansing.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Evelina “Evie” G. Escudero for the additional Committee amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The Honorable Escudero is recognized.

REP. ESCUDERO. Thank you, Mme. Speaker. On page 7, line 7, under Section 16 of the

Bill, we would like to add the following: (D) WITHHOLDING AGENTS WITH RESPECT TO THEIR WITHHOLDING TAX LIABILITIES.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). What does the Sponsor say? Is there...

REP. SUANSING (E.). We accept the proposed amendment.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the Committee amendment, as stated by the Honorable Escudero.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, there being no other Committee amendments, I move that we now proceed to consider the individual amendments, if any.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, there being no other Committee or individual amendment, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 8554 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). As many as are in favor of House Bill No. 8554, as amended, please say *aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 8554, AS AMENDED, ON SECOND READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The *ayes* have it; House Bill No. 8554, as amended, is now approved on Second Reading. (*Applause*)

Congratulations!

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 8552 ON SECOND READING

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 8552, contained in Committee Report No. 924, as reported out by the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). 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. 8552, entitled: AN ACT FURTHER STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE COCONUT AUTHORITY (PCA), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 4 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1468, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "REVISED COCONUT INDUSTRY CODE", AS AMENDED.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Vice Chairman for the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, the Hon. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" A. Mariño.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The Honorable Mariño is now recognized.

REP. MARIÑO. Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

Kindly consider the Explanatory Note as the sponsorship speech of the said Bill, Mme. Speaker. I so move.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to interpellate or speak against the measure, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to introduce any amendment, both on the Committee or individual, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 8552

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 8552.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

DESIGNATION OF MEMBERS TO THE CONF. CTTEES.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, may we take up some administrative matters.

I move that we designate the following as members

of the Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 6938 and Senate Bill No. 1971 regarding the Child Safety in Motor Vehicles Act:

Rep. Cesar V. Sarmiento
Rep. Mariano Michael M. Velarde Jr.
Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel
Rep. Rozzano Rufino B. Biazon
Rep. John Marvin “Yul Siervo” C. Nieto
Rep. Florida “Rida” P. Robes, and
Rep. Anthony M. Bravo, PhD.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

The Members nominated are so designated.
The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we designate the following as members of the Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 725 and Senate Bill No. 1749 regarding the Free Use of Facilities in Land Transportation Terminals:

Rep. Cesar V. Sarmiento
Rep. Strike B. Revilla
Rep. Fernando V. Gonzalez
Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel
Rep. Edgar Mary S. Sarmiento
Rep. Winston “Winnie” Castelo, and
Rep. Julieta R. Cortuna.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

The Members nominated are so designated.
The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mme. Speaker, I move that we designate the following as members of the Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 8374 and Senate Bill No. 1280 regarding the Revised Corporation Code:

Rep. Ferjanel G. Biron, MD
Rep. Xavier Jesus D. Romualdo
Rep. Rosanna “Ria” Vergara
Rep. Manuel F. Zubiri
Rep. Gus S. Tambunting
Rep. Marlyn L. Primicias-Agabas
Rep. Evelina G. Escudero
Rep. Arthur C. Yap
Rep. Ron P. Salo, and
Rep. Arlene B. Arcillas.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

The Members nominated are so designated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mme. Speaker, I move that we designate the following as members of the Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 725 and Senate Bill No. 1749—no, Senate Bill—House Bill No. 6604 and Senate Bill No. 1985 regarding Regulating the Rates of Political Propaganda on Television, Radio, and Print During an Electoral Campaign:

Rep. Sherwin N. Tugna

Rep. Carlos Roman L. Uybarreta

Rep. Jose T. Panganiban Jr., CPA, LLB

Rep. Cristina “Chiqui” Roa-Puno, and

Rep. Danilo E. Suarez.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

The Members nominated are so designated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we designate the following as members of the Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 8239 and Senate Bill No. 1477 on the Promotion of Positive and Non-violent Child Discipline:

Rep. Divina Grace C. Yu

Rep. Bernadette “BH” Herrera-Dy

Rep. Pia S. Cayetano

Rep. Maria Lourdes Acosta-Alba

Rep. France L. Castro, and

Rep. Antonio L. Tinio.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

The Members nominated are so designated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker, good afternoon.

We are in receipt of a message from the Senate informing the House that the Senate passed with amendments House Bill No. 5576, entitled AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CAREER GUIDANCE AND

COUNSELING PROGRAM FOR ALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

We have been advised that the Committee on Basic Education and Culture, sponsor of the said House Bill, as well as the author thereof, has no objections to the amendments introduced thereto by the Senate.

Mme. Speaker, in accordance with our Rules, I move that we concur with the Senate amendments to House Bill No. 5576.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of the guests of the Representative from the Lone District of Iligan City, Hon. Frederick W. Siao. They are the persons representing the Football for Humanity Foundation, i55 Talent House Corporation, and Lost in the Philippines. They are: Belle Tiongco, Chris Thomas, Carmina Cruz, Julianne Marquez, Matthey Stelley, Edward Broomfiled and Ben Gullick.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The guests of Honorable Siao, please rise. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, we are in receipt of a message from the Senate informing the House that the Senate passed with amendments House Bill No. 7166, entitled AN ACT CONVERTING THE KABASALAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KABASALAN, PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY INTO THE ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE (ZSPI) AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

We have been advised that the Committee on Higher and Technical Education, sponsor of the said House Bill, as well as the author thereof, has no objections to the amendments introduced thereto by the Senate.

Mme. Speaker, in accordance with our Rules, I move that we concur with the Senate amendments to House Bill No. 7166.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mme. Speaker, we are in

receipt of a message from the Senate informing the House that the Senate passed with amendments House Bill No. 7264, entitled: AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CORDILLERA STATE POLYTECHNIC SKILLS INSTITUTE, INTEGRATING THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TESDA) TRAINING CENTERS AND TESDA-SUPERVISED STATE-RUN TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (TVIs) IN THE CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

We have been advised that the Committee on Higher and Technical Education, the sponsor of the said House Bill, as well as the author thereof, has no objections to the amendments introduced thereto by the Senate.

Mme. Speaker, in accordance with our Rules, I move that we concur with the Senate amendments to House Bill No. 7264.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ROLL CALL

REP. MARCOLETA. Mme. Speaker, we move to call the roll of Members.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). 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. 29, dated November 14, 2018.**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. The honorable Speaker is present.

Mme. Speaker, the roll call shows that 186 Members responded to the call.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, Mme. Speaker, before we proceed with the individual amendments to House Bill No. 8552, we would like to reiterate the memorandum issued by the Secretary General for all the Members of

the House regarding the recall of Protocol Plate No. 8, which I would like to read to the record and reiterate to the Members:

We have received reports that certain vehicles with Protocol Plate No. 8 have been spotted in indecent places or figured in crime-related activities. In view of this development, the honorable Speaker has given instructions for the immediate recall of all protocol plates issued during the 16th Congress and earlier.

Kindly turn in these car plates to the Office of the Secretary General for proper acknowledgement.

Signed,
THE SECRETARY GENERAL

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The manifestation of the Majority Leader is now noted. The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 8552

Continuation

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 8552 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the Bill.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Secretary General is now directed to read the title of the Bill.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 8552, entitled: AN ACT FURTHER STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE COCONUT AUTHORITY (PCA), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 4 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1468, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "REVISED COCONUT INDUSTRY CODE", AS AMENDED.

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

PERIOD OF AMENDMENTS

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the Bill is that we just closed the period of amendments. I move that we reconsider the termination of the period of amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Is there

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Jose T. Panganiban Jr. of the ANAC-IP Party-List for his individual amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The Honorable Panganiban Jr. is now recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Likewise, Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Vice Chairman of the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The honorable Vice Chair is now recognized.

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the individual amendments as stated by the Honorable Panganiban.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PANGANIBAN. Mme. Speaker, may I read the proposed individual amendments to House Bill No. 8552.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Please proceed.

INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS

REP. PANGANIBAN. The first amendment will be: on page 1, line 5, Section 1, delete the word "ELEVEN (11)" and in lieu thereof insert the word FIFTEEN (15).

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the individual amendment as stated by the Honorable Panganiban.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PANGANIBAN. On page 1, line 11, Section 1, letter "b," after the word "AUTHORITY," delete the phrase "AS VICE CHAIRPERSON."

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). What does the Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the individual amendment as stated by the Honorable Panganiban.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PANGANIBAN. Number three, on page 2, line 2, same Section, letter C, after the acronym "(DOF)", insert the phrase AS VICE CHAIRPERSON.

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the individual amendment as stated by the Honorable Panganiban.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PANGANIBAN. On the same page, line 8, same Section, insert the following:

E). THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DOST);

F.) THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (DTI);

G.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES (LANDBANK);

H.) THE PRESIDENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES (DBP), OR THEIR RESPECTIVE DULY DESIGNATED PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES.

Thereafter, renumber the enumerated members accordingly, such that on line 8, letter “F” shall become letter “I”.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). What does the Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the individual amendment as stated by the Honorable Panganiban.

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

REP. PANGANIBAN. On page 3, same Section, letter “D,” line 28, between the words “TO” and the article “THE”, delete the word “ESTABLISH” and, in lieu thereof, insert the phrase REVIEW AND MODIFY.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). What does the Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the individual amendment as stated by the Honorable Panganiban.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PANGANIBAN. On page 4, introduce a new Section 2, to read as follows:

SECTION 2. APPROPRIATIONS. – THE AMOUNT NEEDED FOR THE INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT SHALL BE CHARGED AGAINST THE

CURRENT YEAR’S APPROPRIATIONS OF THE PCA. THEREAFTER, SUCH SUMS AS MAY BE NECESSARY FOR ITS CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT (GAA): PROVIDED, THAT THE AMOUNT OF NOT LESS THAN TEN BILLION PESOS (P10,000,000,000.00) SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS OF THE PCA, SUBJECT TO THE REGULAR BUDGET PROCESS AND PRIORITIES, TO AUGMENT THE COCONUT FARMERS AND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT TRUST FUND, TO INCREASE THE INCOME OF COCONUT FARMERS, AND TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES OF THE PCA: PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT THE ALLOCATION AND USE OF SUCH ANNUAL APPROPRIATION SHALL BE REVIEWED BY CONGRESS AFTER SIX (6) YEARS FROM THE APPROVAL OF THIS ACT. THE SAID APPROPRIATIONS SHALL BE ALLOCATED AS FOLLOWS:

A.) INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM, TWENTY PERCENT (20%);

B.) PLANTING, REPLANTING, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF HYBRID COCONUT NURSERIES, TWENTY PERCENT (20%);

C.) INTERCROPPING, TEN PERCENT (10%);

D.) SHARED FACILITIES, TWENTY PERCENT (20%);

E.) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, COCONUT DISEASE PREVENTION, CONTROL, AND ERADICATION, TEN PERCENT (10%);

F.) FERTILIZATION, FIVE PERCENT (5%);

G.) NEW PRODUCTS AND ALL DERIVATIVES OF COCONUT OIL AND MARKETING, FIVE PERCENT (5%); AND

H.) CREDIT THROUGH LANDBANK AND DBP, TEN PERCENT (10%):

PROVIDED, FINALLY, THAT THE ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAMS OR PROJECTS SHALL NOT EXCEED TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE PROGRAM OR PROJECT COSTS.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). What does the Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. All the amendments are accepted, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve the individual amendment as stated by the Honorable Panganiban.

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

REP. PANGANIBAN. That will be all, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, there being no additional individual amendment, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 8552 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). As many as are in favor of House Bill No. 8552, as amended, please say *aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 8552, AS AMENDED, ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 8552, as amended, is now approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 8179 ON SECOND READING

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 8179, contained in Committee Report No. 848, as reported out by the Committee on Legislative Franchises.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). 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. 8179, entitled: AN ACT GRANTING SOLAR PARA SA BAYAN CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN DISTRIBUTABLE POWER TECHNOLOGIES AND MINIGRID SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE ENERGY.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the author of the said Bill, Hon. Arthur C. Yap of the Third District of Bohol, for his sponsorship message.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Deputy Speaker Arthur Yap is now recognized. Please proceed.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. YAP (A.)

REP. YAP (A.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker. Good afternoon colleagues.

There is an adage that the only permanent state in life is change. Change is inescapable especially in this innovation-driven world of ours. The typewriter gave way to the word processor and the telephone gave way to the cell phone. And now, the cell phone is being overtaken by data in connecting people.

In power, what once was the monolithic power-generating and transmission behemoth called the

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

NAPOCOR was broken up when the Electric Power Industry Reform Act or EPIRA was legislated in 2001. In the interest of competition, efficiency, lower rates and electric power for all Filipino consumers, the EPIRA effectively broke up the NAPOCOR into generation, transmission, distribution and retail sales. But, Mme. Speaker, still, 17 years after we enacted the EPIRA and spending billions in subsidies, the World Bank has said that the Philippines continues to have the most expensive electricity in Southeast Asia and second to the highest power rates in Asia. Presently, Mme. Speaker, 2.4 million households remain without power or about 12 million Filipinos with zero power and many millions more suffering intermittent power. Fifty-eight percent of those households that are suffering are in Mindanao. In fact, more than 50 percent of households in Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur and Masbate have no power. Masbate, Sulu, Palawan, Surigao del Sur, Negros Oriental, Sorsogon, Batanes, Zamboanga City, Occidental Mindoro and Marinduque are, in turn, the top 10 provinces that suffer from outages per year. There are studies that more than 40 provinces or half of the Philippines' provinces are paying more than the national average rate of P11 per kilowatt-hour.

It is, therefore, no wonder that in a national survey, Mme. Speaker, taken by Pulse Asia just five months ago, 82 percent of Filipinos are in favor of new options for electric power sources, providers and utilities. It is also not surprising that in the same survey, 89 percent of Filipinos are in favor of increasing the use of renewable energy in the country today.

We are lucky, Mme. Speaker, that we are living at a time when innovation and technological change are providing answers to everyday problems that affect not only our quality of life but the very state and sustainability of our development as cultures, economies and peoples. Because of advances in solar power and transmission, and the current improvements in battery packs, companies all over the world are putting up microgrid solutions to light up and power isolated communities. We need not look far. Locally, we have a shining example of such a company.

Solar Para Sa Bayan is using this technology today, here, locally, in the Philippines and has benefited 200,000 people in 12 towns and in 9 provinces. Such a company should be welcome. It should be celebrated because along the way, they are showing us how the private sector without any tax breaks, without any tax subsidies, can power isolated, underserved communities at no cost to the government.

Flashed on the screen is a satellite picture of the Philippines at night. That is the picture of the Philippines at night. Despite how we have been lionized for our sustained economic growth in the last few years, we can all see how dark and dim our country remains to be. We hope that all of us here can join more than 150 coauthors

in effecting a change by supporting House Bill No. 8179, granting a—let me be very clear—non-exclusive, no tax breaks, no subsidies, private sector-led, solar microgrid franchise, which will remain under the policy guidelines of the DOE and the regulatory jurisdiction of the ERC for rate setting that hopefully will effectively secure for our people the promise enshrined in our Constitution of a prosperous and independent nation, with a people free from poverty, with a rising standard of living and an improved quality of life for all.

Thank you very much, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. VERGARA. Mme. Speaker.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The honorable Mayor, Cong. Lito Atienza, is now recognized. Please proceed.

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker, I believe in the very old saying and practice that ladies should be given priority. I see a Lady raising her hand and she has not been given the recognition. Unless she has something to say or she is declining, then I am taking advantage of the recognition of this Representation.

REP. VERGARA. Thank you, Mme. Speaker. Thank you, my colleague, Congressman Atienza. I appreciate your giving me the opportunity to speak first. May I speak, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The Honorable Vergara, with the permission of the Honorable Atienza...

REP. ATIENZA. Yes, as I mentioned, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). We give the floor to the Hon. Rosanna “Ria” Vergara.

REP. ATIENZA. Yes. As we mentioned, Mme. Speaker, if the Lady Representative would like to say something first before we go into the interpellation, we are giving way to her.

REP. VERGARA. Thank you, honorable colleague. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Thank you, Mayor. Thank you.

We now recognize the Hon. Ria Vergara. Please proceed.

REP. VERGARA. Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

May I address the honorable author, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Yes, go ahead.

REP. VERGARA. Honorable Speaker, my dear friend, Cong. Art Yap, ...

REP. YAP (A.). Yes, Ma'am.

REP. VERGARA. ... the facts you mentioned in the beginning of the Explanatory Note are true. As a former member of the power industry, I concur that our country is lagging in its energy development. We have one of the highest energy rates. However, I believe that this Solar Para Sa Bayan is not the solution. I, together with a number of Representatives in the Seventeenth Congress, find numerous provisions in this Bill to be discordant, unfair, and the measure effectively creates a monopoly for Solar Para Sa Bayan of all solar installations in our country. This will give this entity undue advantage to set up solar plants and instead of encouraging healthy competition, it will kill the solar power industry in our country. Therefore, I respectfully request, if you will allow, that we refer this Bill back to the Committee on Legislative Franchises for further study so we can amend the provisions that are included in this Bill which will kill competition. I mean, I am very concerned about this principle of eminent domain. It gives *Solar Para Sa Bayan* eminent domain for the entire country. This is a privilege or a right only granted to the national government. We are giving it to this one company. This is just one of the many provisions I find problematic. That is just the request, Mme. Speaker, if we could bring it back to the Committee on Legislative Franchises.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). What does the honorable Author say?

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

To my dear friend, Congresswoman Vergara, rather than bringing it back, Mme. Speaker, to the Committee, since it has followed the procedures to get here, maybe we can use the opportunity right now to entertain some of the proposals of the honorable Congresswoman Vergara if there are some changes that she wants to be made. Because on the issue of eminent domain, Mme. Speaker, this is a standard provision that is carried by other utilities-franchises. In fact, the reverse will happen. If the power is not given to this franchise, this franchise will be discriminated against. It is basically an

equal protection for all these franchises if this provision is allowed to remain. That is just one comment if we are dealing with the issue of eminent domain. But allow me to reassure Congress that number one, this franchise will not be allowed to just indiscriminately operate, Mme. Speaker, all over the country because it will still remain under the jurisdiction and policy control of the Department of Energy. It is not going to be allowed to enter franchise areas except only if the franchise area has abandoned a particular area or *Solar Para Sa Bayan* intends to enter an area which is underserved or unserved. So, let us be very clear that this franchise will not give *Solar Para Sa Bayan* the authority to just enter any franchise area. The Department of Energy will continue to exercise control over where and what areas it will be allowed to operate under those requirements, under those standards that the area remains underserved or unserved.

On the question of rates, Mme. Speaker, neither can *Solar Para Sa Bayan* just impose any rate it wants. Hindi rin po pupuwede. You have to go back to the Energy Regulatory Commission because it is the agency under the law that is mandated to regulate rates. So, I hope that the House, the honorable Congresswoman Vergara can be made to understand and accept the provisions that this is not as open as she thinks it is, that it is not as indiscriminate as she thinks it is. She can, of course, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Your answer please, Honorable Vergara. Please answer that issue now.

REP. VERGARA. Yes, Mme. Speaker.

I would like first to tackle the issue of eminent domain and how it is a principal or a privilege granted to electric franchises. I agree because these electric franchises, whether they are privately held or coops, refer to a specific area and they provide a basic necessity which is electricity. They are the sole provider, whereas *Solar Para Sa Bayan* will not be providing electricity—I mean, they are not the sole provider; they will be the secondary source. In fact, contrary to what the honorable author says that they will not just enter any franchise area, on page 1, line 8, it says, “The grantee shall have the right to open a non-discriminatory access to any transmission or distribution system...” So, that means they can enter any franchise area. They will have access to any transmission system and that for me is worrisome. Having operated a utility in the past, we were very careful as to who enters our franchise area because they might install equipment that could disrupt or affect the transmission lines which will then, in turn, affect the operations of the distribution utility. And that is why I firmly request if we could study further the provisions of this House Bill No. 8179.

I agree to the concept that we want to energize and reach these far-flung areas that do not have access to electricity. But having been part of the power industry, solar as a source of power is not the cheapest—it is not the most affordable. I mean, at the end of the day, it is still nuclear and I do not believe that this is the solution to bring down power rates in our country.

REP. YAP (A.). Mme. Speaker, if the concern of the honorable Representative is delineating the area, that is the purpose of this plenary discussion. The author is willing to yield to the language that she wants if it will not defeat the basic fundamental objective of the franchise. So, I am actually prepared, on page 1, line 4, to write there, to insert the phrase “non-exclusive”; on page 1, line 6, I am also prepared to yield that the area to be served will only be delimited to unserved and underserved areas. So, Mme. Speaker, I am willing to yield to amendments. In fact, later on, I know that Cong. Caloy Uybarreta will also stand up to make proposals especially in the areas of rates, areas, non-exclusivity and other matters. So, maybe we can allow the honorable Congresswoman Vergara to take a little time to suggest whatever she wants to suggest and we can accept it here so we can yield the floor first to some other legislators who may want to question and interpellate the Bill, Mme. Speaker?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). I would like first to wait for the reply of the Honorable Vergara regarding your question before we go to another legislator.

REP. YAP (A.). Yes, Ma’am.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). So, Honorable Vergara, please answer that issue.

REP. YAP (A.). Yes, Mme. Speaker.

REP. VERGARA. Yes, Mme. Speaker. Thank you, Congressman Art.

Yes, I will have other clauses to include. One, I would like a performance clause included in this Bill. I would like to see how serious they are in really reaching the underserved areas. For instance, as soon as this is approved, I would like to see within one year that they are able to set up 50 megawatts of solar grids in these areas that have no power and subject to their compliance, then the 25-year lease or the 25-year life that has been given to them will not be cancelled, but if within a year of getting this Bill approved or passed into a law they are unable to implement what they envisioned, then we have every right to cancel the franchise. Are you amenable?

REP. YAP (A.). Mme. Speaker, allow me to consider the points because it is the first time I am hearing it but it strikes me like we are trying to punish somebody who wants to help with the situation. Right now, the responsibility of powering our nation belongs to the cooperatives.

Now, do the cooperatives have the same bonds that can be forfeited if they have failed in powering up the franchises that they have been granted? We have here an entity that wants to assist and to help in certain delineated areas? It strikes me like we are punishing the new kid on the block that is trying to help the situation now. But I am not saying no to what extent the bond can be imposed. Allow me to study it, Mme. Speaker. Right now, in the course of the debates, I can answer it appropriately. Just give us a little time and allow the technical staff to do a little back-of-the-envelope computation if this is something that can be allowed. Offhand, that is how I feel about it, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). What does the Honorable Vergara say regarding that matter?

REP. VERGARA. Mme. Speaker, I will prepare the provision and confer with the author so we can come up with an acceptable provision. It is not actually to punish the entity that wants to serve. Actually, this provision is present in NTC franchises. Once they are given a franchise, they have within two years to get the radio or the television channel up and running to show that they are committed to honor the terms of the franchise that they are granted. Even for power utilities, there is a clause that if you are unable to service customers within your franchise area, then Congress, as a Body, can revoke your franchise. It will be along those lines, Mme. Speaker.

Thank you, Congressman Atienza, for giving me the opportunity. I shall now come up with the amendments and submit it, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Thank you, Honorable Vergara.

REP. VERGARA. Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). May we hear from Congressman Atienza.

REP. ATIENZA. Yes, Mme. Speaker. If the Lady is finished with her manifestation and position on the issue, this Representation would like to take advantage of the opportunity to also air our concerns on this measure. But in the process, the Lady was proposing that we spend more time reviewing and studying the proposal. Did I

hear that right, Mme. Speaker? She suggested that we give it a little more time to study and make proposals or counterproposals to improve this particular measure that we are debating on.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). What does the honorable Sponsor say?

REP. YAP (A.). Mme. Speaker, that is the purpose of why we are having these plenary discussions right now. This does not mean that this franchise is already cast in stone. We can always debate it here. This is part of the parliamentary process that we have. We are willing to accept suggestions, and I would just like to state that we have given also a chance for others to air their comments. We are accepting the comments of others as well, as long as we give the process a chance, Mme. Speaker. We may see it here that if there are amendments or there are suggestions, we will be willing to accept them.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The Honorable Atienza is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. With the position of the Sponsor, I am awaiting a reaction from the Lady who proposed for a little more time to consider the issues surrounding this particular franchise. If she is satisfied with what the Sponsor just mentioned, then I will start my interpellation; otherwise, Mme. Speaker, I believe we should tackle that particular issue or the request of Congresswoman Vergara.

Kayo po ba ay kuntento roon sa sinabi ng ating Sponsor? Ituloy na natin ito at banggitin na lang ninyo iyong inyong mga gustong mga panukala as amendments o gusto po ninyong ipagpatuloy iyong inyong kahilingan na pag-aralan nating mabuti ito sapagkat maraming dapat baguhin at maraming amendments?

In fact, nag-meeting po kanina iyong private sector-opponents and the Gentleman-Sponsor, and there indeed are many valid sentiments and issues raised by the private sector to which Congressman Yap gracefully agreed that he will incorporate as amendments these particular issues.

In line with that, I am still awaiting the Sponsor to put in writing exactly what he has agreed to with the private sector in this morning's meeting. Dahil mahirap po naman nating pag-usapan sa floor iyan, baka hindi naman masakyan ng mga nakikinig, eh boboto tayo rito sa isyung ito na hindi po malinaw sa inyo ang puno't dulo ng mga naisin, layunin at mga pangyayari.

So much has been said, Mme. Speaker, on this issue. We, speaking on behalf of the consumers, are also being maligned, saying that we are nothing but

obstructionists and we are even tormentors. Tormenting who? I would like to ask that question. Who are we tormenting in this issue? We are protecting the rights of the consumers. True, we need to lower the price of electricity. Dapat po talagang asikasuhin nating lahat iyan. Pero ang solusyon po ba ay itong prangkisang ito? Will this franchise lower the cost, genuinely, the price of electricity in the country? Iyon ang tanong ng marami, iyon din ang tanong ng industriya na ngayon ay gumagalaw na sa elektrisidad.

At this point, I would request the Sponsor to specifically write down the amendments that he has accepted in today's meeting with the private industry leaders, and we sit down again with the Members of Congress who may not be excited by the narration of the Sponsor about a revolutionary technology to solve the nation's electricity problem. Then we can all get together and agree to approve or disapprove the measure. Pero at this point, I can talk here and ask questions, but I do not think the Members would appreciate fully the line of reasoning that we are propounding.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). May the Honorable Yap please respond.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mme. Speaker.

REP. YAP (A.). Mme. Speaker, may I be allowed to respond.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Yes, please respond.

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

Just to answer very curtly, and direct to the point on some of the issues. We had a consultation this morning with some of the electric coops under the PHILRECA or the Philippine Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives. Allow me to just state that the fear of the rural cooperatives is that this franchise is just going to allow *Solar Para Sa Bayan* to enter their areas.

I explained to them that under the Constitution, Mme. Speaker, there are no exclusive franchises. First, under the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, all our franchises are non-exclusive. Second, it does not mean that this franchise applicant, this grantee if it will be granted, Mme. Speaker, can just enter any other area. It has to first secure clearance from the Department of Energy if the area is underserved or unserved. So let it not be thought of, Mme. Speaker,—I am just responding to the query. Let it not be thought of, Mme. Speaker, that this grantee can just enter a franchise area without the clearance of the Department of Energy. If the area is not unserved or underserved,

and the DOE does not give the clearance, the franchise holder cannot go in, Mme. Speaker.

Third, on the issue of rates, this franchise grantee, if it is granted, cannot just impose any rates that it wants. It still has to go through the Energy Regulatory Commission because that is the government agency that sets the rates. I hope that this can clarify some of the fears that this franchisee will go wild and just enter any territory indiscriminately.

REP. VERGARA. Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Yes, the Honorable Vergara is recognized.

REP. VERGARA. Mme. Speaker, would the distinguished Sponsor then please explain how come on page 1, it says that the grantee shall have the right to open a non-discriminatory access to any transmission or distribution system?

REP. YAP (A.). Where is that, Mme. Speaker?

REP. VERGARA. It is on the first page, Section 1, starting in line 8 then it goes to page 2.

REP. YAP. Mme. Speaker, the provision that the grantee shall have the right to open a non-discriminatory access to any transmission is according to Section 23 of the EPIRA. We just copied that line from the EPIRA.

REP. VERGARA. And the grantee here would be the *Solar Para Sa Bayan Corporation*?

REP. YAP (A.). Yes, Mme. Speaker, this is under the law. This is under Section 23 of the EPIRA. We just copied the law.

REP. VERGARA. Therefore, they can enter any franchise area?

REP. YAP (A.). As I said Mme. Speaker, we are willing to put the safeguards here in the amendments.

REP. VERGARA. Mme. Speaker, may we move to suspend so we can confer with the honorable author?

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 8179

REP. MARCOLETA. Mme. Speaker, I move that

we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 8179 to give way to some administrative matters.

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

REP. MARCOLETA. Mme. Speaker, I move that we include some additional coauthors of House Bills No. 8529, 8552 and 8554, as contained in the list to be submitted by the Committee on Rules.

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

REP. MARCOLETA. Mme. Speaker, I move that we include as additional coauthors of bills and resolutions that are pending in the Committees the Members appearing in the list yet to be submitted by the Committee on Rules, after due verification of their requests for inclusion as coauthors of such bills and resolutions.

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

CHANGE OF REFERRAL OF CERTAIN MEASURES

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

1. House Bill No. 8259, amending investment restrictions in Commonwealth Act No. 541, as amended by Letter of Instruction No. 630, from the Committee on Trade and Industry to the Committee on Public Works and Highways; and

2. House Bills No. 3797, 4194, 5651 and 6976, transferring to the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology the authority to exercise supervision and control over provincial jails, from the Committee on Justice to the Committee on Public Order and Safety.

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

DESIGNATION OF MEMBERS TO THE CONF. CTTE.

REP. MARCOLETA. Mme. Speaker, I move that we designate the following as members of the Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 5745 and Senate Bill No. 1233 on

the Coconut Farmers and Industry Development Fund, namely:

Rep. Jose T. Panganiban Jr., CPA, LIB.
Rep. Sharon S. Garin
Rep. Angelina “Helen” D.L. Tan, M.D.
Rep. Evelina G. Escudero
Rep. Ron P. Salo
Rep. Orestes T. Salon, and
Rep. Edcel C. Lagman.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

The conferees: Reps. Jose Panganiban Jr., Sharon Garin, Angelina Tan, Evelina Escudero, Ron Salo, Orestes Salon and Edcel Lagman, are now designated as conferees.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MARCOLETA. Mme. Speaker, we are in receipt of a letter dated November 6, 2018 from Rep. Karlo Alexei B. Nograles informing the House of his appointment as Cabinet Secretary and subsequent resignation as Member of the House of Representatives.

Mme. Speaker, in view of the foregoing, I move that we refer the said letter to the Secretary General for appropriate action.

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

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

It was 5:15 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:17 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. MARCOLETA. Mme. Speaker, I move that

we approve Journal No. 28, dated November 13, 2018, copies of which have been previously distributed to the Members.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

REP. MARCOLETA. May I move for the election of the following Members to various Committees:

The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader, Rep. Rodante D. Marcoleta, read the names of the House Members elected to the various Committees, per Journal No. 29, dated November 14, 2018.

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT

Rep. Danilo E. Suarez, as Chairman

COMMITTEE ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Rep. Winston “Winnie” Castelo, as additional member

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. MARCOLETA. May I ask for a suspension of the session, Mme. Speaker.

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

It was 5:18 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:24 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. MARCOLETA. Mme. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until three o'clock in the afternoon of Monday, November 19, 2018.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the session is adjourned until Monday, November 19, 2018, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

It was 5:24 p.m.