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RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 1:00 p.m., the session was resumed with Deputy Speaker Pablo John F. Garcia presiding.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we take up the Additional Reference of Business and request that the Secretary General be directed to read the same.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Secretary General will please read the Additional Reference of Business.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 4587, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF AGE, RACIAL OR ETHNIC ORIGIN, RELIGIOUS BELIEF OR ACTIVITY, POLITICAL INCLINATION OR CONVICTION, SOCIAL CLASS, SEX, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSIONS, MARITAL OR RELATIONSHIP STATUS, DISABILITY, HIV STATUS, HEALTH STATUS OR MEDICAL HISTORY, LANGUAGE, PHYSICAL FEATURES, AND OTHER STATUS, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Abellanos
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

House Bill No. 4588, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING COCKFIGHTING IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Teves (Arnolfo)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

House Bill No. 4589, entitled:

“AN ACT MODIFYING THE SALARY SCHEDULE FOR CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL AND AUTHORIZING THE GRANT OF ADDITIONAL BENEFITS”

By Representative Cabochan
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 4590, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING YOUNG WOMEN’S KIT TO FEMALE STUDENTS IN ALL PUBLIC ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Fariñas (Ria)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 4591, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10870 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE PHILIPPINE CREDIT CARD INDUSTRY REGULATION LAW”

By Representative Delos Santos
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

House Bill No. 4592, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING ALL TOLL OPERATORS TO GIVE DISCOUNTS TO MOTORISTS WHO AVAIL OF ELECTRONIC TOLL COLLECTION SYSTEM”

By Representative Violago
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 4593, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING PHILIPPINE AGRICULTURAL GROWTH AND

STIMULI ACCELERATION (PAGASA) ACT, DEFINING ITS MANDATES, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Cabatbat
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 4594, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL GRASSROOTS SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM CENTERED IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL GAMES”

By Representative Torres-Gomez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 4595, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING SEPTEMBER 11 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF ILOCOS NORTE IN COMMEMORATION OF THE BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF FORMER PRESIDENT FERDINAND EDRALIN MARCOS TO BE KNOWN AS ‘PRESIDENT FERDINAND EDRALIN MARCOS DAY’ ”

By Representatives Fariñas (Ria) and Fariñas (Rudys Caesar)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 4596, entitled:

“AN ACT TO FURTHER PROMOTE THE MOBILITY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY BY MANDATING CERTAIN ACCESSIBILITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘MAGNA CARTA FOR DISABLED PERSONS’, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Fariñas (Ria) and Fariñas (Rudys Caesar)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES

House Bill No. 4597, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE REGION VI OF ILOILO CITY INTO A REGULAR LICENSING CENTER TO BE KNOWN AS THE ILOILO CITY LICENSING CENTER,

AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Baronda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 329, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 70, SERIES OF 2018”

By Representatives Brosas, Zarate, Cullamat, Gaité, Castro (France) and Elago
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 330, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CONDEMNING IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE TERMS THE AMBUSH ON FORMER PANGASINAN REPRESENTATIVE AMADO ESPINO JR. IN SAN CARLOS CITY, URGING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE TO IMMEDIATELY APPREHEND THE SUSPECTS, AND CALLING FOR A SPEEDY INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO THE SAME AND SIMILAR ATTACKS AGAINST GOVERNMENT LEADERS”

By Representative Villafuerte
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 331, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO SIGNIFY ITS COMMITMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE YOUTH STRIKE FOR CLIMATE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Elago
TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

House Resolution No. 332, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY AND INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, RELATING TO INCREASING NUMBER OF RICE CARTELS AND RICE SMUGGLING IN THE COUNTRY”

By Representative Cabatbat
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 333, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION, EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE, FOR THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS (DPWH) IN THE BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (BARMM) FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND PROJECTS (PAPs) IN THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED AUTONOMOUS REGION”

By Representatives Hataman, Sinsuat, Mangudadatu, Arbison, Matba, Balindong, Sangcopan and Adiong

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Joint Resolution No. 16, entitled:

“JOINT RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE RICE SUBSIDY AS PROVIDED UNDER THE PANTAWID PAMILYANG PILIPINO PROGRAM (4Ps) IN THE GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT (GAA) FOR THE PURCHASE OF PALAY FROM FARMERS, MANDATING FOR THE PURPOSE THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD) TO BUY PALAY FROM THE LOCAL FARMERS AND DISTRIBUTE RICE SUBSIDY IN THE FORM OF ACTUAL RICE INSTEAD OF CASH ASSISTANCE TO QUALIFIED BENEFICIARIES”

By Representative Villafuerte

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Transportation (Committee Report No. 20), re H.B. No. 4611, entitled:

“AN ACT DESIGNATING THE THIRD SUNDAY OF NOVEMBER EVERY YEAR AS THE NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD CRASH VICTIMS, SURVIVORS, AND THEIR FAMILIES, ENSURING ITS MEANINGFUL OBSERVANCE”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 698 and 4166

Sponsor: Representative Sarmiento

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4228

Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 4228 as contained in Committee Report No. 8 and request that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the said measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Secretary General is hereby directed to read only the title of House Bill No. 4228.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 4228, entitled: AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

REP. BARONDA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Department of Education.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. BARONDA. Mr. Speaker, to sponsor the proposed budget of the Department of Education, we move to recognize Rep. Corazon T. Nuñez-Malanyaon, Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, to answer questions.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Honorable Nuñez-Malanyaon is hereby recognized for her sponsorship.

REP. BARONDA. Mr. Speaker, before we begin, we would like to acknowledge the presence of our guests in the Plenary headed by the very dynamic and young-at-heart Secretary Leonor “Liling” Magtolis Briones; (*Applause*) Undersecretary Annalyn M. Sevilla; Undersecretary Alain Del B. Pascua;

Undersecretary Jesus L.R. Mateo; Undersecretary Nepomuceno A. Malaluan; Undersecretary Diosdado M. San Antonio; Undersecretary Tonisito M.C. Umali, Esq.; Undersecretary Josephine G. Maribojoc; OIC-Undersecretary, our chief, former Chief of Staff, Atty. Revsee A. Escobedo; Assistant Secretary, Atty. Salvador C. Malana III; Assistant Secretary G.H.S. Ambat; OIC-Assistant Secretary Alma Ruby C. Torio; OIC-Assistant Secretary, Mr. Ramon Fiel G. Abcede; OIC-Assistant Secretary Alberto T. Escobarte; and all the regional directors and heads of the attached agencies, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). The officials of the Department of Education and attached agencies are welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

REP. BARONDA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. France L. Castro of ACT TEACHERS Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Honorable France Castro is likewise recognized. The Sponsor will please proceed.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Good afternoon, honorable Speaker.

This humble Representation is tasked to sponsor the budget of the Department of Education and its attached agencies, namely: Early Childhood Care and Development Council, National Book Development Board, National Council for Children's Television, National Museum of the Philippines, and the Philippine High School for the Arts. The Department's proposed budget of P551,715,849,000 is 13.46 percent of the national government budget of P4.1 trillion for Fiscal Year 2020 and ranks second among departments with the biggest allocations. Of this amount, P518,853,188,000 forms part of the proposed New Appropriations which this august Body is deliberating upon.

The Department of Education's budget is anchored on the following strategic priorities: expanding access to basic education, improving its quality and relevance, and modernizing education management and governance. For Fiscal Year 2020, the Department of Education will operate under the banner, "Making the pivot from access to quality, in the pursuit of its objectives that every Filipino has access to a complete and quality basic education, every graduate is prepared for further education and world of works, and the delivery of basic education services to learners is effective, efficient and collaborative."

This Representation, Your Honor, hopes for the approval of the budget of the Department and its attached agencies and is now ready to answer questions relative to the same.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Previously recognized, Hon. France L. Castro may now proceed with her interpellation.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Puwede po bang makapagtanong ng ilang clarificatory questions sa budget po ng Department of Education?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Gladly, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. So, iyong una pong set of questions ko po ay about shortages or budget cuts doon sa ating budget. Alam natin, Mr. Speaker, na iyong edukasyon ang pinakamahalagang serbisyo na maibibigay ng gobyerno sa kanyang mamamayan pero napansin ko po, Mr. Speaker, iyong ilang mga shortages, alam naman natin na talagang talamak ay iyong shortage of classrooms, textbooks and other materials that are essential doon sa ating teaching and learning process. I would like to thank the Department of Education for giving us data about the unfilled plantilla positions for the teaching and non-teaching personnel, particularly Usec. Jesus Mateo, and another data were also provided by Usec. Analyn Sevilla.

So, iyong unang tanong, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ay iyong tungkol po doon sa teachers, on the unfilled plantilla positions. It says here on your data that the grand total, including the DepEd Central Office, of unfilled plantilla positions—so, you have here three columns: teaching, teaching-related, and non-teaching, with a total of 63,035 unfilled positions broken down as follows: sa teaching po, you have 41, 510; sa teaching-related ay 9,297; and the non-teaching is 12,228. So, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, what is the difference between teaching-related and non-teaching? Alam ko po iyong difference ng teaching sa non-teaching pero ano po iyong mga position noong mga teaching-related?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Teaching-related positions include iyong mga posisyon ng mga supervisors and those who are in actual teaching jobs.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, Mr. Speaker, ito po iyong mga positions on administration and supervision. Tama po ba, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, in the schools.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, ito po iyong mga principals, mga guidance counselors.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Pati supervisors. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Kasama po ba dito iyong mga librarians o sa non-teaching sila?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Kasama po sila, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Looking at your matrixes, nakita po namin, please correct me if I am wrong doon sa aking mga data dito na na-present ninyo, ang grand total ng unfilled positions ay 62,637. Is it correct, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Medyo naguluhan po ako, Mr. Speaker, kasi looking at the data for National Capital Region, mayroon po dito sa teaching na 7,764, teaching-related ay 985, at non-teaching position—so, you have a total of 84,197?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ito ho iyong mga figures: for non-teaching positions, filled is 48,192, unfilled is 12,206, the total for non-teaching is 60,398; for teaching positions, filled is 805,955 and unfilled is 41,510, the total is 847,465; for teaching-related positions, filled is 48,478 and unfilled is 9,319, the total is 57,797. So, the total for filled positions is 902,625 and for unfilled is 63,035; or the total for non-teaching as well as teaching and teaching-related is 965,660, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Wala po ako ng data na iyon, Mr. Speaker. Can the honorable Sponsor provide me with the data that you have read? Tama naman po ito kasi ang hinihingi ko lang po ay iyong unfilled plantilla positions, pero ang tanong ko po ay parang hindi siya nagta-tally doon sa grand total ng unfilled teaching, teaching-related and non-teaching as regards doon sa breakdown, kaya nga nagbigay po ako ng example.

Do we have the same matrix, Mr. Speaker? Katulad nga po ng sinabi ko, ang example ko, sa National Capital Region—kung tama po iyong intindi ko—iyong mga unfilled ay mayroong 7,764, iyong teaching-related ay 985, at sa non-teaching naman ay 1,587, kaya iyong total ng unfilled ay 84,197. So, saan po nakuha itong 84,197? Isang example lang po ito na tinitingnan ko pero nakita ko dito sa total ng unfilled ay parang hindi siya nagta-tally doon sa inilagay po natin.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, please allow our undersecretary in charge of positions to reconcile your figures and make the necessary corrections.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). May I request for a minute of suspension of session, Mr. Speaker?

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

It was 1:18 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 1:20 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

Please proceed, Honorable France Castro.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). May I know the comment, Mr. Speaker, of the distinguished Sponsor as regards our data?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. We will check the data again and then we will provide you with a new document, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mr. Speaker, the data that the DepEd provided me was the wrong data and I have here a copy of the new data. May I proceed, Mr. Speaker? For example, in the National Capital Region, we have here for the non-teaching personnel unfilled positions, it is 1,537, and then for the teaching positions 7,764, and teaching-related is 985 unfilled positions. So, is it correct? Are we looking at the same data, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. That is correct, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Kung mapapansin natin, Mr. Speaker, dito sa data ng ating Departamento, mayroon po tayong grand total ng unfilled non-teaching positions na 12,206 and teaching unfilled positions na 41,510, na ang pinakamalaki po ay nanggagaling sa CALABARZON, NCR at saka dito sa Central Visayas. Iyong sa teaching-related naman po, ito po iyong mga administrators, supervisors, guidance, at librarians, mayroon po tayong unfilled positions totaling to 9,319. Is it correct, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, it is correct, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Kung titingnan natin, Mr. Speaker, doon po sa mga unfilled positions, mayroon po tayong 63,035 na overall total sa mga teaching, teaching-related and non-teaching personnel. May I know Mr. Speaker, the reason there is a significant number of unfilled positions? So, let me go through it one by one. For non-teaching positions, we have 12,206. May I know the reason, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, there are so many unfilled positions for non-teaching?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Actually, for year 2020, 10,000 new teacher items are provided. Actually, the DepEd, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, asked for 40,000 teacher items except that we only got 10,000 new teacher items. So, these positions include Teachers I and II. Then, 5,000 items for non-teaching personnel are provided by DBM chargeable against the Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund. It is true that there is still a great disparity between the unfilled positions as well as the provision for 2020 but as stated early on, the DepEd asked for 40,000 but only 10,000 items were given, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). With due respect to our distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, I agree that you have requested for more items for teaching and non-teaching. Sa non-teaching, ito ay mga financial staff, and we 10,000 for the teaching. Ang tanong ko po, Mr. Speaker, maroong tayong unfilled positions na 41,510, so, kung magki-create tayo ng 10,000, to which I agree na tama naman ito kasi kulang pa talaga iyong mga teachers natin, bakit nangyayari na ang dami nating mga unfilled positions, both for the non-teaching and teaching positions, yet mayroon tayong kini-create na new positions. Bakit po, Mr. Speaker, hindi napi-fill up ng DepEd ang mga ito? Kung babaybayin o titingnan po natin, napakarami po ito, per division per region, na thousands ang mga unfilled positions sa teaching.

Ang nagiging resulta, Mr. Speaker, ay paano natin maa-attain iyong sinasabi ng Department of Education na ideal class size kung ang dami ngang unfilled positions? Puwede bang malaman o makahingi ng categorical answer bakit nangyayari ang unfilled positions na ito na, sa tingin ko, Mr. Speaker, ay very significant?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Ang sagot po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, bago lang po naibigay itong non-teaching positions that were unfilled, iyong 11,808, bago lang naibigay ng DBM ang authority to fill these up. Then, dito naman sa teaching, bago lang rin naibigay, at dito naman sa teaching positions, kasama dito ang mga higher positions like Master Teacher I, iyong Master Teachers. So, iyon po ang rason na hindi natin napi-fill up kaagad.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, ang ibig ninyo po bang sabihin, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, doon sa unfilled positions ng teaching, puro po ba ito Master Teachers? Ito po ba iyong mga positions for promotion kasi significant ito, 41,510. Kung sinasabi po ng ating distinguished Sponsor na karamihan dito ay mga Master Teachers or items for promotion, bakit ganito karami ang mini-maintain nating positions for promotion? Marami pong mga teachers natin ang gustong ma-promote. Ang dami pong mga applicants na for promotion, na gustong ma-promote pero ang nakikita natin at ang dinig natin mula sa field ay kulang ang positions sa mga Master Teachers. Mukhang hindi po yata nagtutugma iyong ating reasoning kung bakit may ganito karaming unfilled positions and yet, iyong sa ibaba, on the ground, sinasabi na wala na tayong mga items para sa mga higher positions, Mr. Speaker.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, sa kalakihan ho ng organization, medyo it takes time bago nare-report ito, mula sa ibaba, doon sa Central Office. Karamihan dito sa mga unfilled positions, actually, ay filled-up na. Some are still being processed, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mr. Speaker, ang Kinatawan na ito ay hindi po satisfied sa mga sagot ng ating distinguished Sponsor of the Department of Education budget dahil, sa tingin ko po, parang hindi po tama na marami tayong mga unfilled positions and yet, nangangailangan tayo na magkaroon sana ng ideal number of teachers to students ratio. Pangalawa, gusto ko rin busisiin kung ilan ba ang mga items mula sa Master Teachers at iba pang mga positions—dahil marami sa mga teachers natin, Mr. Speaker, ay napagkakaitan ng tsansa or oportunidad na magkaroon ng promotion. Marami nga diyan ay Teacher 1 na 20 or 30 years na, napakatagal na sa mga position, kaya dapat ma-fill up na ang mga ito. Pangatlo, ito po ay nagki-create ng savings on the part of the Department of Education, na sana ay nagagamit natin po para doon sa kapakinabangan ng ating mga teachers at siyempre, para doon sa kalidad ng edukasyon.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Everything is noted, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, mayroon po tayong unfilled teaching-related at ang total po nito ay 9,319. So, sabi po ng ating butihing Sponsor kanina, Mr. Speaker, kabilang dito iyong mga administrative positions, iyong mga principals—tama po? May I know the ratio po dito sa mga teaching-related positions, ilan po dito iyong pang-administration, o iyong tinatawag nating "Principal" item, from the 9,319, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, we will give you the data later. These are the positions that are classified under teaching-related: school principals, guidance counselors, subject coordinators, head teachers, vocational placement coordinators, administrators, and vocational school superintendents, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Mr. Speaker, again, muli po, sa data na ito, napakalaki din o maraming mga unfilled positions sa administration, 9,319. So, gusto ko pong malaman kung ilan po dito iyong pang-administration. Bakit po, Mr. Speaker, kapag pumupunta po tayo sa field, ay naririnig po natin sa ating mga eskuwelahan ang comment na marami pong mga eskuwelahan natin na ang mga "Principal" items, na supposedly napapakinabangan ng ating mga teachers for promotion, again, ay hindi po nagagamit. Mayroon nga po tayong mga teachers na teacher-in-charge. Ano ba iyong ibig sabihin nito? Dalawa po ang ginagamit o dalawa po iyong ginagampanan niyang responsibilidad: administrative responsibility and at the same time, teaching responsibility, na malaki pong paglabag ito sa RA 9155. Sa RA 9155, dini-define po dito kung ano ba talaga iyong trabaho ng teaching and non-teaching, at teaching-related personnel para sa mga tracks na, sa tingin namin, ay hindi na-e-evaluate nang mabuti ng ating Departamento, Mr. Speaker, na, una, dapat ma-fill up—siguro mamaya ay malalaman natin iyong reason—iyong mga items po for principals, guidance counselors, mga head teachers at iba pa. Sana rin na iyong mga teachers natin na gumagampan na teacher-in-charge ay maging full-fledged principal na. Maaaring ikatuwiran, Mr. Speaker, ng ating Sponsor na walang pumapasa sa mga Principal's tests. So, baka iyon po iyong ating maging dahilan pero, Mr. Speaker, wala po bang magagawa, wala po bang magagawa ang Departamento, na maging flexible dito sa mga ganitong requirements para po iyong mga "Principal" items, mga administrative positions, ay ma-fill up na, Your Honor.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Iyong hindi pa nakapasa ng Principal's tests, they are given designations like head teachers at saka ang DepEd tries to conduct training para makapasa sila sa kanilang Principal's tests. For as long as they are not able to pass the Principal's tests, they will not qualify as and cannot be full-pledged principals.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, distinguished Sponsor. Ano po iyong intervention na ginagawa po ng ating Departamento para doon sa mga teachers na gusto naman talaga nila ang administrative track instead of teaching—ang dami nito. Siguro po, Mr. Speaker, kunin natin sa Department of Education, through our

distinguished Sponsor, iyong mga positions na ito na marami po mga TIC. So, ano po iyong mga interventions na ginagawa po ng ating Departamento para makapasa or ma-qualify iyong ating mga teachers?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Ito ho ang mga interventions that DepEd provides: mentoring, training, coaching and then, encouraging them to also aim for career progression.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Sana po, Mr. Speaker, talagang seryoso iyong ating Departamento na ma-address iyong kakulangan ng ating mga teachers na gusto na pong ma-promote pero hindi pa nakakapasa at siyempre, iyong mahalaga dito ay ang intervention ng ating Departamento.

Let me go now, Mr. Speaker, to my next topic, on classroom shortages. In 2018, 47,000 is the original target by the Department of Education, Mr. Speaker, but it was reduced to 28,170 noong General Appropriations Act. Is that correct, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Sinasabi po ng COA sa kanilang observations na doon po sa ni-request natin na budget for 2019, 3,440 na po iyon as of July 31, 2019, na mayroon lang 11 ang nagawa. Do you attest to this or do you agree to these data, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Ito ho ang sitwasyon, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. On the 47,000 classrooms that were the original target supposed to be of the DepEd, only 28,170 classrooms were given. It is true that the original target was 47,000 but it was reduced to 28,170, so, 11 classrooms were completed as of December 2018, but 21,278 classrooms were already ongoing construction while 8,749 were undergoing procurement process by the DPWH. As of July 31, 2019, 3,440 have already been completed, while the balance of 24,730 are ongoing and, yes, everything—all of the balances are undergoing construction and DepEd is also constantly monitoring the construction and coordinating with the DPWH on the construction.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

Ita na po ang summary, Mr. Speaker. Out of 47,000 na original target, na-reduce po ito ng DBM sa 28,170. Then in July 31, 2019, mayroon po tayong kakulangan o shortage sa classrooms na 24,730. Ngayon po, may proposal po tayo na 64,000 pero ang funding na ibinigay ng DBM ay para sa 48,000 lang. Kung isusuma po

natin, Mr. Speaker, mayroon pa rin tayong, more or less, 32,000 na classroom shortage. Tama po ba iyan if we add natin iyong kasalukuyang kailangan natin?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes. We requested from the DBM the number of classrooms except that we were only given this number because of the limited funds. So, as I said earlier, lahat ng naibigay, na naka-program, are now ongoing.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Samakatuwid, Mr. Speaker, more than 34,000 classrooms iyong kailangan natin for this year para ma-fulfill natin iyong tinatawag na mga shortages sa mga classrooms, na sana ay nai-provide ng ating DBM dito sa Kongreso, so, shortages sa teaching and non-teaching personnel, and classrooms.

Sa iba pang shortages, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, iyong tungkol doon sa ICT packages. Mayroon po tayong undelivered na 39,950 sa recipient schools. Puwede po ba malaman natin ang dahilan kaugnay nito, Mr. Speaker? Pangatlo po, ang Science and Math kits, mayroon din tayong 13.6 million na undelivered. Gusto natin maging computer-literate ang ating mga bata at magkaroon din siyempre ng Science and Math kits. Ano pong dahilan, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, bakit hindi pa po ito nade-deliver?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Lahat po iyon, ongoing ang delivery until the end of the year, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, ongoing ang delivery ng 39,950 recipient schools ng Science and Math kits. Mr. Speaker, ano na po ngayon, second quarter na, paano na ang second quarter? Sana po ito ay ma-deliver as soon as possible kasi nade-deprive iyong ating mga estudyante ng talagang kalidad na edukasyon na idudulot ng mga packages na ito. Puwede po bang makakuha, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ng listahan ng recipient schools ng Science and Math kits to be delivered?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, we will give you the data.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, Mr. Speaker, mas nakikita natin po ang mga shortages, at mas masahol ang makikita nating shortages kung ang teachers mismo ang ating tatanungin, kung titingnan natin ang sitwasyon sa field. Kung hindi nag-viral iyong isang post ng isang teacher na ang faculty room nila ay nasa banyo, hindi pa natin mabubusisi talaga ang shortages sa ating mga eskuwelahan in terms of lack of facilities. Ito ay isa sa mga mayor na ipinaglalaman ng mga unyon, kasama ang iba pang shortages, na makikita sa difference between the proposed budget ng DepEd at ang maliit na porsiyento lamang na isinama sa GAB.

I-note din natin, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, na isang malaking shortage para sa teachers, siyempre, iyong doon sa salary increase nila. Anyway, that is another issue.

Okay, doon sa budget cuts naman, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ang common understanding po natin sa budget cut ay iyong difference sa items ngayong 2019 at sa paparating na 2020 budget. Makikita natin, Mr. Speaker, sa matrix ng Department of Education in terms of the budget cuts ang mga ito. Mr. Speaker, babangitin ko lang iyong items na may budget cuts sa ating Departamento dahil, sa tingin po ng Representasyong ito, napakahalaga ang mga na-cut dito, and at the minimum, dapat maibalik ito dahil essential ito doon sa delivery of service natin sa education. So, unang-una po ay ang Basic Education Inputs Program at ito po iyong improvement and acquisition of school sites, new school personnel positions, learning tools and equipment, textbooks and other instructional materials. Malaki po, Mr. Speaker, ang na-cut dito na mga kailangang-kailangan natin.

Another one po ay iyong tungkol naman sa Inclusive Education Program. Ito po ang programa ng Departamento on multi-grade education na mayroong budget cut na P4 million; Indigenous Peoples Education, P17 million; Flexible Learning Option, P106 million; at para po doon sa ating Moro students, iyong Madrasah Education Program, P19 million ang cut. So, ito po ay nagto-total ng P147 million in budget cuts. Ano po ba ang ginawa ng ating Departamento dito sa budget cuts na ito?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Ang ginagawa po ng DepEd ay humingi ng humingi kaya lang dahil sa limited resources, limited funds, nababawasan. So, ginagawan na lang nila ng paraan na ma-compensate itong mga shortages. Kasi talagang makikita naman natin from the very beginning, the DepEd keeps on asking for higher or bigger allocation, bigger support but it just so happens that we are always limited by resources, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, distinguished Sponsor. In due time po, mag-create tayo ng amendments to the budget of the Department of Education.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Babangitin ko pa, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, iyong iba pang budget cuts na talagang nakaka-worry sa parte ng ACT TEACHERS Party-List: iyong Education Policy and Development Program, mayroon po ditong National Assessment System for Basic Education, na-cut ng P212 million; Policy and Research Program, P12 million;

Basic Education Curriculum, P27 million; Development of Promotion of Campus Journalism, P457,000; National Literacy Policies and Programs, P1,678,000; at ang Early Language Literacy and Numeracy, P3,486,000. So, ito pa po ang ibang budget cuts na nakikita natin na kailangan pagtuunan ng pansin.

Bukod pa po diyan, Mr. Speaker, ang budget cuts naman na kaugnay ng development ng ating mga personnel, mayroon na po tayong CPD Law at alam naman natin ang Departamentong in-charge ng CPD Law natin. Malaki po ang cuts para sa trainings ng ating mga personnel, particularly, on Human Resource Development in schools and learning centers na P49 million—Teacher Quality and Development Program, P20,341,000 at Human Resource Development, P49,371,000. Ano po ba kaya ang puwedeng maging intervention ng ating Departamento kaugnay nito, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, we agree with you and those are all noted, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker. Sana po ay makatulong tayo later on na madagdagan o maibalik man lang ang mga na-cut sa budget ng Department of Education. Okay?

Next po ay tungkol sa GASTPE. Nakita ko sa budget natin na mayroon tayong P31 billion for GASTPE. Is that correct, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Sa budget natin sa GASTPE, hindi ko po nakuha ang data kaugnay nito, Mr. Sponsor. Noong nagkaroon tayo ng budget briefing, ginusto rin sana nating makakuha ng data mula sa mga schools kung ilan po iyong ating mga beneficiary dito sa GASTPE, iyong nasa elementary and high school, up to senior high school. Wala pa pong ipinapakita ang ating Departamento na data tungkol dito, Mr. Speaker.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Okay. Wala pong elementary, only Grades 7 to 12, and the number of voucher program beneficiaries is 1,290,185.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, puwede po bang makuha iyong data noong mga beneficiary natin ng GASTPE?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. We will provide the data.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). At siyempre, iyong pong data natin doon sa senior high school.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Opo, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Mayroon po tayong nakuhang report mula sa COA doon sa observations nila ng GASTPE implementation. Sa COA report, mayroon mga ghost beneficiary, mayroon din mga beneficiary na na-doble na nabigyan o nagkadoble-doble ang mga pangalan. So, isa rin po ito sa ni-raise ko sa DepEd briefing noong nakaraan at wala rin akong nakuhang sagot kaugnay dito, Mr. Speaker. Puwede po bang ma-provide ito dahil malaki po iyong budget sa GASTPE, P31 billion, na sana ay nagamit natin sa mga pangangailangan sa public schools, sa mga basics na kailangan natin. Puwede po ba, on the record, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, maipaliwanag ang naging COA observations kaugnay sa “anomalies” sa GASTPE?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. We provided you already the required document, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Your office received it on September 13, 2019.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Anyway, Mr. Speaker, titingnan ko pa po iyon. Titingnan natin ang discrepancies. Puwede bang in brief, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, makuha natin iyong gist ng explanation kung bakit nangyayari po ang ganoon?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Okay. The DepEd, in coordination with the Private Education Assistance Committee, updated that list of 115 voucher program beneficiaries reported in the AOM of the COA, which beneficiaries were billed multiple times due to having multiple Unique Learner Reference Number or LRN, but these are more on clerical errors. The PEAC and the DepEd worked together to avoid the occurrence of the same findings. Unique LRN of students are now being used in claims for payments and the database of the voucher management system has been updated, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you doon sa sagot, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Sana lang po, makita o ma-evaluate at ma-assess natin ang pondo na naibibigay sa GASTPE na tulong sa mga private schools. Totoo naman po na kailangan ng assistance pero kailangan din na maging maayos ang implementation ng GASTPE at ang pagbibigay natin ng pondo sa private schools. Imagine po ninyo, P31 billion, at wala pa po dito iyong parang tulong sa senior high school. Tama po ba? Ito lang po ay iyong sa GASTPE, wala pa dito iyong sa mga senior high school o ang tinatawag nating voucher system para sa mga senior high school. Mr. Speaker, P31 billion is P31 billion. Sa salaries nga ng

ating government employees and teachers, P31 billion lang ang ibinibigay na pondo para sa salary increase pero P31 billion is a big amount to consider.

Mayroon pa po akong nakita na binawasan ng budget na kulang-kulang na P1 billion doon sa non-DepEd public schools. Nagkakahalaga ito ng kulang-kulang na P1,940,224,000. Tama po ba? Ito iyong mga LUC at SUC na mga eskuwelahan po natin na may mga senior high school.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Nasa SUCs lang ho iyong Grades 11 to 12 kasi po mayroong free tuition naman talaga ang SUCs, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Sigruo, Mr. Speaker, napakalaki ng tinanggal na budget kaugnay nito kung totoo iyong trend o policy ng DepEd na later on, mawawala na sa SUCs ang senior high school. Mr. Speaker, ang anak ko ay nasa LUC, at ganoon ang sinasabi, na dalawang taon na lang daw ang kanilang senior high school at hindi na ito mapopondohan. Ito ba ang ibig sabihin, Mr. Speaker, kung bakit sa trend ay pababa ng pababa ang ibinibigay nating pondo para sa non-DepEd public schools gaya ng SUCs?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Actually, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the decision to keep Grades 11 to 12 is really with the SUCs kasi ngayon, ang kanilang consideration, ang kanilang focus is on tertiary kaya nga medyo maliit na lang ang naibibigay sa SUCs, kasi itong pondo ay parang ginagamit na lang sa laboratory requirements nila.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). For the record, Mr. Speaker, ang trend po natin sa mga SUC na dating nagki-cater sa ating senior high school, in due time or at the proper time, ay mawawala na at ang pondo po ba na inilalaan dito ay mapupunta sa additional funds ng DepEd schools natin, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Noted po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Isa pa po sa budget cuts, Mr. Speaker, in terms naman po doon sa benefits ng teachers ay iyong tungkol sa medical examination for public school teachers. Gusto ko lang malaman, Mr. Speaker, kung talagang nag-provide pa ba ng proposal and DepEd kaugnay ng medical examination for public school teachers? Ginawa nila ito noong 2019. Nag-propose pa ba ang Department of Education, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ng budget para po dito?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, yes, the DepEd proposed, but the DBM did

not consider it, pending the issuance of the IRR of the Universal Health Act, kaya po hindi pa napagbigyan iyong proposal ng DepEd, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Ang tanong, Mr. Speaker, nag-propose ba ang Department of Education ng budget for medical treatment as benefit para sa ating mga teachers for 2020?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Ito po ay para sa 2020 where DepEd proposed P400 million, but it was not approved and so, it is deleted. The reason is that they are waiting for the IRR of the Universal Health Act and the lead agency here is the DOH, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the teachers, it is good to know na nag-propose po ang Department of Education pero na-cut ito ng Department of Budget and Management. In due time, mag-propose din po tayo ng amendment dito sa ating benefit na ito para sa mga teachers natin.

On to my last topic, Mr. Speaker, on weaponizing the bureaucracy to fulfill iyong tinatawag nating National Task Force on the ELCAC. may I know, Mr. Speaker, ano po iyong papel ng Department of Education dito kasi nakita natin that they belong to Cluster 12, based on the DILG Memo, as a member ng Sectoral Unification, Capacity-building, Empowerment and Mobilization Cluster—so, iyong mga specific activities, programs and projects under the NTF as a Cluster 12 member; iyong resolutions, documents, agreements under the NTF, as Cluster 12 member, entered into by the DepEd with the Office of the President, NTF, DND, AFP, and any official unit thereof. So, ano po iyong papel dito ng Department of Education sa Cluster 12, na binabanggit po doon sa document ng Department of Education and DILG?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, member ang DepEd sa basic services sa committee or the National Task Force, but anything na related to education and information, iyon ang gagawin ng DepEd, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Puwede po bang makakuha ng dokumento, Mr. Speaker, related sa role ng Department of Education dito sa National Task Force.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the DepEd will provide the good Congresswoman the required document.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Alam natin, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, na sa Department of Education, talagang civilian authority ay dapat hindi napapaloob o nasa-

subjugate under po doon sa mga military activity. Nakalagay din po dito, Mr. Speaker, at nakita natin, iyong mga gagampanin ng Department of Education. So, dahil alam naman natin kung para saan ang National Task Force na ito kaya po nagiging dahilan ito, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, noong profiling na ginagawa sa mga teachers. Alam ko na naging kaisa ang DepEd kaugnay ng pagtutol dito sa mga profiling ng mga teachers. Totoo po ba, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Hindi ho kasama iyon, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. So, malinaw na hindi kasama itong mga ginagawa na mga profiling, at naranasan ito last year noong mga teachers, dahil ang nangyayaring ito ay labag doon sa basic rights ng mga guro na makapag-union. Alam po ninyo, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, mga lider po natin, siguro, dapat maimbestigahan din ito ng Department of Education, particularly sa Region X, dahil si Ma'am Ofelia Tabacon madalas o pang-anim na beses na siyang binibigyan ng red tag, sinasabi sa eskuwelahan niya na siya daw ay terrorist et cetera. Baka puwede po, Mr. Speaker, maimbestigahan ito ng Department of Education at para makuha din natin iyong suporta ng Department of Education doon sa pag-o-organize ng mga unions. Puwede po ba, Mr. Speaker, maimbestigahan ito?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Si Ma'am Ofelia Tabacon sa Region X na teacher po doon sa Cagayan de Oro City.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Sige, dahil kakaunti na lang po ang time, Mr. Speaker, sana ang papel ng Department of Education dito sa National Task Force ay hindi naging dahilan ng closure ng mga Salugpungan schools and threats and suspension sa mga tribal schools natin na katulad ng nangyari sa Salugpungan. Dapat hindi rin ito maging dahilan para mapigilan ang mga teachers natin sa kanilang rights para sa pag-uunyon at para sa free expression at maging dahilan din po noong paglabag ng mga karapatan ng ating mga bata, ng ating mga teachers at iyong ating mga personnel sa kanilang mga basic human rights.

So, ito lang po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, marami pong salamat.

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

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, before we proceed to the next interpellator, I would like to move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Cong. Eric Go Yap, from Barangay Tuyon-Tuyon, municipality of Tuy, Batangas. They are Kapitan Adrian Peres, Kagawad Arnulfo Arzobal, Kagawad Porfirio Bautista, Kagawad Joselito Carinan, Kagawad Adela De Castro, Kagawad Maylene Cebeda, Kagawad Nerissa Derjob, Kagawad Virgilio Atatado, Secretary Marlyn Atienza, Treasurer Cecilia Atatado, and SK Mica Atatado.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). The guests of Cong. Eric Go Yap, welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, the next to interpellate, from the Party-List BAYAN MUNA, I move that we recognize Rep. Eufemia "Ka Femia" C. Cullamat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Honorable Cullamat is recognized.

REP. SUAREZ (D.). For her manifestation, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Honorable Cullamat is recognized for her manifestation.

REP. CULLAMAT. Mr. Speaker, maraming salamat. Mme. Sponsor, mayroon po akong ipapahayag na manipestasyon, pwede po ba? Maraming salamat, Mme. Sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, ang pagpapalawak ng isip sa pamamagitan ng edukasyon ang susi tungo sa pag-unlad. Lahat tayo rito ay may kakayahang gampanan ang ating mga tungkulin dahil sa pagkatuto. Karanasan man o paaralan ang ating naging mga guro, hindi maitatangi ang halaga ng institusyon ng edukasyon, at lahat ng magulang ay nagnanais na makapagtapos ng pag-aaral ang mga anak. May mga batang mga ilog pa ang tinatawid para lang makapasok sa paaralan. May mga gurong nagtuturo ng 2 baytang ng sabay-sabay kahit gaano man kahirap dahil kinikilala nila ang halaga ng edukasyon.

Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor, paulit-ulit na sinasabi ng DepEd ang mga salitang "no one left behind" pero iniwan nila ang mga batang Lumad sa hindi makatarungan na pag-isyu ng DepEd ng memo na nagsususpende ng permit to operate ng 55 paaralan ng Salugpungan sa Davao Region. Malaking kalapastangan ito sa karapatan sa edukasyon. Ang Salugpungan ay nagtuturo ng tunay na kultura, pagpapahalaga sa ating lupang ninuno at pangangalaga sa kalikasan para sa susunod na henerasyon. Sa halip na gipitin at ipagkait

ng DepEd ang edukasyon sa mga Lumad ay dapat pa nga nilang kilalanin at tulong ang pagpupursigi nito ng mga katutubo. Sa matagal nang pakikibaka nila, dugo at pawis ang ipinuhunan para makapagpatayo ng mga paaralan sa kanilang mga komunidad para makapag-aral ang kanilang mga anak at ang susunod na henerasyon. Sa kanilang pag-aaral ay natutunan ng mga Lumad na dapat labanan ang panghihimasok ng mga malalaking korporasyong nagmimina, logging at iba pang kumpanyang nakakasira sa kanilang lupang ninuno.

Ipinapasara ang mga paaralang Lumad ng walang mabigat na batayan at hindi sa sapat na proseso. Pinakikiusapan namin ang Salugpungan, nalaman namin na alegasyon lang pala mula sa National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict ang basehan ng DepEd sa suspension order nito. Hindi pa man napatunayan, hindi pa nga naimbestigahan, ito ay agad na itinuturing ng DepEd na katotohanan at ginawang batayan sa pagsuspende. Hindi ipinaalam sa Salugpungan, walang formal complaint, hindi binigyan ng kopya ng report kung saan nakabatay ang suspension, kaya paano sasagutin ang mga alegasyong wala namang kongkretong batayan? Mukhang ang DepEd nga ang dapat managot kung bakit basta-bastang pinagkaitan ng edukasyon ang mga batang Lumad base sa impormasyong hindi inaalang kung totoo.

Ang mga paaralan pa ang dinidikdik na magbigay ng dahilan kung bakit hindi dapat ipasara. Hindi raw nagpasa ng sapat na papeles ang mga paaralan. Kasinungalingan ang sinasabi ng DepEd at ng military na ginagamit ang mga paaralang Lumad bilang training ground ng rebelyon. Sa pagkakatatagan ng mga kasinungalingan ito, ang Department of Education ay nagpapalaganap ng miseducation.

Mayroon ding nagsasabing na mga Lumad ang nagpapasara ng paaralan—mga Lumad nga ang nagtayo nito kaya papaanong mga Lumad ang magsasabing isasara ang mga paaralan?

Hindi kami humihingi ng pera mula sa gobyerno kahit kapos kami ng pera. Ang gusto namin ay hayaan kaming magpatakbo ng aming sariling paaralan ayon sa aming karapatan sa sariling pagpapasya. Mayroon na ring mga banta na ipapasara ang Lumad schools sa Caraga, ang ALCADDEV o Alternative Learning Center for Agricultural and Livelihood Development, ito ay high school, at ang Tribal Filipino Program of Surigao del Sur, ito ay elementarya. Malinaw po, batay doon sa United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, na karapatan naming magtatag at mamahala sa aming sistema ng edukasyon at institusyong nagbibigay ng sariling wika sa pamamaraang naangkop sa aming kultural na pamamaraan sa pagturo at pagkatuto.

Huwag natin itong hayaang mangyari, ang pagsara ng TRIFPSS at ALCADDEV, kaya dahil dito ay hinahamon ko ang Department of Education at ang Kongresong

ito na makiisa sa mga paaralan at komunidad ng mga katutubo. Ang pagsisikap na ito ay ipinapakita namin na tulong namin sa ating gobyerno, dahil matagal nang walang naibibigay na sosyal na serbisyo, matagal nang hindi binigyan ng serbisyo ang mga katutubo, ngunit hindi kami gumawa ng problema sa gobyerno at bagkus, ito ang naging tulong namin at ang hinihingi namin na tulong ng Department of Education, kung anuman ang pagkukulang sa aming pagtayo ng paaralan ay hindi dapat ito ang gagawin at patuloy naming ipapanawagan na ibasura ang martial law sa Mindanao, ibasura ang whole-of-nation approach, ibasura ang National Task Force to End Local Communist and Armed Conflict dahil hindi po ito tumutugon ng aming kinakaharap na problema. Ang aming panawagan palagi sa ating pamahalaan, irespeto nila ang aming karapatan sa sariling pagpapasya. Ito lang po, Mr. Speaker.

Maraming salamat at magandang hapon sa ating lahat.

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

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank Congresswoman Cullamat for her manifestation.

Next in our list, Mr. Speaker, is the Representative from MAGSASAKA Party-List, Cong. Argel Joseph T. Cabatbat for his interpellation. I move that he be recognized.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P). Honorable Cabatbat is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department, Mr. Speaker, has a commendable utilization rate of around 90 percent plus. However, the unused appropriations or the remaining percentage of unutilized or unused appropriations still amount to around P42 billion for 2017 alone, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor. Although commendable and impressive is the utilization rate, yet, the amount of unused appropriations is still very significant. Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor, I would like to ask the Department as to what actions are being taken by the Department to improve and increase their utilization rate of the appropriations given to them?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, as admitted by our honorable Congressman, the fund utilization rate of the DepEd is really remarkable and commendable. For instance, here in 2018, P40 billion was supposed to be recorded but actually the fund released by DBM was —P16.7 billion of that was unreleased, while P23.9 billion was unobligated, P19 billion of which is continuing and has been made

part of the 2019 budget. This amount has already been spent for Capital Outlays, as well as MOOEs, because the DepEd was allowed to use it for another year, thus, the extension. In effect, only P4.4 billion lapsed, which is the Personnel Services portion. So, while it would appear like it is a big amount, yet, it is still quite small because it is the consolidated amount for about 47,000 schools and 200 division offices in 16 regions. So, every school, parang 1,000 lang talaga for this P4.4 billion.

Just for the information of the honorable Congressman, the utilization rate record of the DepEd now is really commendable. In 2016, it was 88 percent, while in 2017, there was a remarkable drop in the level of the unutilized funds because the utilization rate then was 97 percent and now in 2018, it is 95 percent.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Despite the remarkable utilization rate of the Department, I have read the COA reports on their recommendations for the Department as to how to improve the utilization of its unused appropriations

Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor, I would just want to ask how the Department is performing as far as complying with the recommendations of the COA is concerned.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, actually, the DepEd has heeded the recommendations also of the COA and it is already conducting a lot of reforms and dialogues, as well as consultations, and initiating reforms just so it can further improve its utilization rate.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor. Can we be given a detailed report on these reforms and actions taken by the Department?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking of the Unused Appropriations, can we also be given a copy or a detailed report as to the Unused Appropriations for 2017?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. We will provide this to the honorable Congressman, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CABATBAT. Is it true that for 2018, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor, the Department did not report any Continuing Appropriations?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. The DepEd reported Continuing Appropriations of P19 billion. I

stated early on that of the unobligated portion, P19 billion is for ...

REP. CABATBAT. For 2018, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes.

REP. CABATBAT. I saw in the 2019 and 2020 NEP, there appears to be no Continuing Appropriations for 2018.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. There is no Continuing Appropriations in 2018 because 2017 budget was valid only for one year.

REP. CABATBAT. I think I would like to disagree with my esteemed colleague, Mr. Speaker, because as far as I can remember, the validity of the appropriations for 2017 is for two years except for PS. Perhaps, there should be another reason for the supposed reversion of funds to the Treasury.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, talagang one year lang ho ang validity for 2017.

REP. CABATBAT. Well, I submit, Mr. Speaker, but as far as I can remember, for the 2017 GAA, it was for two years. Nonetheless, let us agree to disagree, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor.

Let me move on to my next question. The Department, in one of its budget briefings, has mentioned exploring the use of artificial intelligence in our education. Do we have some sort of a roadmap as to when we are going to utilize or start utilizing artificial intelligence in our educational system?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Pinag-aaralan na po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CABATBAT. Can we also be given a report on that?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CABATBAT. Okay. On to my last question, Mr. Speaker, what is the Department doing to promote the importance of agriculture in our educational system and in teaching our students about agriculture, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. The DepEd is trying to actually enhance the curriculum for agriculture, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CABATBAT. Can we be given a draft proposal for this so we can also contribute.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CABATBAT. When can we expect its implementation, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. The implementation actually is ongoing, but we are still continuing the refinements, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CABATBAT. I have no further questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of the budget of the Department of Education, including its attached agencies.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. PALMA. Before we continue, Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of the guests of the Makabayan bloc from Germany: Hon. Lorenz Gosta Beutin, Member of the Parliament of Germany; Ms. Laura Geiger of Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Center for International Dialogue and Cooperation; and Mr. Benjamin Beutler, together with a former colleague of ours, Hon. Antonio Tinio.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Our guests from Germany and our colleague, Congressman Tinio, are recognized. Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

COMMISSION ON AUDIT

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to consider the proposed budget of the Commission on Audit.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, before we begin with the Sponsor, may we acknowledge the presence

of our guests in the floor, the Commission on Audit family headed by Chairperson Michael G. Aguinaldo, Commissioner Jose A. Fabia, Commissioner Roland C. Pondoc, Asst. Commissioner Carmela S. Perez, Asst. Commissioner Elizabeth Zosa, Asst. Commissioner Winnie Rose Encallado, Asst. Commissioner Susan Garcia, Asst. Commissioner Adelina Concepcion Ancajas, Asst. Commissioner Luzvi Chatto, Asst. Commissioner Alexander B. Juliano, Asst. Commissioner Manolo C. Sy, Asst. Commissioner Joseph Anacay, Asst. Commissioner Luz Tolentino, the directors of local, national and corporate sectors, and all other directors of this Department, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). The officials of the Commission on Audit, headed by our good friend, Chairman Michael Aguinaldo, are welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, as the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the Commission on Audit, I move that we recognize Rep. Elenita Milagros “Eileen” Ermita-Buhain, Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, to answer questions, if any.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Hon. Eileen Ermita-Buhain is recognized for her sponsorship.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

It was 2:27 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 2:33 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the first interpellator for the Commission on Audit, Rep. Ferdinand R. Gaité of Party-List BAYAN MUNA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Honorable Gaité is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, pahihintulutan bang makapagtanong ng ilang clarificatory questions hinggil sa budget ng Commission on Audit, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Yes, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to answer questions from the Gentleman.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po. Ang Kinatawang ito ay may mga ilang katanungan hinggil sa policy o mga patakaran ngayon hinggil sa ating mga ...

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. PALMA. With the indulgence of Honorable Gaité, may I request the people inside the Plenary Hall to please remain quiet so that we can proceed with the interpellation. May I request, again, the Members and the people inside the Plenary Hall to please minimize their noise.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Yes, to the people in the Plenary Hall, please maintain order. Please proceed, Honorable Gaité.

REP. GAITE. Muli, maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor.

Ang Commission on Audit ay isa sa signatories ng lumabas na circular noong 2017 at gayundin noong 2018 at ang tawag dito ay CSC-COA-DBM Joint Circular No. 1. Inilabas ito noong 2017 at gayundin noong 2018 at ang nilalaman nito ay patungkol sa usapin ng ating mga job order at contract of service workers, na sinasabing kailangan ng gobyerno para maisagawa ang mga pangangailangang temporary ng ating pamahalaan pero at the same time, pinagpapatuloy iyong nakikita nating kontraktwalisasyon ng mga manggagawa sa gobyerno.

Noong 2017, nilinaw dito na sa halip na gumamit noong tinatawag na individual contract of service, ipapalit iyong institutional contract of service. Sa aming pananaw, hindi ito asosolusyunan ang problema ng kontraktwalisasyon at sa halip ay gagamit lamang ng service contractors or service providers or service agencies para mag-hire ng mga kawani pero hindi pa rin sila gagawa ng regular na trabaho kahit na marami sa kanila ay matagal na sa serbisyo sa pamahalaan. Binago ito noong 2018 ngunit, essentially, ang binago lamang ay iyong pag-extend ng deadline na originally ay dapat January 2019. Doon sa sumunod na circular na nilabas noong 2018, na-extend lang ito sa December 31, 2020 o may palugit na dalawang taon.

Sinabi dito na gagamit pa rin at puwedeng pahintulutan ang paggamit ng mga institutional contracts of service na gumagamit ng mga service contractors at service providers pero ang katangian ng trabaho ay wala pa ring tinatawag na employee-employer relationship.

Ang ibig sabihin, hindi pa rin sila empleyado ng gobyerno. Mismo nga sa Commission on Audit, ayon sa aming pagsisiyasat, ay nagha-hire ng mga contracts of service. Ayon sa datos ng Civil Service Commission sa kanilang Inventory of Government Human Resource System, may 174 employees comprising 0.14 percent of the total members of the—I am sorry, 230 pala, sorry po—you have 230 job orders or contracts of service comprising 0.18 percent of the total members of the personnel of the Commission on Audit.

Ang tanong po namin, layunin ba talaga ng gobyerno na magtipid sa pamamagitan ng pag-hire ng mga job order and contract of service workers as a matter of policy, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Mr. Speaker, hindi naman po.

REP. GAITE. Ang isa, Mme. Sponsor, sa nakita naming layunin, at paulit-ulit na nababanggit ito, ay mayroon daw mga trabaho na time-bound. Meaning, limited lamang ang panahon na pangangailangan ang trabaho ngunit para daw makatipid sa pangmadalian, hindi na kailangan daw mag-create ng plantilla positions, mag-hire ng regular employees at sa halip ay maghain nalang ng job orders at contract of service. Hindi ba natin masasabing isang paraan iyan para makapagtipid ang gobyerno, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Mr. Speaker, hindi naman actually policy ng COA na magtipid ng ganoon. It is really a policy po ng DBM.

REP. GAITE. Kaya ko po natatanong ito kasi mismo sa pag-define kung ano ang puwedeng i-contract out o gumamit ng mga job orders at contracts of service, sinasabi rin dito: “to ensure the continuous and efficient delivery of government programs and services, such as implementation of projects requiring personal skills or expertise not available in the agency, or implementation of time-bound projects or tasks which renders the hiring of permanent employees impractical and more expensive.”

Hindi ho ba ang ibig sabihin noon, bilang patakaran, para makapagtipid sa gastusin sa Personnel Services na normally na na-charge ang item sa mga plantilla positions, na ma-charge na lang ito sa contracting out of services sa ilalim ng Maintenance and Other Operating Expense, at mas madalas kaysa hindi, ay hindi siya permanente at kadalasan, taon-taon nire-rehire ang ganitong uri ng trabaho pero walang kasiguruhan sa trabaho, making it less expensive. Tama po ba iyan, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Mr. Speaker, hindi naman sa nagtitipid po ang government. Apparently,

hindi lang po nagka-qualify ang empleyado sa Civil Service although, of course, ang gusto rin po ng COA ay magkaroon talaga ng plantilla position ang atin pong mga workers.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa kasagutan, Mme. Sponsor. Kaya ko po natanong ito, kasama sa mandato ng Commission on Audit ang prevention and disallowance of “irregular, unnecessary, excessive, extravagant or unconscionable expenditures or uses of government funds and properties.” Tama po ba iyan, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Tama po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Kung gayon, Madam Sponsor, naniniwala ba ang ating kapita-pitagang Sponsor na ang hiring ng regular at permanent employees ay extravagant, unnecessary, unconscionable, tulad na lang ng ating mga manggagawa sa Department of Health, doon sa HRH Deployment Program na ang malaking bahagi ng ating mga kawani at manggagawa na nagbibigay serbisyong pangkalusugan ay hindi regular, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Hindi po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Nakakabahala po kung kaya po nagtatanong ang Kinatawag ito dahil lumolobo ang bilang ng ating job orders at contracts of service sa government. Hindi pa kasama diyan iyong bilang ng tinatawag po nating casuals and contractuales. Ang malaking pagkakaiba, iyong casuals and contractuales, bagamat wala rin silang kasiguruhan sa trabaho, mayroon silang employee-employer relationship. Iyong ating job orders and contracts of service, bagamat gumagawa sila o gumagampan ng regular na trabaho, sila ay walang employee-employer relationship. Sabi nga ng Facebook, “not in a relationship.”

Nakakalungkot dahil silang gumagampan ng regular na trabaho, marami sa kanila ay matagal na sa serbisyo. Bakit matagal? Kasi nire-rehire lamang sila nang nire-rehire taon-taon. You would be surprised that in some agencies, they have been working under a contract of service or job order for 5, 10, 15, even 30 years, doing regular functions. Sa DSWD, ang tawag sa kanila ay “MOA workers”—memorandum of agreement workers. Sa NHA, ang tawag sa kanila ay “emergency hires.” Tinanong ko iyong isa, “Madam, emergency hire po kayo?” “Opo,” sagot niya. Tinanong ko, “Gaano katagal na?” “Aniya, “Nasa 15 taon.” Sabi ko: “Madam, hindi po emergency iyan, iyan po ay long-term employment na, at dapat matagal na kayo ginawang regular.” Yet, there are at least 600,000 job orders and contracts of service out of the 2.4 million government employees

in government. Idagdag pa natin iyong almost 200,000 casuals and contractuales with employee-employer relationship.

Paano natin maja-justify ito, na mismo ang gobyerno na sana ay nagpapatupad ng mga batas, lalo na sa karapatan at kagalingan ng manggagawa, mismo ang DBM, CSC and the Commission on Audit, are party to this policy on the continuing program of contractualization within the government itself, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Actually, Mr. Speaker, nag-a-agree po ang COA na kailangan po, in the future, ay magkaroon po ng plantilla position ang atin pong mga workers.

REP. GAITE. Lalo’t higit sa Commission on Audit na saklaw ang lahat ng ahensiya ng pamahalaan. Tungkulin ng COA na busisiin ang lahat ng paggamit ng resources na kailangan ng mamamayang Pilipino ngunit ang nakakadismaya, iyong gumagampan ng trabahong ito ay mismo sila ay hindi kinikilala ang kanilang trabaho. Nabanggit na iyong trabaho nila ay regular, iyong trabaho nila ay necessary, iyong trabaho nila ay desirable and yet, many of our employees in government—800,000 ang total kasi one out of every three government employees—are subjected to these conditions na kawalan ng kasiguruhan sa trabaho; walang benepisyo kapag nag-retire sila dahil hindi sila covered ng GSIS or SSS; kapag sila ay magkasakit ay hindi sila covered ng PhilHealth; at kung sila ay magkaroon ng pagkakataon o gustong magkaroon ng sariling tahanan, hindi sila covered ng Pag-IBIG.

Marami pa silang ibang problemang kinakaharap bilang empleyado ng gobyerno because we argue that there actually exists an employee-employer relationship but by the myth of the contract, by providing a sentence in that contract stating that “no employee-employer relationship exists,” iyong myth na walang employee-employer relationship ay parang ginagawang katotohanan. Tama po ba iyan, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Opo, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Kung kaya’t ang Kinatawag ito ay nagtutulak na sa Circular na ito, sa halip na i-institutionalize ang contractualization, dapat gawin ang government bilang uliran na employer, kasama ang Civil Service Commission at ang Department of Budget and Management, dapat magpakatotoo at gawin talagang regular ang daang-libo nating mga kawani na hindi nakakatamasa ng regular na empleyo at nalalagay sa matinding panganib. Marami sa kanila ay nagbibigay ng mga basic services such as, iyong ating mga nagwawalis sa lansangan, mga health workers sa

mga iba't ibang ospital, maski iyong mayroon po—alam po ba ninyo, kahit mga technical workers, we have highly-trained personnel; like in the Philippine Rice Research Institute, we have scientists, mga geneticists, but in the absence of a regular position, kapit sa patalim ang sitwasyon nila at hanggang ngayon ay nananatiling contractual na mga manggagawa.

Ang Kinatawang ito ay nagtutulak na dapat baguhin ang Circular na ito at sa halip, itulak nito iyong pag-create ng mga jobs, ng mga regular positions sa government, para bigyan ng pagkakataon ang daanglibo nating mga government workers na hindi regular, na magkaroon, at last, ng trabahong regular, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Gentleman. Mr. Speaker, in general, we are all against contractualization and we are for regularization, and COA is willing to help and pursue this, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po. Ang susunod ko pong katanungan ay patungkol doon sa tinanong ko na po doon sa Office of the President tungkol doon sa Confidential and Intelligence Funds. Ayon sa datos na nakuha natin, as submitted under the BESF, umaabot ng P4.5 billion ang kabuuang Confidential and Intelligence Funds, which almost doubled in the past three years. Nakakabahala ito dahil ayon rin sa datos na nakuha namin, of the P8.28 billion-Office of the President's budget, more than half will be for confidential and intelligence expenses. Matanong ko po, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, nagsusumite ba ang mga naturang opisina ng kanilang reports patungkol sa paggamit ng Confidential and Intelligence Funds, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Opo, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po. Nabasa po kasi namin, Mme. Sponsor, na ayon sa COA-DBM-DILG-GCG-DND Joint Circular No. 2015-01 na lumabas noong 2015, required nga na mag-submit sila ng quarterly accomplishment reports, kung kaya't natatanong namin ito ay sapagkat ang kinababahala natin, ang tawag nga po sa pondong ito ay "Black Budget," "black" as in itim. Bakit po black? Hindi kasi nasa-subject nga po sa audit. Tama po ba ako, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Yes, Mr. Speaker, ina-audit naman po ang pondo.

REP. GAITE. Ina-audit po ito, Mme. Sponsor, sa anong paraan? Ito ba ay kinikilatis ang bawat sentimo na ginagamit? Ito ba ay kailangan may patunay na dumaan sa process ng bidding ang bawat expense item? Ang

bawat item ba ay pino-post audit? Kailangan ba mag-submit ng mga data requirements para ma-ensure na ang bawat sentimo na ginagamit na galing sa buwis ng mga mamamayang Pilipino ay na-audit, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the utilization of such Intelligence and Confidential Funds is generally confidential and classified in nature, and requires not only strong internal controls in the release and utilization thereof, but also strict accounting and auditing rules to prevent mishandling or the improper application of the funds.

REP. GAITE. Mme. Sponsor, maaari rin po bang malaman kung mismong Office of the President, kung saan nabanggit na P4.5 billion ang Confidential and Intelligence Funds for 2020, sila rin ba ay sumusunod sa reporting requirements na tinatakda ng naturang Joint Circular?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po. Ang pagkakaiba daw noong intelligence funds ay patungkol sa military, at ang confidential funds ay para sa mga civilian agencies. Tama po ba iyon, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Mr. Speaker, tama po, Your Honor.

REP. GAITE. Sa kasalukuyan po ba, matanong ko lang, Mme. Sponsor, sa ibang bansa, may mga policy na hindi forever ang confidentiality, hindi forever. Mayroong procedure o process na sa takdang panahon, ang mga ito ay dini-declassify. I think the purpose of that is to ensure that maaaring ngayon, may usapin sa pambansang seguridad o taktikal na hindi maaaring maisiwalat, pero bunga ng ating sinumpaang tungkulin na public office is a public trust, the use of each centavo of government funds must be known to the public.

Mayroon bang procedure ngayon na ang sinasabing classified na mga information regarding audit reports, eventually ho ba iyan, ay nadi-declassify, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Mr. Speaker, hindi po.

REP. GAITE. So, wala pong proseso o procedure ngayon na ang mga classified, audited financial statements ng mga ahensiyang may Confidential and Intelligence Funds ay maaaring, in the future, ay mailabas? Wala po? Tama po ba, Mme. Sponsor, na wala po?

REP. ERMITA-BUHAIN. Wala po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po. Makakatulong po iyong inyong binigay na impormasyon para gumawa ng mga kongkretong hakbang ang Kinatawang ito para doon sa usapin ng napakahalagang papel ng Commission on Audit na tiyakin na ang bawat piso na ginagamit ng ating bayan ay ma-audit. Gagawa ng karampatang hakbang para ma-ensure ang transparency sa paggamit ng pondo, na ito ay hindi nagagamit sa katiwalian, korapsyon o iba pang hindi karapat-dapat na paggamit ng pondo na pinaghirapan ng mamamayang Pilipino.

Maraming salamat po sa inyong kasagutan, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize another Sponsor, Cong. Jonathan Sy-Alvarado.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Honorable Sy-Alvarado is recognized.

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the next interpellator, Rep. Mohamad Khalid Q. Dimaporo of the First District of Lanao del Norte.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Hon. Khalid Dimaporo is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, honorable Speaker. Honorable Sponsor, will the good Sponsor of the budget of the Commission on Audit allow me to ask some questions to place the answers on record?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Gladly, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My concern is with regard to my region and is really a policy issue on how COA should administer itself when it comes to national projects being implemented in our respective regions, specifically Regions IX, X and XII and also the Autonomous Region which is now the BARMM.

In the 2019 Budget, the ARMM was given P10.14 billion—that is for the ARMM—but on top of that, may dagdag ito. Ang dagdag is the DPWH budget that is being implemented through Regions IX, X, and XII. In Regions IX, Zamboanga Peninsula, they are implementing for Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi. In Regions X, Northern Mindanao, they are implementing for the Province of Lanao del Sur. In Regions XII, SOCCSKSARGEN, they are implementing for the Province of Maguindanao.

I would like to show a slide so I can make it clearer for everybody to see. In the 2019 budget, the DPWH has been implementing in Region IX, P2.28 billion worth of projects—P500 million for Basilan, Isabela; P500 million for Sulu's First District; P500 million for the Sulu Second District; P500 million for Tawi-Tawi Lone District. In Region X, the DPWH has been implementing P500 million for Lanao del Sur's First District; and P500 million for Lanao del Sur's Second District. In Region XII, the same also, the DPWH has been implementing for Maguindanao P500 million for the First District, and P570 million for the Second District.

Now, I would like to ask—what is the jurisdiction of the COA with regard to these public infrastructure funds? Subject to our Constitution, Article X, Section 14, supposedly, Malacañang or the President will administer the national programs through different regions. That is why we created our regions. In the case of Mindanao, our regions were created by virtue of Executive Order No. 36, series 2001, providing for the reorganization of the Administrative Regions in Mindanao, and for other purposes. The latest administrative region was created by virtue of the Bangsamoro Organic Law which provides jurisdiction for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region. Now, I would like to ask the COA—how do they follow the jurisdiction of the DPWH?

Let me make my question clear, Mr. Speaker. Does the COA follow the regional jurisdiction or does the COA follow where the funds will go? So, for example, in Region X, is the COA limited to Region X? In Region IX, is the COA limited to Region IX? In Region XII, is the COA limited to Region XII?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Mr. Speaker, the COA follows wherever the funds go. So, if you put the funds in the regions, the COA has jurisdiction in the regions. If you put it in the Bangsamoro, then COA will follow it there, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that clarification because when I ask our regional offices, our regional COA, I get different answers. In some COA offices, they say, kung saan ang pera, diyan susunod ng COA. In other COA offices that I asked, they say, if the project is inside the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region, then we have to coordinate with the COA of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region because it is within their jurisdiction. So, I would like to get an official answer because it is very dangerous if the COA itself does not know where their jurisdictional boundaries are. We might end up with ghost projects.

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, kagaya po ng nauna kong sinabi, sinusundan ng COA kung nasaan iyong pondo. Ngayon, different regions,

different boundaries. Sa loob ng Bangsamoro, kailangan pong magpaalam ang different regional offices ng COA doon sa COA na sakop ang Bangsamoro, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, pero sa bandang huli po, ito ay iko-consolidate rin naman sa kabuuan kaya mapupunta rin po ito sa COA Central Office, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you for that clarification, honorable Sponsor.

Next, I would like to ask, again, the second question regarding jurisdiction. It is very clear that we have created regional administrative regions. We have Executive Order No. 36 for Mindanao. We have the Bangsamoro Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region. Now, why is it that the DPWH is implementing projects from one region to another region? Is that within the purview of COA to red-flag the DPWH and say, “teka muna, wala kayong executive order. Teka muna, wala kayong administrative order. Teka muna, wala kayong Republic Act” when the DPWH does this from one region to another region?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Mr. Speaker, kung ang iba’t ibang rehiyon po ng DPWH ay papasok sa kabilang rehiyon, itatanong ng COA ngayon sa rehiyon na pumasok sa kabilang rehiyon kung bakit nila ito ginawa. Kung hindi po naging akma iyong kanilang paliwanag, mare-red flag po sila ng COA, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, for that clarification.

I would like to go to my next slide, and with regard to the jurisdiction of the COA, I hope the honorable Sponsor and our friends from the COA family will inform the regional COA offices of their answers here, para klaro when I go back to Northern Mindanao and speak to the different regional offices.

My second question—is it the mandate of COA to red-flag projects being implemented not in accordance with Republic Acts? For example, Republic Act No. 9054, it is very clear here, and it says:

Unless approved by the Regional Assembly, no public works funds allocated by central government or national government for the Regional Government or allocated by the Regional Government from its own revenues may be disbursed, distributed, realigned or used in any manner.

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Well, I would like to inform the COA that I was the previous Vice Chair

for the ARMM and I know for a fact that there is no regional Public Works Act allowing these infrastructure projects in Regions IX, X and XII to be implemented inside the ARMM. So, I would like to manifest this concern of mine. I hope that the COA family will look into this. They may have overlooked this provision in the old ARMM Law.

Secondly, with regard to the Bangsamoro Organic Law, the guidelines for the implementation of public works and infrastructure are found in Section 37 of Republic Act No. 11054. The problem is that it is imperfect. There is a defect in Republic Act No. 11054 and the defect is, it does not provide that the DPWH will create a regional office within the BARMM and therefore, it is difficult for the DPWH to implement infrastructure projects inside the BARMM. I hope the COA will support me on this and look into the jurisdiction of the DPWH in implementing infra projects inside the BARMM without a regional office and shortcutting the process by downloading the funds to Regions IX, X and XII. We will be opposed to that, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor. I have spoken to the RDC of Northern Mindanao, the governors and the mayors will be opposed to that also. So, I hope that the kind Sponsor and the COA family will take that into consideration, especially for the 2020 budget.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, for allowing me to make my manifestation.

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

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

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.) Honorable Zarate is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Magandang hapon po sa ating Sponsor at sa COA.

May isang katanungan lang po ako sa COA. Sa inyong budget, mayroong Special Audit Sub-Program kung saan naglaan po kayo ng P142,870,000. Paano po ginugugol ang particular budget na ito? At any rate, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ang nakalaan doon ay budget ito for Special Audit Sub-program. Ang talagang katanungan ko ay kung ano ba ang kino-cover nitong special audit at paano ito ginagawa.

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, iyong special audit po ay ginagawa ng COA sa mga isyu na nire-report sa Kagawaran. Pagka ito po ay ni-report na ng isang tao o ng isang grupo, magpapadala

po ng mga tao o special auditors ang COA sa lugar na dapat i-audit at depende po sa outcome ng audit, ay magbibigay po ng karampatang susunod na aksiyon ang COA. Dito po ginagamit ang mga pondong iyan, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat, Mr. Sponsor. Kung iyon po ang nasasaklaw ng special audit, maitanong ko lang po, nagkaroon na po ba ng special audit ang ating Kagawaran patungkol po sa coco levy fund?

Kung matatandaan po ng Kinatawang ito, ang coco levy fund, ito iyong buwis na sinisingil mula mga magniniyog, na lalo't higit sa mga maliliit na magsasaka, noong panahon ng diktador na si Marcos mula 1971 hanggang 1983, at umabot na nga ito sa Korte Suprema. Sa ngayon ay idineklara na ng Korte Suprema na ang pondong ito ay dapat ibalik sa ating mga magsasaka ng niyog, kaya nga may ipinasang panukalang batas ang Kongreso, although na-veto ito. Ang tanong ko po tungkol diyan ay kung nagkaroon ng special audit ang COA patungkol sa pondong ito.

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Mayroon po tayong ongoing special audit, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, tungkol sa coco levy fund.

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat po. Kung magkagayon, ang sunod ko pong katanungan—ano po ang sinasaklaw ng special audit na ito patungkol sa coco levy fund?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Mr. Speaker, lahat po ng mga issues na ni-report sa katiwalian na maaaring mangyari o nangyari na sa coco levy fund ay iniimbestigahan ng COA at ito po ay inaaral ng mabuti ng ating mga auditors, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat po. Mayroon po bang timeline ang ating Kagawaran upang matapos ang special audit na ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, sa unang pagkakataon po ay ina-audit na ngayon iyong coco levy fund at mahirap pong magbigay ng timeline kung kailan po ito matatapos dahil never before in its history na na-audit iyan ng COA. Ngayon po, Mr. Speaker, ginagawa ng Komisyon ang pinakamabilis at pinakamagandang paraan upang maayos, mabilis at makatotohanang ma-audit iyong coco levy fund na matagal na pong hinihiling ng taong-bayan, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po. Tama po kayo na nakapahabang panahon na tayo ay nananawagan na magkaroon nga ng special audit ito, at pangatlong

termino ko na po sa Kongreso pero sa unang termino pa lang ay nananawagan na tayo ng special audit. So, tanggap na po natin iyon kung walang timeline dahil ang mahalaga ay nagkakaroon na ng audit. Ang dugtong ko lang po na tanong—saklaw ba ng audit na ito iyong sinasabi po ng Treasury na P62.5 billion, more or less, na cash na nasa isang trust fund, at saklaw din ba rito iyong tinatawag na P13.9 billion na held in an escrow account, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Opo, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Kabahagi rin po ba ng pag-audit iyong titingnan natin kung paano ba ginamit ito, sa mga nakaraang panahon, ng mga kumpanyang nakinabang dito at iba pang kaakibat na mga issues, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Opo, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat po. Iyon lang po ang aking katanungan dahil batay po sa desisyon ng Korte Suprema ay kailangang mapangalagaan ang pondong ito. Kailangang matiyak natin na ang pondong iyan ay nandiyan pa at puwedeng pakinabangan ng ating mamamayan, lalong-lalo ng mga maliit na magsasaka ng niyog, dahil sinabi nga sa desisyon ng Korte Suprema na dapat ito ay solely for the benefit of our coconut farmers and also for the development of our coconut industry.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker at maraming salamat po sa pamilya ng COA.

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Maraming salamat po, Congressman Zarate mula sa BAYAN MUNA. Kaisa po ninyo ang COA.

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

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize our Minority Leader, Hon. Bienvenido M. Abante Jr.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). The honorable Minority Leader Bienvenido M. Abante Jr. is hereby recognized.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you.

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Pardon me. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, before the Minority Leader proceeds to his interpellation, may we first recognize Rep. Solomon R. Chungalao of the Lone District of Ifugao.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Honorable Chungalao is hereby recognized.

REP. CHUNGALAO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, the honorable Sponsor.

This is more of a request. I understand that the Commission on Audit implements post-audit. May I request that they bring back pre-audit at least in the Cordillera Administrative Region?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Opo, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CHUNGALAO. May I have the assurance from the Chairman and the Commission if they can allow pre-audit in the Cordilleras?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Garcia (P.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Deogracias Victor "DV" B. Savellano.

REP. CHUNGALAO. Thank you. I hope this is not an unreasonable request kasi in the Cordilleras, many or majority of the mayors and local officials are not really that educated, so when they go to the COA to ask for advice, the COA will just inform them to go ahead. Pagkatapos ng project kinakatay, kaya parang ang trabaho ng COA ay watchdog na lang, na waiting for them na magkamali, but with a pre-audit, at least, they are safe.

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the COA is very supportive of your suggestion and will try to do it for the whole country, not only for the Cordilleras, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CHUNGALAO. When can we expect that policy to be implemented, to return to pre-audit, at least in the Cordillera Administrative Region, at kaysa naman sa they will study it, we want a timetable.

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Mr. Speaker, sa ibang lugar po ay nagawa na ito ng COA kaya during the start of the year ay maipapagawa ito sa buong bansa, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CHUNGALAO. Can you give an assurance that by January may pre-audit na ang CAR?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CHUNGALAO. In the Thirteenth Congress, we requested for that and it was implemented. Galit iyong mga auditors sa amin pero ang sabi ko, being in the government is public service, so dapat tumulong naman sila. There is one reason why I took the floor on this, because I know a mayor who was charged by COA tungkol diyan sa fertilizer, then, gumawa ng desisyon ang COA and he was unable to get his salary for three years. Pagkatapos, after three years, the Ombudsman came out with a decision practically exonerating him.

Now, ano ba ang remedyo? Will the mayor, who is now out of office, file a petition with the COA to allow him to receive his salary back? He worked for three years but because of a COA audit report, hindi siya nabayaran for three years dahil they charged it to his salary.

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Mr. Speaker, can the COA have a copy of the case of the mayor of the distinguished Gentleman from the Lone District of Ifugao, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. CHUNGALAO. I have it here, but can I get their assurance when we file the appropriate petition with the COA?

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CHUNGALAO. That is all that I wanted to ask. It is more of a request because, please naman, not all mayors are educated. Puwede siguro dito sa siyudad and other areas but in the Cordilleras, lalo na sa amin, most of the mayors and local officials are really not that educated, high school graduate, walang alam kaya lumalapit sa kanila, hindi tinutulungan at kapag nagkamali, binabanatan naman. So, at least, with a pre-audit, there is some degree of safety on their part for them to do their job.

So, I will take the assurance of the COA that there will be pre-audit at least in the Cordillera Administrative Region by January.

REP. SY-ALVARADO. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CHUNGALAO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, honorable Sponsor.

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

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize our Minority Leader, Hon. Bienvenido M. Abante Jr.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). Hon. Bienvenido Abante is recognized.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There being no more questions to be asked by the Minority, I move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate in behalf of the Minority, Mr. Speaker.

I so move.

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

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the COA.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ALONTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session to allow our guests and their technical staff to vacate the floor and allow the next department staff to settle down.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

It was 3:21 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of the budget for the Department of Education and I would like to request that the honorable Sponsor, Hon. Cora T. Nuñez-Malanyaon, be recognized to answer the questions. The next to interpellate will be the Hon. Sarah Jane I. Elago of the KABATAAN Party-List. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session.

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

It was 3:24 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:33 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, with the indulgence of the family of the Department of Education, I withdraw the earlier motion to continue with the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of DepEd.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to consider the proposed budget of the Department of Tourism.

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

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, to sponsor the proposed budget of the Department of Tourism, I move that we recognize Hon. Michael John R. Duavit, Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, to answer any questions.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). Hon. Jack Duavit is hereby recognized.

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Before we begin, Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of our guests in the Plenary. We have with us the honorable Sec. Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, Usec. Edwin Enrile, Usec. Benito Bengzon Jr., Usec. Arturo Boncato Jr., OIC-Usec. Reynaldo Ching, Asec. Leila Rivera, Asec. Roberto Alabado III, Asec. Verna Buensuceso, Asec. Howard Lance Uyking and Asec. Myra Paz Abubakar.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). The House of Representatives welcomes Hon. Berna Puyat and the DOT family.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Ferdinand R. Gaité of BAYAN MUNA Party-List to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the Department of Tourism.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). Hon. Ferdinand Gaité is recognized.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Sa ating kapita-pitagang Sponsor, pahintulutan ba na makapagbigay ng ilang katanungan para ma-clarify ang budget ng Department of Tourism, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DUAVIT. It will be my honor to try to answer any and all questions of the honorable Gentleman from BAYAN MUNA, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Sa President's budget message for Fiscal Year 2020, sa key budget priorities, naulit ang isa sa mga binabanggit na programa ng gobyerno, under ensuring effective and efficient delivery of government services, ay iyong usapin ng ridding the government of corruption. Tama po ba iyan, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DUAVIT. That is correct, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Nandiyan po ang aking katanungan, Mr. Speaker, patungkol sa inilabas na mismo nang naunang ahensiyang nag-present ng kanilang budget, ang inilabas ng Commission on Audit na report na na-plug o ibig sabihin, ang ginawang aksiyon ng Commission on Audit hinggil sa kontrata ng Department of Tourism with the People's Television Network, Inc. or PTV-4. Aware po ba ang ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor sa usaping ito, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DUAVIT. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have been defending the budget of the Department of Tourism for the last four years and before that, for another six years, and yes, this was a pretty big issue involving roughly P60 million with regard to PTV-4 and to Bitag Media Unlimited Inc. Mayroon na pong Notice of Disallowance po na na-issue ng COA noong June 5, 2018. Mayroon na rin pong supplemental Notice of Disallowance na na-issue din po noong June 8. So, in October last year, ang mga respondents po na nasa DOT pa ay nag-file na ng kani-kanilang mga appeal pero iyong wala na po sa Departamento, wala po tayong datos tungkol doon.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, at nagbigay na ng ilang kongkretong hakbang, sa pag-

unawa ko, ang Commission on Audit regarding the disallowances of certain expenditures made by the Department of Tourism. Tama po ba, mas aksiyon po ba iyon ng Commission on Audit o iyon po ay hakbang na ginawa ng ating ahensiya, ang ating Department of Tourism, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DUAVIT. Very active po talaga iyong ahensiya po dito dahil alam na po natin na kaya po talagang napili si Secretary Puyat para pumalit sa dating Secretary ay talagang ang utos sa kanya ng Pangulo ay linisin ang bahay po nila.

REP. GAITE. Liban po doon sa ginawa ng ahensiya, partikular po, mayroon ho bang nanagot sa mga kwestiyonableng transaksyon na ito? Hindi ho lang ba na-disallow ito sa audit, mayroon bang ginawang hakbang regarding the officials who were directly involved in the transaction between the DOT and the PTV-4 regarding possible charges against them, cases sa Ombudsman o iba pang ahensiya ng pamahalaan, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DUAVIT. Opo. Ang Departamento po is in full cooperation, not just with the COA po, but it is ready should the case go already. Ang hinihintay na lang po ay ang Ombudsman and eventually po, kung kakailangan ang Sandigan.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa ilang kasagutan. Na-raise po ang ilang concerns na ito dahil nabanggit nga po sa unahan pa lang, iyan po ang pinagmamalaki ng pamahalaang Duterte na laban o galit sa korapsyon at marami nga pong tinanggal dahil sa korapsyon. Alam na natin na iyong naunang Kalihim ng DOT, at sa pati sa ibang ahensiya ng pamahalaan, ay gayundin. Ngunit nakikita natin na iyong iba tinatanggal pero nire-recycle, ibinabalik sila pero sa ibang ahensiya ng pamahalaan, at nakikita natin parang hindi consistent ang campaign laban sa katiwalian, kung kaya't hindi kataka-taka na ang Pilipinas ay nalista bilang sixth sa Most Corrupt Countries sa ilang mga ginawang surveys dito sa Asya-Pacifica.

Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, kaya iyong P4.1 trillion po na plano na ating ilalabas sa darating na taon, malaking halaga talaga, sana ay mailayo natin sa mga makakating kamay. Kilos pronto rin po sana ang sumbong tungkol sa mga ma-anomalyang transaksyon.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. Sponsor. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DUAVIT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. FARINÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, next to interpellate the Sponsor, may we recognize Hon. Jose L. Atienza Jr. from BUHAY Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). Hon. Lito Atienza from BUHAY Party-List is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mme. Majority Leader. With the indulgence of my friend, the Sponsor, we would like to ask some questions.

REP. DUAVIT. It is always an honor and a pleasure to answer any and all questions by Honorable Atienza from BUHAY Party-List, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, Gentleman Sponsor, we would just like to ask the Department of Tourism if the National Museum is under its control?

REP. DUAVIT. The Secretary is only a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Museum, Mr. Speaker, but it is not under the umbrella of the Department of Tourism.

REP. ATIENZA. Therefore, we would just like to solicit their understanding and support for the issue that is now raging on the Botong Francisco masterpiece, which the National Museum has arrogated upon itself to own, which cannot happen.

REP. DUAVIT. For clarification, Mr. Speaker, is this the same Botong masterpiece that was with the City Hall of Manila?

REP. ATIENZA. If and when the issue is taken up by the Board, we would like to request the Secretary of Tourism to clarify matters. That masterpiece belongs to the City of Manila. It cannot be arrogated, owned, controlled by the Department or the National Museum. It should be returned to the people of the City of Manila. Kung sila po ay member of the Board, we would just like to ask for their support on that issue because, otherwise, we will include them in the lawsuit that we are now preparing. We are decided to go even to the courts to prove that the National Museum arrogated upon itself, illegally, this masterpiece, even claiming a memorandum of agreement which is defective. It says in that memorandum of agreement that the Members of Congress representing Manila agreed to that anomalous and questionable arrangement. I have taken up that issue on the floor and the Members of Congress of the City of Manila, all of them have denied this, even denied knowing anything about it. Kaya para hindi po masali ang Department of Tourism, I would suggest that they take a position on the issue and that the Botong Francisco masterpiece be returned to the City Hall of Manila.

REP. DUAVIT. I have been assured that they will fully cooperate, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you for that.

REP. DUAVIT. I am especially interested in this since Botong Francisco came from my district.

REP. ATIENZA. So, I will go now to another minor issue, Mr. Speaker. It could help the Department of Tourism promote the country effectively. In last year's budget deliberations, we had a chance to talk with Sec. Berna Romulo and she listened and called her key officers to listen to our opinion that, one very effective way of promoting tourism in the country, without any expense for that matter but just using the imagination of those leading the Department, is to utilize all the incoming tourists, for them to have very fond memories of the islands when they go home. Lyon pong aming suggestion, ang lahat ng papasok ng bapor, eroplano at kung anumang sasakyan, kahit bangka, dito ay magpatugtog tayo ng mga tugtuging o himig na Pilipino, ng ating kultura, na naririnig nila pagdating nila sa Maynila o sa Pilipinas. They have not done anything about this, and I continue to note that, while other countries do it, we seem to be hesitant in promoting our culture to our visitors. They come, they leave, they do not have memories of our culture. Wala silang narinig na himig na Pilipino. Hindi nila naririnig ang ating mga rondalla. Hindi nila naririnig ang ating mga harana kaya wala silang iniiuwing alaala. Ang iniiuwi nila, ewan ko kung anong iniiuwi nila pero wala pong alaala na magbibigay ng inspirasyon sa kanila para bumalik muli sa ating kapuluan. We have so much to offer—God-given attractions in the islands that any tourist would enjoy. We are listed now as one of the top islands in the world, but the problem is we are not promoting ourselves properly, and they just seem to know how to spend money but not how to get things done without any expense at all. Kakausapin lang po ninyo ang ating airlines diyan, kakausapin ninyo ang tourist companies upang silang lahat ay tumulong at malaki po ang maitutulong nila.

Pumunta kayo sa Bali, you will not hear anything but Balinese music. Pumunta kayo sa Honolulu, wala kayong maririnig kung hindi Hawaiian music. Sa Pilipinas, pumunta kayo rito, ang maririnig ninyo ay Hollywood, western, hip-hop and the like. We do not seem to be conscious that our culture is the best selling point of the island, and the character of the nation and the people are all embodied in these cultural pieces. I am appealing to them now before I even consider talking about money being given to them. I would give this particular simple suggestion for them to consider, with no expense to the Department. They do not even have to spend anything to get this program going, to

require the airlines with their airplanes coming to the Philippines and landing at the Manila International Airport to play Philippine music, like the way our airline, the Philippine Airlines, is forced to do when it lands in the Hawaiian Islands. Puwede po ba nating hilingin sa kanila ang programang ito? Para sa kanila rin po iyan. Sila ang mabibigyan ng papuri for a successful promotions effort.

REP. DUAVIT. Yes, Mr. Speaker, this is a very inspiring recommendation, just like last year's.

REP. ATIENZA. Today, as I said, I will just say it again that this is suggested by this Representation but if we do not implement it, for their next year's budget, I will be very meticulous on every peso and centavo spent.

REP. DUAVIT. Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will recommend that as early as now but there are a few technical issues when it comes to copyright when it come to playing music in public places. I will definitely make the recommendation that the curation and application for synchronization rights be included in the branding campaign.

Thanks to the honorable Gentleman from BUHAY.

REP. ATIENZA. Following through our cultural relevance for the effective promotion of tourism in the country, may I ask if the Department of Tourism is in control of the Intramuros walls. In other words, are they in control of the Intramuros Administration?

REP. DUAVIT. It is under the umbrella of the DOT, Mr. Speaker, it is an attached agency.

REP. ATIENZA. It is under their control?

REP. DUAVIT. Yes.

REP. ATIENZA. Do they appoint the head in running the Intramuros Administration, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DUAVIT. The head is appointed by the Office of the President.

REP. ATIENZA. Magkano po ang budget na ibinibigay ng DOT sa Intramuros Administration?

REP. DUAVIT. Ang OP po, Mr. Speaker, upon the recommendation of the DOT—the appointment is still made by the Office of the President.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, may I have a minute. I will just approach the Gentleman as I did not hear or I could not hear the figure that he is mentioning.

REP. DUAVIT. Mr. Speaker.

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, may I move that we suspend the session.

REP. DUAVIT. Mr. Speaker, may I request that the people in the gallery be more quiet. The honorable Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List and I are having a difficult time hearing each other.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). The people in the gallery and Members are requested to maintain order.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, I move for a one-minute suspension of the session.

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

It was 3:52 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:53 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Jose L. Atienza Jr. to continue his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). Hon. Lito Atienza is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you. Let me reiterate my question to the Gentleman. How much is allocated to manage or run the Intramuros area which is under the Intramuros Administration? Run by a man appointed by the DOT Secretary, no less, so, he is trusted and, I am sure, competent.

REP. DUAVIT. The Intramuros Administration has been allotted by the DBM P81.8 million for 2020, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Did I hear it right, P81 million?

REP. DUAVIT. Yes, P81.8 million, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. We must accept that the Intramuros area, especially the Walled City, is the number one selling point of Metro Manila and possibly, the country, to any visitor who will visit the island for the first time because that area contains the history of our country. Next year, we shall be celebrating, or rather, on 2021, two years from now, we will be celebrating our 500 years of opening up to the Western World and the Intramuros walls was the first impression they had of us.

Five hundred years after, we are fortunate that the Walled City is still existing. Wala na pong ganyang attraction sa ibang bansa pero tayo ay mayroon pa. So, P81 million to improve, to maintain, to run and to see to it that this area offers continuing, activities, and cultural activities at that, for all of us Filipinos, young and old alike, to enable us to refresh our memories and to be proud of our culture.

REP. DUAVIT. I agree, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Therefore, P81 million, Mr. Speaker, is not enough. Maski na ilagay mo diyan si Superman, hindi po mapapatakbo ng tama iyan. During the period of amendments, we shall try to amend that particular figure, and I hope the Gentleman will support our position.

REP. DUAVIT. I will, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Did I hear that he will support?

REP. DUAVIT. I will support, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. With that, I am happy, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Gentleman for his understanding of what we are trying to do to help the Department succeed in their efforts to promote tourism.

REP. DUAVIT. I likewise the Gentleman from BUHAY, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Wala pong dahilan na hindi magsasucceed ang ating turismo as one of the biggest earners of our government and one of the biggest factors of our economic development even, but we must support ourselves. Let us support our cultural heritage by presenting them to the visitors.

Next year, I hope that in the same deliberations, the DOT, in their report, can already include that they are forcing all the carriers of tourists landing by sea, by port, by bus, by plane, to hear Philippine music and not western music para po naman marinig nila at makilala nila tayo. Kung hindi nila maririnig iyan, pati ang mga anak natin ay lumalaki na mangmang sa kultura natin bilang Pilipino.

REP. DUAVIT. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. We hope to increase the budget of the Intramuros Administration from their own budget. If we cannot add a little more, then, if I could, I will get it from the other departments, but if we cannot, they can adjust their budget. Let us give it more para po naman magkaroon ng incentive ang mga nagtatrabaho diyan, gumawa pa nang higit sa kanilang kakayahan, na sa lahat ng mangyayari sa Intramuros, maaari tayong makilahok at magmalaki.

REP. DUAVIT. I agree, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. DUAVIT. Maraming salamat din po.

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

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, before we proceed, may we acknowledge the presence of the guest of Hon. Lorna P. Bautista-Bandigan. We have with us the Mayor of the Municipality of Jose Abad Santos from the Province of Davao Occidental, Mayor John Jason Joyce. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). Welcome to the House of Representatives.

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, next to interpellate the Sponsor, may we recognize Hon. Paolo Z. Duterte from the First District of Davao City.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session.

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

It was 3:59 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:00 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is resumed.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of the budget of the Department of Tourism.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we continue the consideration of the budget of the Department of Education.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. BARONDA. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize Rep. Corazon T. Nuñez-Malanyaon to sponsor the budget of the DepEd.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). Rep. Cora Nuñez-Malanyaon is hereby recognized.

REP. BARONDA. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize Rep. Sarah Jane I. Elago of KABATAAN Party-List for her interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). Hon. Sarah Elago is recognized.

REP. ELAGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the distinguished Sponsor and the DepEd family.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). Majority Leader, Hon. Sarah Elago has been recognized.

REP. ELAGO. Muli, maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Magandang hapon sa ating distinguished Sponsor at sa DepEd family. Nagpapasalamat rin po ako sa Department of Education sa pagbibigay sa Representasyon na ito ng mga dokumento hinggil sa kanilang initial review ng K to 12 Program. Nais din po nating muling maipanawagan sa naturang Departamento na kinakailangan ng kabuuang review, hindi lamang sa curriculum kundi maging sa mga estado ng mga pasilidad, mga learning materials at lahat po ng may kinalaman sa buong K to 12 Program.

First, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask about the COA 2018 Report on textbooks and other instructional materials under the Basic Education Inputs Program.

The COA reported several mismanagement incidents that cost the government millions of pesos from the undistributed instructional materials worth P113.7 million, to the P254.3 million worth of learning materials which were reported to have 1,308 errors found in Araling Panlipunan, 317 errors in Tagalog learning materials, and 317 errors in Science learning materials. Mr. Speaker, the same COA Report added that teachers also commented that the learning materials lacked lessons, were not in line with the curriculum guide and have confusing sequencing of topics. Now, let me ask our distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, how can the DepEd ensure that this persistent problem will be prevented next year?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, those errors that were noted were actually, well, they say they were editorial preferences and that for now, the management is conducting a series of workshops, the output of which will be in the form of notes sent to the teacher, containing the pages with validated findings, describing the errors found, and providing recommendations on how the findings will be corrected. So, we are waiting for the list of errors and then, we will be issuing notes to the teachers to point to them the errors that had been noted, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, if the cost of unutilized textbooks and contracts for textbook with errors were summed up, the total wastage involving all of these was P368 million. Napakalaki po niyan, daan-daang milyong, kaya tayo po ay naghahanap ng kasagutan sa DepEd, bukod pa doon sa mga workshops, para makita kung nasaan ang mga errors na ito. Kailangan po nating maglagay ng mga mekanismo kung paanong hindi na magkakaroon muli ng mga ganyang pagkakamali po sa ating mga libro, sa ating mga learning materials na ipinapamigay sa ating mga paaralan. Kaya po tinatanggap po natin ang commitment ng ating distinguished Sponsor na siya po ay makakasama natin hinggil sa kinakailangan na gawain na ito para matiyak na hindi lang batay sa katotohanan kundi doon sa tamang impormasyon ang nakalagay sa ating mga libro.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Okay.

REP. ELAGO. Now, nais ko pong bigyang pansin, Mr. Speaker, ang kalagayan po ng mga pasilidad para sa ating special education students. Sang-ayon po sa isang pag-aaral ng Philippine Institute for Development Studies, ang dami raw po ng mga dropouts sa ating PWD children at ang karaniwang dahilan ay iyong distansiya ng eskuwelahan kung saan po sila mag-enroll. Ito po ay nakita sa iba't ibang mga probinsiya sa ating bansa.

Nais nating malaman, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, what are the current initiatives or concrete actions taken by the DepEd in response to the lack of access to our facilities for our children and students with special needs?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the DepEd is developing a policy on inclusive education which will include those learners with disabilities, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, magkano po ang nakalaang pondo para sa ating SPED facilities para sa Fiscal Year 2020?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. While the DepEd has requested the DBM for P500 million, it was not granted and so, we are using the regular MOOE in Special Programs, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, ano daw po ang dahilan kung bakit hindi nailaan ang P500 million na ito na nirekomenda ng DepEd para sa mga SPED facilities?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. The DBM has the authority to prioritize and perhaps, because of fund limitation, they cannot grant the request of the DepEd for special concerns, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Kung gayon, Mr. Speaker, ilang bahagdan po ng ating regular MOOE sa 2019 ang ginamit para sa mga SPED facilities?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. It was not specifically accounted for because it was part of the total because we are adopting, actually, an inclusive education that has programs for learners with special disabilities, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, mukhang napapanahon na para maglagay po tayo ng isang specific item para sa mga SPED facilities para po matugunan natin ito. Katulad po sa isang report, ng isang SPED teacher, mayroon daw po siyang 65 SPED pupils lamang sa isang classroom, o sa isang classroom ang kanilang ina-accommodate dahil kulang na kulang iyong kanilang mga kakayahan para po makapag-accommodate pa ng mas marami, kaya po makikipagtulungan tayo muli sa DepEd pagdating sa pagtugon sa mga pangangailangan na ito. Yes, at tayo po ay sumusuporta na sa regular MOOE, kailangan ang lahat ng facilities para sa education, na walang naiwan, ngunit kailangan po nating tiyakin na iyong ating mga estudyante na may espesyal na pangangailangan ay natutugunan din.

Ngayon, hayaan po ninyo akong magtanong tungkol sa kalagayan ng mga senior high school students. May

we know, Mr. Speaker, from the distinguished Sponsor, the current percentage distribution of senior high school graduates for the Academic Year 2018 to 2019 based on senior high school track? Ano po ang hati o distribution ngayon ng ating SHS students, kung karamihan po ba sa kanila ay nasa STEM o nasa TVL o naka-enrol sa arts at sports?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Sixty-five percent—I am sorry, 60 percent academics track, about 39 to 40 percent for tech-voc-livelihood, 0.5 percent for sports at 0.5 percent for arts. So, again, 60 percent academics, 39 percent TVL and then, 0.5 percent sports and 0.5 percent arts, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Salamat, Mr. Speaker. Ang ibig sabihin po ba, na ito ay ganoon din iyong percentage ng mga estudyante na pumili noong ganoong track na iyon, o magpasahanggang ngayon po ba ay nalilimitahan pa rin tayo noong mga pasilidad din na makakapag-cater doon sa mga estudyante na nais sanang makapag-enrol sa arts track o di kaya ay sa sports track? Is the availability of facilities for such track the primary consideration for our senior high graduates in selecting their track?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Actually, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ongoing na ang delivery nitong mga tech-voc tools and equipment to the schools, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Sa TVL naman, may joint delivery with the private schools, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, paano naman iyong arts at sports tracks natin? Simula pa lang ng 2016, tinanong na po natin na bakit 0.1 percent lang iyong kayang mag-offer na mga schools. So, ang ibig sabihin po, parang wala namang apat na choices ang mga estudyante kasi ang magiging choice lang nila ay iyong kung ano ba iyong offering doon sa mga senior high schools na malapit po sa kanilang mga lugar. Ito po ba ay naaksiyunan na ng DepEd na mas pataasin naman po iyong mga pasilidad para tunay na may mapagpipilian ang ating mga estudyante sa senior high school.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Actually, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the DepEd encourages the schools to develop more sports and arts tracks, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, sa encouragement na iyan ng DepEd doon, mayroon bang nakalaaang pondo para, halimbawa, kapag mag-o-offer o nais ng isang eskuwelahan ng sports track, mayroon po bang mga dagdag na mga items para sa mga bagong teachers para sa sports science o mga instructors po ng mga partikular na sports o may kinalaman sa human kinetics program?

Mayroon po bang dagdag na pondo sa Capital Outlays para sila ay makapagpatayo ng rehearsal areas para doon sa mga gustong mag-offer ng performing arts track? Sa kabila ng encouragement na iyan ng DepEd pero kung wala naman na pondo iyong ating mga public senior high schools para po sa mga dagdag na pasilidad na iyan ay hindi rin po sila mabibigyan ng kapasidad para mag-offer noong mga tracks na iyon.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Actually, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, medyo the same fund level for sports and arts for all tracks, actually, is being given by DepEd.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, lahat po ba ng ating mga public senior high schools, halimbawa po dito sa Metro Manila, kada isang public senior high school ay mayroon pong academic track offering, mayroong arts offering, mayroong sports at mayroon ding TVL, o limitado lang din po ang mga tracks na offered sa kada public senior high school?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, ang ginagawa po is, actually po, depende sa school kung ano ang pinipili nila, kung ano ang gusto nilang i-specialize, at ang DepEd naman tries to also assist in determining kung ano dapat ang specialization nila, so, iyon ang susupportahan na track—iyon ang policy ng DepEd.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, ano po ang mekanismo po ng DepEd pagdating sa pagbibigay ng rekomendasyon sa mga eskuwelahan kung ano dapat iyong academic track o iyong strands sa TVL ang ma-offer sa isang school? Mayroon po ba tayong pag-aaral ng mga industriya sa lugar o mayroon ba tayong konsiderasyon din doon sa interes ng mga estudyante? Ano po ang siyensiya sa likod ng offering ng ating mga tracks sa public senior high schools?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Okay. Thank you. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ang ginagawa ho ngayon is, they try to consider actually the industry of the region, ano ang mga peculiarities ng isang region as to the tech-voc-livelihood they are going to offer. For example, kung, let us say, iyong medyo malakas ang construction or Build, Build, Build, so, ngayon, ini-encourage nila na—of course, let say, kung medyo malakas iyong construction, so, dapat pupunta naman sila doon na magkaroon talaga ng maraming offerings na kailangan may mga crane operators, mga welders, mga masons, mga carpenters, so, things like those. They should consider, actually, the peculiar industry of the region at saka iyong pangangailangan sa region. So, medyo naka-customize actually sa peculiar need of the region para magiging useful at mas relevant iyong natutunan ng learners.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, nais nating bigyan konsiderasyon din ng DepEd ito pong datos mula sa JobStreet.com. Sigurado po ako na nabasa ninyo na rin po ito dahil ito po ay may kinalaman doon sa hiniling ng Representasyong ito na tracer studies noong mga graduates natin ng senior high school—kung sila ba ay nakapagpatuloy sa kolehiyo, nakakahanap ba ng trabaho o kaya naman ay nakakapagtayo ng negosyo sang-ayon doon sa mga promises o mga layunin ng pagdadagdag ng dalawang taon sa ating basic education. Sang-ayon po sa information na ito mula sa mga employers and data reviews, as much as 35 percent were flatly unwilling to hire senior high school graduates. More than a third said, “The jobs they offered were only open to college graduates.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to know from our distinguished Sponsor and the DepEd, what are the available support systems for SHS graduates to find employment?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, first, on your question kung ano na ba ang mga initiatives of the DepEd, with respect to the graduates, nagkaroon na tayo ng tracer studies at ongoing pa iyon and this is relative to curriculum review. Mayroon na tayong mga pilot tracer studies, so, iyong malakihan is still ongoing, at iyong intervention pa rin nila is guidance counselling and then the DepEd also requires them to take the NSEP sa TESDA, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Nawa ay maging wake-up call ang mga nabanggit na mga information ng DepEd pagdating sa kapalaran o sa mga pagkakataon sa ating senior high school graduates para makapagtrabaho, makapagtayo ng negosyo, makatuloy sa kolehiyo para daglian na nating ipatawag ang oversight committee para po ma-review ang K to 12 Program.

Nais ko rin pong bigyang pansin naman itong pondo na ginagamit natin para sa Voucher Program sa Senior High School. Sa tala po ng DepEd para sa Senior High School Voucher Program, magkano na po ang ating alokasyon para sa programang ito para sa taong 2020, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor? Sa akin pong naaalala, nasa student council pa lang po ako noong pinag-uusapan itong K to 12 Program at ang Senior High School Voucher Program. Iyan po ang inilagay na pondo para iyong mga hindi pa nahahabol na buildings para sa mga public senior high schools natin, kung hindi maa-accommodate doon iyong mga graduates ng high school na magpapatuloy sa Grades 11 and 12, sila po muna ay mag-e-enroll sa private schools at sa pag-e-enroll nila sa private schools, wala naman daw po silang babayaran kasi sila po ay sagot ng Senior High School Voucher Program. So, nabigla po tayo na

magpasahanggang ngayon pala ay naglalaan pa rin tayo ng pondo sa Voucher Program, kaya ang ibig sabihin lang, Mr. Speaker, mayroon pa tayong hinahabol doon sa buildings natin para sa senior high school. Nais din nating malaman kung ano ba iyong plano ng DepEd pagdating sa pagpapatuloy ng Senior High School Voucher Program na ito na noon ay tila ginamit lang po bilang quick fix pero po ngayon ay patuloy pa nating pinopondohan.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. More or less, for 2020, it is P18.8 billion, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. So, it is P18.8 billion at iyan po lahat ay napupunta sa ating private secondary schools?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. For the senior high school students, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Ito po ay napupunta sa private secondary schools at sa non-DepEd na public schools natin. Hanggang kailan po tayo mag-o-offer nito?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. This is for the private and the non-DepEd schools, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Opo, malinaw po iyon sa Representasyon na ito. Mr. Speaker, hanggang kailan po natin popondohan itong Senior High School Voucher Program?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Ito po ay tuluy-tuloy na kasi we are trying to adopt a policy of complementarity between the public and the private schools, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, noong una, ginamit natin ito bilang quick fix at pagkatapos, ngayon ang plano ng DepEd pala ay gawin na itong permanente na programa para sagutin ang mga hindi makakapag-aral o hindi makakapag-enroll sa senior high school at gagamitin daw po iyong konsepto ng pagbibigay din ng option sa ating mga junior high school graduates na makapag-enroll sa private. Nababahala lang tayo dito, Mr. Speaker, dahil willing tayong gastusan o magbigay na pondo sa mga pribadong paaralan, ay bakit hindi na lang po natin ibuhos doon sa ating mga subsidy programs para pandagdag suporta sa ating mga public senior high school students.

Sa kasalukuyan po ba, ilan po sa total enrollment natin sa senior high school ang nasa public schools at ilan po ang nasa mga pribadong paaralan? Nais ko pong makuha ang pigura ng DepEd sa National Capital Region. Bakit NCR, Mr. Speaker? Noong 2016, nakita po natin na 87 percent or at least 80 percent po ng mga

senior high school students natin ay nasa pribado. So, ang ibig sabihin, ang 80 percent po na iyan, kalakhan ay nanggaling sa mga public junior high schools pero hindi po sila nakatuloy ng senior high school doon sa mga schools nila dahil hindi pa po tapos iyong mga buildings o hindi pa po tapos iyong facilities offering senior high school. So, now, may we know from the distinguished Sponsor the current percentage distribution of our senior high school students in the NCR?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the total enrollment for Grades 11 and 12 nationwide is 3,022,841 students, out of which 1,599,637 are in the public schools while 1,339,951 are in the private schools.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Kukunin po ng Representasyon ito mula sa ating DepEd family.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. The ratio, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, is 50 percent for public schools and 45.7 percent for the private schools, and for the SUCs, it is 3.4, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Salamat, Mr. Speaker. Isa po sa mga pinakaluma nating high school ay ang Manila High School at isa po sila sa mga hindi nakapag-offer ng public senior high school noong first year implementation ng K to 12 Program. Kaya ipinapakita lang nito na marami pa tayong mga isyu na kailangang tugunan pagdating sa pagpapalakas ng public senior high school system, kung ito man ay ipagpapatuloy pa natin depende po sa mga magiging resulta ng gagawing imbestigasyon ng Kongresong ito hinggil sa pagpapatupad ng K to 12 Program.

Ngayon, Mr. Speaker, nais ko pong magtanong hinggil sa pagpapatupad ng Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education o iyong GASTPE Program. Isa po ito sa mga programa ng DepEd na taon-taon ay nakakatanggap ng isa sa pinakamalaking budget allocation. Sa katunayan, Mr. Speaker, sa simula po ng programang ito noong taong 2012 hanggang 2017, tayo po ay nag-allocate na ng P86 billion at magpasahanggang ngayon po, nandiyan pa rin iyong ating dilemma pagdating sa ghost beneficiaries. Napakinggan po ng Representasyon na ito ang mga ginagawang hakbang ng DepEd hinggil diyan ngunit dagdag pa po sa concern ng Representation na ito ay hinggil sa role ng PEAC o ng Private Education Assistance Committee pagdating po sa pagdi-distribute o pag-a-administer ng lahat ng mga subsidyo at mga financial assistance programs na nakapaloob sa GASTPE.

Mr. Speaker, magkano na po ba ang ibinayad natin sa PEAC simula nang masimulan ang GASTPE, simula po taong 2012 hanggang sa ngayon?

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Savellano relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Pablo John F. Garcia.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. We still have to compute, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, but all the support that we are giving to the private schools is really mandated by law. There is nothing we can do about it because it is in the law that encourages the policy of complementarity between public and private schools.

With respect to those errors, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, this Representation has answered the good Congresswoman a while ago that the errors were not really too remarkable or too alarming. There were really some grantees that are double billed like twins or triplets, they have the same first, middle and last names and the same date of birth but with different extension names. Then, there are also those who were billed twice in the IMS, but the PEAC and the DepEd are working together to avoid the occurrence of the same finding, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Mayroon po bang pondo na nakalaan sa taong 2020 para palakasin ang ating sistema ng handling ng information ng lahat ng mga scholars at lahat po ng mga aplikante ng ating mga subsidyo sa basic education program?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, there is such a system called Voucher Management System.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, how much is allotted for this system for year 2020?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. It is part of the management partnership with the PEAC, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, sa performance audit report po ng COA na kakalabas lang nitong nakaraang taon, tayo po ay gumagastos ng tens of millions of pesos each year for the PEAC's service. Ang serbisyo na ito ay hindi po talagang kaya na ilipat natin sa DepEd? Mayroon po ba tayong rekomendasyon na imbes po magkokontrata pa tayo ng serbisyo ng iba, na paulit-ulit na nagkakaroon ng mga pagkakamali, ay hayaan na lang po natin na palakasin iyong Departamento para sila na po mismo iyong maghawak ng administrative function sa implementasyon ng GASTPE?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, talagang mayroong ginagawa iyong joint management of the DepEd and the PEAC, together with the DBM, and the DepEd is proposing to create an office that will manage the private education system.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, panahon na ho siguro na ma-review din natin iyong mga nilalaman ng mga kontrata natin sa PEAC kasi kabilang po doon sa performance audit report ng GASTPE iyong nagbabayad po tayo, through the DepEd, para sa serbisyo ng PEAC kahit pa nauulit o iyong mga paulit-ulit na mga isyu ng ghost beneficiaries taon-taon na lang. Pangalawa, kahit po hindi pa nila natatapos iyong mga requirements sang-ayon po sa inyong kontrata ay binabayaran pa rin iyong PEAC, kaya po sa tamang panahon, ang Representasyon po na ito ay magpapanukala ng resolusyon para linawin ang role ng PEAC sa pagpapatupad ng GASTPE. Napakahalaga nito sa atin, Mr. Speaker, dahil ang PEAC rin ho ang kinontrata ng Commission on Higher Education pagdating sa implementasyon ng tertiary education subsidy program na siyang maghahawak ng lahat ng financial assistance programs para po sa ating mga tertiary education students. Ganoon po kahalaga na matuto tayo mula sa karanasan ng DepEd.

Ngayon, Mr. Speaker, hayaan po ninyo ako na magtanong tungkol sa kasalukuyang tindig—ano po ang posisyon ng Department of Education pagdating sa pag-i-introduce ng mandatory ROTC sa Grades 11 and 12?

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Garcia (P.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Deogracias Victor "DV" B. Savellano.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. The DepEd will always support whatever law that Congress passes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, ano po ang tindig ng DepEd pagdating sa mandatory ROTC? Kung sila po ay sumusuporta sa mandatory ROTC, nais po nating malaman kung ano po ba iyong mga naging batayan ng posisyon ng DepEd pagdating sa pagsuporta sa mandatory ROTC sa Grades 11 and 12.

Mr. Speaker, ang impormasyon na ito ay nakuha natin sa pagsalang ng mga panukalang batas hinggil sa mandatory ROTC sa Grades 11 and 12. Ang DepEd po ay hindi naman nagpahayag ng kanilang objection, bagkus, ay nagbigay ng suporta sa pagbabalik ng mandatory ROTC sa Grades 11 and 12. Ito pa rin po ba ay ang kasalukuyang tindig ng DepEd o mayroon na po bang nagbago, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Sa DepEd, talaga ang basis for all the support ay it will always be iyong mandate that is given to them, like if they are required by Congress to support ay talagang susuporta sila. Besides, this is a program of the highest official, the Chief Executive and so, the DepEd, being an agency under the Executive Department, there is nothing that they can do but to support it, especially that the

rationale behind this, about the ROTC, is supposed to promote patriotism, nationalism and all the good values that learners should lead. So, that is the position of the DepEd, Mr. Speaker and Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, hindi po puwede na ang posisyon lang ng DepEd ay susuporta sa kung anuman iyong batas na ipapasa ng Kongreso na ito dahil napakahalaga na marinig din natin kung ano po ba iyong rekomendasyon ng ating Department of Education batay sa kasalukuyang kalagayan ng ating mga senior high school graduates batay sa current curriculum or sa curricular offerings ng ating senior high school tracks. Napakahalaga po ng kanilang mga inputs pagdating sa kung tama ba na ibalik or ma-introduce po natin ang mandatory ROTC sa Grades 11 and 12, habang nananatili pa rin po iyong optional ROTC program pagdating naman sa kolehiyo. Kaya po nais ding malaman ng Representasyon na ito if the DepEd is aware of the 2008 Report of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on all the inputs submitted by state parties under Article 8 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

The said committee noted the information that high school students, usually 15 or 16 years of age, continue to be required to undergo at least one year of Citizenship Advancement Training or CAT Program as a prerequisite for graduation. The committee is concerned that the CAT Program promotes militarism and is contrary to the peace-building education of the state party and to the spirit of the Optional Protocol.

Is the DepEd aware of this recommendation of the CRC with regard to the offering of CAT Program as a required training program for Grade 10 students? Has the DepEd considered this recommendation or this insight from the members of the CRC in its position in the institution of mandatory ROTC in Grades 11 and 12?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the DepEd is aware of that and actually, the basic framework that the DepEd follows is that there should be adherence to the child protection policy and the policy that schools shall always be maintained as zones of peace, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, ang DepEd po, kung alam nila ang mga nilalaman ng naturang report na ito, ano na po iyong kanilang mga kongkretong hakbang na nagawa na or plano pa lang gawin pagdating din po sa nakalagay na rekomendasyon dito na kinakailangan nang amyendahan ang programa ng CAT at i-abolish ang military content nito?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. There is no law yet, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, ang naturang rekomendasyon po ay laman din noong CRC recommendation pagdating sa CAT Program. Ang Ibig sabihin po ba nito ay wala pa po tayong ginagawang mga pag-uusap, mga dayalogo po sa Department of Education tungkol sa pag-amyenda ng CAT at ang pagkonsidera po sa pag-abolish ng military content nito? Napakahalagang pag-usapan po ito ngayon ng DepEd, lalong-lalo na at ibalik po natin o ating i-introduce sa senior high school ang ROTC Program.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, for the enlightenment of our honorable Congresswoman, the DepEd observes the Optional Protocol laid down by the United Nations, that is, the non-recruitment of children aged 18 years old and below, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. So, the DepEd strictly adheres to that, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, sa commitment na sinabi ng ating distinguished Sponsor at DepEd. Sa totoo lang po, talagang very welcome din sa atin iyong efforts ng DepEd noong 2017 pa lang hinggil sa pagpapapirma sa Pilipinas sa Safe Schools Declaration na magtutulak sa lahat po ng mga grupong armado na tiyakin na ang mga eskuwelahan ay mga lugar o mga sona ng kapayapaan. Ang itinatanong natin dito, Mr. Speaker, ay tungkol po doon sa CAT Program, kung nagkaroon na po ba ng pag-review ng programa na ito at kung tayo po ba, na ginagamit po natin o kino-konsidera po ba natin itong mga rekomendasyon sa mga Conventions kung saan state party ang Pilipinas, ang mga dagdag na mga insights mula sa mga bansa, sa mga estado, na pareho po ang mithiin sa atin na protektahan ang karapatan at ang kapakanan ng mga bata.

Mr. Speaker, kailan po huling nasilip, nabusisi, na-review ng DepEd ang kanilang CAT Program?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. There is a draft order, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, already for the CTP, which is the Citizenship Training Program and this is going to enhance the learner's social responsibility and commitment to the development of their communities. Then there will be a separate learning area in Grade 10, and two components of this training are basic leadership and military orientation, and public safety, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, kailan po natin maaasahan na mailabas ng DepEd ang naturang order tungkol sa CTP?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Before the year ends, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Ang CTP po ba ay para lang sa Grade 10 students?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Grade 10 students, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Ito po ay renewed version ng CAT, improved developed version?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. This is the refined version of the CAT Program, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. Ganyan din po ang tipo ng mga hakbang na nais nating makita pagdating naman sa National Service Training Program, kung saan tayo po ay nagko-konsidera na tanggalin ito o kaya naman ay palitan ng mandatory ROTC nang hindi man lang natin binabalikan iyong Batas ng NSTP na ang mismong Kongreso na ito ang nagpasa. Ang KABATAAN Party-List po ay talagang hinahangaan ang wisdom ng mga nauna sa atin dito, na kanila pong tinitignan at binibigyan ng tiwala ang kakayahan ng mga kabataan na tanggapin ang hamon bilang pag-asa ng bayan at gampanan ang kanilang napakahalagang papel para sa pambansang pag-unlad, at iyan po ay nakabatay sa kanilang freedom of choice, sa kanilang kursong kinuha o kung saan sila naka-enrol na mga diploma courses o short courses. Sila po ay maaaring makapag-enrol doon sa mga components ng National Service Training Program. Kaya po hinihikayat natin ang DepEd na samahan ang Representasyon na ito na magkaroon muna tayo ng masusing pag-aaral ng K to 12 Program—na balikan naman natin ang CAT at ang NSTP, ang lahat ng mga components nito ay ating balikan, bago tayo mag-usap ng mga bagong programa na nais nating maipatupad sa ating sistema ng edukasyon.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. Nais ko pong marinig ang commitment from our distinguished Sponsor, the affirmation and the expression of commitment from our distinguished Sponsor with regard to the review of the K to 12 Program and the implementation of the NSTP Law first before we proceed to the deliberation of new programs such as the mandatory ROTC.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the DepEd is open to coordinating with all stakeholders relative to what our honorable Congresswoman is proposing.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman Elago.

REP. ELAGO. Salamat, Mr. Speaker. Maaari po ba sa buwan na ito na tayo ay makapaglunsad ng isang stakeholders' meeting hinggil sa bagong CTP, at maging sa pagpapaalam sa Representasyon ng mga kabataan, ng ating mga estudyante, mga guro at iba pang mga parte ng academic community hinggil po sa tinatakbo ng K to 12 Program review?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the DepEd will invite you as soon as the dates are already finalized, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, baka po next year pa ito o sa susunod na budget hearing, kaya maaari po ba tayong makakuha ng commitment?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Okay.

REP. ELAGO. If not within the month or maybe...

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. It will be soon, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Maaari po ba bago tayo mag-break? Sana bago po mag-break ang Kongreso na ito ay atin nang matingnan ang bill na iyan kasi po napakahalaga na malaman natin kung nasaan na tayo ngayon bago po tayo makapagdesisyon hinggil sa pagsuporta o hindi pagsuporta sa mga panukalang batas na may kinalaman dito.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Right after the budget hearing, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. Mabuhay po ang DepEd family.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, before we continue with the next interpellator, may I request the honorable Sponsor to read the policy issues of the DepEd which the Sponsor would manifest.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. The policy issues being raised by the leadership and Deputy Speaker Marcoleta are supported by the House leadership and require political will on the part of the DepEd. A dialogue was conducted between him and the DepEd officials and they agreed on the following terms of reference that will form part of today's proceedings:

For the DepEd to

1. Recommend that the National Book Development Board be reverted to the Office of the President;

2. Conduct a thorough review of Manual Volume 5 and DepEd Order No. 52, series of 2015, for possible repeal or amendment, with the end in view of looking after the interest of small private sector publishers as provided by RA 8047 within DepEd's mandate over standards, evaluation and selection and consistent with procurement standards with a time frame until December 31, 2019;

3. Ensure that the following paragraph will not be inserted in Section 12 of the Special Provisions of the DepEd budget under the NEP 2020 similar to the second paragraph of Section 15 of the Special Provisions of the DepEd budget in GAA 2019.

This paragraph reads: "However, in case of two (2) failures in bidding the manuscripts, as provided in RA 9184 and DepEd Customized Manual on Procurement for the procurement of manuscripts for textbooks and teacher's manuals, and failure in the alternative mode of procurement, DepEd may resort to developing learning materials."

4. Look into the process and standards of any review and/or approval of learning resources outside the ambit of Volume 5.

This is all, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

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

REP. BARONDA. Thank you so much, Rep. Cora Nuñez-Malanyaon.

Mr. Speaker, we would like to move to the next interpellator and request the recognition of Rep. Jose L. Atienza Jr. of the BUHAY Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Savellano). Rep. Lito Atienza of the BUHAY Party-List is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Majority Leader.

To our esteemed colleague, we would like to ask some questions, with your permission. With the permission of the Lady, we would like to ask some questions.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes. Gladly, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. Una, kami po ay napasyal sa Nueva Ecija noong isang araw at ang tanong ng marami pong guro na sumalubong sa akin sa Second District ay bakit daw iyong pinangakong pagbabago ng mga gusali na napapaloob sa ating budget ngayon ay tila hindi yata natupad. I am talking about the old Marcos-era school houses which should have been changed already by this time.

So, I would like to ask from the Department why they have seemingly not fulfilled the particular commitment

which I heard. I heard that in the Committee hearing in 2017. They justified the increase in their budget that they needed to change the old Marcos-era school houses to have more rooms and to accommodate those who do not have classrooms. Are they going to explain it, or will we just skip it and charge it to experience as one of those promises that were not fulfilled.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, iyong mga Marcos-era buildings are already very old and they are due for replacement kaya lang po ay limited ang pondo at hindi po kaya kaagad na automatically ma-replace. Meanwhile, nire-repair lang po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. The answer does not jive with what we saw because the old Marcos-era buildings were merely renovated and they spent money on that. I do not think that was done through bayanihan, free of labor and free of materials. Ang tanong ko po ay bakit hindi na-deliver iyong nilalayan ng pondo nila na magtatayo na ng mga bagong gusali para dumami ang classrooms at hindi tayo magkaroon ng shortage?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Nire-repair lang po kung ito ay, kahit papaano, viable pa structurally but ang plano talaga ay ire-replace na po ang mga iyon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. At this point, Mr. Speaker, we cannot help but just accept the answer, but we will continue to monitor this because we have a serious problem with the shortage of classrooms. Meanwhile, we have aging structures which are limited in capacity, like the old Marcos-era buildings. With the funds that they are now being given, we hope they are able to attend to and address this problem which continues to be a live issue in places like the Second District of Nueva Ecija.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Noted po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. Shifting to another topic, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Department how they look at the non-formal education of the Alternative Learning System in their program of giving emphasis to education for all. No one should be left behind—iyan po ang kanilang slogan, which is very admirable. No Filipino should remain uneducated, at maski na po iyong mga ina at ama na hindi nakapagtapos ng kanilang mababang paaralan ay nabibigyan ng pagkakataon. Iyon pong gustong maka-graduate hanggang high school, nabibigyan ng pagkakataon. Iyong gustong tumuloy ng college, through this program, ay nabibigyan ng

pagkakataon. Mayroon akong kakilala—at kilalang-kilala ninyo, si Manny Pacquiao—who availed of this program. Now, he is even taking it further, as he is taking up advance studies after qualifying in the non-formal education program. Magkano po ba ang inilaan natin ngayon sa programang ito?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Okay, this is what the DepEd is doing—ito ho ang programa ngayon ng DepEd with respect to the ALS. They have expanded, actually, the coverage of the ALS to be able to reach the marginalized group of learners, and it is also in their intention to get the out-of-school youths back, iyong mga adults, at saka iyong mga drug addicts, iyong kailangan talaga na makabalik sa eskuwelahan.

So, they tried to develop basic literacy skills like reading, writing and numeracy to all these learners, then...

REP. ATIENZA. Ang tanong ko lang po, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. ... since there is the budget of ...

REP. ATIENZA. ... ay magkano po ba ang total budget for this very ...

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Ang budget ay...

REP. ATIENZA. ... effective program?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. P601 million nationwide.

REP. ATIENZA. P601 nationwide, tama po ba iyon?

Alam ninyo, may kaunting karanasan kami dito sa Maynila. Dahil sa dami ng mga naiwanan sa edukasyon, nagkaroon ng malaking puwang, magmula noong number one tayo hanggang sa napag-iwanan tayo dahil ang ekonomiya natin ay sumamâ, lalong-lalo na noong 20 years of Marcos rule, subalit P600 million nationwide will just be a drop, that is how much we are spending probably in Manila. And we graduated thousands upon thousands of unlettered, uneducated, and lacking in their capacity to improve the quality of their lives. We were graduating thousands every year for nine years. We did it because we realized the value of it. Hindi puwedeng bata lang ang tinuturuan natin. Maraming mga matatanda na mahihirap, hindi umaangat sa kabuhayan sapagkat kulang ang kanilang pinag-aralan. So, we suggest that the Department take a look and be more serious about this, at this particular program and do not treat it as if it were a mere *consuelo de bobo*. We are providing something for them but

it will not even educate enough of those who need government support.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, it is true, but this ALS budget started with P2 billion, then nagde-decline, until we have now the P600 million. The DepEd was asking for more, but we are only given P600 million. Itong ALS naman ho, tinutulungan din, sinusupportahan din ng lahat ng mga LGUs and there are also some other sectors that are also supporting this ALS Program of the DepEd, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. I am taking the word of the Lady on these particular assurances, but we will continue to monitor and practice or exercise our oversight functions to see whether they are, indeed, realizing the value of non-formal education.

Now, shifting to another topic which is very important, but to start with, I would like to state very clearly that I believe in the integrity of the Secretary. I believe in her capacity for effective management. Rather than talk of pesos and centavos in what we are talking about this afternoon, I would like to ask the Department, what have they done to correct the corrupt practices in the Department, especially in the purchase of books? Again, I know very well that in the purchase of books nationwide, there is a lot of shenanigans going on. Pati po iyong mga librong hindi naman dapat gamitin, nabibigyan ng priority lalong-lalo na kung opisyal ng Department ang may akda. Pangalawa, sa halaga ng libro ay inaasahan ng mga mahihirap na mag-aaral na dapat iyong salapi na nakalaan sa pagbili ng libro ay nagagawa nang tama. Magkano po ba ang nakalaan sa budget na ito, sa pagbili ng mga libro para sa ating mga paaralan?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, in 2019, we had P1.8 billion; for 2020, we only have P960 million, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. P1.8 billion for books? Let me tell you, ...

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, this year, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. Let me share with you, Mr. Speaker, and the Department officers who are here present today that it is a practice in the purchase of books, as I saw it personally up close while I was Mayor of Manila, the publishing houses were offering a 30-percent allowance to be distributed to all the officers who signed in the book purchases—1 percent here, 2 percent there, 3 percent, 20 percent for the Mayor, and I said, this has to stop.

The main cause of our poverty is corruption. Can you imagine, the Education Department of the city of Manila, engaged in such malpractice? We were able to prevent that. Our books in Manila, during my nine years as Mayor, you can check the records, we were able to lower them by 30 percent, dahil sabi ko, “Alisin ninyo iyan, ang mga nakapatong diyan para kay “Eddie,” para kay “Patty,” para sa akin, dahil iyan ay maruming salapi na hindi magbibigay ng anuman para kanino, at iyong ninanakawan ninyo ay mga mag-aaral na umaasa lamang sa gobyerno.

So, may I ask and this is the best time for the Department, for my respected Secretary, to inform us whether the DepEd today has lowered its prices, because during those times that they would not lower their price, ang sabi nila, papaano iyong mga pending P.O. namin sa DepEd eh iyon ay punung-puno ng para kay “Eddie” at kay “Patty,” ngayon po ba ay ginagawa pa ba iyan o hindi? Ibinababa ba ninyo ang presyo ng libro o hindi, lalung-lalo na iyong mga referral books, and books prepared and authored by the officials of the DepEd itself?

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Savellano relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Mujiv S. Hataman.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, hindi na ho iyon ginagawa. Hindi na ho iyon ang practice after the enactment of the Procurement Law, so the DepEd strictly follows the Procurement Law and the prices now range from P11.26 to P82.96 per book. So, ...

REP. ATIENZA. Can you...

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. ...ganoon na ho kaliit ang presyo ngayon ng mga libro, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. ATIENZA. Can you provide this Representation a comparative table showing that in the past, ito ang mga presyo. At present, binago na namin iyan, and I will be able to tell everyone who says “naglalagay kami.”

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Hindi na po.

REP. ATIENZA. Kapag hindi ka naglagay, hindi maaaprubahan iyong libro mo,” and I should be able to answer them, “ito ang katotohanan.” Hindi ginagawa ni Secretary Briones iyan. Ako ay naniniwala sa inyong sinasabi, subalit bigyan ninyo ako ng ebidensya na iyon na nga ang nangyayari.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, they will furnish you with a copy of the required report, Mr. Speaker, especially with respect to comparative prices.

REP. ATIENZA. Huwag ninyong sasabihin sa akin iyong approved prices by the Bureau of Standards and all these. Alam ko na iyong raket na iyan. Kapag kayo ay sumunod sa presyo na idinidikta ng gobyerno mismo, mayroon kayong para kay “Patty” at para kay “Eddie,” kapag si Secretary Briones ay hindi sumunod sa presyo ng gobyerno, malamang madedemanda siya for violating the law, but if she has the strength, and I believe she has the strength if she has the foundation. I believe she has an overflowing foundation of honesty and integrity. We should be able to stand against all of these rumors going around that nothing has changed in the Department of Education.

I do not believe them, but give me the reason to confront the issue and face them that it is not happening anymore because I would like to be able to defend the administration of Secretary Briones.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. It is not ...

REP. ATIENZA. Kailan ko po ba makukuha iyong simpleng comparative table of major books that were purchased by the Department?

Alam kong si Sekretaryo ay hindi tumatanggap. Hindi ko masasabi iyan sa lahat ng taong dinadaan ng mga papeles.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, within the next week, the DepEd will give all the data that you required, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Can we expect it on Monday, Mr. Speaker?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, on Monday.

REP. ATIENZA. I am very happy with the reply and the clarification because, as I said, I never doubted the integrity of this Lady, but I cannot say the same for the rest of the family.

Ipakita ninyo na ginagawa ninyo, next time pupurihin ko rin kayo. Kapag napatunayang hindi kayo nagbabago, lahat kayo ay may demanda, except Secretary Briones. *(Laughter)*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Cong. Enrico A. Pineda for his manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). Cong. Enrico A. Pineda is hereby recognized.

REP. PINEDA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would just like to make a short manifestation.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers prohibits making any deductions from the salaries of teachers, specifically authorized by law. Based on the documents that the DepEd has furnished my office, the authority to make deductions from the financial obligations of the DepEd employees with rural and thrift banks stemmed from Section 52 of the 2019 General Appropriations Act.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, the DepEd has been giving accreditation to financial institutions for automatic payroll deduction of loans extended by the latter to public school teachers, loans that are payable for as long as 36 months. However, the GAA is only valid for one year. So, why is the DepEd allowing loans that will be deducted for more than one year?

These financial institutions are granting loans to teachers as large as P500,000, payable in 36 months, to be automatically deducted from their salaries. The 2019 GAA also provides that public employees must have a minimum monthly take home pay of P5,000 after all deductions are made. Thus, if a teacher takes out a P500,000 loan, after deductions, they may be left with only P5,000 every month for three years. This amount, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, is not enough for someone to subsist.

I believe that the minimum net monthly take home pay salary should be increased to P15,000 a month and that only loans payable within one year be allowed as automatic deductions from teachers' salaries.

Mr. Speaker, my dear Sponsor, we should address these problems at the earliest time possible before our teachers are being buried deeper and deeper in debt. How do we expect them to survive with only P5,000 take home pay salary a month? We have the duty to take care of our public school teachers as they are the ones shaping our children and our future.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

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

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Sergio C. Dagooc of APEC Party-List for his manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). Rep. Sergio C. Dagooc is hereby recognized.

REP. DAGOOC. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Good afternoon, Mme. Sponsor and the DepEd Family.

My manifestation is all about the proposed budget of the DepEd for electrification which, during the

briefing, I was informed that the budget is for the wiring materials of all classrooms and school buildings. So, just for the record, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor, there are school buildings and classrooms being built with house wirings ready for energization, but until now, those classrooms and buildings are not yet energized because of the absence of lines extending from the nearest pole. Mostly, those are areas located in the franchise area of electric cooperatives in the provinces. So, my manifestation, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor, is if it is possible that a portion of the P1.9 billion intended for that house-wiring materials for school buildings and classrooms be diverted to the electrification fund of the National Electrification Administration. However, this will be used only, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, to line extensions for classrooms and buildings in the areas that need line extensions. Hindi po siya gagamitin doon sa other areas. Halimbawa, kung mayroong mga classrooms and buildings located within the franchise area of electric cooperatives na malayo pa iyong linya, doon gagamitin iyong pondo na iyon hindi kung saan-saan lang. Is that possible? Can you assure that to this Representation, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, we cannot actually divert the appropriation for the school wirings to line extensions. Although, in 2017, DepEd was able to get like P300 million supposed to be for line extensions from the last pole to the nearest pole close to the school building, but in 2018 wala na, until 2019 hanggang ngayon po, wala na po.

REP. DAGOOC. Kaya nga, Mme. Sponsor.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Kasi kapag ida-divert natin iyan, mawawalan naman ang school buildings ng kanilang wirings.

REP. DAGOOC. Ano kasi ito, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, this is a chicken and egg issue, kung sino ang nauna. Ngayon, kapag inuna natin iyong classroom, may wiring na siya, wala namang ilaw, kasi walang line extension. Kaya what I am trying to manifest is the possibility that a portion lang naman, portion of that proposed budget na i-allocate din naman natin doon sa mga area na walang line extensions. Those are specific areas po.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I think the best agency that we have to bring this concern too is the NEA, under than the Department of Energy. So, siguro, sila talaga dapat iyan, they shall assume that responsibility of giving preference with respect to the allocation for wirings at itong line extensions from the last pole to the nearest pole near the school.

REP. DAGOOC. Kaya nga po, this Representation referred this matter to the DepEd kasi the proposed budget of NEA for line extensions has been cut, P6.4 billion was cut into P1.2 billion. What does it mean? It will decrease the number of barangays and sitios that were targeted to be energized by 2020. At baka isa, dalawa o marami po sa mga classrooms ninyo na iko-construct next year ang hindi rin maiilawan kahit may wiring na. That is why idinudulog ko ito sa inyo dahil nakita ko doon sa ano ninyo. Ang sinasabi ko lang, Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, a portion lang ang ilaan, pinpointing those areas kasi alam naman ninyo, identified naman ninyo kung saan iko-construct iyon. Ang sinasabi ko, kung yung area na kung saan iko-construct iyong mga classroom o school building ay walang line extension, ay iyan lang din ang bigyan ninyo.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. The DepEd will be coordinating with the NEA so that they will be able to really identify the specific sites where perhaps they can realign their budget for school wiring to line extension, but again, there is a need to augment the funds, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, so it shall be included in the special provision in the coming GAB itself, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DAGOOC. I hope Mme. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na gagawin iyon kasi the two components are vital or necessary. Both the wiring of the building and the line extension are necessary in order to electrify the said building or classroom. Can I have the assurance of the...

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Yes.

REP. DAGOOC. DepEd na—pupuntahan ninyo ba si NEA?

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. DepEd will coordinate with NEA, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. DAGOOC. Thank you, Mme. Sponsor, Your Honor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Irene Gay F. Saulog of the KALINGA Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). Cong. Irene Saulog is recognized for her interpellation.

REP. SAULOG. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, in as much as there are no other Minority member who wishes to ask questions, I move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Department of Education. *(Applause)*

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

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Thank you.

REP. SUAREZ (D.) ... we join the Minority in their motion and move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Department of Education.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). There is a joint motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Department of Education, and including its attached agencies. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. NUÑEZ-MALANYAON. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, before we proceed, may we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Rep. Julienne “Jam” L. Baronda and Rep. Ria Christina G. Fariñas. We have here with us Board Member Perla Tumaliwan of Cagayan Valley, as well as Councilor Kate Coseteng of Quezon City.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). Please rise and welcome to the House of Representatives. The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session.

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

It was 5:23 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:25 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we reconsider again the budget of the Department of Tourism.

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

Hon. Michael John R. Duavit is recognized for his sponsorship speech.

REP. FARIÑAS (R.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Gabriel H. Bordado Jr. of the Third District of Camarines Sur to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the Department of Tourism.

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). Congressman Bordado is recognized.

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session.

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker.

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. PALMA. I move to suspend the session, Mr. Speaker.

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

It was 5:26 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:34 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I would reiterate my motion that Hon. Jack Duavit to sponsor—sorry, be recognized to sponsor the budget of the Department of Tourism and the first to interpellate would be Hon. Gabriel H. Bordado Jr.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). Congressman Bordado is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. BORDADO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, my compadre, a while ago, you and Congressman Lito Atienza ...

REP. DUAVIT. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. ... were discussing something about the Intramuros area.

REP. DUAVIT. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. I understand that the DOT or the Department of Tourism has two attached agencies, the Intramuros Administration, which is responsible for the orderly restoration and development of Intramuros as a monument to the so-called Hispanic period, and the National Parks Development Committee which is mandated to develop, preserve and manage parks in the country such as the Rizal and Paco Parks of Manila and the Pook ni Maria Makiling Forest Park in Los Baños, Laguna.

Is this correct, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DUAVIT. That is accurate, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, can you update us on the current and planned development for Intramuros?

REP. DUAVIT. With Intramuros, the bulk, Mr. Speaker, the Gentleman is asking for the plans for ...

REP. BORDADO. Yes, if you can update us on the current and planned developments for Intramuros.

REP. DUAVIT. Well, one of the main, Mr. Speaker, is the successful relocation of the informal settlers there, and the rest, Mr. Speaker, is still the ongoing restoration work, and of course, the promotion of the sites within Intramuros, which are income-generating and are used for weddings and various functions, Mr. Speaker. Of

course, there is Fort Santiago Museum and one of the plans is to, hopefully, over time, increase the coverage or rather to introduce a new attraction.

REP. BORDADO. Okay, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. In February 2019, the Department of Tourism launched a refreshed Philippine brand campaign that is still anchored on the slogan, "It's More Fun in the Philippines." The new branding campaign is grounded in sustainability and the Secretary herself explained that the ad uses 100 percent crowdsourced materials as it is made entirely by people who have experienced firsthand why it is more fun in the Philippines.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, how does this refreshed Philippine brand campaign differ from the previous DOT campaigns?

REP. DUAVIT. The main difference, Mr. Speaker, is that these refreshers are really required periodically because if you would look at the technical or the materials that are being used, they can easily be perceived as dated. A lot of it can refer to—like even simple things like font types used for that particular period, color grading of the materials, et cetera. The same way that if we go on YouTube now and look at basketball games from maybe 10 years ago or even just five years ago, it is very easy to discern because technology moves. As far as our intended target market is concerned, it is on the technical side; this alone requires the refresher, but the bigger part of the planned refresher, Mr. Speaker, is to really update the ethnographic side or the ethnographic content, and that means that if you are, for example, showing an ad in Russia, it must have a Russian language component, and since we are crowdsourcing, we also included actual Russians speaking to Russians about the Philippines.

REP. BORDADO. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Is the DOT planning to launch new programs intended to boost the tourism industry in the country?

REP. DUAVIT. Right now, Mr. Speaker, we are more of an incremental increase. The Department is very mindful that we cannot just promote excessively. It is a calibrated process, Your Honor, wherein we try to keep up with a certain target growth. So, our target, for example for next year, will be an increase from P7 million to P8 million, but we are mindful not to bring it prematurely to let us say P9 million or P10 million, because we know what the frictions are as far as the visitors come. Our carrying capacity must be able to satisfy them. The same way, if we were to launch a restaurant, we would also like to make sure that everyone that comes to the restaurant is served properly and that there is quality in the entire experience.

REP. BORDADO. Okay, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Since the DOT is focusing its campaign on sustainability, what projects and programs does it currently have or are they planning to launch that would help in protecting, rehabilitating and maintaining the destinations around the country?

REP. DUAVIT. I think the best example, Mr. Speaker, is what happened in Boracay. What was learned from that which, again, can be described as the foster child for unbridled expansion is something that the Department is looking into very keenly and trying to replicate. Again, we go back to what I mentioned earlier being the prescribed or current carrying capacity of a particular destination, in terms of the experience of getting there or the transportation but the actual stay. There are still existing programs that assure quality and rating for the said destination. More than anything, the Department cannot do it alone. It is a multi-agency effort that includes the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and other agencies, Your Honor.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, what are the plans of the DOT to ensure the protection of tourist spots and destinations from damage done by tourists?

REP. DUAVIT. Okay. Mr. Speaker, the first thing is that we have foreign offices also. Pretty much, they get the news faster than we do know. They are co-located with our diplomatic offices and in those diplomatic offices, there are travel advisories that are given. So, the Department, upon notice that there are like perhaps travel advisories that have been issued in certain areas, tinitingnan po ng Departamento kung ano ang risks doon because we really do not want to send visitors, foreign or domestic, to places that may pose some dangers, and if the tourists, again, domestic or foreign, can be advised where their activities should be restricted to or contained in.

REP. BORDADO. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. What are the projects and programs of the DOT that would help educate and train tourist guides?

REP. DUAVIT. We have a training program called the TISP, Your Honor, the Tourism Industry Skills Program. This has a budget of P81 million, Your Honor, and it is actually the DOT personnel that conducts the training.

REP. BORDADO. In other words, the Department is coming up with programs aimed at training these tourist guides?

REP. DUAVIT. It is an ongoing program, Mr. Speaker, and conducted from the regional offices.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, how is the Department ensuring the quality of information on history and culture that we impart on tours, in destinations around the country?

REP. DUAVIT. I was told, Mr. Speaker, that this is an integral part of the module that is being used, history and culture of the Philippines that is used in the 30-day training of said trainings for the tour guides.

REP. BORDADO. In certain parts of the country, we have these tourist guides who tell us something about the history of that particular area. Now, how does the Department come up with a scheme in order that the history being given by such guides are correct?

REP. DUAVIT. Local historians are employed as the lecturers for these topics.

REP. BORDADO. Are you telling me, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, that the DOT is employing local historians?

REP. DUAVIT. Yes, both as an advisory position as far as creation of the modules and, in some rare instances, as lecturers themselves.

REP. BORDADO. I believe, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, that to ensure that we will come up with the real history on our tourist areas, I agree that we may hire, Mr. Speaker, local historians as well. Is the Department doing this?

REP. DUAVIT. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

About a quarter or P813.4 million of the total cash allocation of P3.3 billion in 2018 was reverted to the Bureau of Treasury. Is this correct, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DUAVIT. What was returned or unutilized amounted to around P500 million, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. How much, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DUAVIT. Around P500 million was unutilized.

REP. BORDADO. So this report of P813.4 million of the total cash allocations being reverted to the Bureau of Treasury is incorrect?

REP. DUAVIT. Only cash, I am told, Mr. Speaker, of roughly P500 million or half a billion pesos.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, apart from the Central Office, the regions with unliquidated cash allocations were the National Capital Region, Region VII and Region IX. Is this correct?

REP. DUAVIT. Mr. Speaker, apparently, they have already responded to the COA but the COA has not yet acknowledged this, but I am told that the amounts said in the areas are only in the five figures or less than a hundred thousand pesos, in some cases or in most cases.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, are you saying that the NCR, Region VII and Region IX have already liquidated the cash allocations?

REP. DUAVIT. They have already responded, yes.

REP. BORDADO. Because according to the report, the regional offices explained that efforts were exerted to maximize the usage of allotments and cash allocations received. However, due to the programmed activities which are not applicable to the regions, stakeholders and the late receipt of the fund transferred by the DOT Central Office to the region, the allotment from the Central Office was not fully utilized. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DUAVIT. Due to the delays last year in our budget, Mr. Sponsor, mayroon po talagang mga hindi nakahabol, as far as the disbursements go, although na-obligate na rin po. Humabol na rin at hahabol by the end of the year.

Now, again, as far as some of the larger figures of what happened in 2018, or because right now, we are still halfway of this particular year, it can also be said, Your Honor, that is the savings that went back. I mean, kung tutuusin po natin, ang ginagawa naman talaga dito sa Kongreso—kumbaga, tayo ang nagbibigay ng paalam kung anong puwede o maaaring gastusin, at kung minsan naman, hindi naman po talaga kailangang obligahin na ubusin iyon. Siguro po, ang masasabi ko lang sa depensa ng Departamento, hindi na nila nagamit iyong kabuuan, pero nilampasan pa rin ang target na na-set o ibinigay sa atin for that particular year, for 2018, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, the Commission on Audit or the COA attributed the non-utilization and reversion of the Notice of Cash Allocations or the NCAs to the inability of the DOT Central Office to project and prepare a more realistic monthly disbursement program. Thus, it was the basis for the comprehensive release of the NCAs by the DBM to implement projects and activities in accordance with

the disbursement forecast reflected in the MDP. Is this correct, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DUAVIT. When there is a big difference, I believe, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to an auditing entity as opposed to an operating entity, where the auditing is always looking at what already has happened, and the operating entity is basically trying to look into the future. It is very seldom, this match up, Mr. Speaker, but I really do not see it as a failure in that sense, again, because the targets were reached and the activities were accomplished for the most part.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, has the DOT looked into this particular issue?

REP. DUAVIT. Yes. Of course, they are now trying to improve more advanced analytics, and part of the budget is now going into the IT section of the Department, Your Honor.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, has the regional budgets been adjusted?

REP. DUAVIT. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. BORDADO. Thank you very much, Mr. Sponsor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, DOT.

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

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Cong. Sol Aragon, from the beautiful province of Laguna, for her manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). Congresswoman Aragon is recognized.

REP. ARAGONES. Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a short manifestation regarding Duty Free Philippines. Naniniwala po ako na bahagi ng isang maayos at maunlad na turismo ang pagkakaroon ng isang maayos at murang halagang mga produkto sa loob ng Duty Free. Mr. Speaker, nais ko pong tanungin ang pamunuan ng Duty Free kung ano ang kanilang plano o pinaplano sa higit na pagpapaunlad at pagsasaayos ng Duty Free?

REP. DUAVIT. I was actually a witness, Mr. Speaker. My habit when I am given an assignment to defend a budget is to hold a cross-briefing in the office of the said Department. I did it again this year and like for tomorrow, I will also be doing the same for the Commission on Human Rights. While I was there and they were having their own internal discussions, I

was basically like a fly on the wall listening in. They made it very clear that there is going to be a shift in the merchandising of the sights within our ports and airports, and it is going to shift more towards locally made products—regionally made products that will be sold instead of the usual imported luxury goods. The reasoning for this is twofold. First is that the luxury goods are actually not selling well because they are not that competitive price-wise. Second, it is just a core idea that people should be able to take something away from the Philippines to their homes that is tactile and that can be shown and given to other family members of said visitors. So, expect to see a change in the product mix of Duty Free Philippines.

REP. ARAGONES. Maraming salamat po dahil bilang isang Pilipino, nais nating makita at maramdaman ang pagbabago at pagsasakatuparan ng plano ng pamunuan ng Duty Free.

Hindi pa po ito beripikado, pero may mga nagsasabi sa atin o may mga ulat na nagsasabi na minsan ay mas mura pa ang produkto sa S&R kaysa sa Duty Free. Kung ito po ay may katotohanan—hindi ko sinasabing totoo kasi kailangan pa nating i-verify—nakalulungkot kung ganoon ang sitwasyon dahil makikita natin sa ibang bansa kapag nagpunta tayo doon, talaga namang kumpleto at pag-uwi natin, masaya tayong may bitbit para sa ating mga kapamilya. Hindi lang po natin ito gustong magkaroon ng improvement para sa mga turista na pupunta dito sa Pilipinas, pero para sa atin din bilang mga Pilipino.

REP. DUAVIT. We are in a peculiar situation, Mr. Speaker. In most Duty Free shops in other countries, sales are really limited to those that are outbound or to visiting foreigners. I looked into it also and why we differ from the others is that there was a point in our history where we are very short on foreign exchange. One of the ways that was devised to capture the said additional foreign exchange was to have the balikbayans spend their extra dollars here. Kaya po dati, sa pagbayad po, dollars ang tinatanggap. Over time, nakasanayan na rin po na nagbebenta na rin locally, and that was when we became a little strange. That was one of the reasons also that it was higher in price because noong nangyari po iyon, it started selling like chocolates to balikbayans, et cetera. Ang nangyari po, ang nagreklamo ay ang local producers, companies that eventually closed down like Serg's Chocolates, because of the competition. It was deemed that, ang biruan nga, ito iyong Duty Free na may duties.

So, we are now looking at a way to go past that and because our economic situation is far different from that era, and it is, I believe, we share the same belief that we should be selling more local goods instead of the old models.

REP. ARAGONES. Naniniwala po ako doon. Ako ho ay umaasa at naniniwala na maisasaayos ang isang mas pinaunlad, mas pinamura at mas maraming lokal na produkto para sa Duty Free ng Pilipinas.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). Maraming salamat.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Minority Leader, Rep. Bienvenido “Benny” M. Abante Jr., for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). The Minority Leader, Representative Abante, is recognized.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, will you please allow me to just ask about two or three questions?

REP. DUAVIT. It would be my honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Mayroon pong project ang DOT na ang tawag ay Buhay Carinderia project at mayroon daw pong mga illegal payments worth P80.64 million. Illegal payments po para sa Buhay Carinderia project. Ano po bang nangyari dito? Mayroon na po bang nakasuhan dito? What happened to this?

REP. DUAVIT. The Buhay Carinderia program, Mr. Speaker, is a project between the Tourism Promotions Board and the company called Marylindbert International. On March 1, 2019 po, the COA issued a Notice of Suspension of the payment to Marylindbert. Not all respondents were able to file their responses. To date, the COA has yet to issue a Notice of Disallowance.

Ang TPB po is also coordinating with the OGCC to explore iyong possible legal actions against Marylindbert and responsible TPB officials and employees for the return of the amounts paid to them po. Iyon po ang status to date.

REP. ABANTE. So, ibig sabihin po, nagkaroon na ng legal action on that.

REP. DUAVIT. Opo, mayroon na po, hinihintay na lang po ang mga opinyon ng OGCC at saka ng COA po para maging mas malakas po ang kaso.

REP. ABANTE. Well, of course, this is before the present Secretary and I know that she is doing her best to really make the DOT a very excellent Department, actually.

Ito po ang pangalawang tanong ko, iyon pong nangyari doon po sa Bitag Media Unlimited Incorporated, naibalik na po ba iyong P60 million payment, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. DUAVIT. Ganoon din po iyon, hinihintay na lang po ang aksyon po ng Ombudsman, at saka para po malinaw, the COA directive was addressed to PTV-4, hindi po sa Bitag Media Unlimited Incorporation. Ang findings po ng COA was that there is an apparent conflict of interest between the former Secretary and the producers of *Bitag Kilos Pronto*, one of the PTV-4 programs po.

Nag-issue na po ng Notice of Disallowance ang COA, dated June 5, 2018, and the supplemental Notice of Disallowance was issued to PTV-4 po on June 8, 2018. In October 2018 po, iyong respondents who were still connected with the DOT ay nag-file na po ng kanilang mga appeal pero hinihintay pa po ang desisyon ng COA Director. Sa mga tao po na hindi na po konektado sa DOT, iyan po, medyo kulang po tayo ng impormasyon.

REP. ABANTE. So, ano na po ang present status ngayon?

REP. DUAVIT. Iyon na nga po—ang present status po nito ay may Notice of Disallowance na naisyu po noong June 5, 2018, at ang inaano lang naman po ng Departamento is, they will cooperate with any and all investigations on the matter as best taken, and they gave us that assurance.

REP. ABANTE. For my last question, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, what is the explanation of the current DOT Secretary on the following adverse findings of COA in its latest 2018 Audit Report: (1) Various offices of the Department of Tourism spent a total of P507,304,000 without supporting documents; and (2) A total of P918,935 in expenses on six foreign trips, where the two-person per trip limit as stated in the DOT Department Order was violated.

REP. DUAVIT. Well, are you referring to the trips, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ABANTE. Iyong una po iyong P507.304 million, without any supporting documents, ano pong nangyari doon?

REP. DUAVIT. Well, Secretary Romulo-Puyat reiterated previous management directives for the personnel concerned to immediately comply with that COA audit findings as would be the standard procedure, Mr. Speaker, and they have been given 15 days from receipt of the memorandum to comply. The

DOT officials were also directed to ensure immediate compliance with said COA audit findings.

REP. ABANTE. Well, I am raising these concerns, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, because I know that with the stewardship of the present Secretary of the DOT, I believe that she really would like the Tourism Department to be what it should be according to its mandate. Of course, the Minority here does not find any reason why we do not have to support the budget requirement of the Department of Tourism. Only that, perhaps, we should also look into some, you know, things that perhaps would stain the Department in every good thing that they are doing.

Maraming, maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

Thank you very much.

REP. DUAVIT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Cong. Argel Joseph T. Cabatbat from the MAGSASAKA Party-List for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). Congressman Cabatbat is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a short manifestation.

I would like to ask the Department to submit a report as to the savings and request for augmentation from the year 2017 up to now, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DUAVIT. We will make that available by Friday, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There being no other members of the Minority who wishes to interpellate on the proposed budget of the Department of Tourism and its attached agencies, on behalf of the Minority, Mr. Speaker, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate for the proposed budget of the Department of Tourism and its attached agencies.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in their motion and move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Department of Tourism.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hataman). There is a joint motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the DOT including its attached agencies.

Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The deliberation on the budget of DOT is hereby terminated.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

It was 6:09 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:13 p.m., the session was resumed with Deputy Speaker Michael L. Romero, PhD., presiding.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4228

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 4228.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4611 ON SECOND READING

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 4611, contained in Committee Report No. 20, as reported out by the Committee on Transportation.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). 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. 4611, entitled: AN ACT DESIGNATING THE THIRD SUNDAY OF NOVEMBER EVERY YEAR AS THE NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD CRASH VICTIMS, SURVIVORS, AND THEIR FAMILIES, ENSURING ITS MEANINGFUL OBSERVANCE.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, to sponsor the said measure, I move that we recognize Hon. Manuel F. Zubiri.

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

Hon. Manuel F. Zubiri is recognized.

REP. ZUBIRI. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I move that the Explanatory Note be considered as the sponsorship speech on the said Bill, Mr. Speaker.

REP. PALMA. We join the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. I move that the Explanatory Note be made as the sponsorship speech thereon.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to interpellate on or speak against the measure, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The period of sponsorship and debate is closed.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments. However, there being no Committee or individual amendments, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve on Second Reading House Bill No. 4611, under Committee Report No. 20.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 4611 on Second Reading.

As many as are in favor, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 4611 ON SECOND READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). House Bill No. 4111 is approved on Second Reading.

REP. PALMA. Four-six-one-one.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The *ayes* have it; the motion is approved. House Bill No. 4611 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4228 *Continuation*

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 4228, under Committee Report No. 8, and that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the said measure.

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 4228, entitled: AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS

REP. COLLANTES. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed with the period of intepellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Commission on Elections.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. COLLANTES. Mr. Speaker, to sponsor for the proposed budget of the Commission on Elections, I move that we recognize Rep. Francisco Jose “Bingo” F. Matugas II, CPA, CESO, LLB, the Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, to answer questions, if any.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Representative Matugas from the First District of Surigao del Norte is hereby recognized.

REP. MATUGAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. COLLANTES. Before we begin, ...

REP. MATUGAS. To sponsor the budget of the COMELEC in the amount of P9.8 billion, ...

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

REP. COLLANTES. Before we begin, Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of our guests in the plenary: Chairman of Commission on Elections, Sheriff M. Abas; Commissioner Al Parreño; Commissioner Luie Tito Guia; Commissioner Ma. Rowena Amelia Guanzon; Commissioner Socorro Inting; Commissioner Marlon Casquejo; and Commissioner Antonio Kho Jr.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Will

the Commissioners led by COMELEC Chairman Sheriff Abas, please stand. Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. COLLANTES. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. France L. Castro of ACT TEACHERS Party-List for her interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Before we proceed with the interpellations on the budget of the COMELEC, may we ask the guests in the House of Representatives to observe proper decorum.

Congresswoman Castro is hereby recognized.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

Your Honor, I would like to thank the COMELEC for the last election because mayroon po siyang ginawang paglilinaw kaugnay noong kwalipikasyon ng mga guro na magsisilbi sa eleksyon dahil, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, nagkaroon po ng kalituhan noong panahon ng eleksyon dahil mayroon pong nagreklamo about doon sa kwalipikasyon ng mga guro na miyembro ng Alliance of Concerned Teachers at saka doon sa pagiging BEI.

Nagpapasalamat kami sa COMELEC sa pagbibigay nito ng linaw kaugnay doon sa pagsasaalang-alang sa karapatan ng mga guro natin sa pag-oorganisa, pagsasaalang-alang sa karapatan ng mga guro natin para doon sa karapatan nila for suffrage at siyempre karapatan din ng ating mga guro na magsilbi rin sa bayan sa pamamagitan ng pagiging BEI sa eleksiyon.

Ilang mga clarification lang, Mr. Speaker, sa pagpapatupad ng Election Service Reform Act na pangunahin pong naging batas sa pamamagitan po ng ating party-list, ang ACT TEACHERS Party-List. Noong nakaraang election po, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, may mga complaint pong ipinaabot sa atin ang ating mga BEI at iba pang mga miyembro ng election officers tungkol doon sa pinababayad na nagre-require ng affidavit o dokumento sa mga nagbi-BEI lalo na sa mga public schools. Pinababayad daw po ng notaryo na nagkakahalaga ng P100 hanggang P200 kada affidavit.

Sinasabi po, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, sa Section 14, Rule V ng ESRA IRR issued in 2017 na may authority to administer oaths o kapangyarihang magnotaryo ang lahat ng election officers pero hindi nakasulat na libre. So, Mr. Speaker, dahil alam naman natin na ito ay isa ring expense para sa ating mga BEI, puwede bang ang COMELEC, sa pamamagitan ng ating butihing Sponsor, ay makakuha tayo ng resolusyon na naglililinaw na ang paglilibre nitong documentary o pagbayad po o pagre-require ng affidavit o dokumento ng mga BEI sa mga public school—parang resolusyon lang po—dapat ito po ay under na po doon sa Election Service Reform

Act at hindi na pababayaran ang ating mga BEI, Mr. Speaker, G. Sponsor?

REP. MATUGAS. Maraming salamat, Your Honor, Mme. Interpellator, Mr. Speaker. Ito pong tanong ninyo, it relates to a BIR Ruling No. 494, 2018 because iyong pagbabayad po ng documentary stamp tax is under po sa jurisdiction ng BIR. Ang COMELEC po ay sumusunod po lamang sa ruling na iyon. So, with regard to your query, if possible ba na magkaroon ng resolution, I think ang resolution should be directed towards the BIR. Kasi iyan po ang nagbigay ng ruling that it is a settled principle of taxation that income, in a broad sense, means all wealth which flows into the taxpayer other than mere return of capital. So, based on that principle, kailangan po talagang magbayad ng withholding tax, so kapag nakapagsumite po siguro ang mga teacher natin o as a group ang Kagawaran ng DepEd doon sa BIR ng isang resolution to exempt them from the payment of the withholding tax, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). With due respect po doon sa sagot ng ating Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, hindi ko po pinatutungkulan iyong tungkol sa tax na nire-require po ng BIR doon sa honorarium na tinatanggap ng ating mga BEI. Ito po yung Section 14, Rule V ng ESRA. Ito po iyong IRR sa pagpa-file po ng mga BEI noong kanilang oath. Hindi ba tatanggapin po iyong kanilang parang pinaka-assignment during election time? May kapangyarihan po, ayon sa batas, na ang mga election officer ang puwedeng mag-administer nito pero ang nangyayari po may nakarating po sa ating opisina na mga complaint about sa pagbabayad doon sa mga Teacher. So, dahil naman po ito ay kapangyarihan ng election officer, iyong pagnotaryo, halimbawa, ito po ba ay dapat pang singilin kasi malinaw naman po ito doon sa ESRA? Kaya po ang request sana ng Kinatawang ito, Mr. Speaker, ay magkaroon ng isang resolusyon para linawin itong part na ito ng Section 14 ng Rule V ng ESRA IRR na sana wala nang expense si Teacher BEI kaugnay nitong mga assignment or appointment na ito, Mr. Speaker, G. Sponsor.

REP. MATUGAS. Mme. Interpellator, Mr. Speaker, regarding po sa documentary stamp tax na nakalagay po doon sa oath nila, wala na pong bayad, sinagot na po ng COMELEC including po iyong pagnotaryo, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.) Ah, okay. Malinaw po iyon, ano, Mr. Speaker, na libre and notaryo, documentary stamps na sagot po ng COMELEC doon sa assignment or appointment ng mga Teacher BEI o ng mga BEI.

Another concern, Mr. Speaker, on the reimbursement scheme of the medical benefits and on legal assistance, malinaw po sa batas ng Election Service Reform Act

iyong mga benefit kaugnay nito as regards the medical benefits. Ang common complaint po, Mr. Speaker, G. Sponsor, ay kailangan munang maglabas ng pera ang mga BEI or iyong maaapektuhan bago checkup o makapagpagamot, at kailangan munang mag-hire ng private lawyer kahit na pro bono lawyer o hindi maiiwasang may expense din kasi ang mga kinasuhang Teacher.

So, dito po ba, Mr. Speaker, puwede po bang linawin ng ating distinguished Sponsor iyong rules and regulations kaugnay noong pag-a-acquire or pag-avail noong mga teacher natin ng medical benefits and legal assistance.

Una muna po iyong medical benefits kasi po kumukuha muna sa bulsa si Teacher bago ma-reimburse. So, iyon iyong naging patakaran. Wala po ba itong parang magiging rules or dagdag na guidelines para si Teacher ay hindi na po siya kumukuha sa sarili niyang bulsa?

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, Mme. Interpellator, sa COMELEC po, mayroon po talagang nakalaan na special trust fund for the medical assistance, death benefits, legal assistance para po sa ating mga guro. Kaso lang, alam naman po natin na sa gobyerno, hindi pupuwede tayong mag cash advance ng walang magbigay ng pauna kasi kailangan po ng resibo. So, ang nagiging patakaran or rules or procedures ay kailangan muna iyong teacher natin mag-spend o maglabas ng pera para sa medical benefits niya. Then iyong resibo po ay ire-reimburse ng COMELEC para mas madali po iyong liquidation niya particularly with the COA requirements.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Puwede po bang maglabas ng separate na guidelines ang COMELEC kaugnay nito para maging malinaw po doon sa ating mga teacher?

REP. MATUGAS. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, mayroon na pong guideline. Ito ay ipinapaloob sa COMELEC Minute Resolution No. 18-0124, dated February 13, 2018, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Thank you po, Mr. Speaker. Iyong last na lang po, iyong legal assistance sa ating mga BEI. So, may ginawang MOU ang COMELEC with the IBP at PAO, okay naman po, Mr. Speaker, G. Sponsor na ma-complement na iba pang paraan upang madagdagan ang iba pang legal assistance sa mga serye ng eleksiyon.

Kasi tila from all fronts iyan, risk ang kanilang inaabot or harassment kahit during polls, mismong presinto ay nagkakaroon ng certain form of harassment sa ating mga guro.

So, nakalagay lang po dito sa ating implementing rules and regulations ay iyong mga puwedeng kumuha ng legal assistance ang ating COMELEC, parang after

na ng election, kapag si Teacher ay mayroon nang kaso or kinakasuhan na siya.

So, puwede po ba, Mr. Speaker, na sana po makuha natin iyong serbisyo po ng IBP kaugnay nito lalong-lalo na po parang mayroon yatang rule sa Supreme Court about iyong mga new lawyer, iyong IBP Chapter about pro bono na serbisyo noong mga bagong lawyer ng IBP, Mr. Speaker, G. Sponsor?

REP. MATUGAS. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, unang-una, puwede po iyong IBP na magbigay ng serbisyo. Pero ito pong legal na tulong sa mga guro natin is nakapaloob na po sa Special Trust Fund, na may budget na P30 million, kasama po doon sa medical benefits na ibinibigay sa mga guro. So, puwede pong mag-refer ang mga teachers natin, magpunta sa COMELEC, para humingi po ng legal assistance fee para doon sa mga kaso na iaangat against sa kanila, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, dito po sa pondong ito, kabilang po ba ito doon sa MOU ng COMELEC at saka IBP? Kasi, ang kailangan ng Teacher dito ay iyong free legal assistance kung sakali kasi may mga panahon na iyong mga teacher ay bumubunot pa sa sarili nilang bulsa tapos kung private lawyer iyan mas gagastusan pa nila iyon. Mae-ensure po ba, Mr. Speaker, na through these guidelines natin sa legal assistance si Teacher ay talagang fully covered noong legal assistance from COMELEC?

REP. MATUGAS. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, according to COMELEC, iba pa po iyong sa MOU with the IBP. So, parang lumalabas po na dalawa iyong pupuwedeng puntahan ng ating mga guro, doon sa Special Trust Fund at saka doon sa MOU.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, lilinawin ko lang po, doon sa MOU ng COMELEC at ng IBP at PAO, free legal assistance po ito.

REP. MATUGAS. Yes po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Oo. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Last na po.

Itong nakaraang election, nagkaroon ng mga hindi maiiwasang pagtingin ang ating mga mamamayan kaugnay sa dayaan, kaugnay sa iba't ibang uri ng fraud sa election, lalong-lalo na po, kung matatandaan natin, na nagkaroon ng parang pagpigil o matagal na pag-transmit ng mga election vote doon sa transmitter natin or sa mother transmitter. Mayroon po bang ginagawa na pag-aaral sa kasalukuyan ang COMELEC kaugnay noong assessment sa nakaraang election partikular sa pagpapatuloy ng Smartmatic?

Pangalawa pong question, Mr. Speaker, G. Sponsor, ano po iyong possibility na magkaroon ng hybrid mode of election sa susunod na election? Ito po ba iyong sinasabi nating hybrid, manual po sa precinct level pero iyong pagta-transmit po ay talagang mabilis at talagang electronic po, ito iyong tinatawag na hybrid.

So, una po, may pag-aaral po bang ginawa o assessment ang COMELEC kaugnay noong nangyaring mga dayaan sa election at iba pa pong mga fraud na nire-raise ng mga mamamayan, ng mga kandidato, politiko, organisasyon, at iba pa?

Pangalawa po, may posibilidad ba na magkaroon ng hybrid mode of election sa susunod na mga election instead of Smartmatic?

REP. MATUGAS. Unang-una po, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, with regard sa first question kung ano ang ginagawa ng COMELEC after the election, isa po sa mga legal procedure, technical procedure na ginagawa is iyong random manual audit. So, ginagawa po nila iyon to check kung may mga systemic error na nangyayari doon sa election. So far naman po, I think based doon sa data na nakuha nila from the random manual audit, nasa 99 percent na maganda ang performance ng last election in relation to the systemic factors. So, ibig sabihin, iyong technical aspect o iyong automation aspect is 99 percent maganda po ang takbo based sa random manual audit.

Sa second po na tanong, as to the hybrid voting or hybrid election, ang masasabi po natin ngayon is, as of today, wala pa pong batas na nagsasabi sa COMELEC na gawin ang hybrid voting. Siguro, pagdating ng panahon bago magkaeleksiyon sa 2022, kung magkaroon tayo ng batas na magsasabi na ang eleksiyon natin magiging hybrid na, susundin po iyon ng COMELEC, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Mr. Speaker, puwede po bang makakuha noong report, noong assessment and evaluation ng Commission about doon sa sinasabi ng ating Sponsor about doon sa performance noong nakaraang eleksiyon using Smartmatic?

REP. MATUGAS. Yes po, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, magbibigay po ang COMELEC.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Pangalawa, Mr. Speaker, puwede po bang simulan na natin ngayon habang—I think mayroon nang naka-propose na batas about hybrid mode of election. Puwede bang simulan na rin ng COMELEC iyong pag-aaral kaugnay nitong mga mode na ito na gusto nating mangyari sa mga susunod na eleksiyon, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MATUGAS. Yes po, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, magagawa po nila iyong pag-study ng ganoong klaseng voting.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay, at mabigyan din po ng update ang Kinatawang ito kaugnay po ng study na iyan.

REP. MATUGAS. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I end my interpellation.

Thank you, Your Honor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. COLLANTES. Mr. Speaker, the next to interpellate the Sponsor, may we recognize Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo from the First District of Lanao del Norte.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Khalid Dimaporo is hereby recognized.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the honorable Sponsor allow me to ask some questions regarding the budget of the COMELEC?

REP. MATUGAS. Yes, Your Honor, you may.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor.

First, I would like to congratulate the COMELEC family for the successful implementation of the 2019 local elections. Second, my concern is actually in support of the COMELEC's budget for 2022, and this is because we have an outlier in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region and that is the parliamentary form of government.

Now, under the Bangsamoro Organic Law, Article VII, Section 40, the budget for the parliamentary election comes from COMELEC, if I am not mistaken. May I have that confirmed, honorable Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, may I ask for a one-minute suspension of the session.

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

It was 6:37 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:38 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

REP. MATUGAS. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, with regard to your question, as of now, there is no budget allocated for that.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Yes, I understand, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, that there is no budget allocated for the Bangsamoro Electoral Office because I am talking about the potential 2022 budget, but just so that the COMELEC family is aware of this, I will just read Article VII, Section 40 of the Bangsamoro Organic Law, which reads and I quote:

Section 40. Bangsamoro Electoral Office – The Commission on Election shall establish a Bangsamoro Electoral Office under its supervision and control which shall implement and enforce its orders, rulings and decisions. The budget of the Bangsamoro Electoral Office shall be part of the yearly budget of the Commission on Elections.

Now, I am saying this again in preparation for the budget year 2022 because the Bangsamoro Parliament is a deviation from our Omnibus Election Code. Actually, part of the Bangsamoro Organic Law is a requirement for the Bangsamoro Parliament to enact a Bangsamoro Electoral Code, and my understanding is, the Bangsamoro Electoral Code will be the basis for the budget of COMELEC in the 2022 elections.

Now, if I understand our budget process properly, if we are looking, all do it in 2022 for the Bangsamoro Parliament to have its own regular elections. Congress will approve that budget in 2021, and in the budgetary process, it will emanate or the COMELEC will start preparing its budgetary details in the first quarter of 2021, which means to say, ideally, the Bangsamoro Electoral Code should be passed sometime in the year 2020 and even better if they can pass the Bangsamoro Electoral Code within the year 2019.

This is a concern that I would like to put on record here on the floor because I want to be consistent. Kung wala pang Bangsamoro Electoral Code when we discuss the 2021 budget next year, then I will raise the flag and say that this is a concern for us, especially for the COMELEC family. So, I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, does the COMELEC have an ideal timeline for the Bangsamoro Parliament to enact and to pass their Bangsamoro Electoral Code? Is it 2019, 2020 or will we be waiting for the Bangsamoro Parliament to act?

REP. MATUGAS. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, the timeline is within 2021.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor.

Again, this is going to be an interesting issue for all of us. When we have the bicam on the Bangsamoro Organic Law, the House contingent singled out the parliamentary form of government as a possible constitutional issue. It was the Senate contingent that pushed for the parliamentary form of government, and we agreed that we will just raise it in the Supreme Court and leave it to the Supreme Court to decide if a parliamentary form of government is constitutional or not. But until that decision comes, we have to support the implementation of the Bangsamoro Organic Law, and I hope the elections of the Bangsamoro Parliament will not be obstructed because of late legislation from the region.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, honorable Sponsor. Thank you for entertaining my questions.

REP. MATUGAS. Thank you, Your Honor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. COLLANTES. Mr. Speaker, next to interpellate the Sponsor, may we recognize Rep. Sarah Elago.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). We recognize Rep. Sarah Elago.

REP. ELAGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Good evening to the COMELEC family. Just two concerns from this Youth Representation. First, I would like to ask about the use of the new voter registration verification machines. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, how much have we spent on these new machines for the pilot testing of the VRVMs?

REP. MATUGAS. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, the budget is about P900 million.

REP. ELAGO. So P900 million for the pilot testing of the VRVMs.

Mr. Speaker, it must be noted that during the recently concluded 2019 elections, there were reports of the new VRVMs which malfunctioned in several precincts and caused delays in voting, with some precincts opening nearly an hour to as much as three hours late.

Kumusta po ang assessment ng COMELEC pagdating sa paggamit ng VRVMs? Were the results positive?

REP. MATUGAS. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, iyong investigation po doon sa nangyari last election is still ongoing, iyong forensic investigation ng COMELEC doon sa nangyari sa VRVMs, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, kailan po natin maaasahan ang pagtatapos ...

REP. MATUGAS. Within the month of December, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ELAGO. Bago matapos ang taong ito? Mahalaga pong malaman natin kung kumusta ang naging paggamit sa VRVMs o kung naging positibo ba ang resulta nito dahil P900 million ang ginastos po dito ng ating taumbayan.

Pangalawa, Mr. Speaker, sa ating pag-asa sa pagtanggap ng naturang resulta ng pag-aaral ng COMELEC, nais din po nating hikayatin ang Commission on Elections na pag-aralan din ho ang tungkol sa pagboto ng ating mga estudyante sa National Capital Region, partikular ho sa university belt at maging sa university belt ng iba't ibang mga susing siyudad o lungsod sa buong bansa. Ito po ay dahil sa academic calendar shift or doon sa pagbabago po ng academic calendar sa ating mga pamantasan at kolehiyo. Kung noon po, bago mag-shift ang maraming universities and colleges ng kanilang calendar, ang Abril at Mayo ay mga buwan ng bakasyon. Ngayon ho, ang Mayo ay tumatapat na sa final examinations week ng mga estudyante. Kaya po maraming nakapag-ulat sa Representasyon na ito—though karamihan po anecdotal pa lamang, mayroon tayong mga nasusulat na mga report, ngunit gusto rin nating malaman iyong bilang kung ilan ba sa actual iyong hindi nakaboto dahil tumama po iyong mismong eleksiyon sa mga finals week ng mga paaralan na nag-shift na ng kanilang academic calendar. Kaya po isang bagay na kailangang pag-aralan kung nakaapekto ba iyong shift ng academic calendar sa pagboto ng ating mga kabataan, ng mga iskolar ng bayan, mga estudyante sa mga university belts. Pangalawa, kung ito man ay nakaapekto, kailangan din po nating pag-aralan kung paano ba makapagbibigay o makapag-i-institute po tayo ng mekanismo para ma-ensure na sila rin ay makaboboto. Maaari po ba nating mahingi ang komento o pagtingin dito ng ating distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MATUGAS. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, nag-agree po ang COMELEC doon sa punto mo na marami ang hindi nakaboto dahil nga ng klase, may exam, kaya lang wala pa silang datos noon; inalam pa nila ngayon. Tapos, nag-agree rin sila na dapat pag-aralan iyong schedule dahil nag-shift na nga iyong academic year natin; hindi na bakasyon iyong Mayo ngayon, may klase na at may exam. So, pumapayag po ang COMELEC na pag-aralan iyon para mabigyan din ng chance iyong mga estudyante na makaboto, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ELAGO. That is all from this Youth Representation, Mr. Speaker.

Maraming salamat po sa COMELEC at reminder din po sa lahat, hanggang September 30, bukas po ang ating voters' registration. Kaya kung hindi pa nagpaparehistro, magparehistro na po tayo.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

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

REP. COLLANTES. Mr. Speaker, next to interpellate the Sponsor, may we recognize Rep. Stella Luz A. Quimbo from the Second District of Marikina City.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Stella Quimbo is hereby recognized.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Speaker, there being no other member of the Minority who has questions for the COMELEC, I move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on their proposed budget.

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

REP. COLLANTES. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in their motion and move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Commission on Elections.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). There is a joint motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Commission on Elections.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Commission on Elections is hereby terminated. Congratulations. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. COLLANTES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session to allow our guests and their technical staff to vacate the floor and allow the guests and the technical staff of the next agency to settle down.

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

It was 6:48 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:51 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

METRO MANILA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed with the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Metro Manila Development Authority.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, to sponsor the proposed budget of the Metro Manila Development Authority, I move that we recognize Rep. Alfred Vargas, the Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, to answer questions, if any.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Alfred Vargas is hereby recognized.

REP. VARGAS. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I have the honor of defending the budget of Metro Manila Development Authority in the amount of P4,106,784,000 for the year 2020.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of our guests who are in the plenary. We have with us here: Chairman, General Danilo Delapuz Lim; Deputy Chairman, Usec. Frisco San Juan Jr.; General Manager, Usec. Jose Arturo Garcia Jr.; AGM for Finance, Asec. Romando Artes; and the rest of the officials of the MMDA family, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). May the MMDA family headed by General Danny Lim please rise. Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Bayani F. Fernando of Marikina City to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the MMDA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The former MMDA Chair and now Rep. Bayani Fernando is hereby recognized.

REP. FERNANDO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Distinguished Sponsor, good afternoon.

This is the agency closest to my heart. So, do not worry; this is going to be very short, and there is nothing to fear.

Will the Gentleman entertain some interpellations from this Representation?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, this Representation would gladly entertain questions from the honorable Gentleman, former MMDA Chair and now Representative from Marikina.

REP. FERNANDO. Mr. Speaker, am I correct that the MMDA is directly under the supervision of the President, under the Office of the President?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, yes, Your Honor.

REP. FERNANDO. And to refresh our colleagues here, in summary, what are the services of the MMDA?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the services of the MMDA are the following: preparation of medium- and long-term plans; evaluation and packaging projects; investment programming; coordination, monitoring and project implementation; transport and traffic management; solid waste disposal and management; urban renewal, zoning and land-use planning and shelter services; flood control and sewerage management; health and sanitation; urban protection and pollution control; and public safety and preparedness for preventive or rescue operations, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. FERNANDO. Meaning, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, the mandate and function of the MMDA is that broad, and it requires substantial funding for it to dutifully discharge its functions. Am I correct?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, it is that enormous.

REP. FERNANDO. How much then was the appropriation approved by Congress in the Fiscal Year of 2018?

REP. VARGAS. In 2018, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, it was P3.36 billion.

REP. FERNANDO. And of this amount, how much comes from the IRA for cities and municipalities?

REP. VARGAS. From this amount, internal revenue allotment was P411 million.

REP. FERNANDO. Were you able to disburse this fund for 2018? In terms of percentage, how much is your rate of fund utilization?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker. There was 100 percent utilization.

REP. FERNANDO. And how much is your appropriation for the current year, Fiscal Year 2019?

REP. VARGAS. For this year, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, Year 2019, it is P3,666,953,000, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FERNANDO. It is practically just a few thousands more than that of the previous year. Were you able to utilize these funds?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. FERNANDO. How much is your proposed budget in the NEP of 2020?

REP. VARGAS. The amount that we have from the National Expenditure Program for 2020 is P4,101,907,000, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FERNANDO. And how much was your original proposal to DBM?

REP. VARGAS. The original proposal to the DBM for this was P11,716,000,000.

REP. FERNANDO. That is a far cry—anyway, considering the previously mentioned services or functions, do you think it is sufficient enough, so that you will be able to effectively and efficiently deliver the services expected of your agency?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, considering the enormity of the services provided by the MMDA, its functions and its responsibilities, the proposed budget for this, for Fiscal Year 2020, is definitely not enough and we could also definitely use more help from the government.

REP. FERNANDO. What could be the reason of the DBM on the slash of the budget of the agency?

REP. VARGAS. Well, to be honest, Mr. Speaker, and Your Honor, the budget was increased by 22 percent from last year, but indeed, we still need more. The MMDA still needs more funding for its projects.

REP. FERNANDO. I can believe that, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. I was the Chairman of this

agency before and I know the huge tasks it has to perform, and in performing these tasks—especially, confronting the current traffic crisis and the current flooding in Metro Manila—it is just proper that this august Body reasonably allocate appropriate funding if we want this agency to be effective. Am I correct, Mr. Speaker?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Congress has the power of the purse and we could do so accordingly.

REP. FERNANDO. I therefore move, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, that we increase the budget of the MMDA for Fiscal Year 2020. Where do we get this fund, this increase, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor? The MMDA in its Charter is under the Office of the President, then being under the Office of the President, it is therefore, reasonable to move some funds from the Office of the President to this impoverished and battered Agency.

Mr. Speaker, with this manna from heaven, I am sure you will be happy and with a prayer to relieve you of so much burden now. With this optimism, I expect your support to this amendment to the budget which I shall, at the proper time, put forth. In the proper time, I would like to manifest that this will form part of the institutional amendment for consideration of the august Chamber.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and distinguished Sponsor. (*Applause*)

REP. VARGAS. Thank you.

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

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, the next Member of the House who wishes to interpellate the Sponsor is the Representative from the ACT TEACHERS Party-List. I move that we recognize Rep. France L. Castro for her interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. France Castro of ACT TEACHERS Party-List is hereby recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Iyong atin po bang kagalang-galang na Sponsor ay puwedeng maglinaw ng ilang mga issue sa MMDA na may kaugnayan sa budget?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, akin pong ikinagagalak na linawin ang mga issue po na inyong tatanungin tungkol po sa MMDA. Maraming salamat po.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, ang MMDA po, sa pamamagitan ng kanyang Regional Development Council Head na si General Danilo D. Lim, ay naatasang maging head po ng National Capital Region Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict. Totoo po ba ito, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor?

REP. VARGAS. No, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Puwede po bang mag-elaborate ang ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor dahil nakalagay dito sa report that the Metro Manila Regional Development Council or RDC and the Regional Peace and Order Council formally created the NCR Task Force ELCAC at ang maghe-head daw po rito, ang nakalagay sa report, ay ang MMDA.

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, it is true that the MMDA Chairman is the Chair of the Regional Development Council. That is correct and the Chairman of the MMDA is also a member of the RPOC, just a member. Ang participation lang po ng MMDA dito is about poverty alleviation in NCR, kasama po iyong 16 cities and one municipality, the principle is that insurgency can be solved by solving poverty.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, malinaw po, Mr. Speaker, na ang MMDA through its Chairman ay kabilang po o miyembro nitong National Capital Region Task Force. Ang role nito ay magbigay ng serbisyo to alleviate poverty. Mr. Speaker, mukhang hindi po katanggap-tanggap sa akin iyong answers na ito. Puwede po bang mag-submit ang MMDA ng dokumento na may kaugnayan dito sa role ng MMDA.? Iyong mga joint issuances, agreements, MOUs kung mayroon, resolutions, na kung saan ang makikita po rito nang malinaw iyong role ng MMDA, Mr. Sponsor, G. Isponsor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, MMDA will submit all the documents that the Representative requested.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Puwede rin po bang malaman, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, kung mayroon po bang budget na inilaan kaugnay nitong role ng MMDA dito sa council na ito, ang Regional Development Council?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, wala pong ganyang budget.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

Ang next question ko po, Mr. Speaker, ay puwede po bang i-point out ng ating kagalang-galang na

Sponsor, mula doon sa probisyon ng RA 7924, na kung saan na-create iyong mga powers ng MMDA. Mayroon po ba ritong nakalagay, sa mga powers ng MMDA, na support role sa National Task Force?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, under the scope of services in the MMDA charter, the number one item is development planning ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. So, alin po ba?

REP. VARGAS. ... which covers the poverty alleviation function under the Regional Development Council because the MMDA Chair is only tasked to take care of the Regional Development Plan. So, it is the planning function.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor. Mukhang doon po sa sinasabi nating function or iyong limited powers ng MMDA, kung titingnan po natin doon sa RA 7924, wala po rito iyong power ng MMDA for poverty alleviation. Kung itutuloy ko lang po, Mr. Speaker, the powers were limited to the formulation, coordination, regulation, implementation, preparation, management, monitoring, setting of policies, installation of a system, and administration. So, ibig sabihin ba nito, dahil binanggit natin iyong poverty alleviation, ay may power din ang MMDA to deliver social services to the poor? Kabilang po ba ito sa powers ng ating MMDA, Mr. Sponsor, G. Ispiker?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I am referring to the Regional Development Council, and the Regional Development Council is an inter-agency effort. What the MMDA is tasked to do or the responsibility of this authority, the MMDA, is only with regard to the Regional Development Plan which is strongly embedded in its Charter, Republic Act No. 7924.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Romero relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Ferdinand L. Hernandez.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Malinaw po, Mr. Speaker, na hindi kabilang dito sa mga powers ng MMDA iyong mag-ensure ng direct delivery of social services sa mga mahihirap. Ito lang ay itinalagang power mula sa NCRTF-ELCAC. Malinaw po, Mr. Speaker, na hindi ito kabilang doon sa power niya.

Ang tanong ko po, Mr. Speaker, iyon bang civilian authority dito sa Metro Manila ay not functioning at inatasan itong MMDA na ito na mag-deliver ng services sa mga mahihirap? Useless ba iyong ating mga LGU dito sa Metro Manila? Can they not be trusted to deliver services na ibinibigay pa ito sa MMDA? So, inutil na po ba iyong ating mga LGU sa Metro Manila

para ang MMDA ay maatasan na mag-ensure ng direct delivery of social services to the poor, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, again, the MMDA's participation in the Regional Development Council is only limited in its regional development planning and coordination among the LGUs, and in the coordination of their programs and projects.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Coordination, pero malinaw po, Mr. Speaker, na nakalagay po rito sa itinalagang function ng MMDA, sa NCRTF-ELCAC, na magbibigay sila ng delivery of services.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, gusto ko lang sabihin na iyong ating mga LGU sa ngayon ay sa tingin naman natin ay nagpa-function sa Metro Manila, at iyong pagpapa-deliver ng social services na inaatas ng NTF-ELCAC ay sumosobra po yata ito doon sa itinalaga ng batas kaugnay noong powers ng MMDA. So, Mr. Speaker, baka dapat na ma-review itong powers na ito ng MMDA, kasi ultimo nga ang traffic ay hindi pa natin ma-solve-solve dito sa Metro Manila.

Ang worry din po ng Kinatawang ito, Mr. Speaker, dahil po sa ganitong function, iyong mga socioeconomic issues na idinudulog po ng ating mga mamamayan through the LGUs—iba-iba pa po iyang mga socioeconomic reforms na gusto ng ating mamamayan dito sa Metro Manila—ay mapagkamalan po ito na bawal sa ating batas. Ang mga basic rights pong ito ay pinapahintulutang idulog sa ating mga LGU.

Sana po, Mr. Speaker, ay ma-review ng MMDA iyong kanilang function and, at the same time po, tingnan ang talagang role ng MMDA dito, lalong-lalo na po doon sa pagpapaunlad po natin sa Metro Manila in terms of the basic functions and powers ng MMDA.

REP. VARGAS. Duly noted, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

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

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Representative of the GABRIELA Party-List, Rep. Arlene D. Brosas, for her interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Rep. Arlene D. Brosas is hereby recognized.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Kagalang-galang na Sponsor, maaari po bang magbigay ng ilan lamang na katanungan?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, bilang inyong kaibigan, ikinagalak kong sumagot sa inyong mga katanungan.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, G. Isponsor.

Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, araw-araw pa rin ang penitensiya ng mga commuter natin sa Metro Manila dahil sa papalalang problema sa traffic. Kung dati, “bawal tumawid nakamamatay,” ngayon, kapag naipit sa traffic, nakamamatay na rin. Ayon mismo kay MMDA Spokesperson, Celine Pialago, more than 22,000 vehicles ang nadagdag sa average daily EDSA traffic. Tama po ba iyon, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, almost 1,000 vehicles a day in Metro Manila po ang nadadagdag.

REP. BROSAS. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, kung 22,000 po ang binibilang natin, this means that everyday around 405,882 vehicles are plying EDSA from an average of 383,828 vehicles last year. Of this figure, 255,732 are private vehicles representing 63 percent of the total daily EDSA traffic volume.

Ngayon pong nalalapit na ang Christmas break, the traffic volume is expected to get worse. Kapansin-pansin na despite these figures, public vehicles pa rin ang pinupuntirya ng MMDA. Nariyan na ang unang ipinanukalang Provincial Bus Ban na pansamantalang pinatigil ng korte. Nariyan ang pagpapatupad ng Yellow Lane Policy na sa halip na ibsan ang traffic ay lumala pa. Libo-libo ang higit na naperwisyo dahil dito. Has the MMDA even considered introducing added regulations to private vehicles instead? Bakit laging ang mga karaniwang mananakay ang dapat na magdusa sa mga traffic management policies na ito, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, first of all, tama po iyong mga numero ninyo na binanggit at hindi po talaga madaling i-solve itong traffic na ito, and even the MMDA, sa amin pong pre-plenary kahapon, ay umaamin din naman po na hindi po kaya nang mag-isa ng MMDA. Dapat lahat po ay magtutulungan kasama na iyong private sector, and to answer your questions tungkol po doon sa mga buses, ito po ay isang matter na nasa korte na po and the MMDA will let the courts decide. Kung anuman po ang sabihin na nararapat gawin ay siguradong susundin po ng MMDA.

Iyon naman pong Yellow Lane, matagal na po iyang existing policy na ipinapatupad, pero doon po sa inyong sinabi kanina kung open po ba sa ibang mga solusyon, sa ibang mga suggestions ang MMDA, ang sagot po diyan ay “Yes.” At doon po sa tanong po ninyo tungkol po naman sa mga private vehicles, kung open

po ba na iyon naman po iyong i-regulate, ang sagot po diyan ay “Yes” din.

Marami pong mga suggestions and the MMDA has assured us that lahat po ng mga ideas para po sa mga sustainable solutions sa ating mga problema, lalong-lalo na sa traffic ay idadaan sa isang participatory at very consultative manner, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Hernandez relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Raneo “Ranie” E. Abu.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, iyong usapin po ng added regulations to private vehicles, kasi iyon po particularly iyong tanong. Ano na po iyong nagawa ng MMDA dito? Earlier this month, the MMDA encouraged the public to pitch in ideas backed by research on how to solve the congestion of EDSA. Hindi po ba trabaho ito ng MMDA, ang pag-aralan ang mga solusyon at patakaran na lulutas sa trapik? At ang particular question po kanina, uulitin ko ulit, mayroon bang regulation na ginawa sa private vehicles ang Ahensya, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, iyon pong high occupancy vehicle or popularly known as the carpooling system, kaso nga lang po ipinatigil din po ito ng Senado. Ngayon, iyong tungkol po doon sa police power na inyo pong sinasabi, wala pong police power ang MMDA at nagpapatupad lang po ito ng mga polisiya na inaprubahan doon po sa Metro Manila Council sa 16 cities of NCR and the one municipality.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, ibig sabihin, carpooling lang ang ibinigay for the private vehicles. Wala po ba tayong ibang programa, wala po ba tayong ibang approaches, wala po ba tayong researches ngayon na iniisip para diyan sa regulation ng private vehicles, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, mayroon pong mga bagay na under DOTr na nag-a-address po diyan sa issue na iyan, pero halimbawa, mayroon po ngayong ipinanukalang “no garage, no car policy,” nasa Senate na po iyan—through legislation po iyan, number coding at saka iyon pong limitation ng pagbili ng mga bagong sasakyan ay hindi na po iyan under ng MMDA.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, mayroon po bang research budget ang Ahensya at magkano po ba ito?

REP. VARGAS. Let me check, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, kung mayroon po. Mayroon pong budget na funded by JICA, ongoing po itong reasearch.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, magkano po ang budget for the research nitong 2020?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, it is a grant amounting to P150 million.

REP. BROSAS. P150 million po ang budget natin para i-research kung paano natin...

REP. VARGAS. Grant po iyan from JICA.

REP. BROSAS. Grant from China?

REP. VARGAS. From Japan.

REP. BROSAS. Specifically for all, para po sa lahat, hindi lang sa NCR traffic?

REP. VARGAS. For NCR.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, kaya po natin itinatanong kasi iyong pera po na iyan ay gagamitin para makapag-research tayo.

Mayroon po ba ang MMDA na kinonsider na studies and reports published by the UP National Center for Transportation Studies? Have these studies been taken into account by the MMDA in crafting solutions to our traffic problems? Mayroon po ba kayong mga kinausap at pinag-aralan?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, according to MMDA, kasama po iyan sa pinag-aaralan.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, nakapag-usap na po ba kayo ng UP National Center for Transportation Studies?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

Actually, they have representation po sa team na iyan, so they are part of the team.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, maaari bang malaman kung ano ang nilalaman ng ilan sa mga pag-uusapan ninyo, if you can divulge it, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the identification of traffic bottlenecks for MMDA and LGUs, bale 271 total po iyong considered identified na potential bottleneck and it was not based on uniform selection criteria, but using scientific approach, the CPT and JPT. We will still study the detailed situation of these bottlenecks based on the results of the second questionnaire survey and traffic data. Kasama po iyan. Kasama na po dito iyong paggawa ng software at pag-consider sa travel time using Waze data, traffic

volume, at marami pa pong iba. Very scientific po ito, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, so you are partnering with them. May iba pa po bang research agencies na pina-partner-an ninyo ngayon kaugnay sa studies on traffic management?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the NCTS and the Japanese consultants and experts.

REP. BROSAS. Japanese consultants, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

Binabayaran ninyo po ba ang mga consultants na ito, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, everything is well taken care of here because the P150 million is a grant from Japan or JICA.

REP. BROSAS. So, you have a report, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor. Siguro iyong pa-update na lang po ...

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. ... kung ano iyong results nito.

REP. VARGAS. Most definitely, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ginagawa po ito ng MMDA in a very scientific way based on empirical data.

REP. BROSAS. Yes. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, ang mga kababayan po natin ay naghihintay ng agarang solusyon. Hindi po iyong matagal. Hindi po iyong, as in, sobra-sobrang umabot na ng taon, sabi nga natin, kasi it involves also the lives of the people. Alam ninyo po iyon. Hindi ba, kapag nata-traffic, kahit ang mga ambulansya, sabi nga sa isang artikulo ay namamatay iyong mga kababayan natin kapag hindi nakararating agad sa ospital dahil hindi kaagad nalulunasan ang kanilang mga sakit at kung anu-ano pa.

Matindi po iyong toll sa atin ng traffic, ano po, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, kaya ito po talaga kumbaga ay immediate. Immediate na solusyon ang kailangan, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I share your sentiment, and rest assured na lahat naman po tayo, even the Legislative branch, at hindi lang po iyong Executive branch ang naghahanap ng solusyon sa pinakamalaking problema natin sa traffic dahil napakalaki po ng epekto nito.

Ang kailangan po nito ay short-term, medium-term and long-term solutions, at siguro, sa sobrang laki po, because of the enormity of this challenge or problem, siguro po ay talagang hindi po talaga ganoong kadali at

basta-basta ito mabibigyan ng lunas, pero nandito na po iyong mga research at nandito na po iyong planning.

REP. BROSAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, ang gusto nga po natin ay aksyon, iyong nakikita nating talagang lumuluwag iyong EDSA at iyong nakikita talaga nating nakakapagbiyahe tayo, iyon po.

My next point, on the deployment of the PNP-HPG's "girlfriend material." Ito po iyong news noong nakaraan. In a supposed bid to intimidate erring drivers and traffic violators, the PNP-Highway Patrol Group deployed its "ladies' strike force" consisting of 23 good-looking female police officers. Ayon mismo kay MMDA Traffic Czar Edison Nebrija, "girlfriend material" ang mga nasabing HPG officers at pampagaan daw umano sila ng stressful na problema sa traffic.

G. Isponsor, Mr. Speaker, is this how the MMDA views women and traffic management? May kinalaman ba talaga ang deployment ng female officers sa pagpapagaan ng trapiko, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ito pong binabanggit po ninyo ay hindi po iyan under ng MMDA. Under po iyan ng HPG, sa PNP po iyan.

REP. BROSAS. So, sa PNP-HPG, hindi po under sa MMDA iyan, but you have the same program, mayroon po kayong relation.

REP. VARGAS. Coordination lang po ang main relationship po.

REP. BROSAS. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sinasabi po namin ito kasi sinabi ni traffic czar Nebrija na bahagi ito ng gender equality program. Ngayon, ang kinukwestiyon po natin ay seryoso ba si Mr. Nebrija dito? Pero, of course, PNP Highway Patrol Group po sila, so wala sila dito. Hindi nila malalaman itong isyu na ito.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, this Representation from GABRIELA Women's Party strongly objects to the unabashed display of sexism by the PNP-HPG in their ill-conceived bid to more effectively apprehend traffic violators. Sa pagde-deploy ng sinasabing "ladies' strike force," ikinakahon ang papel ng mga kababaihan bilang pambitag sa kanilang kabiguang solusyonan ang problema sa traffic sa Metro Manila.

Hindi bahagi ng pagiging mapanlikha ang pagiging sexist at pag-objectify sa mga kababaihan. Sana po, kahit ang MMDA will listen to this kasi ito naman po ay usapin ng policy. I am sure, kayo din po ay apektado nito. Hindi natin gusto na ang mga kababaihan natin ay ginagawang objects—ino-objectify. The traffic problem is too serious to even indulge in sexism and experimental solutions, and as recent events show,

getting stuck in EDSA is fatal. Kada araw nga po, humigit kumulang apat na oras ang nawawala sa mga manggagawa na bugbog na sa trabaho. Kung susumahin ito, halos 1,000 oras ang nawawala kada taon sa mga manggagawa na dapat sana ay panahon para sa pamilya at sa pahinga.

More than just increasing the funds for effective traffic management, it is about time that the agency revamps its solutions and framework, and prioritizes the welfare of ordinary commuters.

Resolbahin po natin iyong problema sa traffic mula sa punto de bista ng mga ordinaryong mananakay, hindi sa punto de bista ng may kakayahang mag-ari ng pribadong sasakyan. Alam po natin iyan. Ang problema natin ay iyong effective at efficient na public transportation system. Alam din po iyan ng ibang mga bansa na mayroong effective public transportation system. Ang problema po ay kapag matindi ang korapsyon at ang nangyayari ay ang nakokorap pa ay ang sa usapin ng mga public transport mismo natin. Mahirap po talaga iyon. Mahirap talagang masolusyonan kung ang korapsyon ay nandoon, tapos alam ninyo naman po iyong usapin ng Dalian train. I was asking about this doon sa DOTr noong nakaraan. Hindi na po sa inyo iyon, alam ko po iyon, hindi sa inyo iyon, pero public transportation system, at iyon po iyong kailangan natin. Iyong mga solusyon ay palliative po iyon, iyong magkaroon tayo ng yellow lane, magkaroon tayo ng ganito, pero hindi nito masosolusyonan ang traffic. Alam po natin iyon, at ang kalakhan po dito sa Metro Manila ay sasakay iyon ng train, sasakay iyon ng bus, at sasakay iyon ng mga pampublikong sasakyan at doon po tayo mag-i-improve. Iyon po iyong sinasabi ng Kinatawan na ito. Anyway, si Chi Nebrija po ay nasa inyo, si Nebrija, he is here, but he is in the MMDA. So, siya po iyong nagbigay noong mga remarks na iyon.

Ang ibig sabihin, it does not only involve the PNP-HPG, but it also involves the MMDA iyong kaugnay po sa mga kababaihan.

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the MMDA as an institution categorically states that it is not its position to practice discrimination or mention any sexist remarks. We believe it was mentioned in his own personal Facebook account but nevertheless, MMDA will always uphold the law, protect the rights of the Filipino and definitely, will not tolerate discrimination and any sexist remarks.

REP. BROSAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, dapat po maklaro natin iyan, kasi alam naman po ninyo iyong policies lalo na kung nanggagaling ito sa matataas na posisyon mula sa inyo. Be very careful po sa pagsasabi ng mga salita. Alam ninyo po, nagbabantay kami lagi doon e, lalo na sa usapin ng mga karapatan ng mga kababaihan. Paano po tayo magtatanggol ng karapatan

ng mga kababayan kung hindi natin marerespeto ang karapatan ng mga kababaihan?

Magsama-sama po tayong tulungang ma-educate or kahit papaano ay maging aware iyong mga tao kaugnay dito na huwag maging sexist, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, opo, binibigyan po ng malaking halaga ng MMDA ang inyong issue na binanggit ngayon.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Mr. Sponsor, on to my next point po, this is about the MMDA road clearing operations. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. The Metro Manila Development Authority has been conducting regular clearing operations at 17 Metro Manila local government units to ensure that all roads will be free from obstruction within the time frame of the Department of the Interior and Local Government or DILG.

The DILG ordered to reclaim the roads within 60 days in order to fast-track clearing of all roads. The clearing operations were deemed successful but at the expense of the vendors' livelihood, iyong mga maliliit po nating manininda.

On July 30, the MMDA conducted clearing operations in Baclaran. In a video which circulated online, a female vendor was telling members of the Metro Manila Development Authority or the MMDA of their plight. Pinalayas sila sa puwesto nila nang walang abiso. Mayroon bang existing relocation plan ang MMDA para sa mga vendors na tinamaan ng clearing operations? Ilang vendors na po ang successfully na-relocate, kung mayroon?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I think the question can be best answered by the LGUs involved because the main participation of the MMDA here in this inter-agency efforts of clearing is to assist only and to coordinate.

REP. BROSAS. So, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, the MMDA is not in the loop in the whole plan. It should be a comprehensive plan, of course, hindi ba, kasi bago ka naman magtatanggal ng mga vendors, kailangang coordinated naman nang buo hindi ba? Ang LGU, DILG, at MMDA, so hindi pwedeng hindi alam ng MMDA kung saan ipupuwesto ang ating mga vendors na mawawalan ng kabuhayan.

Kasi para sa kanila, ang isang araw na hindi ka makakapagbenta ay hindi iyon pagkain ng buong pamilya, kaya po natin itinatanong iyon, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, hindi po maaaring tapakan—wala pong kapangyarihan na

matapakan po ang karapatan at responsibilidad ng LGU.

Once again, ang MMDA po ay nandidiyan para i-coordinate and lahat po ng LGUs sa NCR at mag-assist sa mga utos ng gobyerno and to make sure na okay ang planning at saka iyong management po ng mga programa.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, saang mga lugar nakapag-conduct ng clearing operations ang MMDA?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, sa buong Metro Manila po.

REP. BROSAS. Paano masasabi na naabot na ang full compliance ng DILG order? Nag-declare na ...

REP. VARGAS. Nakabase po ...

REP. BROSAS. ... ba siya, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor?

REP. VARGAS. Nakabase po iyan sa report na nanggagaling po sa LGU mismo, na sina-submit nila sa DILG, tapos iyong DILG po ang nag-a-assess.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, mayroon kayong kopya?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, wala pong kopya ang MMDA ngayon, but as the Sponsor of the DILG, na na-approve naman po, gagawa po ako ng paraan para makakuha po ...

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

REP. VARGAS. ... ng report na iyan, opo.

REP. BROSAS. May we have that copy of the report kung lumabas na, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

REP. VARGAS. I will produce that in my capacity po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, iyong mga maliliit po nating vendors, sila ay tatanggalan natin ng karapatan kapag sila ay nawalan ng kabuhayan o matatanggalan ng kabuhayan. We cannot continue to set aside fellow human beings as eyesores and obstructions. Hindi lamang po façade iyong tinitingnan natin. Kaya naman sila napasok sa ganyang klase ng gawain ay dahil sa kahirapan o kawalan ng job opportunities para sa mga mahihirap.

For as long as sufficient at decent ang mga jobs na mayroon tayo, hangga't hindi po naaabot ng mga ordinaryong Pilipino ang sufficient and decent jobs, mananatili po na magkakaroon ng mga vendors, and they will always fill in our thoroughfares to make a living. Kaya po dapat solusyonan iyong pinakaugat noong problema natin kung bakit nagkakaroon ng mga ganitong mga vendors at mahihirap. At sana po, ang maging stance ng MMDA, DILG, at ng LGU dito ay hindi anti-poor kundi sosolusyonan ang problema ng mga mahihirap at maralita natin.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Iyon lang po. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

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

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, the next Member of the House to interpellate the Sponsor is the Minority Leader, Rep. Bienvenido M. Abante Jr. I move that we recognize him, Your Honor, for his interpellation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Gentleman from the Sixth District of Manila, honorable Minority Leader Bienvenido M. Abante Jr., is recognized for his interpellation or manifestation.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Will the debonair, good-looking Congressman from Quezon City yield to several clarificatory questions?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, this Representation would gladly answer questions from our honorable, very dashing and most respected Minority Leader Benny Abante from the city of Manila.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you.

Well, of course, the most important mandate of the MMDA is to solve the traffic problem of Metro Manila. Am I right?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, part of the scope of the services of MMDA is transport and traffic management. That is correct.

REP. ABANTE. And because of that, they are being attacked, harassed, complimented, and criticized, left and right, by a good number of people. Am I right?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ABANTE. Na kahit na anumang gawin mo, maaaring ito ay mabuti sa iba pero kapag pinag-usapan naman ng iba ay masama sila. Kaya nga po, minsan ay naiintindihan ko na hindi na ho malaman ng MMDA

ang kanilang gagawin, you know, and the people that they should please. Ika nga, we cannot actually please everybody. But even if we cannot please everybody, everyone must always obey the law because the mandate of the MMDA is to implement the law. Am I right?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ABANTE. It is not to please some groups of people. It is not to please powerful people, but it is always to implement the law of the land.

REP. VARGAS. That is correct, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Of course, before we give order to the traffic problem in Metro Manila, we should first of all give order to the organization itself. If there is laxity of order in the organization, then it follows that it would be very difficult to give order to the mandate that they have been given. Am I right, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. VARGAS. That is correct, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ABANTE. Is it true that P7.61 billion was cut from the MMDA's proposed budget for 2020, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, to be exact, it is P7,610,190,000.

REP. ABANTE. Therefore, about P7.61 billion was cut or slashed, ano po?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Of course, it is the duty of the DBM whether to increase or slash the budget. Am I right?

REP. VARGAS. Yes.

REP. ABANTE. But is the DBM aware that this budget cut will mean a slash in the P697 million budget intended for salary increases of the MMDA traffic enforcers?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Alright. How many employees do the MMDA have at the present time?

REP. VARGAS. A total, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, of around 8,000.

REP. ABANTE. How many of them are traffic enforcers?

REP. VARGAS. Three thousand, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ABANTE. How many of them occupy plantilla positions?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, around 20 to 25 percent, Your Honor.

REP. ABANTE. Around 20 to 25 percent occupy plantilla positions?

REP. VARGAS. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. My goodness, how can you be able to perform your duty in waste management, in traffic enforcement when you cannot even give proper salaries to your employees, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, that is the sad truth that the Authority has been facing for the past several years.

REP. ABANTE. If you said that only 20 to 25 percent have plantilla positions, therefore, majority of the employees of MMDA, particularly traffic enforcers and those who are involved in garbage management are not permanent?

REP. VARGAS. That is correct, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Therefore, they do not have any security of tenure?

REP. VARGAS. That is correct, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Wala po silang benefit?

REP. VARGAS. That is correct.

REP. ABANTE. Wala po silang GSIS?

REP. VARGAS. That is correct, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Ang kanila lamang ay PhilHealth?

REP. VARGAS. Wala pa rin po.

REP. ABANTE. Pati PhilHealth wala pa rin?

REP. VARGAS. PhilHealth po mayroon, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ABANTE. PhilHealth mayroon, pero wala na po iyong ibang mga dapat na ibinibigay kapag mayroon kang plantilla position?

REP. VARGAS. Wala po, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Aba, ngayon, mauunawaan po natin kung bakit iyong mga traffic enforcers resort to corruption, ano po.

REP. VARGAS. Puwede po nating sabihin iyan na one of the reasons.

REP. ABANTE. Magkano po ba ang pinakamalaking suweldo ng isang empleyado ng MMDA with a plantilla position?

REP. VARGAS. Let me answer muna, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the job order ranges from P8,000 to P9,000.

REP. ABANTE. Hindi po, iyong pinakamataas na suweldo na may plantilla position. For example ang isang head na may plantilla position. Ang head po ba ng traffic enforcers na mayroong plantilla position, magkano po ang suweldo niya?

REP. VARGAS. Iyong mga mataas na plantilla position, halimbawa ang division chief, around P60,000 to P70,000 po.

REP. ABANTE. Sixty to seventy thousand. Kung sila po ay sumusuweldo ng P60,000 to P70,000, wala na po silang dapat na gawin pang anumang kalokohan sapagkat maganda na ang kanilang mga tinatanggap, ano po?

REP. VARGAS. Tama po.

REP. ABANTE. Nabanggit po ninyo, you mentioned a while ago that the lowest, the lowest salary or income a traffic enforcer because he is on a job order scheme is only about P9,000.

REP. VARGAS. That is correct, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Aba, talagang mate-tempt po at mauwi sa korapsyon iyan. Talaga pong kapag nanghuli iyan ng traffic violation at maglabas ng kaunting pera iyong tao ay talagang tatanggapin nila sapagkat napakaliit ng kanilang suweldo. Magkano po ang take-home pay ng taong tumatanggap ng P9,000?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, we will give a round figure, around P8,000 po ang take-home pay.

REP. ABANTE. Mga P8,000 ang take-home pay. If you are looking at a traffic enforcer that has a wife and and three children, hindi po kasya ang P8,000, ano po?

REP. VARGAS. Tama po iyon.

REP. ABANTE. Mag-iisip po siya ng paraan para madagdagan ang kanyang income, at ang tanging paraan para madagdagan ang kanyang income ay mangotong, ano po?

REP. VARGAS. Mayroon pong mga ganyang mga nanghuhuli.

REP. ABANTE. I really commend and even appreciate ang ibang MMDA traffic enforcers na kahit maliit ang kanilang suweldo ay hindi po nagiging corrupt.

REP. VARGAS. The MMDA, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, is proud to say na mayroon pa rin, marami pa pong mga MMDA employees and enforcers natin na umiiral pa rin ang kanilang pagka-Pilipino, bagama't ang kanilang take-home pay ay hindi po ganoong kalaki,

REP. ABANTE. That is right. Kapag ang nahuli pa nila ang mayroong kapangyarihan, baka barilin pa, suntukin pa o ma-harass pa dahil gagamitan ng kapangyarihan, ano po?

REP. VARGAS. Opo, kawawa po. Tulad noong isang araw, mayroong nasaksak, kawawa naman po.

REP. ABANTE. Minsan po ang ating kinakampihan palagi ay iyong kanilang mga hinuhuli, at hindi natin nakikita ang kaawa-awa at kalunus-lunos na kalagayan ng mahigit kumulang na 4,000 traffic enforcers na napakababa ng kanilang suweldo, ano po?

REP. VARGAS. Opo, tama po.

REP. ABANTE. Ako po ay nagigitla at hindi agad makapagsalita sa kalagayan ng libu-libo nating traffic enforcers na malimit, sila pa ang sinisisi ng mga motorista, ano po?

Siguro, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, it is high time that we should look into this problem very seriously, na kung nais po natin na magkaroon ng talagang magandang implementasyon ng ating traffic problem, our road management and garbage

management, I believe that it is the first duty of the government to provide enough compensation for those who are working in the bureaucracy. Am I right, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, tama po.

REP. ABANTE. Perhaps, as we end this budget deliberations within the week, an amendment should be done immediately to increase the budget of the MMDA for the purpose of adding more income to those employees who are receiving just job orders, perhaps even providing plantilla positions for them.

Narining ko, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, na mayroon po tayong traffic enforcers at sa garbage management na 17 years nang nagtatrabaho sa MMDA na job order pa rin, ano po. Wow! Sana po ay narinig ng lahat ng ating mga Congressmen ngayon. Palagay ko, walang naghihirap na mga Congressmen dito at makikita po nila ang pangangailangan ng ating government workers na karamihan po ay job order employees.

Nais nating tanggalin ang contractualization pero ang pinaka-guilty sa contractualization ay walang iba kundi ang ating pamahalaan. Of course, we know they would like to give decent jobs to everyone, and perhaps the government does not have enough funds to give that decent job, but my goodness, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, it is high time that there ought to be a change in budgeting, particularly sa karamihan po ng ating mga empleyado ng gobyerno, ang MMDA, most of the time. Narinig ko rin po na sa LTO, marami ring job order at sa iba pang mga ahensya ng gobyerno. I think it is high time to put a stop to it sapagkat kaawa-awa po naman ang ating government workers, especially ang mga traffic enforcers natin. Kung nais nating mawala ang maliliit na korapsyon sa ating traffic management, I do believe that our small employees should be given enough income so that they could be able to support their families. Am I right, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. VARGAS. That is correct, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ABANTE. Tapos na po ang aking pagtatanong at sa akin pong pagtatapos, there being no other member of the Minority who wishes to ask any questions, I therefore move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the MMDA, Mr. Speaker. *(Applause)*

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

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, we gladly join the Minority in their motion and respectfully move to

terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Metro Manila Development Authority.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the joint motion from the Minority and the Majority with respect to the budget of the MMDA to terminate the period of interpellation and debate is hereby approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. TAN (A.P.). Mr. Speaker, I move to briefly suspend the session to allow our resource people to vacate the plenary hall. Thank you.

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

It was 7:53 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:56 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4228

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 4228.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we take up the Additional Reference of Business, and request that the Secretary General be directed to read the same.

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

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary General read the House Resolution

on First Reading, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding reference:

RESOLUTION

House Resolution No. 347, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEATH OF HONORABLE JESUS MARINO ‘RENE’ G. ESPINA, A GREAT FILIPINO PUBLIC SERVANT WHO WAS A FORMER SENATOR (1970-1973), GOVERNOR OF THE PROVINCE OF CEBU (1963-1969), SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS, TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM”

By Representatives Cayetano (Alan Peter), Romualdez (Ferdinand), Abante and Garcia (Pablo John)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4466 ON SECOND READING

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 4466, contained in Committee Report No. 10, as reported out by the Committee on Higher and Technical Education.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). 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. 4466, entitled: AN ACT INTEGRATING LABOR EDUCATION INTO THE SOCIAL SCIENCE SUBJECTS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM.

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session.

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

It was 7:58 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:59 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, to sponsor House Bill No. 4466, I move that we recognize the Hon. Allan Benedict S. Reyes from the Third District of Quezon City for his sponsorship speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Hon. Allan Reyes from the Third District of Quezon City is recognized to sponsor House Bill No. 4466, under Committee Report No. 10.

REP. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Explanatory Note of the Bill be considered as the sponsorship speech on the measure.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, we join the honorable Sponsor. I move that the Explanatory Note be considered as the sponsorship speech on the measure.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to interpellate on or speak against the measure, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Committee or individual amendment, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 4466 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 4466 on Second Reading.

As many as are in favor, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 4466 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 4466 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4581 ON SECOND READING

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 4581, contained in Committee Report No. 11, 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. Abu). Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.*

The Secretary General is hereby 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. 4581 entitled: AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO GOLDEN BROADCAST PROFESSIONAL, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8025 ENTITLED "A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE A STATION FOR FM RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING IN THE ISLAND OF MINDANAO AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES", AND EXPANDING ITS COVERAGE TO THE ENTIRE PHILIPPINES.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, to sponsor the Bill, I move that we recognize the Chairman of the Legislative Franchises, Hon. Franz "Chicoy" E. Alvarez.

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

The Chairman of the Legislative Franchises Committee, Representative Alvarez from the First District of Palawan, is recognized to sponsor House Bill No. 4581.

REP. ALVAREZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move that the Explanatory Note of the Bill be considered as the sponsorship speech on the measure.

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

REP. PALMA. We join the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. I

move that the Explanatory Note of the Bill be considered as the sponsorship speech on the measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to interpellate on or speak against the measure, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Committee or individual amendment, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 4581 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 4581 on Second Reading.

As many as are in favor, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 4581 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 4581 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4583
ON SECOND READING

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 4583, contained in Committee Report No. 13, 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. Abu). 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. 4583, entitled: AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO BROADCAST ENTERPRISES AND AFFILIATED MEDIA, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8098 TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize Hon. Franz “Chicoy” E. Alvarez to begin his sponsorship of the measure.

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

The distinguished Chairman of the Committee on Legislative Franchises, Hon. Franz Alvarez, is recognized to sponsor House Bill No. 4583.

REP. ALVAREZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move that the Explanatory Note of the Bill be considered as the sponsorship speech on the measure.

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

REP. PALMA. We join the honorable Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to interpellate on or speak against the measure, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Committee or individual amendment, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 4583 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 4583 on Second Reading.

As many as are in favor, please say *Aye*.

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye.*

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 4583
ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 4583 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4584
ON SECOND READING

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 4584, contained in Committee Report No. 14, 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. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is hereby 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. 4584, entitled: AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO CRUSADERS BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC., UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8091 ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING THE CRUSADERS BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC., A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS WITHIN THE PHILIPPINES".

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, May we recognize Hon. Franz Alvarez for his sponsorship of the measure.

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

The Chairperson of the Committee on Legislative Franchises, Rep. Franz Alvarez, is recognized to begin his sponsorship of the measure.

REP. ALVAREZ (F). Mr. Speaker, may I request that the Explanatory Note of the Bill be considered as the sponsorship speech on the measure.

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

REP. PALMA. We join, Mr. Speaker, the Sponsor and move that the Explanatory Note be considered as the sponsorship speech on the measure.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to interpellate on or speak against the said measure, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Committee or individual amendment, I move that we close the period of amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 4584 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 4584 on Second Reading.

As many as are in favor, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 4584 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 4584 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

OMNIBUS CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL BILLS ON SECOND READING

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move for the omnibus consideration on Second Reading of the following measures:

1. House Bill No. 4436, contained in Committee Report No. 6;
2. House Bill No. 4437, contained in Committee Report No. 7; and
3. House Bill No. 4582, contained in Committee Report No. 12.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Franz "Chicoy" E. Alvarez to sponsor the said measures.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Franz Alvarez from the First District of Palawan is recognized to sponsor House Bills No. 4436, 4437, and 4582.

REP. ALVAREZ (F). Mr. Speaker, may I request

that the Explanatory Notes of the said Bills be entered as the sponsorship speeches on the measures.

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

REP. PALMA. We join the authors, Mr. Speaker, and move that the Explanatory Notes of the respective House Bills be made as their sponsorship speeches.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to interpellate on or speak against the said measures, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Committee or individual amendment, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve the aforesaid measures on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). As many as are in favor of the approval of the bills enumerated in the omnibus motion, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

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

OMNIBUS APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILLS ON SECOND READING

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

House Bills No. 4436, 4437, and 4582 are approved on Second Reading.*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we include as additional coauthors to House Bills No. 4228, 4436, 4437, 4463, 4581, 4582, 4583, 4584, 4466, and 4611 the Members contained in the list to be submitted by the Committee on Rules.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CHANGE OF REFERRAL OF H.B. NO. 4351

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move for the change of referral of House Bill No. 4351, entitled: AN ACT INSTITUTING REFORMS TO FURTHER PROTECT AND DEVELOP MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 81, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “THE 1986 REVISED CHARTER OF THE DEVELOPMENT BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES,” AS AMENDED, from the Committee on Micro, Small Business, and Medium Enterprise Development to the Committee on Banks and Financial Intermediaries.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. John Marvin “Yul Servo” C. Nieto for a manifestation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. John Marvin “Yul Servo” C. Nieto from the Third District of Manila is recognized for his manifestation.

REP. NIETO. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Nais ko lamang pong i-manifest na maging coauthor po dito sa House Bill No. 4611, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the Additional Reference of Business.

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

The Secretary General will please read the Additional Reference of Business.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary General read the Committee Report and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Government Reorganization, the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 21), re H.B. No. 4664, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTING REFORMS IN REAL PROPERTY VALUATION AND ASSESSMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES, REORGANIZING THE BUREAU OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 305, 343, 815, 1616, 1782, 1908, 2085, 2400, 3358, 3368, 3566 and 3668

Sponsors: Representatives Mariño, Salceda and Ungab

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

REP. SUAREZ (D). On behalf of the Majority, Mr. Speaker, I move for the election of the following Members to the various Committees:

The Majority Leader, Rep. David “Jay-Jay” C. Suarez, read the names of the House Members elected to the various Committees, per Journal No. 18, dated September 17, 2019.

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

As Vice Chairperson:

Rep. Anthony Peter "Onyx" D. Crisologo

As members:

Rep. Amihilda J. Sangcopan

Rep. Ma. Bernardita "Ditas" Ramos

Rep. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D.

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND
TECHNICAL EDUCATION

As Vice Chairperson:

Rep. Ann K. Hofer

As members:

Rep. Estrellita B. Suansing

Rep. Amihilda J. Sangcopan

COMMITTEE ON VISAYAS
DEVELOPMENT

As member:

Rep. Florencio G. Noel

COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL
INTERMEDIARIES

As members:

Rep. Enrico A. Pineda

Rep. Henry R. Villarica

Rep. Marisol C. Panotes

Rep. Josefina B. Tallado

Rep. Alan B. Ecleo I

Rep. Gerardo "Gerryboy" J. Espina Jr.

Rep. Jumel Anthony I. Espino

Rep. Jonathan Keith T. Flores

Rep. Nestor B. Fongwan

Rep. Wilton "Tonton" T. Kho

Rep. Jake Vincent Villa

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

As member:

Rep. Amihilda J. Sangcopan

COMMITTEE ON POVERTY
ALLEVIATION

As members:

Rep. Rolando M. Valeriano

Rep. Florencio G. Noel

Rep. Anthony Peter "Onyx" D. Crisologo

Rep. Romulo "Kid" Peña Jr.

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN
DEVELOPMENT

As Vice Chairperson:

Rep. Florida "Rida" P. Robes

As members:

Rep. Allan Benedict S. Reyes

Rep. Rosanna "Ria" Vergara

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND
EMPLOYMENT

As members:

Rep. Alfredo A. Garbin Jr.

Rep. Cheryl P. Deloso-Montalla

Rep. Dahlia A. Loyola

Rep. Manuel Luis "Manny" T. Lopez

Rep. Leonardo L. Babasa Jr.

Rep. Datu Roonie Q. Sinsuat Sr.

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

As members:

Rep. Amihilda J. Sangcopan

Rep. Presley C. De Jesus

Rep. Alfredo A. Garbin Jr.

Rep. Princess Rihan M. Sakaluran

Rep. Christian S. Unabia

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

As Vice Chairperson:

Rep. Hector S. Sanchez

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

As members:

Rep. Michael John R. Duavit

Rep. Carlito S. Marquez

Rep. Ciriaco B. Gato Jr.

Rep. Jumel Anthony I. Espino

Rep. Ria Christina G. Fariñas

Rep. Jonathan Keith T. Flores

Rep. Nestor B. Fongwan

Rep. Wilton "Tonton" T. Kho

Rep. Joseph "Jojo" L. Lara

Rep. Esmael G. Mangudadatu

Rep. Teodorico T. Haresco Jr.

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

As Vice Chairperson:

Rep. Micaela S. Violago

As members:
Rep. Enrico A. Pineda
Rep. Carlos O. Cojuangco

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS
AND HIGHWAYS

As Vice Chairperson:
Rep. Adriano A. Ebcas

As members:
Rep. Tyrone D. Agabas
Rep. Erico Aristotle C. Aumentado
Rep. Elias C. Bulut Jr.
Rep. Carlos O. Cojuangco
Rep. Greg G. Gasataya
Rep. Ciriaco B. Gato Jr.
Rep. Bernardita “Ditas” Ramos
Rep. Carlito S. Marquez
Rep. Manuel T. Sagarbarria
Rep. Marissa Andaya
Rep. Faustino Michael Carlos T. Dy III
Rep. Solomon R. Chungalao
Rep. Genaro M. Alvarez Jr.
Rep. Leonardo L. Babasa Jr.
Rep. Carl Nicolas C. Cari
Rep. Joseph “Jojo” L. Lara
Rep. Ann K. Hofer
Rep. John Marvin “Yul Servo” C. Nieto
Rep. Alan “Aldu” R. Dujali
Rep. Gerardo “Gerryboy” J. Espina Jr.
Rep. Wilton “Tonton” T. Kho
Rep. Jose Enrique “Joet” S. Garcia III
Rep. Datu Roonie Q. Sinsuat Sr.
Rep. Presley C. De Jesus

COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE
AND SECURITY

As members:
Rep. Hector S. Sanchez
Rep. Manuel DG. Cabochan III

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
AND WELFARE

As Vice Chairperson:
Rep. Manuel DG. Cabochan III

As members:
Rep. Hector S. Sanchez
Rep. Leonardo L. Babasa Jr.
Rep. Christian S. Unabia
Rep. Rodolfo B. Albano
Rep. Pablo C. Ortega

COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES

As member:
Rep. Hector S. Sanchez

COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

As Vice Chairpersons:
Rep. Paz C. Radaza
Rep. Michael T. Defensor
Rep. Anna Marie Villaraza-Suarez

As members:
Rep. Resurreccion M. Acop
Rep. Maria Fe R. Abunda
Rep. Ma. Lourdes T. Arroyo
Rep. Naealla Bainto Aguinaldo
Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza
Rep. Manuel Jose “Mannix” M. Dalipe
Rep. Joy Myra S. Tambunting
Rep. Diego “Nonoy” C. Ty
Rep. Janice Z. Salimbangon

COMMITTEE OF INTER-PARLIAMENTARY
RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY

As Vice Chairperson:
Rep. Ann K. Hofer

As members:
Rep. Princess Rihan M. Sakaluran
Rep. Solomon R. Chungalao
Rep. Wilton “Tonton” T. Kho
Rep. Joseph “Jojo” L. Lara
Rep. Esmael G. Mangudadatu
Rep. Datu Roonie Q. Sinsuat Sr.
Rep. Jesus “Bong” C. Suntay
Rep. Samier A. Tan
Rep. Henry R. Villarica
Rep. Marisol C. Panotes
Rep. Josefina B. Tallado
Rep. Rosanna “Ria” Vergara
Rep. Julienne “Jam” L. Baronda

COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

As Vice Chairpersons:
Rep. Leonardo L. Babasa Jr.
Rep. Luis N. Campos Jr.

As members:
Rep. Solomon R. Chungalao
Rep. Arnie B. Fuentesbella
Rep. Greg G. Gasataya
Rep. Dahlia A. Loyola
Rep. Elias C. Bulut Jr.

Rep. Manuel T. Sagarbarria
 Rep. Gerardo P. Valmayor Jr.
 Rep. Michael John R. Duavit
 Rep. Teodorico T. Haresco Jr.
 Rep. Maria Laarni Cayetano
 Rep. Manuel DG. Cabochan III
 Rep. Hector S. Sanchez

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY

As Vice Chairperson:
 Rep. Michael Edgar Y. Aglipay

As members:
 Rep. Wilfrido Mark M. Enverga
 Rep. Dahlia A. Loyola
 Rep. Erico Aristotle C. Aumentado
 Rep. Manuel Jose "Mannix" M. Dalipe
 Rep. John Reynald M. Tiangco
 Rep. Arnie B. Fuentebella
 Rep. Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba
 Rep. Princess Rihan M. Sakaluran
 Rep. Adriano A. Ebcas
 Rep. Presley C. De Jesus
 Rep. Manuel DG. Cabochan III

COMMITTEE ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT

As members:
 Rep. Amihilda J. Sangcopan
 Rep. Micaela S. Violago

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

As Vice Chairperson:
 Rep. Maricel G. Natividad-Nagaño, M.D.

As members:
 Rep. Cyrille "Beng" F. Abueg-Zaldivar
 Rep. Solomon R. Chungalao
 Rep. Arnold "Noli" D. Celeste
 Rep. Estrellita B. Suansing
 Rep. Princess Rihan M. Sakaluran
 Rep. Adriano A. Ebcas
 Rep. Presley C. De Jesus
 Rep. Alberto "Bobby" D. Pacquiao
 Rep. Ann K. Hofer
 Rep. Hector S. Sanchez

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

As Vice Chairperson:
 Rep. Jose Gay G. Padiernos

As members:
 Rep. Alfel M. Bascug

Rep. Luisa Lloren Cuaresma
 Rep. Hector S. Sanchez

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

As Vice Chairperson:
 Rep. Cyrille "Beng" F. Abueg-Zaldivar

As members:
 Rep. Rufus B. Rodriguez
 Rep. Rosanna "Ria" Vergara
 Rep. Alberto "Bobby" D. Pacquiao
 Rep. Julienne "Jam" L. Baronda

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

As Vice Chairperson:
 Rep. Joseph "Jojo" L. Lara

As members:
 Rep. Kristine Singson-Meehan
 Rep. Solomon R. Chungalao
 Rep. Arnie B. Fuentebella
 Rep. Faustino Michael Carlos T. Dy III
 Rep. Ian Paul L. Dy
 Rep. Abdullah D. Dimaporo
 Rep. Dahlia A. Loyola
 Rep. Amihilda J. Sangcopan

COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY

As members:
 Rep. Allan Benedict S. Reyes
 Rep. Leonardo L. Babasa Jr.
 Rep. Christian S. Unabia
 Rep. Jake Vincent Villa

COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

As Vice Chairpersons:
 Rep. Emmarie "Lolypop" Ouano-Dizon
 Rep. Jesus "Bong" C. Suntay

As members:
 Rep. Rodolfo B. Albano
 Rep. Alfredo A. Garbin Jr.
 Rep. Jesus "Bong" C. Suntay
 Rep. Christian S. Unabia
 Rep. Jake Vincent Villa

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Will you please correct the membership of Rep. Bong Suntay. He was read as Vice Chairperson, then as a member.

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Correction, Mr. Speaker. He is Vice Chairperson.

COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE

As Vice Chairperson:

Rep. Allan Benedict S. Reyes

As members:

Rep. Ruth Mariano-Hernandez

Rep. Princess Rihan M. Sakaluran

Rep. Rosanna "Ria" Vergara

Rep. Florida "Rida" P. Robes

COMMITTEE ON GOOD GOVERNMENT
AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

As Chairperson:

Rep. "Kuya" Jose Antonio R. Sy-Alvarado

As Vice Chairpersons:

Rep. Jesus Crispin C. Remulla

Rep. Michael T. Defensor

As members:

Rep. Narciso R. Bravo Jr.

Rep. Romeo M. Jalosjos Jr.

Rep. Sol Aragon

Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" A. Mariño

Rep. Antonio "Tony" T. Albano

Rep. Lorna C. Silverio

Rep. Samantha Louise Vargas Alfonso

Rep. Cyrille "Beng" F. Abueg-Zaldivar

Rep. Jorge Antonio P. Bustos

Rep. Ed Christopher S. Go

Rep. Vincent Franco "Duke" D. Frasco

Rep. Emmarie "Lolypop" Ouano-Dizon

Rep. Cesar "Jawo" L. Jimenez Jr.

Rep. Eric Go Yap

Rep. Claudine Diana D. Bautista

Rep. Sandro L. Gonzalez

Rep. Raul "Boboy" C. Tupas

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REFORESTATION

As Chairperson:

Rep. Elias C. Bulut Jr.

As Vice Chairpersons:

Rep. Solomon R. Chungalao

Rep. Maximo Y. Dalog Jr.

Rep. Christian S. Unabia

Rep. Cyrille "Beng" F. Abueg-Zaldivar

As members:

Rep. Munir M. Arbison

Rep. Ansaruddin Abdul Malik A. Adiong

Rep. Faustino Michael Carlos T. Dy III

Rep. Tyrone D. Agabas

Rep. Alfonso V. Umali Jr.

Rep. Paz C. Radaza

Rep. Ron P. Salo

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON LAND USE

As Chairperson:

Rep. Eduardo "Eddie" R. Gullas

As Vice Chairperson:

Rep. Teodorico T. Haresco Jr.

As members:

Rep. Samantha Louise Vargas Alfonso

Rep. Ramon C. Nolasco Jr.

Rep. Adriano A. Ebcas

Rep. Jocelyn P. Tulfo

COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT

As Vice Chairperson:

Rep. Sabiniano S. Canama

As Vice Chairpersons:

Rep. Jose "Jun" L. Ong Jr.

Rep. Jose Gay G. Padiernos

Rep. Virgilio S. Lacson

Rep. Adriano A. Ebcas

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Excuse me,
Majority Leader.

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Yes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Will you
kindly repeat from the top. Please repeat from the top.

As Chairperson:

Rep. Sabiniano S. Canama

As Vice Chairpersons:

Rep. Jose "Jun" L. Ong Jr.

Rep. Jose Gay G. Padiernos

Rep. Virgilio S. Lacson

Rep. Adriano A. Ebcas

As members:

Rep. Rico B. Geron

Rep. Presley C. De Jesus

Rep. Wilfredo "Willy" S. Caminero

Rep. Diego "Nonoy" C. Ty

Rep. Fernando T. Cabredo

Rep. Janice Z. Salimbangon

Rep. Rashidin H. Matba

Rep. Teodorico T. Haresco Jr.

COMMITTEE ON DANGEROUS DRUGS

As Chairperson:

Rep. Robert Ace S. Barbers

As Vice Chairpersons:

Rep. Narciso R. Bravo Jr.

Rep. Edgar Mary S. Sarmiento

Rep. Alan B. Ecleo I

Rep. Pablo C. Ortega

Rep. Jorge Antonio P. Bustos

As members:

Rep. Frederick W. Siao

Rep. Romeo M. Jalosjos Jr.

Rep. Samantha Louise Vargas Alfonso

Rep. Rashidin H. Matba

Rep. Fernando T. Cabredo

Rep. Elpidio F. Barzaga Jr.

Rep. Eddiebong G. Plaza

Rep. Strike B. Revilla

Rep. John Marvin “Yul Servo” C. Nieto

Rep. Horacio P. Suansing Jr.

Rep. Rolando M. Valeriano

Rep. Lorna P. Bautista-Bandigan

Rep. Manuel Luis “Manny” T. Lopez

Rep. Edward Vera Perez Maceda

Rep. Precious Hipolito Castelo

Rep. Luis N. Campos Jr.

Rep. Josephine Ramirez-Sato

Rep. Nestor B. Fongwan

Rep. Romulo “Kid” Peña Jr.

Rep. Wilton “Tonton” T. Kho

Rep. Joseph “Jojo” L. Lara

Rep. Esmael G. Mangudadatu

Rep. Emmarie “Lolypop” Ouano-Dizon

Rep. Joselito “Joel” S. Sacdalan

Rep. Datu Roonie Q. Sinsuat Sr.

Rep. Jesus “Bong” C. Suntay

Rep. Samier A. Tan

Rep. Henry R. Villarica

Rep. Josefina B. Tallado

Rep. Alfredo A. Garbin Jr.

Rep. Manuel DG. Cabochan III

COMMITTEE ON MICRO, SMALL AND
MEDIUM ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

As Chairperson:

Rep. Virgilio S. Lacson

As Vice Chairpersons:

Rep. Camille A. Villar

Rep. Juliet Marie De Leon Ferrer

Rep. Ma. Lucille L. Nava, M.D.

Rep. Adriano A. Ebcas

As members:

Rep. Ruth Mariano-Hernandez

Rep. Alan “Aldu” R. Dujali

Rep. Leonardo L. Babasa Jr.

Rep. Ria Christina G. Fariñas

Rep. Jonathan Keith T. Flores

Rep. Christian S. Unabia

Rep. Braeden John Q. Biron

Rep. Allan Benedict S. Reyes

Rep. Naealla Bainto Aguinaldo

Rep. Lorna C. Silverio

Rep. Elpidio F. Barzaga Jr.

Rep. Fernando T. Cabredo

Rep. Janice Z. Salimbangon

Rep. Princess Rihan M. Sakaluran

Rep. Rowena Niña O. Taturan

Rep. Jose “Jun” L. Ong Jr.

Rep. Edgar Mary S. Sarmiento

Rep. Romulo “Kid” Peña Jr.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the election of the following Members is approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 347

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 347.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). 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. 347, entitled: A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEATH OF HONORABLE JESUS MARINO “RENE” G. ESPINA, A GREAT FILIPINO PUBLIC SERVANT WHO WAS A FORMER SENATOR (1970-1973), GOVERNOR OF THE PROVINCE OF CEBU (1963-1969), SECRETARY

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

OF PUBLIC WORKS, TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM.

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

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 347

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 347.

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

House Resolution No. 347 is adopted.
The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. PALMA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session until September 18, 2019, at one o'clock in the afternoon.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended until September 18, 2019, at one o'clock in the afternoon.

It was 8:33 p.m.