



# Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 18<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION  
*House of Representatives*

Vol. 3

Tuesday, November 19, 2019

No. 28

## CALL TO ORDER

*At 3:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Raneo "Ranie" E. Abu called the session to order.*

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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 Reference of Business.

## PRAYER

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please rise for the silent prayer and meditation.

*Everybody rose for the silent prayer.*

## REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

## NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please remain standing for the singing of the Philippine National Anthem.

*Everybody remained standing for the singing of the Philippine National Anthem.*

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

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

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. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we defer the approval of the Journal of the previous session.

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

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we now proceed to the Reference of Business.

## BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 5496, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE APPOINTMENT OF BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS IN EVERY BARANGAY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE, FURTHER EXPANDING THE BENEFITS OF BARANGAY OFFICIALS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Nieto

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5497, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING ADDITIONAL BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES FOR SOLO PARENTS, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED 8972”

By Representative Delos Santos

TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 5498, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PERTINENT PROVISIONS OF BATAS PAMBANSA 881, OTHERWISE

KNOWN AS THE ‘OMNIBUS ELECTION CODE’, AS AMENDED, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Saulog  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND ELECTORAL REFORMS

House Bill No. 5499, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERIES IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BASILISA, IN THE LONE DISTRICT OF DINAGAT ISLANDS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Ecleo  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES RESOURCES

House Bill No. 5500, entitled:

“AN ACT UPGRADING THE MINIMUM SALARY OF GOVERNMENT NURSES AND OTHER HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL”

By Representative Amante-Matba  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 5501, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE AGUSAN DEL NORTE PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL IN BUTUAN CITY, PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL NORTE INTO A LEVEL III TEACHING AND TRAINING HOSPITAL TO BE KNOWN AS THE AGUSAN DEL NORTE GENERAL HOSPITAL AND TRAINING CENTER AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Amante-Matba  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 5502, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY SONGKOY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KITCHARAO, AGUSAN DEL NORTE”

By Representative Amante-Matba  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5503, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY PANGAYLAN-IP IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SANTIAGO, AGUSAN DEL NORTE”

By Representative Amante-Matba  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5504, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY CROSSING IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KITCHARAO, AGUSAN DEL NORTE”

By Representative Amante-Matba  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5505, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE REGISTRATION, LICENSURE, AND PRACTICE OF PHYSICAL THERAPY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER RELATED PURPOSES”

By Representative Gonzales (Aurelio)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

House Bill No. 5507, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTING THE SECOND PHASE OF AGRARIAN REFORM IN THE COUNTRY THEREBY COMPLETING THE COVERAGE OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS UNDER THE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM, PROVIDING STATE SUBSIDY IN THE ACQUISITION AND DISTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS TO AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES AND CREATING THE MECHANISMS FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION AND OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Roman  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRARIAN REFORM

House Bill No. 5508, entitled:

“AN ACT TRANSFORMING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM INTO ‘DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT’ MANDATING ITS FUNCTIONS, OPERATIONALIZING THE 2<sup>ND</sup> PHASE OF CARP IMPLEMENTATION, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Roman  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON AGRARIAN REFORM

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter dated October 17, 2019 of Caesar R. Dulay, Commissioner, Bureau of Internal Revenue, Department of Finance, submitting the Bureau’s

Consolidated Monthly Report of Disbursement (FAR 4) and Statement of Approved Budget, Utilizations, Disbursements and Balances for Trust Receipts (FAR 6) for the quarter ending September 30, 2019.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated October 23, 2019 of Atty. Romulo P. Rivera, OIC-Regional Director, Regional Office No. 1, Commission on Audit, transmitting a copy of the Annual Audit Report of the Northern Foods Corporation, Sarrat, Ilocos Norte, for the fiscal year ended May 31, 2019.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated October 23, 2019 of Victor J. Yu, Provincial Governor, Province of Zamboanga del Sur, submitting the Report on Fund Utilization and Status of Programs of the Project Implementation for the Quarter Ended July to September 2019 (Third Quarter) on the Local Government Support Fund to Local Government Units, to wit:

1. Social Services Program;
2. Conditional Matching Grant Program;
3. Bottom-Up Budgeting (BUB) Projects; and
4. Kalsada Projects.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated October 28, 2019 of Usec. Bernardo C. Florece, Jr., Officer-in-Charge, Department of the Interior and Local Government, submitting to the House of Representatives the Department's CY 2019 Performance-based Challenge Fund 2nd Quarter Progress Report.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Letter dated 31 October 2019 of Ryan R. Enriquez, Chairperson and CEO, National Youth Commission, informing the House of Representatives that the Commission's Report on the Utilization of Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Mandatory and Continuing Training Fund FAR 1 – Statement of Appropriations, Allotments, Obligations, Disbursements and Balances as of the quarter ending July 31 and September 30, 2019 have been posted to the agency's website – Transparency Seal on October 28, 2019.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated 5 November 2019 of Maria Catalina E. Cabral, Ph.D., CESO I, Undersecretary for Planning and Public-Private Partnership (PPP), Office of the Secretary, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), submitting to the House of Representatives the Project Briefers, including the

List of Priority Projects of PPP of the DPWH and Toll Regulatory Board (TRB), for implementation, ongoing, and completed by the DPWH.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

Report on Fund Utilization and Status of Program/ Project Implementation for the Quarter ended September 2019 of the Municipality of Laua-an, Province of Antique on the Local Government Support Fund attested by Capt. Francisco G. Baladjay, Jr., Municipal Mayor.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

2020 People's Proposed Budget of the Department of Budget and Management.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Financial Accountability Reports (FARs) and Budget Accountability Reports (BARs) of the Supreme Court of the Philippines and the Lower Courts (SCPLC) and the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET) for the third quarter of 2019 that were posted in the Supreme Court website on November 5, 2019.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

#### COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Health and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 83), re H.B. No. 1477, entitled:

“AN ACT UPGRADING THE CARAGA REGIONAL HOSPITAL IN BARANGAY WASHINGTON, SURIGAO CITY, SURIGAO DEL NORTE INTO A TERTIARY LEVEL HOSPITAL, INCREASING ITS BED CAPACITY FROM ONE HUNDRED FIFTY (150) TO FIVE HUNDRED (500) BEDS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Tan (Angelina), Barbers and Ungab

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

#### CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5070 ON SECOND READING

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 5070, contained in Committee Report No. 70, as reported out by the Committee on Disaster Management.

May I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of 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 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. 5070, entitled: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR FREE FREIGHT SERVICES IN THE TRANSPORTATION OF RELIEF GOODS TO CALAMITY-STRICKEN AREAS.

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

#### PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. BOLILIA. 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. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Florida “Rida” P. Robes of the Lone District of San Jose del Monte for her sponsorship speech.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Lady from the Lone District of San Jose del Monte City is recognized to sponsor House Bill No. 5070 under Committee Report No. 70.

#### SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. ROBES

REP. ROBES. Thank you, Mr. Speaker; and thank you, Majority Leader.

I would just like to get your approval for this Bill that I think everybody would be interested and for the interest of the common good. House Bill No. 2389 is actually for natural disasters such as typhoons, floods, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions which can happen unexpectedly, while human-induced disasters such as war and famine may not occur so suddenly but the

effects can be so devastating as well. When they strike, they test the resilience of humanity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). House Bill No. 5070.

REP. ROBES. Thank you. I stand corrected. Under Committee Report No. 70, it is House Bill No. 5070.

Just to make it short, this is entitled: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR FREE FREIGHT SERVICES IN THE TRANSPORTATION OF RELIEF GOODS TO CALAMITY-STRICKEN AREAS. This is, actually, Your Honor, to give a chances to our benefactors and donors to share what they have for our victims of calamities. That is all, Your Honor.

I move that my Bill be approved and be recorded in this august Body, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, considering that there are no Members of the House who wish to interpellate the Sponsor 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. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of sponsorship and debate is now terminated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments. There being no Committee and individual amendments, I move that we close the same.

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. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve on Second Reading House Bill No. 5070 as contained in Committee Report No. 70.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

#### VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 5070 on Second Reading.

\* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

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*.

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 5070  
ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 5070, under Committee Report No. 70, is hereby approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

*It was 3:13 p.m.*

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4952  
ON SECOND READING

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 4952, contained in Committee Report No. 61, as reported out by the Committee on Basic Education and Culture.

May I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of 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 Secretary General is directed to read only 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. 4952, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING THE WALINGWALING ORCHID AS THE NATIONAL ORCHID OF THE PHILIPPINES.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate on House Bill No. 4952 and recognize the Chairperson of the Committee on Basic Education, Rep. Roman T. Romulo, from the Lone District of Pasig, to sponsor 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 period of sponsorship and debate on House Bill No. 4952 is now open and the Chairperson of the Committee on Basic Education, Rep. Roman T. Romulo, is recognized to begin sponsorship of the measure.

REP. ROMULO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Majority Leader.

To the Members of this esteemed House, I am proud to stand before you to sponsor House Bill No. 3506, under Committee Report No. 61, declaring the walingwaling orchid as the National Orchid of the Philippines.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). May you please repeat the House Bill number?

REP. ROMULO. The House Bill number, Mr. Speaker, is House Bill No. 3506.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is it not House Bill No. 4952?

REP. ROMULO. It is the original—yes, that is correct. The substitute bill is House Bill No. 4952. The original bill, Mr. Speaker, seek to declare the walingwaling as the National Flower, but we substituted that Bill to declare it as the National Orchid of the Philippines and so now, it is known as House Bill No. 4952.

\* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

Mr. Speaker, I move that the Explanatory Note of the proponent of this measure, Hon. Vincent J. Garcia, be adopted also as the sponsorship speech on this Bill. Just to add a little history, Mr. Speaker, this bill of Congressman Vincent Garcia has passed several Congresses already and previously, they proposed it as the national flower, but Honorable Garcia (V.) has now agreed that we make it the National Orchid of the Philippines.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). What is the pleasure of the Gentleman from the First District of Albay?

REP. LAGMAN. I have just one clarificatory question.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). If the good Sponsor is ready to yield for clarification.

REP. LAGMAN. Because I would ...

REP. ROMULO. As it is the right of any Member to interpellate during sponsorship.

REP. LAGMAN. Yes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). You now have the floor, Representative Lagman.

REP. LAGMAN. Distinguished Sponsor, I heard that the distinguished Sponsor is adopting the Explanatory Note of House Bill No. 3506 which has been substituted with House Bill No. 4952. The Explanatory Note says, and I quote, "This Bill seeks to declare the Walingwaling as the National Flower of the Philippines, to replace the Sampaguita." Are we abandoning this statement in the Explanatory Note?

REP. ROMULO. That is correct, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Member. That is why when I moved for the adoption of the Explanatory Note of House Bill No. 3506, I added that the distinguished author or Sponsor of this measure, Hon. Vincent J. Garcia, had agreed during the Committee meeting that instead

of declaring it the National Flower, we declare it the National Orchid of the Philippines. So, just to clarify, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Member, any portion of the Explanatory Note which refers to the "National Flower" should be deemed as referring to the "National Orchid" of the Philippines.

REP. LAGMAN. Well, with that clarification, Mr. Speaker, I have no further question and I join the distinguished Sponsor in urging for the passage of this Bill. Thank you.

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

REP. BOLILIA. 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. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of sponsorship and debate for House Bill No. 4952 is now closed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. 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 period of amendments is now opened.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, considering that there are no Committee amendments, I move that we proceed to consider individual amendments.

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

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Committee amendments, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 4952 on Second Reading.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

*VIVA VOCE* VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 4952 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*.

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 4952  
ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 4952, under Committee Report No. 61, is now approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4953  
ON SECOND READING

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 4953, contained in Committee Report No. 60, as reported out by the Committee on Basic Education and Culture.

May I request that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of 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 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. 4953, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING THE BALANGAY AS THE NATIONAL BOAT OF THE PHILIPPINES.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize Rep. Roman T. Romulo from the Lone District of Pasig for his sponsorship speech.

I so move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the period of sponsorship and debate is now open.

Let us recognize the Chairperson of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture, Hon. Roman Romulo, to sponsor House Bill No. 4953.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. ROMULO

REP. ROMULO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Majority Leader, distinguished Members of the House of Representatives, I am honored to, again, sponsor House Bill No. 4953, as contained in Committee Report No. 60, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING THE BALANGAY AS THE NATIONAL BOAT OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Mr. Speaker, with your permission and the permission of the Members, this Bill has been championed by one of our Members, Hon. Lawrence "Law" H. Fortun but unfortunately, right now, he is in a meeting. So, may I ask that the Speaker and the Members allow Honorable Fortun to submit as the sponsorship speech his Explanatory Note on the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Majority Leader, are you allowing the sponsorship speech of Honorable Fortun as part of the sponsorship speech of the distinguished Chairperson of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture.

REP. ROMULO. That was my motion, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (Silence) The Chair hears none; the motion of the Chairperson of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture that the Explanatory Note of the Bill be considered as the sponsorship speech on the measure is approved.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from the BUHAY Party-List, Hon. Jose L. Atienza, Jr. for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Lito

\* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)



Atienza of the Party-List BUHAY is now recognized to interpellate the Chairperson of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pahintulutan po ng ating kagalang-galang na Chairman of the Committee, we would just like to clarify certain matters as to why are we passing such a measure. Puwede po bang makapagtanong?

REP. ROMULO. Maraming salamat po, Honorable Atienza, sa inyong katanungan. Ito rin ay magbibigay ng pagkakataon para malaman po ng lahat na Miyembro ng ating Kongreso kung gaano kaimportante po itong Balangay or Butuan boat. Alam po ninyo, kung babasahin po natin, unang-una, iyong mga historical documents, lumalabas po na ang boat na ito ang kauna-unahang nahanap po na boat na talagang gawa dito sa Pilipinas. Ang Balangay boat po, very special po iyong technique ng paggawa po nito. Hindi po ito katulad noong mga boats na naririnig natin ngayon na ginagamit po iyong teknolohiya po na may mga nails at kung anuano po para magkabit po sila. Dito po sa Balangay, may special technique na ginagamit noong panahon na iyon ng ating mga ninunong Pilipino, na sa paggawa po nito ay pagkabit talaga lang po iyong wooden planks nito na walang butas at walang nails na ginagawa. Kaya noong hinahanap po ito ay talagang katangi-tangi po talaga na sinabi na gawa sa Pilipinas ito and in fact po, wala pang nahahanap kahit sa buong Asya po ang ganitong klaseng technique ng paggawa ng boat.

In fact, during the Committee meeting po ay sinabi po sa atin na iyong term na “barangay” ay nanggaling po sa Balangay boat dahil ang nangyari po dito ay, mga seafaring po tayo noong panahon na iyon at sama-sama po tayo, kaya eventually po kahit iyong term na “barangay” ay hinugot po iyan dito sa Balangay boat.

REP. ATIENZA. Samakatuwid, Mr. Speaker, ang nilalayan natin ay bumuo tayo ng isang uri ng bangka na maaaring ang bawat Pilipino—ito ay para magmalaki at makaramdam tayo ng pagiging Pilipino. Iyon po ang ating layunin?

REP. ROMULO. Tama po iyon, Honorable Atienza, dahil talagang ipinapakita naman po ng historical documents na dito talaga po ito nahanap sa Pilipinas at dito po ginawa ito.

REP. ATIENZA. Saan po ba ginamit at kailan po ba ito ginawa, ang mga Balangay o Balanghay kung tawagin? Ito po ba ay galing sa Mindanao, Visayas o Luzon? Saan po ba galing ito?

REP. ROMULO. Ang una pong nahanap nito talaga o na-excavate ay sa Butuan City, Agusan del

Norte, Mindanao. Base po sa mga nasabmit sa atin sa Committee, ang sinasabi talaga na base sa pag-aaral po, noong na-examine po nila iyong na-excavate na bangka o boat po na ito ng Balangay, sinasabi po nila na it dates back to 320, 990, 1250 A.D. In fact po, kung babasahin raw po natin iyong Chronicles of Pigafetta, sinasabi po niya dito na ito iyong oldest na pre-Hispanic watercraft found in the Philippines.

REP. ATIENZA. Ito po bang Balangay kung tawagin ay ginamit ng mga taga-Luzon o ng mga Bisaya at any point in time sa ating kasaysayan?

REP. ROMULO. Alam ninyo, Honorable Atienza, base po sa Committee meeting kung saan naitanong rin po ang katanungan na iyan, ang sinagot po doon ay so far, ang mga nahahanap po na Balangay ay mostly nasa Mindanao pero hindi naman po nila sinasabi na eventually ay baka mahanap rin po ito sa ibang parte ng Pilipinas. So far po, sa Mindanao po nahanap itong mga relics po ng Balangay.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, importante po ito—ginagamit pa po ba hanggang ngayon ang Balangay ng sinuman sa ating kapuluan?

REP. ROMULO. Sa pagkaalam ko po, Honorable Atienza, and in fact, about five years ago, si Congressman Law Fortun, inihain na niya ang Bill na ito at kasabay noong inihain po niya ang Bill na ito, gumawa rin po ng isang Balangay boat muli using the same technique. Ito po ay inikot nila sa ibang Asian countries po natin at tina-track raw po nila, base po sa records, kung saan dumadaan dati iyong Balangay boat. Again po, nag-expedition po sila pero kung ginagamit commercially po, siguro po, kapag naipasa natin ang Bill na ito at naging isang batas, ito ay magiging inspirasyon muli para magkaroon po tayo ng tunay na isang produkto na gawa ng isang Pilipino—gawa ng Pilipinas, gawa ng Pilipino—at siguro po, magiging inspirasyon ito para magamit ito muli kung hindi man ginagamit commercially sa ngayon.

REP. ATIENZA. Ito po bang Balangay kung tawagin natin, maituturing natin na isang sasakyang pangdagat na ginamit, ginagamit at gagamitin pa ng ating mga kababayan at ng mga mangingisda? Alam po ba nila itong Balangay o ito ay ginamit lamang noong araw at hindi na po ginagamit ngayon?

REP. ROMULO. Alam ninyo po, noong nakaraan po, sigurado ay ating ginagamit ito kaya na-derive po iyong term na “barangay” dahil sa pagsasama-sama po ng mga magkakapit-bahay at pamilya doon sa Balangay kapag ginagamit nila ang bangka na ito. In the future po, hopefully po ay maging inspirasyon po ito para



magamit po uli ng mga mangingisda natin. Malay po natin, baka mayroon pong mga Pilipino na mag-isip na mag-produce o mag-manufacture, using this technique, ng mas maraming Balangay boats po muli para magamit po ng ating mga mangingisda. Ang masisigurado ko po sa inyo, Honorable Atienza, five years ago po, they rebuilt two boats and these two boats po were used to track the same route that they knew that this boat used to traverse and found them to be seaworthy po.

REP. ATIENZA. Ano po ba ang masasabi ninyong katangi-tangi na taglay nitong Balangay kapag pinag-usapan ang seaworthiness, iyong practicality at cost-efficiency? Ito po ba ay lumalayag lang o gumagamit ng motor? Ano po ba ang katangian nitong uring sasakyang pandagat?

REP. ROMULO. Maraming salamat sa katanungan ninyo, Honorable Atienza.

Unang-una po, kung sa practicality po, ang katangi-tangi talaga sa Balangay po ay iyong technique po noong paggawa nito. Ang ibig sabihin po, ang technique sa paggawa po nito ay ikinakabit-kabit po, without using nails, iyong boat po mismo. Nakita po natin na seaworthy ito dahil ginamit po ito about five years ago to travel to other Asian countries at siguro po, hindi po ito gumagamit, actually, ng motor at ang ginamit po dito ay sails. Siguro po, noong panahon na unang ginawa ito, noong unang ginamit ito ng mga taga Butuan, talagang wala pa namang motor noon at ang mayroon ay sails. In fact, iyong expedition po na ginawa, gumamit rin sila—the original way it was used—they used sails rin po.

REP. ATIENZA. Marami po sa atin ang nakakaalam ng kasaysayan ng iba't ibang uri ng sasakyang pandagat. Nandiyan ang bangka. Ito po bang Balangay ay isang malaking bangka? Ano ang sukat po ba nito?

*At this juncture, the Deputy Speaker relinquished the Chair to Rep. Xavier Jesus D. Romualdo.*

REP. ROMULO. Iyong sukat po nito ay maibibigay ko sa inyo. Katulad ng binabanggit ko, Honorable Atienza, siguro, iyong katangi-tangi ay ang technique ng paggawa ng Balangay mismo na hindi po ito gumagamit ng mga pako at wala po tayong minamartilyo dito. Ang ginagawa po dito ay pinagsasama po iyong mga wooden planks at ganoon po ang ginawa at iyon po ang technique ng paggawa niya. Siguro po, iyong detalye noong paggawa mismo, iyong teknikal na paggawa niya, kung papayag po si Honorable Atienza, ay isa-submit ko sa kaniya pero iyong po talaga ang katangi-tangi nito, na walang pakong ginagamit at hindi gumagamit ng external na mga bagay pero iyong mismong planks

na ginamit sa barko, sa Balangay mismo ay mini-mesh in po nila together para maging Balangay boat.

REP. ATIENZA. Hindi po ba o marahil ay maihahambing natin ang Balangay sa mga bangkang malalaki na ginagamit noong araw na pantawid ng ating karagatan katulad ng basnig. Iyong naturan ko ay ang vinta at iyan po ay mabibilis at tunay na bangkang Pilipino. Nagmula rin sa Mindanao pero alam na kilala ito sa buong kapuluan.

Ang tinatanong ko lang po sa aking sarili, at nais kong ipamahagi sa lahat, bakit Balangay ang ating pipiliin? Parang wala na yatang nakakaalam ng katagang Balangay sa panahon natin ngayon. Barangay—naintindihan natin pero ang Balangay ay hindi po natin masakyan. Although mayroon na po tayong nakitang gumawa at gumamit niyan pero hindi na ginagamit ito sa panahong ito. Ang vinta, hanggang ngayon, ay ginagamit ng ating mga kapatid na Muslim. Iyong bangkang malalaki ay ginagamit pa rin sa pangingsda. Lahat po iyan ay gawa ng mga Pilipino.

So, ang tatanungin sa atin ng ating mga kababayan, bakit pinili ninyo ang Balangay? Dahil naiiba ang pangalan o mas kilala at mas alam ng mga mangingisdang Pilipino, na maaari nilang tanggapin na isang karangalan na magkaroon tayo ng isang Balangay na tatawagin nating orihinal na Pilipino. Sabi ninyo, hindi gumagamit ng pako, hindi po orihinal iyon. Iyon ay ginawa na sa iba't ibang bahagi ng mundo dahil ang ating kapit-bansang Tsina, ang mga Kastila at ang mga Ingles ay gumagawa ng bapor noong araw na wala pong pakong ginagamit, kaya hindi po ito ang maaaring pagbasihan ng isang bangkang Pilipino.

Samantala, kung pag-uusapan po natin ang ibang mga bangka, nabanggit ko iyong basnig at iyan po ay ginagamit pangkalakal papuntang Tsina, papunta sa iba't ibang bahagi sa mundo at ipinagmamalaki rin natin iyon. Dito ba ay sasabihin nating mas kilala ang Balangay kaysa sa basnig, o kaya mas kilala ang Balangay at mas praktikal kaysa sa vinta? Baka mahirap nating sagutin iyon, G. Sponsor.

REP. ROMULO. Siguro, Honorable Atienza, isa rin talaga na desisyon kung bakit ang Komite po ay pumanig sa author ng Bill na ito dahil base sa historical documents po na ikinuwento sa amin during the Committee meeting, lumalabas po talaga na itong Balangay is known po at accepted naman po, kahit ng mga dayuhan, na talagang gawa dito sa Pilipinas, at iyong nahanap po, parang wala pa namang na-record na gamit o gawa ito sa ibang bansa. So, endemic po talaga sa atin ito. Iyong technique po ng paggawa nito, sabi ninyo nga po, maaaring ginagawa ng iba po iyan pero ito po talaga ay masasabi natin at may datos naman pong nagpapakita o historical records na ito ay talagang naisip ng mga Pilipino sa Butuan, probably po, dahil

doon iyong oldest relic na nahanap o na-excavate sa kauna-unahang beses, pero parang accepted rin po na iyong technique nito ay talagang ginawa po ng Pilipino. Siguro po, idagdag ko na lang po, alam kong nababanggit rin po ninyo ito, kahit iyong barangay po—siguro, isang patunay na po iyan kaya naman nagkaroon ng term po na “barangay” ay alam naman po natin na smallest political unit or smallest unit of government natin iyan at hindi naman po siguro iyan mapapangalan po kung hindi rin po nila nakita na katangi-tangi itong Balangay boat na Pilipino po talaga ang gumawa.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, ano po ba ang magiging epekto nito, ang benepisyong, kung matatawag natin ito, para sa mga Pilipino kung tayo ay magbibigay ng katangi-tanging pagkilala sa Balangay at hindi sa vinta o ibang uri ng sasakyang ginagamit ng ating mga kababayan hanggang sa kasalukuyan? Ano po ang benepisyong makukuha ng lahat kung ang Balangay ay bibigyan natin ng ganyang uring karangalan na tawaging katangi-tanging sasakyang Pilipino? Para bagang iyong iba ay hindi sasakyang Pilipino. Baka ganoon po ang magiging bunga niyan?

REP. ROMULO. Katulad ng nababanggit ninyo kanina, Honorable Atienza, baka marami po sa mga Pilipino, in fact, ang hindi po aware dito sa Balangay boat. Marami rin pong mga Pilipino, hindi po nila alam na ang term na “barangay” ay nanggaling po sa Balangay. Kapag na-declare po natin ito na isang national boat ay mapag-aaralan po ito ng ating mga kabataan. Ano po ang magiging benepisyong nito? Magiging inspirasyon po ito sa ating mga kabataan na sa simula’t simula pa lang, centuries ago, ang Pilipino pala ay innovative, imaginative and creative. Ito ay magpapatunay po sa sinasabi natin na ang Pilipino po ay may kayang pumantay sa kahit sinong dayuhan. Ito ang magiging source of pride hindi lang po ng Pilipinas pero ng bawat Pilipino at ito ay mapag-aaralan ng mabuti at malalaman ng kabataan natin.

REP. ATIENZA. Kung sakali po na ipasa natin ang panukalang ito, bibigyan ba natin ng suporta ang mga gumagawa ng Balangay sa kasalukuyan, o wala rin po naman tayong itutulong sa kanila?

REP. ROMULO. Hopefully, G. Atienza, kapag po naging batas itong Bill natin at na-declare ito bilang national boat, dito mauumpisahan na mabigyan pansin ng ating national government, ng National Historical Commission at iyong iba pang mga ahensiya ng gobyerno at makikita nila na mayroon pala talagang isang produkto na gawa ng Pilipino, baka panahon na na bigyan natin ng pondo ito, bigyan natin ng pansin, bigyan natin ng pagkakataon dahil ang pinakamahalaga po diyan, magiging inspirasyon po ito sa kabataan natin

dahil ito ay gawang Pilipino at nire-recognize po natin na Pilipino po ang gumawa.

REP. ATIENZA. Iyon po ang aking ikinababahala na kapag itong ganitong uri ng batas ay ating ipapasa, baka naman hingan din tayo ng pagkilala ng mga gumagawa ng bangka hanggang sa kasalukuyan. Alam po ninyo, may mga magagaling gumawa ng bangka, na mula sa isang pirasong troso, inuukit nila, walang dugtong, walang pako, original na gawang Pilipino rin po iyon. Kung sabihin nila, “Kami rin ay kilanlin ninyo dahil kami ay nauna pa diyan.” Gumagamit na ng bangka ang Pilipino noong hindi pa natin kilala iyong disenyo ng Balangay at iyan po ay inukit, nadisenyo ng mga sinauna nating kababayan. Ang bangka is a natural vehicle for all coastal living Filipinos since the beginning of time. Gumagamit sila ng bangka na inukit nila at iyon ang kanilang sasakyan. Katangi-tangi kaya bakit hindi natin binibigyan ng pagkilala iyong ganoong uring Filipino ingenuity?

REP. ROMULO. Sa unang katanungan po ni Honorable Atienza, mahihinto po ba natin ang ibang may passion para sa ibang mga uri ng mga bangka rin para madeklara rin po sila? Alam naman po natin ang katotohanan na kahit anong batas po, puwedeng ma-repeal, ma-modify accordingly. Ngayon po, base sa dokumento po na mayroon tayo—historical documents katulad noong Chronicles of Pigafetta na na-present po nila sa Committee, base po sa mga dokumento po na ito, lumalabas naman po talaga ang Balangay po ang masasabi pa rin natin na oldest endemic boat na gawang Pilipino. Kung darating po ang panahon na mayroon pong ibang boat makers po sa ibang probinsiya at sasabihin rin po nila, “Kami rin ay may ganyan” at mapapatunayan po nila ito, hindi naman para sa atin ang hindi pakinggan iyan at kung totoo po iyan, lahat naman po tayo ay magkakaisa muli basta para sa Pilipino, para sa source of pride ng ating mga kabataan. Sa ngayon po, so far, ang Balangay lang talaga ang nakikita po natin based on those documents.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, naitanong ko na po iyong mga katanungan na marahil maririnig ninyo sa mga darating na araw.

REP. ROMULO. Yes po.

REP. ATIENZA. Kapag ito ay nalathala at nalamang mayroon tayong binuong batas na katulad nito, ang sinasabi ko ay tatanungin tayo ng ating mga kapatid na gumagamit ng vinta, “Bakit kami, hindi ba kami Pilipino?” Iyong mga bumubuo at gumagawa pa rin ng bangka hanggang ngayon, marami po sila sa Parañaque, Las Piñas, Cavite, Bulacan, Pampanga at sasabihin din po nila iyon, “Bakit naman binigyan ninyo ng pagkilala ang Balangay samantalang nandito kami hanggang ngayon na gumagawa kami ng bangka

at hindi naman kami tinutulungan ng gobyerno o bigyan ng pagkilala man lang ng Kongreso?"

So I asked those questions, Mr. Speaker, anticipating that many sectors among our people will ask the same question. Why are you recognizing one type of watercraft to the detriment of the other kinds of watercraft which we are still using and producing, and many of them are more adjacent to modern times dahil kinakabitan na ng outboard motor at nakatawid din ng malawak na mga karagatan sa ating kapuluan at sa labas ng ating bansa? This question will have to be answered by the Sponsors and by the Committee Chairman when the time comes when people will be asking, "What again motivated you on this? We feel that you are living us out in the cold."

With that, Mr. Speaker, I have already stated my misgivings. I may not vote for the measure, although I am praising the Chairman for his nationalistic research and intentions, but on the other hand, it may also be fair to the other boat makers of the land to be given recognition.

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

REP. ROMULO. Maraming salamat, Honorable Atienza. Katulad po ng binanggit natin kanina, kapag dumating tayo sa puntong iyon na mayroong iba na gustong maghain ng panukalang tulad nito, papakinggan rin po natin. Ang gusto naman po natin ay mas maraming sources of pride para sa Pilipino para sa ating kabataan. Basta gawang Pilipino po, siguro po ay maipagyayabang natin kahit isa, dalawa o tatlo pa iyan dahil gusto po natin iyon para laging may maibaon ang Pilipino na maipagyayabang na gawang Pilipino.

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po.

REP. ROMULO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, considering that no other Member wishes to interpellate the Sponsor or to speak against the measure, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of sponsorship and debate is hereby closed. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of amendments is opened.

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of amendments is hereby closed.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on House Bill No. 4953, as contained in Committee Report No. 60, on Second Reading.

#### VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 4953 on Second Reading. As many as are in favor, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). As many as are against, please say *Nay*. (*Silence*)

#### APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 4953 ON SECOND READING

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). The *ayes* have it; the motion is approved.

House Bill No. 4953 is hereby approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### ROLL CALL

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

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General will please call the roll.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is reflected in Journal No. 28, dated November 19, 2019.\**

\* See ANNEX (printed separately)

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Mr. Speaker, the roll call shows that 234 Members responded to the call.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). With 234 Members responding to the call, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ANDAYA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Eddiebong G. Plaza, Representative of the Second District of Agusan del Sur and Hon. Alfel M. Bascug, Representative of the First District of Agusan del Sur. They are our guest-priests from the Diocese of Butuan, Fr. Jose R. Sincero and Fr. Joselito Galido.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). Will the guests of Representatives Plaza and Bascug please rise? Welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ANDAYA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence also of the guests of Hon. Eufemia “Ka Femia” C. Cullamat, Representative of the BAYAN MUNA Party-List. They are the teachers from the ALCADDEV and Tribal Filipino Program of Surigao del Sur: Glenn Campos, Arie Jhon Enriquez, Felix Egona, and Zaldy Tejero.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). Will the guests of Representative Cullamat please rise? Welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, we move to acknowledge the presence of the guests of Speaker Alan Peter “Compañero” S. Cayetano, Rep. Edcel C. Lagman, Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda, Rep. Fernando T. Cabredo, Rep. Alfredo A. Garbin Jr., Rep. Ronnie L. Ong, and yours truly, Rep. Alfred C. Delos Santos. They are Board Member Jesciel Richard Salceda; Mr. Nong Ranggasa, Executive Director of the Local Climate Change Adaptation and Development; the 156 councilors from various local government units in the province of Albay composed of three cities and 15 municipalities; and vice mayors, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). Will the guests of Speaker Cayetano, Representatives Lagman, Salceda, Cabredo, Garbin, Ong and Delos Santos please rise? Welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, may we move to acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Geraldine B. Roman: the Bataan Equality Champs.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). Will the guests of Representative Roman please rise? Welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4664

##### *Continuation*

#### PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, under the Calendar of Business, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 4664, as contained in Committee Report No. 21, and for this purpose, may I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). 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. 4664.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill 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.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary situation is that the measure is still in the period of sponsorship and debate. I move that we recognize the Chairman of the Committee on Government Reorganization, Hon. Mario Vittorio “Marvey” A. Mariño of the Fifth District of Batangas to continue his sponsorship of the measure.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). The Chairman of the Committee on Government Reorganization, Rep. Mario Vittorio “Marvey” A. Mariño, is hereby recognized to continue his sponsorship of the measure.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize Rep. Arlene D. Brosas from the Party-List GABRIELA.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). Representative Brosas is recognized for her interpellation.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, may the good Sponsor yield to some questions regarding the TRAIN 3 package of real estate tax reform?

REP. MARIÑO. Certainly, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. G. Sponsor, nais pong malinawan ng Kinatawan na ito kung paano itinatakda ang real property valuation and taxation sa kasalukuyan at iyong pino-propose na pagbabago dito, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, sa kasalukuyan po ay iba-ibang ahensiya ng gobyerno ang nagde-determine ng market values ng property. For example, for BIR purposes, it is the BIR that determines the zonal value of a property within a certain region and for the local governments, each local government has their own assessor at iyong mga assessor na po na iyon ang nag-a-assess ng mga market values doon sa kanilang lokalidad.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, sa ilalim ng Local Government Code, may kapangyarihan ang mga LGU na magtakda at mangolekta ng real property tax o amilyar sa lahat ng ari-arian na nasasakupan nila. Paano po maaapektuhan ang mga LGUs o local government units dito sa ipinapanukalang batas na ito?

REP. MARIÑO. Tama po, Mr. Speaker, sa kasalukuyan, ang LGU ang may kapangyarihan na mag-determine ng market value, pati na rin po ng assessment level at ng tax rate. Hindi naman po maaapektuhan ang kapangyarihan na iyan dahil ang local government pa rin po ang magbibigay ng assessment level and tax rate at ang mababago lamang po dito ay ang market value ng property.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, ano po ba iyong motibo talaga sa pagtutulak ng TRAIN 3 o iyong tinatawag nating pinapanukalang batas ninyo? Ano po iyong mga basic na dahilan kung bakit kailangan ang House Bill na ito?

REP. MARIÑO. Well, if I may read, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the Bill, ito po ay para magkaroon ng standard ng valuation of real property sa ating bansa. Ang ibig sabihin, iisa po iyong gagamitin ng mga ahensiya ng gobyerno sa pag-determine ng market value at ito po ay gagamitan natin ng valuation na dine-determine ng mga professionals, isang valuation

practice na mayroong sinusunod na standards sa pag-determine ng market value. Ito po ay maiipon din natin sa isang database ang lahat ng market values ng buong bansa. It will ensure transparency in real property transactions to protect public interest. So, iyan po iyong gusto nating i-propose para po iisa iyong standards na tinitingnan natin, isang market schedule ang tinitingnan natin upang hindi magkagulo ang mga ahensiya ng gobyerno kapag mayroon pong dini-determine na market value sa isang property.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, unang-una, nais nating itanong sa mabuting Sponsor, totoo ba na makapagpapalapad ng tax base o balon ng pagkukunan ng buwis ang measure na ito, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor?

REP. MARIÑO. Ang base po ng taxes ay iyong tinatawag nating market value. So, based ito doon—na-multiply natin iyong assessment level and tax rate kaya maaari pong tumaas ang revenue for example, ng isang local government unit.

REP. BROSAS. So, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, may maki-create o may malilikha po na revenues dito. Iyon po ba ang sinasabi ninyo?

REP. MARIÑO. Again, Mr. Speaker, I am sorry.

*At this juncture, the Presiding Officer relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Neptali M. Gonzales II.*

REP. BROSAS. May maki-create o may malilikha po bang revenues dito?

REP. MARIÑO. Magiging efficient o magiging transparent po iyong revenues dahil naa-update po iyong market value pero ang sabi po natin, ang kapangyarihan pa rin ay nasa local government units as far as the assessment level and the tax rate are concerned.

REP. BROSAS. Pangalawang tanong, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, hindi po ba ito ay ginagawa bilang paghikayat ng mas maraming investors sa real property sector?

REP. MARIÑO. Totoo po, Mr. Speaker, dahil magiging transparent iyong mga transaksyon ng gobyerno kapag mayroon tayong sinusunod na standards sa pag-determine ng market value.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ito po ba ay may kinalaman sa Build, Build, Build Program ng Duterte administration?

REP. MARIÑO. Siguro po mayroon dahil ito

ay makakapag-generate ng revenue hindi lamang sa lahat ng mga local government units at magkakaroon din ng transparency. So, iyong pondong makukuha o magge-generate ay magagamit din po ng mga local governments for their local infrastructure projects. It will also settle any disputes as far as, for example, nabanggit po iyong mga infrastructure, maganda pong halimbawa diyan ay iyong dispute sa property right-of-way, ang determination po ng market value, for example, ng DPWH ay ito rin ang magiging basehan sa pagbabayad ng right-of-way. Mayroon pong fairness at mayroon pong transparency na mangyayari.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, nililina natin na nagkakaroon ng mga problema sa right-of-way compensation, legal disputes sa valuation ng mga ari-arian, nakakaantala ng mga proyektong imprastraktura ng Duterte administration—iyon po iyong gusto naming sabihin. Samantala, ginawa po nating flat rate na 6 percent iyong real estate tax kahit ano pang tipo at lawak ng ari-arian mula sa dating tax schedule na 5 to 20 percent. Bakit po natin ito ginawa, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, wala naman po sa Bill na ito iyong sa tax rate. Ang Bill po na ito is only about the schedule of market values, so, hindi po kasama dito iyong sa tax rate, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sino po ba iyong makikinabang talaga dito sa panukalang batas na ito?

REP. MARIÑO. Well, ang makikinabang po talaga dito ay ang karamihan ng mga local government units dahil maa-update po iyong market values ng kanilang mga properties at alam naman natin na ang mga local governments ay mayroong mga constituents. For example, iyong Special Education Fund, kapag po tumaas iyong revenue ng isang local government, kasama po sa pagtaas ang Special Education Fund at iyan naman po ay ginagamit sa pagpapa-repair at pagpapagawa ng mga eskuwelahan. Marami rin po ang mga infrastructure na ginagawa ang isang local government. Bukod po doon ay maiiwasan po natin iyong mga delays sa mga government projects.

Gaya po nang nabanggit kanina, iyon pong mga disputes with the right-of-way, instead of using the zonal value, iisa na lang po ang gagamitin ng buong ahensiya ng gobyerno sa pag-determine nito dahil mayroon na pong schedule of market values. Hindi na po ito hahantong pa sa korte dahil kung ano po ang market value ay iyon din po ang ibabayad doon sa maaapektuhan ng right-of-way. Hindi po made-delay iyong projects dahil nagkakaroon ng mga kaso o nagkakaroon ng mga disputes, so, maganda po ito para sa lahat po ng

mamamayan. Kagaya po rin nang nasabi rin kanina, dadami ang mga mamumuhunan dahil may tiwala po sila sa ating sistema na may sinusunod na tayong tamang standards sa pag-determine ng market value.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, on the other hand, may pinangangambahan po ang Kinatawan na ito kaugnay sa sinasabi ninyo dahil sa tingin po namin, ang mga malalaking dayuhan at lokal na negosyante, mga contractors sa mga proyektong imprastraktura at mga may-ari ng mga malalawak na lupain ang makikinabang dito.

Paano ko po nasabi iyon? Sa pagpapasimple ng real property valuation at taxation, mapapabilis ang mga nakabinbing proyekto ng Build, Build, Build Program at iba pang real estate projects na alam po natin na under the Duterte administration ay ipinangangako sa mga dayuhang namumuhunan. Plus, posible ring pataasin lalo ang valuation ng mga lupaing dadaanan ng mga proyektong Build, Build, Build para naman sa mas malaking right-of-way compensation na sabi ninyo nga kanina ay marami ang mga problema, at ang nakikinabang dito, kung hindi po iyong may-ari ng lupa ay ang mga burukrata. Tiyak din iyong mga agresibong pangangamkam ng lupain sa kanayunan at saka sa kalunsuran para sa mga proyektong pangkaunlaran bunga ng mas mataas na valuation ng mga lupain. Iyon po iyong pinangangambahan namin. Walang direktang maidudulot iyong TRAIN 3 sa mga ordinaryong mamamayan o iyong tinatawag nating Real Property Valuation and Assessment Reform Act.

Sa tingin po namin, baka mas lalo ito magpalawak ng demolisyon at dislokasyon ng mga komunidad bunga ng pagkukumahog ng mga negosyante na pagkakitaan ito. Sa totoo lang po, lalaki ang tax collection ng gobyerno kasi, hindi ba, napakalaki na noong tax cuts sa mga may-ari ng malalawak na lupain sa ilalim ng TRAIN 1 at TRAIN 2? Hindi po namin maihihiwalay ito sa TRAIN 1 at sa TRAIN 2 o sa CITIRA Law. Tinitingnan po namin ng buo na baka ito ay lalong pangambahan ng ating mga maliliit o maralitang mamamayan.

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, ito nga po ay ginagawa natin para din po sa benepisyo ng mga maliliit nating mamamayan sapagkat kapag gumanda po ang revenue collection ng isang LGU, sila rin naman po ang makikinabang dahil iyong mga serbisyo po na ibinibigay ng LGU ay doon din naman po iyan kukuhanin. Hindi naman po natin sinasabing tataas agad ang mga taxes dahil ang inaayos lang naman po natin dito ay iyong market value. Remember, the tax is determined by the assessment level and also the tax rate, so, may kapangyarihan pa rin po ang mga local governments na ma-determine kung talagang tataas iyan o hindi. Ang tinatama lamang po ay iyong market value.

Ang gusto naman po natin talaga ay matapos iyong mga malalaking imprastruktura na ipinapagawa ng gobyerno. Hindi naman po puwedeng hindi ito matapos dahil para naman po sa maraming mamamayan iyong mga ipinapagawa nating mga kalsada, train systems at lahat po ito ay kailangan ng pondo. Kaya dito po ay isinasayos lamang natin iyong market value para po makuha rin ang tiwala ng mga namumuhunan. Hindi naman po ito para lamang sa mga foreigners, bagkus, ito po ay para din sa mga lokal. Sabi nga po natin kanina, iyong right-of-way, ang mga may-ari ng lupa ay mababayaran ng tamang presyo dahil naka-determine na po iyong market value. Wala pong maaapi sa Bill na ito, bagkus, gaganda po iyong koleksiyon ng local government ng revenue at gaganda rin po ang koleksiyon ng national government dahil maiaayos natin ito. Wala pong magiging sagabal dahil mayroong problema sa mga market values or right-of-way acquisitions at hindi po nagtatalo-talo, for example, ang BIR at ang mga assessors dahil hindi po ma-determine ng tama kung alin ang susundin na presyo.

So, I believe, Mr. Speaker, na ito po ay para sa mas nakararami, lalong-lalo na po doon sa mga nangangailangan ng mga serbisyo dahil ang serbisyo naman po ay hindi iyan naibibigay ng walang pondo na nangagaling sa mga nagbabayad ng buwis. Ang nagbabayad po ng buwis ay iyong mga may-ari din ng lupa. Ito po ay magandang panukala. Sa tingin ko po, gaya po ng nasabi ko, ang makikinabang po rito ay iyong mga tumatanggap ng mga serbisyo.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, we are aware that under the TRAIN 1, real estate tax was simplified and subjected to a flat rate. Kanina po, sinabi ko na ito ay 6 percent and this, of course, heavily benefits rich families with properties and big businesses kasi bumaba ang tax. They stand to receive increased tax savings because of their relatively lower real estate tax rate.

Now, under the Real Property Valuation and Assessment Reform Act, property valuation and real estate tax administration are being simplified. Katulad po ng sinasabi ninyo, una, ang tanong po natin, can the good Sponsor confirm that this measure is an indispensable part of the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program which includes the highly regressive and anti-poor TRAIN 1?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, I am not exactly sure whether it is an anti-poor measure. All I know is that this market value valuation is meant to give transparency as far as the process is concerned on coming up with the correct market value. Hindi ko po alam kung iyan po ay connected doon sa ibang mga panukala. Ang alam ko lang po ay ito po ay pagtatama ng market value ng mga properties, in which case ay matagal na po dapat itong nagawa.

Ang panukala po na ito ay nanggaling na sa mga previous Congresses kaya matagal na po dapat na na-update iyong mga market values. Noong mga nakaraan po, ang market value po ng isang property ay—ang tawag po doon sa lokal ay sinisipat, or determined by tantsa—pero ngayon po ay gagamitan natin ng tamang proseso. Kaya po we believe that this Bill will correct the schedule of market values and also eliminate conflicts among the other agencies.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, we are very wary kasi alam ninyo naman po ang pinanggagalingan natin, iyong TRAIN 1, kaya ang tanong ko kanina ay kung ito ay magiging anti-poor or highly regressive. Ang sinasabi ninyo naman po na hindi ito included doon sa mga tax reform.

Can the Sponsor also confirm if this measure is part of the tax reform measure prescribed by the IMF or International Monetary Fund?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with the tax measure of the IMF but this is not meant or this is not designed to oppress anybody, especially the poor, because ito nga po ay para sa mga benepisyo ng mga nakakarami. Ang magbabayad po ng buwis ay iyong mga may-ari ng lupa at saka iyong mga bumibili o nag-i-invest dito sa ating bansa, whether they are foreigners or locals. It is meant to generate revenue and it is meant to benefit not only the majority of our population, but definitely the poor sector kasi iyong mga benepisyo naman po ay sa kanila madalas ibinibigay, iyong mga services.

REP. BROSAS. Yes. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, let me cite a document from the IMF para po mas maintindihan natin na hindi ito hiwalay sa Tax Reform Package na ipinapasa sa kasalukuyan—iyong Tax Reform Package 1, 2 and 3.

As regards TRAIN 1, 2 and 3, the IMF Country Report No. 18-287 for the Philippines, released in September 2018, particularly made mention of the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program, which is the CTRP, as part of its recommendations for fiscal reform and one among the policy actions prescribed is TRAIN Package 3 which pertains to property valuation and tax. This is precisely the measure being deliberated at the moment in this august Chamber. Hence, this measure cannot be divorced from the highly regressive TRAIN 1, and from the other tax reform packages which this Chamber had passed in the past couple of months.

So, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, hindi po siya hiwalay at kailangan po nating tingnan ito na isang buo na CTRP or Comprehensive Tax Reform Program.

REP. MARIÑO. If it is in your findings, Mr. Speaker.



REP. BROSAS. Anyway, on to my next question, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, mayroon pa po tayong gustong linawin. Before we legislate a measure that seeks to streamline property valuation, we need first to establish the current scheme of things on how the real estate valuation and the real estate tax administration are being carried out. Iyong DOF po, through the Bureau of Local Government Finance, has issued the Philippine Valuation Standards 2017, an adaptation of the International Valuation Standards o IVS 2017. May we know if there is an assessment on how this was implemented across different agencies down to the LGUs? Paano po ito ginawang batayan ng mga LGUs, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, it is being implemented and in fact, it is being used to train the current assessors of the local government units.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, the question was—paano ito ginawang batayan ng mga LGUs?

REP. MARIÑO. Well, trine-train nga po iyong mga local assessors na sila naman po iyong nag-a-assess. Ginagamit po nila iyong sistema para i-assess iyong mga properties sa local governments and that is how they determine the market values as of right now.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ang sinasabi po ba ninyo, is the Philippine Valuation Standards or IVS 2017 not enough to serve as a guide and basis for real estate property valuation?

REP. MARIÑO. Well, Mr. Speaker, we can always improve and this is an improvement of the old system. May mga karagdagan pong mga i-implement kung saka-sakaling matutupad ang panukalang ito.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, we noticed that the proposed measure, House Bill No. 4664, does not make any explicit mention or reference to the IVS Council or to IVS per se. Does this mean that the IVS will not be the main basis in the formulation and computation of property tax and valuation?

REP. MARIÑO. Well, we are generalizing it right now into internationally acceptable standards, Mr. Speaker. So, mamaya nga po ay mayroong mga proposals for amendments at iyon po ang isa sa maidadagdag na mga amendments dito sa Bill na ito.

REP. BROSAS. Yes, please, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Let us be clear about this—kung ano ang gagamitin, kung gagamitin ang IVS para sa computation of property tax and valuation.

Under Section 12 of the measure, it is stated in part that: “For valuation purposes, all real properties, whether taxable or exempt, shall be appraised based on prevailing market values in the locality where the property is situated, in conformity with the valuation standards adopted pursuant to this Act.” Now, we noticed that the stipulation “prevailing market values,” not fair market value as stated in previous legislations and jurisprudence in relation to real property valuation and determination of just compensation. Can the Sponsor elaborate the difference between prevailing market value and fair market value?

REP. MARIÑO. I think the prevailing market value is the same as the fair market value. Fair market value only alludes to the process of how we came up with the value itself. Sa aking palagay, pareho po ang prevailing market value at ang fair market value.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, mahalaga ang clarification na ito dahil, apparently, we are adopting a new approach in terms of real property valuation which is reflective of the demand and supply in the investment market. Ang ibig sabihin po, this measure creates a bigger room for speculative pricing of real estate property and potential risks of artificial valuation. We have seen how speculation, especially in the property sector, has cascaded into adverse effects for the real economy, affecting workers and ordinary citizens, kaya po mahalaga na linawin natin ang paksang ito kaugnay ang market value.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, let me cite that fair value is the most commonly used phrase when it comes to conducting a valuation of an asset where value can be termed as that value by which an asset has exchanged hands between two parties. More likely, this can be traced with a fair value of the stock or the share price. In other words, the fair value of an asset is the amount that is paid in a transaction between parties involved if it was sold in the open market where the seller and the buyer willingly agreed on the value.

On the other hand, the market value of an asset or any other thing can be termed as that value in which the market is made for an asset. Market value is the value of the company which is calculated from its current market price or the stock price, and the same would rarely reflect the actual current value of a company because the market value will reflect demand and supply by the investing market and how eager or not the investors are in participating in the company’s future.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, kung dati po ang ginagamit natin sa mga previous legislation or jurisprudence ay fair market value, why the change for the prevailing market value?

REP. MARIÑO. Kagaya po ng nasabi ko, Mr.

Speaker, pareho ang tingin namin dito—market value is the same as the prevailing market value at the time it was assessed. I do not see how it is different, Mr. Speaker, kasi the prevailing is the market value as determined by, maybe, a professional appraiser at that time.

REP. BROSAS. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I would like to go to my next point. Sa kasalukuyang real estate property valuation at drafting ng Philippine valuation standards, ano po ang involvement ng private sector dito?

REP. MARIÑO. Doon po sa iki-create na consultative committee, for example, on Section 7, there is the creation of a central consultative committee, which will be chaired by the BLGF Executive Director and will be composed of a representative from each of the following: the BIR, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, national organization of government assessors, national organization of appraisers in national government agencies and the private appraisal sector. Mayroon po silang representasyon sa central consultative committee and also in the regional consultative committee. Ito naman po ang mga kasama sa regional consultative committee: BIR, DENR, head of the regional organization of government assessors, head of regional organization of national government appraisers, head of the private appraisal sector within the region or duly authorized representative, head of the bankers association within the region or its duly authorized representative. Sa mga pagpulong ng consultative committees, kasama po ang private sector.

REP. BROSAS. Okay. Natanong namin ito, Mr. Speaker, dahil sa ilalim ng panukalang batas, lilikhain po iyong sinasabi ninyo na central consultative committee at binanggit ninyo kung saan magiging bahagi nga nito ang isang representante mula sa private appraisal sector. Rather, this would mean more preferential valuation for the private sector or not. It is, of course, dependent on how much the consultative committees will formulate the valuation standards and its appreciation of the market value.

That is all, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Thank you for giving me time to clarify questions na gusto po nating masagot.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, G, Isponsor.

REP. MARIÑO. Thank you to the interpellator. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Jose L. Atienza Jr. from the BUHAY Party-List for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Honorable Atienza from BUHAY Party-List is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor. We just would like to clarify the genuine intentions and the eventual results of this very important measure that we are discussing. It concerns taxation. It affects the power of the local government units. It will eventually affect the taxpayers' capacity to pay or not pay, or be able to pay his real estate taxes. In so doing, it may affect the development goals of the local government unit. So, I would like to be clarified, therefore, Mr. Speaker, on some of the points raised by the measure.

It claims to promote the development of a just, equitable and efficient real property valuation all over the country. The reforms will broaden the tax base—binabasa ko po iyong kanilang sariling literature—“the use for property and property-related taxes of the national and local government, thereby increasing government revenues without increasing the existing tax rates or devising new tax imposition.” Wala daw pong bagong tax at hindi naman daw babaguhin ang sistema. Tama po ba iyong binasa ko?

REP. MARIÑO. Tama po, G. Ispiker, pero iyong kapangyarihan po ng local government ay nandoodon pa rin kasi iyong assessment level at iyong tax rate shall be determined by the local Sangguniang Panlungsod. So, naroroon pa rin po ang power ng LGUs. Ang nabago lamang po ay ina-adjust po iyong market value. Gaya po ng ating interpellator, alam ko po na naging Mayor siya, so, isa iyan sa revenue generation ng isang local government. Karamihan po kasi ng ating mga local governments ay hindi na-a-update ang market value ng properties at tumatagal ng taon bago ma-update because it is a political decision. Mayroon pong mandato under the Local Government Code na kada tatlong taon ay dapat po ina-update pero hindi naman po inaalis nitong Bill ang kapangyarihan ng local governments dahil hawak pa rin nila iyong assessment level at tax rate na ipapataw. Kung gusto po nila—halimbawa po, gusto ng Mayor o ng Sangguniang Panlungsod na itaas iyong mga ibinabayad na buwis ng isang LGU, puwede po. Puwede rin i-adjust nila iyong tax rate at assessment level so male-lesser po iyong impact ng increase in tax na babayaran ng isang taxpayer.

REP. ATIENZA. Iyon nga po ang tatanungin ko. Papaano ninyo matitiyak na kapag ipinasa natin ito ay magkakaroon tayo ng just, equitable and efficient real property valuation system? Papaano po mangyayari iyon? Pakipaliwanag nga po ninyo.

REP. MARIÑO. G. Ispiker, dadaan po kasi ito sa

proseso na dine-determine ng mga professionals—for example, may assessor o appraiser po na kasama sa nagde-determine ng mga market values sa isang region o isang area, mayroong ginagamit na standards para po ma-determine ito. So, dadaan po ito sa proseso na mas detalyado dahil nga dinaan natin sa tamang standards.

REP. ATIENZA. Sa tingin po ba ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor ang sistema ngayon ay mayroong depekto? Tuwirin na po natin ang ating pagpapalitan ng kuro-kuro. May depekto po ba ang sistema ngayon na nais baguhin ng panukalang batas na ito?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, marami po ang kailangang ayusin sa sistema ngayon katulad ng disputes sa right-of-way at kadalasan po ay nade-delay iyong project dahil pinag-aawayan kung alin ang susundin na presyo, whether it is the zonal value or the market value based on the assessment of the local government. Nagkakahablahan po diyan kaya ang nangyayari ay hindi natutuloy iyong proyekto ng DPWH. Kapag po mayroon na nito, isa lamang ang schedule of market values na susundin, whether the agency or government agencies will pay for the right-of-way or the government will purchase the property.

REP. ATIENZA. Sa tingin po nila, may depekto ang ating sistema to determine cost or payment for the right-of-way. Iyon po ba ang inyong tinutukoy?

REP. MARIÑO. Sa tingin ko po, Mr. Speaker, mayroon dahil maraming cases of disputes or delays sa mga proyekto dahil sa right-of-way. Sa ngayon, iyan po ang nagiging cost at mas malaki ang cost ng delay sa mga proyekto ng gobyerno sa present system ngayon kaya nga po mayroon tayong panukala na ma-improve ang current system.

REP. ATIENZA. How do we streamline iyong proseso ng pagbalangkas sa right-of-way with this measure?

REP. MARIÑO. Ang lahat po ng ahensiya, Mr. Speaker, kasama ang DPWH, ang DENR at lahat ng national agencies, isa lamang ang gagamitin na basis ng presyuhan ng lupa. Gaya po ng nasabi ko, hindi na iyong mayroon pang ibang basis. For example, ang kadalasan po na nangyayari diyan, ang pinagbabasehan, ang pinag-aawayan ay ang zonal value ng BIR, which we know is the higher amount because it is based on the two highest latest purchases. Mas mataas po iyong zonal value kaysa sa market value.

REP. ATIENZA. With this measure, sa tingin ninyo, maaalis iyong mga nangyayaring diperensiya between the zonal value and the local assessment value. Ganoon po ba?

REP. MARIÑO. Tama po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Samakatuwid ay makikialam po ang national government. With this measure, you believe that, with the national government intervening, all the problems of right-of-way issues on taxation will be minimized, to say the least.

REP. MARIÑO. Kapag po isa na lamang ang basis, Mr. Speaker, ng market value, wala nang masyadong dispute as far as the price of a particular property, so, maiiwasan po iyong delay ng mga projects.

REP. ATIENZA. Hindi po ba ang BIR ay nasa ilalim ng Department of Finance?

REP. MARIÑO. Tama po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Hindi po ba under the supervision ng DOF ang operations ng BIR?

REP. MARIÑO. Tama po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Bakit kailangan pa ng bagong batas upang makialam ang isang kagawaran na mayroon naman talagang tunay na pakialam? Do you think it will streamline the resolution of issues related to right-of-way, or it will further complicate it with the intervention of the national government?

REP. MARIÑO. It will not complicate because the Secretary of Finance will be the one approving the schedule of market values. Kasama po sa consultative committee na bubuuin ang mga ahensiya na binanggit katulad ng BIR at DENR. Ang mag-a-approve din po nito ay ang Secretary of Finance through the BLGF. Mai-streamline po talaga ito kasi magkakaroon ng database ang BLGF as to the schedule of market values in the whole country. Talagang malaking improvement po ito, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. The Gentleman, Mr. Speaker, still has not clarified the point I am trying to raise. How do you improve the conditions today with the intervention of the Department of Finance on the functions of the Bureau of Internal Revenue in connection with the local government authority? You have to answer that, Mr. Speaker, because otherwise this piece of paper could mean a bigger problem for the country sooner than later dahil po magkakaroon tayo ng maraming issue na ang national government na naman ang makikialam. Kung national government lang ang aasahan natin, huwag na tayong managinip na uunlad tayo.

We have the principle of local autonomy enshrined in the Constitution. Is that correct?

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

REP. ATIENZA. Sa tingin ninyo, ano po ba ang ibig sabihin ng local autonomy? Self-rule, self-government, independence of decision and allowing the local government units to do their thing.

Gusto nilang mataas na buwis, gumawa kayo ng batas para sa mataas na buwis. Anyway, the Department of Finance will always have the authority to intervene if there is an abuse of authority but otherwise, kung mataas ang buwis sa Maynila, matatalo iyong mayor. Natalo nga, hindi ba? Dahil inabuso niya iyong 300 percent increase sa assessment value and so, he suffered the consequences.

I cannot justify, in my own thinking as to why would the national government do a better job than the local government official who is elected and can be kicked out of office if he does not do well? The principle of check and balance on everything we do is the best antidote to all the delays in the projects. The number one reason we have problems with the right-of-way is corruption and it will not be solved by this measure. It will only abet more corruption when the national government centralizes on itself the power to control assessment all over the country. Pabayaan natin ang mga local government units mag-compete—Makati against Manila; Quezon City against Las Piñas; Taguig against Makati.

That is the best way to really promote development and the competitive spirit as provided for by the Constitution. Local autonomy is self-rule, government independence of making decisions without big brother looking behind my back. The people are the best policing agency. Kapag umabuso ang local government, talo sila sa eleksiyon. Iyon ang the best antidote.

Kapag nag-abuso ang Department of Finance, si Secretary Dominguez, hindi ba permanenteng nandiyan na? Ako, I agree with the integrity of the gentleman, but I do not think he will be there permanently. If we passed this law, whoever sits as the Secretary of Finance will be a very powerful individual. Iyong iniwasan natin ay lalong magkakaroon ng gusot. Hindi po ninyo masabi kung ano ang talagang tunay na pagbabago kung ipapasa natin ito.

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, ang assessment process naman po ay nasa kapangyarihan pa din ng local governments. In fact, they will be the ones submitting the market values of the properties to the BLGF. So, ang assessment po ay nanggagaling pa rin sa local level. Hindi naman po ito ginagawa ng BLGF at nagga-guide lang po sa technical work ang BLGF pero ang assessment po ay manggagaling pa rin sa mga local assessors. Wala naman pong ipinagbago iyong isa-submit nila kaya lang ho dinadaan ito sa mas magandang proseso. We are professionalizing

and making a standard po kung papaano nag-a-assess ng property. So, wala pong kapangyarihan din yong, sabi natin, national government, but ang national government naman po, kapag dumaan po sa proseso, meaning mayroon po itong consultations sa central committee na iki-create at saka doon sa regional committee na iki-create at kasama po doon iyong local government. In fact, bago naman po ito ipapadala sa Bureau of Local Government Finance, aaprubahan po ito o titingnan po ito noong local chief executive kung ito po ay tama at saka po ito ay isa-submit sa Bureau of Local Government Finance. So, ang kapangyarihan pa rin po ay hindi maaalis sa local government dahil assessor pa rin po ng local government ang magbibigay ng market values.

REP. ATIENZA. Kaya nga namin inuulit, Mr. Speaker, you have your vast experiences in the local government unit. The BUHAY Party-List Representative has a vast experience in local governance, so, I cannot understand why we need to change the present system where the mayor is answerable to the people and not just to the committee or a special body or an assessor assigned to see to it that these are uniform. Marami pong mga rekesitos iyan. Papunta na naman sa corruption iyan. Let the man be responsible alone. The mayor will sink or swim depending on the development of his community. The Department of Finance has other big responsibilities to perform. Assessment, valuation, tax rate and collection, lahat po iyan ay local.

Sinasabi ninyo, maraming problema sa right-of-way at kadalasan ang problema diyan ay corruption. Iyon ang ating tumbukin. The Secretary of Finance has every authority to intervene, but to put another layer of government when we are already in the road to full local autonomy will become a roadblock to national progress and development. Iyon po ang nagbibigay alala sa inyong lingkod.

I do not believe in centralization and this Bill will centralize. I do not believe in the national government taking the full range of the development plans of the country because they will not succeed. It is only the local government units which will do that and deliver the expectations of our people for a better life. If we will pass this law, Mr. Speaker, we are going back to the old ages. They are stating international standards—those are good words, attractive ones. They are stating that we have to use professionals—iyon po ay magandang pakinggan pero tuloy-tuloy po ang mangyayaring gridlock in many points of conflicts if we will pass this law. Let us allow the full implementation of local autonomy. Kung may diperensiya, pasukin ng BIR, pasukin ng DOF iyong mga lokal na gobyernong iyon. Kung walang problema, everything should just run on a day-to-day basis without having to go through a national agency for a simple case of real estate taxation.

You may say that the authority on assessment and tax rate remains in the hands of the local government units, then why is there a need of the so-called streamlining. You will streamline everything towards one road to corruption, iyan ang nakikita po ng inyong lingkod. Therefore, we urge all our colleagues to take a very serious look at this seemingly innocent form of adjustment in our taxation system once again. “Buwis, buwis”—sabi nga ng mga tao at kung maririnig po ninyo—“buwis, buwis, buwisit kayong lahat.” Ang gaganda ng sinasabi ninyo pero pagdating sa amin, pahirap ang inaabot namin. Kung may diperensiya ang isang local government unit, let the BIR, let the DOF, let the President, let the DILG handle the defective local management. Otherwise, I see no improvement, I see no benefit if we will pass this Package 3, the so-called real property valuation reform which the Gentleman is unable to point out on how it will reform the system.

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, may I give an example. I also come from a local government unit because I was a city councilor twice and I was able to participate in updating our market values as far as our local government unit is concerned.

Ang problema po diyan sa pag-a-update ng market values, iyan po ay political decision and usually, karamihan po ng local government units ay hindi po nila ginagalaw iyong mga tax assessment level, tax rate and also the market value because takot po sila ng backlash politically. Kaya po karamihan po ng local government units ay mababa ang revenue collection. Unang-una, hindi po efficient ang kanilang collection dahil nga outdated na iyong mga market values. Kapag po na-update ninyo ang market values ay tataas po ang revenue ng isang local government unit na hindi naman po inaalas ang kapangyarihan ng local government unit dahil ang assessment level at saka ang tax rate ay nasa kanila pa ring kapangyarihan.

So if you wish to determine whether you want to be competitive or not, then just adjust the assessment level and the tax rate para hindi po malaki iyong impact ng tax sa overall. But however, this will benefit a lot of the local government units which do not have the database, which do not have the capacity to update their market values as they are not even trained to do the assessment of other LGUs. Ito po ang sinasabi natin ay kabuuang pag-ganda ng revenues ng mas nakakaraming municipalities and cities, but the power as to whether to increase taxes, the impact of taxes, would still be with the local government and the chief local executive will have that power through the local Sanggunian.

Ako po ay nakapag-participate na sa ganitong proseso at napakatagal po noong proseso. Kadalasan po ay nag-o-object agad ang mga taxpayers dahil ayaw naman talaga ng mga taxpayers na tumaas ang

kanilang buwis pero kapag na-determine po ninyo, hindi naman po lahat ng buwis sa residential ay itinataas, at puwede naman po sa commercial at industrial lang. So that is where you get your revenues. Para saan po iyong revenue ng isang local government unit? Para po iyan sa mga constituents sa mga ipapagawa at sa mga serbisyo.

So ito pong Bill is designed for those, number one, the LGUs na hindi kayang mag-update ng kanilang market values dahil, una, kulang ang kanilang training, wala silang computerization sa kanilang mga municipalities at ang mga iyon po ang mga talagang kailangang-kailangan na ma-update ang kanilang market values. Kapag po ang market values nila ay hindi updated, wala naman pong mga mag-i-invest na mga mamumuhunan sa mga lugar na iyan dahil hindi po nila nakikita na tama iyong mga pag-determine ng market values.

Kaya naman po ang sistema po na ito ay para sa mas magandang transparency para sa lahat at ang kauna-unahan po ay iyong revenue generation ng isang local government unit na hindi na masyadong mag-aalala sa impact sa kanila, politically, because marami po, aminin man ho natin o hindi, sa mga local chief executives natin ay walang political will para i-improve ang kanilang revenue. Ang inaasahan lang po nila ay kapag tumaas iyong tax rate at kapag itinaas ang assessment level, tatamaan naman po sila politically pagdating ng eleksiyon. Kaya po kahit po sabihin nating kada tatlong taon ay dapat ina-update iyong market values, hindi po nila ginagawa dahil kada tatlong taon nag-e-eleksiyon kaya takot po silang i-update.

So, mayroon po diyan mga LGUs na sampung taon na hindi pa rin po naa-update ang kanilang market values. Ano po ang nangyari doon sa mga LGUs na iyon? Hindi po nila kayang ibigay ang mga serbisyo para sa kanilang mga mamamayan, wala pong mga social services at wala pong mga infrastructure projects kasi wala po silang pondo para maipagawa iyong mga dapat nilang ipagawa. Ito naman po ay para sa mga kababayan natin na umaasa doon sa mga social services. Ang mga nagbabayad po dito ay, aminin man natin o hindi, iyon pong mga may-ari ng lupa, na sinasabi naman po natin ay pinapaganda naman po iyong tunay na presyo ng kanilang lupa. Kung saka-sakali po ang lupa na iyan ay dadaanan ng right-of-way, sabihin natin pong pagagawaan ng isang malaking kalsada, iyon po ang nangyayari sa amin ngayon, papagawa ng isang diversion road at ang ibabayad po doon sa mga may-ari ng lupa ay kung ano ang takbo ng market value na presyo. Hindi po iyan mag-aaway-away dahil sasabihin po ng may-ari, “Hindi po ako papayag na iyong assessment ng local government unit ang ibabayad ninyo sa akin. Ang ibayad ninyo po sa akin ay kung ano ang nasa zonal value.” Doon po ngayon tayo magkakaproblema.

So, ang sinasabi ko po ay ang batas na ito, kapag naipasa, magkakaroon po ng tamang market values ang lahat ng properties sa buong Pilipinas para gamitin ng lahat ng ahensiya ng gobyerno. Hindi po sinasabi nating tinatanggal natin ang kapangyarihan ng isang mayor o ng Sanggunian o ng local government unit dahil sila pa rin naman ang magde-determine nito. For example, magkatabi po, halimbawa, ang dalawang cities at nagko-compete sa investor—iyan naman po ay puwede nilang pababain kapag na-adjust iyong assessment level at saka iyong tax rate, at depende po iyan sa incentive na gusto ng mayor o ng Sanggunian. Kaya, hindi po naaalisan, Mr. Speaker, iyong kapangyarihan ng local government unit.

Ito po ay isang measure—at sabi ko nga po, naging mayor ang ating Kgg. Lito Atienza—na magbibigay ng napakadaming revenues, halimbawa, sa isang local government unit, na ito naman ang inaasahan ng mga tao para po sa mga serbisyo tulad ng pagpapagamot at pagkakaroon ng ospital. Saan po kukunin iyan ng local government unit? Doon po sa mga buwis na ibinabayad ng mga may-ari ng lupa. Marami pong revenue generation possibilities ang isang local government unit pero ito pong sa property ay isa na sa inaasahan. Aside from the IRA, ito po ay locally generated revenues na inaasahan ng local government unit.

Kaya po, Mr. Speaker, kasama po sa proseso ng Bill na ito ang lahat ng representatives na binabanggit dito kapag binuo iyong consultative committees. So, dadaan lang po sa tamang proseso, mayroon pong standards na sinusunod para mahikayat din natin iyong mga foreign investors o sinuman ang mag-i-invest sa isang lungsod o sa isang municipality dahil tama iyong pag-determine natin ng presyo ng market value. Kapag po hindi tama ang pag-determine ng market value, dadating nga po diyan iyong mga magte-take advantage dahil hindi po alam ng may-ari ng lupa kung magkano talaga ang kaniyang property, pero kung mayroon po silang basis, mayroon po silang binabasehan ay iyan po ay napakaganda at makakatulong po iyan sa ating mga kababayan sa pag-determine ng market value.

So, ako po ay naniniwala, Mr. Speaker, na maganda ang layunin ng Bill na ito. Aside from what I said earlier, it will minimize the disputes among the different agencies of government. I know there is corruption but corruption is, you know, kasuhan po natin iyong mga may kaso ng corruption. Ito po ay wala naman pong kinalaman sa corruption dahil ina-adjust lamang po natin iyong market value sa buong region o sa buong Pilipinas. So, iyon po ang layunin ng panukalang ito, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, lumalabas na po iyong intensiyon ng batas. Sa aking pandinig, ang intensiyon dito ay pakialaman ng national government ang valuation system. Sabi nila, kapag national

government ang gagawa ay mas maayos ang trabaho. Ganoon po ba ang inyong pinupunto?

REP. MARINÑO. Mr. Speaker, kaya lang naman po masasama dito iyong national government ay dahil mayroon pong involved na national agencies. So, siyempre po, kasama po sa approval nito ang Secretary of Finance kasi susundin po ng mga national agencies kung ano man po ang mapapagkasunduan na market value. So, definitely, mayroon po talagang role iyong Secretary of Finance at national government because the national agencies will be using this market value as well. Kaya nga po from national to local, it will be the same market value, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. This piece of legislation focuses on valuation, tama ho iyon? Sa paniniwala ninyo, and we respect your point of view and also the view of the Sponsors of the measure—ang dami nila—sa tingin nila ay mas magiging maayos, patas at saka mababawasan ang korapsyon kung national government na ang mamamahala o kaya ang susubaybay sa valuation ng lupa.

Ang valuation, for the information of the honorable Sponsor, is dictated by many factors and number one is development. Iyong maski na anong gawin ng national government, itaas ang valuation pero kung wala pong development doon, binabaha po roon kapag tag-ulan at kapag tag-init naman ay lahat sila ay nagkakabulotong, mawawalan po ng value ang lupang iyon. Kung tuloy-tuloy po naman ang development doon katulad ng Taguig na tuloy-tuloy ang development kaya tuloy-tuloy ang pagtaas ng presyo ng lupa roon. Sa Makati, tuloy-tuloy ang development kaya tuloy-tuloy din ang pagtaas ng presyo ng lupa. Wala pong pakialam ang national government doon.

So, bakit hindi natin gawing modelo iyong mga successful LGUs sa real estate valuation. Hindi po iyong bubuo tayo ng batas na naman na ang valuation ng buong bansa, sabi ninyo, ay pag-aaralan ng mga eksperto. Wala na pong mas eksperto pa kaysa doon sa mga dumadaan sa halalan. Alam ninyo iyan at ang sabi nga ninyo ay nag-LGU din kayo, kapag kayo ay nag-abuso, hindi na kayo mananalò. Kung kayo ay nanalo ng ilang ulit, ang ibig sabihin ay patas kayo.

Iyong mga technocrats sa gobyerno, hindi dumadaan sa eleksiyon iyon kaya kung ano ang sabihin nila, akala nila tama pero sa totoo lang ay hindi katanggap-tanggap. Sino ang mananagot doon? Si mayor at iyong mga konsehal. Si technocrat, wala, nandoon sa kaniyang opisina iyon. Wala naman siyang pakialam sa halalan. Kaya ang aking pakiusap sa lahat, pag-aralan natin ang batas na ito. Maganda man ang layunin subalit ito ay lihis sa tamang pamamaraan ng pagbabago ng buhay ng Pilipino.

Local autonomy is still the only way we can really

make the Filipinos have better lives. Let the local units compete with each other. Kung mataas ang kanilang valuation ay hayaan ninyo sila. Kung wala namang bibili ng lupa roon, di wala rin silang kikitain. Hindi na rin sila mananalo sa eleksiyon. Elections are still the best antidote to any problems experienced by all of us. Hindi iyong dictation of some technocrats—huwag kayong magagalit pero natatawa ako dahil dumaaan na ako riyon. Napanood ko na iyan. Martial law, wala pong naghari sa Pilipinas kundi technocrats. Nagbunga ba ng ating kasaganaan? Gumanda ba ang buhay ng mga Pilipino? Hindi po. Gumanda ang buhay noong mga technocrats.

Kaya hayaan na nating tumibay muna ang sistema ng local autonomy before we even talk about reforming and reshaping the valuation of land in the country. The problems mentioned by the Sponsor are problems that can be solved without restructuring. Let the people be the judge at sila po ang huhusga kung sino ang tama at sino ang mali. Hindi po iyong technocrat na nag-aral sa Harvard pero hindi naman marunong ng damdaming bayan. Kaya ako po ay humihingi ng paumanhin sa kanila. Kung sila ay excited dito sa batas na ito, ang inyong lingkod ay discouraged. Hindi po ito ang paraan sa kaunlaran. Ito ay paraan para sa dagdag na kapangyarihan sa iilang tao sa national government, but it will not redound to the benefit of each and every taxpayer. Tandaan ninyo, sabi nga nila, “buwis, buwis, buwisit kayong lahat.” Ayokong tawagin akong buwisit kaya maaalala nila ang ating maikling pagpapalitang ito na ipinipilit ko at iginigiit ko na hindi ito ang solusyon sa mga problema ng ating valuation.

Ang lupa ay tumataas ang value dahil po sa mga pangyayari sa paligid—nagkaroon ng bagong shopping center, nagkaroon ng bagong waste treatment facility. Kung nagkaroon ng maraming pagbabago sa lugar na iyon ay tataas po ang value noon. That cannot be dictated by any agency and office, much less the Department of Finance which should be concerned with the fees and tax collection and in cutting short the corruption in the Bureau of Customs. It should be concerned with the corruption in the Bureau of Internal Revenue. Let the real estate valuation, assessment, taxation and collection be the responsibility of local officials who are directly elected and chosen by the people they are serving. The people in the end, Mr. Speaker, will gain from that very healthy condition where accountability will be primary, where there will be transparency, fairness in taxation, and not dictated upon by anyone.

Anyway, thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, for being patient with my arguments, but I will still be against this measure maski saan po makarating ang usapan.

Salamat po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments.

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

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, there being no Committee amendments, I move that we now proceed to consider individual amendments.

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

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Sharon S. Garin of the Party-List AAMBIS-OWA for her individual amendments.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Can we go page by page? On page 1?

REP. GARIN (S.). Yes, Mr. Speaker. In fact, in some cases, line by line, yes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Yes. We go page by page so that there will be an orderly presentation of individual amendments. We now go to page 1.

REP. GARIN (S.). I start with page 5, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). That is why the Chair is doing it properly.

REP. GARIN (S.). Okay.

#### INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Page 1, page 2, page 3, page 4.

REP. LAGMAN. Page 4, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Page 4. Honorable Lagman, on what line?



REP. LAGMAN. On page 4, Section 3, line 4, after the letter (h), provide the following paragraph. Can I now proceed, Mr. Speaker, with my amendment?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Proceed.

REP. LAGMAN. LETTER (I). INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED VALUATION STANDARDS SHALL REFER TO GENERALLY ACCEPTED STANDARDS FOR THE VALUATION FOR ALL TYPES OF ASSETS INCLUDING REAL ESTATE PLANT AND EQUIPMENT, INTANGIBLE ASSETS AND BUSINESSES WHICH SHALL INCLUDE BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE INTERNATIONAL VALUATION STANDARDS.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the amendment is accepted.

REP. LAGMAN. On the same page, LETTER (J). INTERNATIONAL VALUATION STANDARDS SHALL REFER TO STANDARDS FOR UNDERTAKING VALUATION ASSESSMENTS USING GENERALLY RECOGNIZED CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES THAT PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY AND CONSISTENCY EVALUATION PRACTICE AS DETERMINED BY THE INTERNATIONAL VALUATION STANDARDS COUNCIL.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker, and we will renumber the paragraphs accordingly.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The individual amendment has been accepted. Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the amendment is approved.

Same page—no more? Page 5.

REP. GARIN (S.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Hon. Sharon Garin is recognized.

REP. GARIN (S.). On page 5, line 26, insert the word THE after the word “with,” Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The amendment has been accepted. Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the amendment is approved.

REP. GARIN (S.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Same page?

REP. GARIN (S.). Yes, on the same line, insert the word THE after the word “and,” Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

Same page 5, no more?

REP. GARIN (S.). No more.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Page 6, page 7.

REP. GARIN (S.). Page 7, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Honorable Sharon Garin, please proceed.

REP. GARIN (S.). Pardon, Mr. Speaker. Can I go back?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Page 6?

REP. GARIN (S.). On page 5, I am sorry.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Page 5. Proceed.

REP. GARIN (S.). On page 5, line 27, insert the word LONE between the words “the” and “municipal,”— LONE as in L-O-N-E.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARIN (S.). Mr. Speaker, on same page, same line 27, delete the letter “s” from the word “assessors.” Thus, the Section 4, yes, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

Same page, no more?

REP. GARIN (S.). No more.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Page 6, page 7, page 8, page 9.

REP. GARIN (S.). Page 9, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Honorable Sharon Garin, proceed.

REP. GARIN (S.). On page 9, lines 33 to 34, delete the words “and city” between the words “provincial” and “assessors” and insert the phrase TOGETHER WITH THE MUNICIPAL ASSESSORS AND THE CITY ASSESSORS between the words “assessors” and “including,” Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARIN (S.). Mr. Speaker, on the same page, line 34, insert the word LONE, L-O-N-E between the words “the” and “municipal,” Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

Page 10.

REP. LAGMAN. On page 10, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Honorable Lagman, proceed please.

REP. LAGMAN. On page 10, line 17, after the word “SMV,” insert the words IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED VALUATION STANDARDS, so much so that the section would read: “SEC. 14. Approval of Schedule of Market Values. – The Secretary of Finance shall approve the SMV IN ACCORDANCE WITH INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED VALUATION STANDARDS within thirty (30) days from receipt of the joint endorsement of the BLGF Executive Director and the Commissioner of Internal Revenue; otherwise, said schedule shall be deemed approved.”

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARIN (S.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Page 10?

REP. GARIN (S.). Page 10.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Honorable Sharon Garin, please proceed.

REP. GARIN (S.). Page 10, line 31, delete the phrase “on taxpayers,” Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

Page 12.

REP. LAGMAN. Page 11.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Honorable Lagman, what line?

REP. LAGMAN. On line 17, after the words “the same approved,” insert the words PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS LAW SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUED TO ABRIDGE THE POWER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS TO LOWER AND ADJUST ASSESSMENT LEVELS AND TAX RATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991, TO PROVIDE WITH IT TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY OWNERS AS DEEMED NECESSARY.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

Page 12.

REP. GARIN (S.). Page 12, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Honorable Sharon Garin.

REP. GARIN (S.). On page 12, lines 4 to 6, delete the sentence “For purposes of the local transfer tax, the LGU shall use the approved SMV upon its effectivity or the total consideration in the transfer whichever is higher,” Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARIN (S.). On the same page, line 6, after the words “such as,” insert the phrase LOCAL TRANSFER TAX, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Is

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

REP. GARIN (S.). Same page, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Proceed.

REP. GARIN (S.). On page 12, line 15, delete the words “and city” between the words “provincial” and “assessors” and insert the phrase TOGETHER WITH THE MUNICIPAL ASSESSORS AND THE CITY ASSESSORS between the words “assessors” and “including,” Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARIN (S.). Also on the same page, same line 15, insert the word “LONE”, L-O-N-E, between the words “the” and “municipal,” Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, page 12.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Are we through with page 11, no more on page 11? Page 12. Honorable Lagman, please proceed.

REP. LAGMAN. On page 12, line 22, after the words “prior to the next revision,” insert the phrase SUCHAS IN TIMES OF CALAMITIES, DISASTERS AND OTHER ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES so much so that the provision shall read “In case of any significant change in market value where the property is located after the SMV has been approved and prior to the next revision, SUCHAS IN TIMES OF CALAMITIES, DISASTERS, MAN-MADE OR NATURAL AND OTHER ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES, or where corrections of errors and inequalities in the SMV is deemed necessary, or upon the order of the Secretary of Finance, the provincial and city assessors shall

recommend revisions to the existing SMVs to the BLGF REGIONAL OFFICE, through the BLGF Regional Director exercising jurisdiction over the local government unit concerned. Provided, That the city assessors and municipal assessors within the Metropolitan Manila Area shall recommend revisions to the existing SMVs to the BLGF Central Office.”

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept the amendment, Mr. Speaker.

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

Page 13.

REP. GARIN (S.). Page 13, line 26, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Is there any anterior amendment? None? Proceed, Hon. Sharon Garin.

REP. GARIN (S.). After the word “will,” delete the word “be,” Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor, say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

Page 24.

REP. GARIN (S.). Page 14, the next one is page 14. No more in page 13.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). No more? Page?

REP. GARIN (S.). Page 14.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). We go back to 14. Proceed.

REP. GARIN (S.). On page 14, line 7, delete the word “city” between the words “the” and “assessors” and replace with MUNICIPAL, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARIN (S.). On the same page, same line, delete the word “municipal” after the word “and” and replace with CITY, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor, say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARIN (S.). On the same page, line 8, insert the word LONE, L-O-N-E, between the words “the” and “municipal, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARIN (S.). Also on the same page, same line 8, delete the last letter “s” from the word “assessors,” Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor, say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARIN (S.). The last proposal, Mr. Speaker, is on page 19.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Proceed.

REP. GARIN (S.). On page 19, line 7, replace “476” with 473(A), the letter A enclosed in parentheses.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARIN (S.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The Majority Leader is recognized.  
Hon. Mark O. Go is recognized.

REP. GO (M.). Mr. Speaker, I would like to propose one amendment: On page 10, after line 21 after the word “approved,” insert the following: IN CASE OF SUDDEN CHANGES IN THE MARKET VALUES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ANCESTRAL DOMAIN, PUBLIC LAND, AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES, AND OTHER VULNERABLE SECTORS, THE ASSESSOR IS MANDATED TO RECOMMEND TO THE SANGGUNIAN TAX RATES AND ASSESSMENT LEVELS THAT WILL MAINTAIN OR MINIMALLY AFFECT THE REAL PROPERTY TAX DUE FOR THE AFOREMENTIONED PROPERTY.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). What does the distinguished Sponsor say?

REP. MARIÑO. We accept, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GO (M.). Thank you. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MARIÑO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, there being no other individual amendments, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 4664, as amended, on Second Reading.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

### VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 4664, as amended, on Second Reading.

As many as are in favor, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Rep. Gonzales, N.). As many as are against, please say *Nay*.

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

### APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 4664, AS AMENDED ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 4664, as amended, is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we begin the consideration of House Bill No. 59, under Committee Report No. 73, submitted by the Committee on Trade and Industry, and that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The session is suspended.

*It was 5:40 p.m.*

### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 5:40 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of the honorable Speaker Alan Peter “Compañero” S. Cayetano and the entire House of Representatives. They are the Members of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda. The delegation is led by Hon. Herbert Edmund Ariko, Member of Parliament; Hon. Maurice Henry Kibalya, Member of Parliament; Hon. Agnes Kunihira, Member of Parliament; including Mr. Pius Perry Biribonwoha, Mr. Tamale John Mirundi, Ms. Esther Freda Apolat and Ms. Beatrice Gladys Geria. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Welcome to the House of Representatives.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). In order for the House to be able to welcome the visiting Members of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, the session is suspended.

*It was 5:41 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 5:42 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The session is resumed.  
The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guest of Hon. Kristine Alexie B. Tutor from the Third District of Bohol. We have the Hon. Adonis Roy Olalo, Vice Mayor of Balilihan, Province of Bohol.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Please rise. Welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we also acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Henry S. Oaminal from the Second District of Misamis Occidental. They are Tessie Lomanta, Jose Binondo, Pedro Lasmarias Sr., Engr. Lea Saturinas, Engr. Edgar Flores, Blanca Berioso, Egbert Surdilla, Emerson Dablo, Hilari Gongob, Hon. Emigdio Florida, Hon. Eva Ordinem and Hon. Wilma Canama, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Please rise. Welcome to the House of Representatives.  
The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 59 ON SECOND READING

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, may I reiterate my previous motion that we consider House Bill No. 59, contained in Committee Report No. 73, as reported out by the Committee on Trade and Industry.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). 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. 59, entitled: AN ACT SETTING THE MINIMUM PAID-UP CAPITAL AND LOCALLY PRODUCED STOCK INVENTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR FOREIGN RETAIL BUSINESS ENTERPRISES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8762, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "RETAIL TRADE LIBERALIZATION ACT OF 2000."

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

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

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

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize the distinguished Chairperson of the Committee of Trade and Industry, Hon. Weslie T. Gatchalian, to begin sponsorship of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Hon. Weslie Gatchalian, Chairperson of the Committee on Trade and Industry, is hereby recognized to proceed with his sponsorship of the measure.

#### SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. GATCHALIAN

REP. GATCHALIAN. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, good afternoon.

As Chairman of the Committee on Trade and Industry, I have the honor and privilege to stand before you today to sponsor House Bill No. 59, under Committee Report No. 73, entitled: AN ACT SETTING THE MINIMUM PAID-UP CAPITAL AND LOCALLY PRODUCED STOCK INVENTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR FOREIGN RETAIL BUSINESS ENTERPRISES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT

\* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

NO. 8762, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "RETAIL TRADE LIBERALIZATION ACT OF 2000."

Mr. Speaker, the Retail Trade Liberalization Act of 2000 passed almost 20 years ago was designed to ease the stringent rules on retail trade, with the objective of promoting consumer welfare by attracting, promoting and welcoming productive investment to become globally competitive through the liberalization of the retail sector. Since the time it was passed, only a handful of foreign retailers have invested in the country. Thus, these current amendments to the law were certified as urgent by no less than our President because with their approval, foreign direct investments are expected to increase and thereby provide the much-needed investments to spur economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, grant me this indulgence as I run through the salient points of our amendments.

First, the principal question that burns through this issue is whether or not opening the retail industry to foreigners will kill the local retail industry. The simple answer to this question is "No." This is exactly the experience that China had when their retail industry was opened to foreign investments back in 1992. As expected, the shift in their policy on retail trade caused an increase in the number of foreign retailers and even though foreign retailers' participation in the market increased and local retailers' participation decreased, the actual number of local retailers increased. Simply put it this way. When there were only around 1.9 million local retailers before the retail trade was liberalized, the influx of foreign investments allowed the entire industry to grow and local retailers grew to over 2.5 million. This happened because as the collective income of the country rose, so did the consumption of the population. The increased consumption benefitted both local and foreign retailers because they shared a much larger pie.

*At this juncture, the Deputy Speaker relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Rodante D. Marcoleta.*

Another real-world example of the benefits of a liberal retail trade policy is the retail industry of Singapore. Singapore is a small island not much larger than Metro Manila but despite its small geographical land area and the lack of substantial manufacturing industries, it became known as the biggest shopping and tourism haven in Southeast Asia. This was made possible because of its liberal stance on retail trade. Now, despite having a liberal approach on retail trade, Singapore has not killed its local industry. It still boasts a burgeoning scene of local retailers that challenge foreign retailers for a market share. These local retailers benefitted from the entry of foreign retailers because they provided economic growth. On top of that, they

were able to benefit from the free flow of information and technology transfers that were introduced by foreign retailers through global best practices.

This Representation would like the Philippines to grow and become a world-class shopping and tourism destination like Singapore. From high-street brands to high-end labels and everything in between, the diversity of products have not only benefitted Singaporeans but also attracted almost 18.5 million tourists a year. Its reputation as a shopping destination has made Singapore the second most visited city in the Asia-Pacific and the fifth in the world. This definitely not only benefits the retail industry but also the tourism industry and other related industries.

Second, foreign retailers will no longer need to partner with the oligarchs dominating our economy. Nowadays, when you enter the largest mall, supermarket, duty-free outlets or a similar establishment, we can see that almost 70 percent of their products are foreign brands. However, these foreign brands were only able to enter the Philippines because they partnered with the oligarchs who have controlled the market for decades. These oligarchs dictate the kind of foreign brands that the Filipino consumer can enjoy because only they have the capitalization to set-up operations here.

With the amendments introduced in House Bill No. 59, we will give not only the big retailers but also the small and medium-scale foreign retailers the chance to set up shop here without partnering with the oligarchs. The foreign establishments can come here and set up shop on their own or partner with smaller Filipino businesses who can provide capitalization and experience. These amendments will end the dominance that these oligarchs have exerted on the Filipino people.

Third, opening the retail industry to foreign retailers will also provide more jobs for Filipinos in the Philippines. When foreign investors set up shop here, they will inevitably hire local employees who know the culture and can directly interact with the Filipino consumer, and the more foreign retailers who establish a Philippine presence, the more Filipinos they will need to hire. We will then no longer need to send large numbers of OFWs abroad just because they cannot find jobs at home. We will be creating jobs for them here in the Philippines. The creation of jobs is not limited to those directly involved in the retail industry. By welcoming foreign retail investors, we will be creating jobs at every stage of the retail process and in all other industries that service the retail sector. This means there will be more jobs in industries like advertising, construction, distribution, design, logistics, media and manpower agencies, just to name a few. This comes after data from the Philippine Statistics Authority showed that the wholesale and retail industry is the second biggest employer of Filipino labor. It accounts



for 19.6 percent of total employment or about a fifth of the total employment in the country. Hence, if we can encourage more foreign investments into the country by liberalizing our retail trade sector, this would mean more employment opportunities for Filipinos.

Fourth, Filipino consumers will inevitably benefit from the influx of new products. The entry of foreign retailers in the Philippine market will create healthy competition for goods and services. A competitive market will in turn provide more choices and more choices means better quality products at lower prices for the Filipino.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, to ensure the protection of our local industry, House Bill No. 59 has set up measures to ensure the growth of Filipino-owned micro, small and medium enterprises. House Bill No. 59 ensures that businesses with a paid-up capital of less than US\$200,000 or roughly around P10,000,000 are still reserved exclusively for micro and small enterprises wholly-owned by Filipinos, while a minimum of 10 percent of the foreign retailers' stock inventory is mandated to be made in the Philippines. These twin measures are designed to protect our MSMEs while at the same time, make the Philippine market more globally competitive.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, the formula for economic success proposed by House Bill No. 59 is simple. More retailers equals healthier competition. Healthier competition equals more choices for the consumer. More choices for the consumer equals lower prices, better quality and new innovations.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from the Second District of Tarlac, Hon. Victor A. Yap, for his sponsorship speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). Hon. Victor Yap is recognized.

REP. YAP (V.). Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for this opportunity. I have prepared a sponsorship speech for House Bill No. 59 or the Retail Trade Liberalization Act amendments but in the interest of time, and may I say that the honorable Chairman of the Trade and Industry Committee has coherently and completely laid out the predicates and arguments of the benefits of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, may I please just give a copy of this sponsorship speech to the Rules Committee to be inserted in the Congressional Record.

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

REP. YAP (V.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

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

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). With leave of the House, the session is suspended.

*It was 5:56 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 5:56 p.m., the session was resumed.*

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 59

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 59.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE HOUR

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the Privilege Hour.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

\* See ANNEX (printed separately)

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Lady from BAYAN MUNA Party-List, Rep. Eufemia "Ka Femia" C. Cullamat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). Honorable Cullamat is recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. CULLAMAT

REP. CULLAMAT. Maraming, maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

Magandang gabi sa ating lahat. Mr. Speaker, mga kapwa ko Mambabatas, sa gitna ng tumitinding atake sa mga mamamayan na nagaganap ngayon, hayaan ninyo akong magsalita para sa milyon-milyong katutubo at mamamayang Pilipino.

Ang kinalakihan kong lupang ninuno sa kabundukan ng Lianga, Surigao del Sur ay napakayaman. Tahimik ang aming lugar at sagana ang aming buhay ngunit sa lahat ng ito, nagbago ang buhay namin at nagkagulo magmula noong pumasok ang isang logging company, the Lianga Bay Logging Company, sa aming lupang ninuno noong 1960s.

Sa bundok ng Lianga, Surigao del Sur, doon ako isinilang at lumaki. Inabutan ko pa at natamasa ang sariling pamamaraan sa pamumuhay at pagpapaunlad ng aming mga magulang ng aming mga sakahan at taniman. Ang kulturang ito ay mula pa sa aming mga ninuno at matagumpay na naisagawa sa pamamagitan ng pagtutulungan sa pagbubungkal ng lupa, sa pagtatanim ng mga direktang makakain na mga produkto, kaya ramdam na ramdam ng buong komunidad ang sagana, maligaya at malayang buhay sa loob ng aming lupang ninuno.

G. Ispiker, ito ang nawala sa amin noong 1960 nang nakapasok ang Lianga Bay Logging Company, isang malaking kumpanya ng logging sa aming komunidad dahil pinagbawalan na kaming magdagdag ng sakahan para taniman ng aming makakain. Lumala ito noong 1984 nang nagsimula ang militarisasyon sa aming komunidad.

Hindi namin ramdam ang paggalang sa aming karapatan, at sa tagal na naming naninirahan sa lugar na dinatnan ng mga military ay nasaksihan namin ang ginawa nilang pambubugbog sa aming mga kalalakihan at ang pagsasamantala sa aming mga kababaihan. Doon kami nakaranas ng matinding diskriminasyon dahil kami ay nilalait, pinagtatawanan, pinuputol ang mga puno ng aming kagubatan at hinuhuli ang aming mga magulang na nakikitang nagtatanim sa lupain. Ginawang kriminal ang aming mga magulang na nagtatanim at maging ang pagtatanim sa aming sariling lupaing ninuno ay ginawang krimen.

Lalo pang lumalala ito nang pumasok ang minahan sa aming lupang ninuno, ang Benguet Mining Company na naglulunsad ng exploration na wala ding pahintulot

namin. Grabe ang aming dinanas na hirap sa ilalim ng mga kumpanyang yumaman mula sa lupang ninuno, ngunit dahil sa pagkakaisa ng mga katutubo sa paninindigan sa karapatan sa lupang ninuno at sariling pagpapasya, sila ay napalayas at buhay pa ang kagubatan sa aming lupang ninuno.

G. Ispiker, sa dinami-rami ng paghihirap na dinadaan namin noong 1991 ay napagpasyahan naming bumaba sa bayan at tumungo kami sa simbahan at malaki ang pagpapasalamat namin dahil tinanggap kami ni Father Ivan Novo at ni Msgr. Ereneo Amantillo at doon namin ibinahagi ang kalagayan na dinanas namin dahil sa operation ng mga military. Sa loob ng tatlong buwan, habang nasa Pastoral Center kami, palagi kaming kinakausap ni Monsignor at sinusuportahan niya ang aming paniniwala na ang lupang ninuno ay handog sa atin ni Magbabaya o ang Maylikha at dito nakaugat ang lahat ng buhay. Binabahagi din namin ang aming pangangailangan sa edukasyon para sa aming mga anak upang maugnayan namin ang mas maunlad na kultura sa pamamagitan ng edukasyon at ipinakilala ni Msgr. Ereneo Amantillo sa amin ang Literacy and Numeracy Program ng Diocese ng Tandag, Surigao del Sur, ang Tribal Filipino Program of Surigao del Sur. Sinabi niya sa amin na kailangan magkaisa kaming mga Lumad dahil kung hindi kami magkakaisa ay walang sinumang tutulong at reespeto sa amin.

Kaya sa pag-uwi namin sa aming komunidad, G. Ispiker, pinagkaisa namin ang aming hanay upang mas paunlarin ang aming ekonomiya, politika at kultura. Taong 1996 noong nabuo ang aming organisasyon, ang MAPASU. Taong 1996 nang pormal na nagbukas ang klase ng Tribal Filipino Program of Surigao del Sur. Noong 2004, nang maitayo namin, sa aming sariling pagsisikap at pagsasakripisyo, ang Alternative Learning Center for Agricultural and Livelihood Development or ALCADDEV ngunit ngayon, nakaambang pumasok muli ang mga minahan sa aming kabundukan, kung kaya't papatindi ang militarisasyon sa aming mga komunidad. Sa lupang ninuno ng mga katutubo sa Lianga, mayroon nang coal operating contracts ang limang minahan na saklaw ang mahigit na 25,000 ektarya sa Andap Valley Complex. Ito ang rason kung bakit papatindi ang militarisasyon at pag-atake sa mga komunidad ng mga Lumad sa Mindanao.

Sa aming komunidad sa Simowao, Lianga, Surigao del Sur sa kasalukuyan, halos apat na buwan na nagkampo ang mga militar doon sa amin, sa komunidad namin mismo. Natutulog sa birthing clinic, sa bahay ng mga residente, naka-setup ang mga tent sa gitna ng mga bahay. Sa umaga, nagroronda sila sa komunidad dala ang mga baril, at sa gabi ay maingay na nag-iinuman. Pinasok ang cottage ng aming mga guro at pilit na pinapabigay ang listahan ng lahat ng mag-aaral sa aming

mga paaralan. Pinipilit maging CAFGU ang aming mga kalalakihan. Hindi makapunta sa sakahan ang mga residente dahil sa takot at pumupuslit na lang sa sakahan upang makakuha ng makakain. Para kaming ginawang magnanakaw sa aming sariling lupang ninuno. Para kaming bumalik sa madilim na panahon ng mga logging at mining company.

Sino ba naman ang papayag sa ganitong kalagayan? Hindi makatao ang nagaganap na militarisasyon sa aming mga komunidad. Ang pagkampo sa mga pampublikong lugar ay labag sa batas. Malinaw sa amin na hindi para sa kapayapaan ng komunidad at hindi para sa aming kapakanan ang nagaganap na militarisasyon. Kaya kami ay nagpunta sa iba't-ibang tanggapan upang idulog ang aming mga panawagan upang igiit ang aming batayang karapatan. Nagkaroon ng dayalogo noong October 21 ang Lumadong komunidad at ang mga lokal na pamahalaan at nandoon ako at saka si Congressman Caloy Zarate. Nakita ng buong komunidad kung paano hinati at pinag-away-away ng estado kaming mga Lumad sa pamamagitan ng paggamit ng mga kapwa Lumad, mga pekeng lider or mga “tribal dealer” ng aming mga lupang ninuno na siyang nagpapalaganap ng mga kasinungalingan.

G. Ispiker, ang lahat ng ito ay paninirang-puri sa mga Lumad na organisadong ipagtatanggol ang lupang ninuno. Ito ay bahagi lamang ng sistematikong atake upang patahimikin at takutin kaming mga katutubo hanggang tuluyan nang makapasok ang mapanirang mga proyekto sa Andap Valley, sa Pantaron Mountain Range at sa mga kabundukan ng Mindanao, ang huling front ng ating bansa. Ito ang nais makamit ng whole-of-nation approach bunga ng EO 70. Ito ang layunin ng nagpapatuloy na martial law sa Mindanao ngunit sa tumitinding atake, lalong tumitindi ang aming pagkakaisa at determinasyon upang depensahan ang lupang ninuno mula sa pandarambong.

G. Ispiker, ang pamumuhay, paninirahan at pamumuno ng mga katutubo ay mahigpit na nakaugat sa lupang ninuno. Kinikilala itong sagrado dahil ito ang pundasyon ng buhay, pananampalataya at libingan ng aming mga ninuno. Dito nakaugat ang pagkilala sa sarili, sa tribo, sa kasaysayan at sa salinlahi. Ang lahat ng likas-yaman na nasa ibabaw at ilalim ng lupa ay kinikilala na bahagi ng lupang ninuno. Ganito kahalaga ang lupang ninuno para sa amin kung kaya't hindi namin ito basta-bastang ipagpapalit sa salapi. Nais naming linangin ang aming lupang ninuno na sustainable at tutugon sa pangangailangan ng mga mamamayan. Ang mga kabundukang aming pinoprotektahan ay siya ring pinagmumulan ng tubig at iba pang likas na yaman sa mga mamamayan sa kapatagan. Ayaw nating masira ang ating mga kabundukan dahil sa pandarambong ng mga dayuhang minahan at plantasyon at iba pang

mapanirang mga proyekto na ang iilan lang ang makikinabang at wawasak sa ating Inang Kalikasan.

Sa esensiya, ito ang gusto naming ipagtanggol at dapat na ang gobyerno ay kasama namin sa pagtatanggol ng kalikasan at kagalingan ng lahat ng mamamayan. Pero, G. Ispiker, bakit tila ang mga ahensiya pa ng gobyerno ang naghahawan ng daan para mapapasok ang mapanirang mga proyektong ito?

Nang naranasan namin ang pagpatay ng aming dalawang lider at guro sa madugong Lianga massacre noong September 1, 2015, isang taon kaming nasa evacuation center ngunit hindi kami nawalan ng pag-asa dahil maraming mamamayan ang tumutulong sa amin at nakakaunawa na wasto ang pagtatanggol namin ng aming lupa. Alam ng taumbayan na wasto lamang na ipagtatanggol natin ang mga kagubatan at kabundukang nagbibigay-buhay sa ating lahat mula sa pandarambong at mapanirang mga minahan, logging at plantasyon, at sa ganoon din ay dapat ang mga Kinatawan ng mamamayan, kasama na ang taumbayan, sa paggiit ng ating mga batayang karapatan. Makiisa sa ipinaglalaban ng mga katutubo ng malawak na hanay ng mamamayan.

G. Ispiker, ang ipinaglalaban ng mga katutubo at ang pagdepensa sa lupang ninuno ay lehitimo. Hindi ito pansariling interes lamang. Ito ay para sa kagalingan ng buong mamamayang Pilipino. Ang paggalang sa katutubong kaalaman ay mahalaga para sa tuloy-tuloy at makatarungang pag-unlad at angkop na pangangasiwa sa ating Inang Kalikasan. Patuloy naming igigiit na kilalanin ang aming mga batayang karapatan at karapatan bilang katutubo. Panindigan ang aming karapatan sa lupang ninuno at sariling pagpapasya. Labanan ang tumitinding pasismo. Palayasin ang mga militar at para-militar na nanggugulo sa aming mga komunidad. Tutulan ang pandarambong sa mga lupang ninuno.

G. Ispiker, ito lamang po. Maraming salamat at magandang hapon ulit sa ating lahat.

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

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move to refer the speech of Honorable Cullamat to the Committee on Rules.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session for a few minutes.

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

*It was 6:11 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 6:17 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). The session is resumed. The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CHANGE OF REFERRAL OF CERTAIN MEASURES

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move for the change of referral of the following measures:

1. House Bill No. 1911, from the Committee on Civil Service and Professional Regulation to the Committee on Trade and Industry;
2. House Bills No. 3953 and 4908, from the Committee on Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources to the Committee on Cooperatives Development; and
3. House Bills No. 287, 619, 1058, 2436, 2851 and 3024, from the Committee on Local Government to the Committee on Cooperatives Development.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move for a few minutes suspension of session.

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

*It was 6:18 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 6:22 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). The session is resumed. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of honorable Minority Leader Bienvenido M. Abante Jr. of the Sixth District of Manila. They are Bishop Reuben Abante, Dr. Hernes Abante, Missionary Dennis Ebert, Pastor Ramel

Porto, Pastor Joe Belesario from Quezon City, Pastor Francis Salonga, Pastor Dave Maklay, Pastor Miller Armendez, Pastor Marben Frias, Pastor Dan Dexter Gubat, Pastor Romeo Ballitoc, Pastor Wilver Wegan, Pastor Carlito Balo of Bohol, Pastor Joey Reyes, Pastor Joel Rabi, Pastor Jojo Santos, Pastor Daniel Delfin, Pastor Jeremias Quiom, Pastor Robert Malit, Pastor Jimbo Cortes, Pastor Joe Oeter Nicor, Pastor Arnel Arquisola of Capiz, Pastor Ramon Rosauro, Pastor Roseller Orolfo of Iriga, Pastor Joel Orcine, Pastor Willington Ogorida, Pastor Gary Romero, Pastor Rene Moralde, Pastor Jeff Lazaro, Pastor Reyzel Cayanan, Pastor Emerson Cruz of Pampanga, Pastor Jojo Tuason of Isabela, Pastor Rene Moralde, Pastor Ed Taguiam, Pastor Kenneth Gomez, Pastor Kim Bryan Matito, Pastor Elmer Duque, Pastor Roberto Tolentino, Pastor Perfecto De Vera, Pastor Bert Chan of Bulacan, Pastor Ervi Castillo, Preacher Robert Blusa, Preacher Jerry Parna, Preacher Romy Fadriguela, Preacher Paquito Gabrud, Preacher Cris Torres, Preacher Wilfredo Glinoga, Preacher Rey Balagtas, Preacher Peter Lee, Preacher Dan Lorenzo, Preacher Ric Malit, Susan Perez and Rhoda Alegre, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). The guests of the honorable Minority Leader are all formally welcomed to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize Hon. Bienvenido M. Abante Jr. for his privilege speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). Honorable Abante is recognized. (*Applause*)

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ABANTE

REP. ABANTE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This group of pastors here, before I start, Mr. Speaker, is only part of the BIBLEMODE or the Bible Believers League for Democracy and—nakalimutan ko ah, all right—which has about 6,000 member pastors all over the world.

Mr. Speaker, friends and colleagues in the House, mga kababayan, magandang gabi po sa inyong lahat.

I rise in defense of my constituents and the Filipino consumers. Today, almost all oil companies raised gasoline prices with increases ranging between 80 to 85 centavos per liter. Only one oil company did not raise gasoline prices this week and instead, it will be implementing its new rates tomorrow. I think it was about two weeks ago when the oil companies announced, Mr. Speaker, that they are lowering down the prices of oil to 10 centavos

per liter but four days later, they announced that they are raising the prices of gasoline to 80 centavos per liter, Mr. Speaker. That has been going on for years and this is not the first time all prices have increased this year. In September, oil companies raised gasoline prices twice. On September 17, oil companies raised the pump prices of gasoline and diesel by one peso and 85 centavos per liter, respectively. Less than a week later, oil companies again raised prices, with increases of P2.35 per liter for gasoline and P1.80 per liter for diesel.

The oil companies defended these increases, Mr. Speaker, by blaming the attacks on two oil plants in Saudi Arabia, attacks that supposedly knocked out nearly 60 percent of the country's oil capacity and this is despite pronouncements from the Department of Energy before the Senate Committee on Energy that our country has adequate fuel supplies in the event that conditions worsened in the Middle East.

Thankfully, that did not happen. So, when the crisis passed, this Representation expected fuel prices to go down, and the prices did. But what did the DOE discover? According to the Department of Energy, they made computations and said that the numbers did not add up. In a statement issued on October 2, the DOE Secretary Alfonso G. Cusi said, and I quote: "In view of the apparent difference in the oil price rollback calculations between the Department of Energy (DOE) and oil firms, we issued Show-Cause Orders (SCOs) to 13 oil companies yesterday afternoon, October 1". At a Palace briefing that day, Assistant Secretary Leonido J. Pulido III explained that per their computations, the price reductions for gasoline was short by 22 centavos per liter and the rollback for diesel was short by .06 centavos.

Mr. Speaker, the surges in oil prices were not just sudden. As it was pointed out by a distinguished Member of the Minority, Marikina Rep. Stella Luz A. Quimbo, they were simultaneous, Mr. Speaker, at sabay-sabay po sila nagtaas ng presyo. Congresswoman Quimbo is an economist by profession. Although I am a preacher we both smell something fishy, Mr. Speaker. There were many instances when gasoline prices had gone up and also many instances that they had gone down, but the differences in gasoline prices at the beginning of the year compared to the prices of gasoline this month should give us a pause. May I just mention, Mr. Speaker, as of January 31, 2019, the prices of the lowest quality of gasoline ranged from P42.70 to P51.76. As of November 14, 2019, gasoline prices ranged from P44.20 to P57.14, Mr. Speaker. This, Mr. Speaker, translates to a steady price increase ranging from P1.50 to almost staggering P6.00 per liter of gasoline.

Hindi lang po ang frequency ang concern natin kung hindi ang rate ng pagtaas kumpara sa pagbaba. I also fear that the almost identical price increases and

the timing of the same indicated that oil companies, I repeat, may be colluding at the expense of the Filipino consumer. Akala ko ba ay mayroon po tayong tinatawag nating "fair competition"? Akala ko po ba, Mr. Speaker, noong hindi na po ni-regulate ng pamahalaan ang presyo ng krudo at ng langis, makikita po natin na nagkaroon na ng mga dagdag na mga oil players dito at magkakaroon ng fair competition subalit hindi po ito ang nakita natin. Ang nakikita po namin, Mr. Speaker, ay itong mga oil companies natin ay mayroong collusion, nag-uusap-usap kung anong presyo ng langis ang kanilang ibababa at kung kailan sila muli magtataas, Mr. Speaker. That is not fair competition, Mr. Speaker, kaya naman po, hindi ako nagugulat na may nagkaso sa mga ito. Last week, a consumer rights group filed a complaint with the Philippine Competition Commission alleging petroleum price fixing, cartel and collusion among 15 oil companies operating in our country.

I remember during the budget deliberations, sinabi ko po sa mga opisyal ng tinatawag nating Philippine Competition Commission or PCC na noon ko lamang narinig ang kanilang agency. Bakit po? Sapagkat wala silang ginagawa. So, I made a statement that I will do my best to dissolve this agency, the Philippine Competition Commission. Why? Because it is not doing anything and we are just giving big salaries to these officials who are not doing anything for our country at ngayon po, mayroon nang ginagawa kahit kaunti kaya iisipin ko pa kung ipapa-dissolve ko pa ang agency na ito. The said group, Laban Konsyumer, filed a complaint against oil companies for allegedly entering into pricing agreements that substantially prevent competition in retail and petroleum products. As what has been observed by myself and this advocacy group, the big and small oil companies adjust their prices by the same amount, which runs counter to the whole objective of deregulating the oil industry.

Mr. Speaker, four years ago, this august Body passed a law to prevent such shenanigans: Republic Act No. 10667, the Philippine Competition Law, a measure that prohibits pricing agreements that restrict competition. This law is the basis of the complaint currently lodged with the PCC, a body created by this law for that purpose. Malinaw po na kailangan ng taumbayan ng kakampi para ipagtanggol nila ang karapatan nila bilang consumer. Bakit po? Sapagkat ang mga may-ari ng oil companies na ito na mga bilyonaryo, kinukuha ang mga bilyon hindi po sa kanilang sarili kundi kinukuha ang bilyon sa mga milyon-milyong mga consumer na bumibili ng langis, Mr. Speaker. These, my friends and colleagues, are our constituents and we cannot allow companies that make billions of pesos prey on them for profit.

Noong isang araw, masabi ko lamang, when we had the Committee on Games and Amusements hearing— hindi po pala Games and Amusements. Doon po sa

isang Committee ng Information and Communications Technology—DICT, nandoon po ang representante ng Globe at representante ng Smart. Ipinapaliwanag po nila ang kanilang ginagawa sa internet. I asked the question and I said “Why is it that we have a bad internet connection in this country and our internet is the slowest internet all over the world?” Ang sabi nila, “because sa Vietnam daw po, 70,000 ang kanilang mga cell sites pero dito po sa Pilipinas, 18,000 lang.” Sabi ko, “Anong ginagawa ninyo? Mga bilyonaryo ang may-ari ng mga kumpanyang iyan kaya bakit hindi ninyo pabilisin ang internet natin dito? Samantalang kayo ay kumikita mula sa mga milyon-milyong consumer na mga mahihirap upang kayo ay maging mga bilyonaryo.”

I urge the PCC to look into these oil companies and act on this complaint with dispatch and call on the Department of Energy to fulfill its mandate to protect consumer welfare and ensure fair oil industry practices. The Filipino consumer has suffered enough, Mr. Speaker. It is time for the government to step up in their defense and ensure that they are not exploited for profit and are not victimized by corporate greed, Mr. Speaker.

Sobra na po ito. Tama na po ito. Tigilan na po ito.

Maraming, maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker. *(Applause)*

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

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize Hon. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate, for his interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). Honorable Zarate is recognized.

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat, G. Ispiker. Mamarapatin po ba ng ating kagalang-galang na Minority Leader na maglinaw ng ilang mga katanungan ng Kinatawan na ito?

REP. ABANTE. My privilege, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po, Mr. Minority Leader.

Una po, pinagpupugayan ko kayo dahil napakanapanahon po ang inyong paglatag nitong usapin ng pagtaas ng presyo ng langis at maging sa usapin ng serbisyo ng ating mga public utilities katulad po ng telecommunications companies.

Matanong ko lang, sa inyong palagay kagalang-galang na Minority Leader, Mr. Speaker, ano ba ang pinagmulan nitong masalimuot na problema na

kinakaharap at araw-araw ay nararanasan ng ating mga kababayan na parang wala po tayong kontrol sa pagtaas ng presyo ng langis?

REP. ABANTE. Ano po ang pinagmulan ng mga pagtaas na ito? Kung nais ninyo ng talagang tamang salita, ang panimula po nito ay katakawan—katakawan ng mga bilyonaryo sa bansa natin.

REP. ZARATE. Greed.

REP. ABANTE. Greed.

REP. ZARATE. Isang napakalaking kasalanan ang katakawan, tama po ba?

REP. ABANTE. Opo.

REP. ZARATE. Nabanggit ko po iyan dahil, kung maalaala ninyo at siguro kabahagi kayo ng Kamara o ng Kongresong ito, kung hindi man ay siguro matatandaan ninyo na noong 1998, ipinasa po ng Kongreso at naging batas ang Oil Deregulation Law. Sinabi noong 1998 na kailangang i-deregulate natin ang industriya ng langis para magkaroon ng kompetisyon at kung mayroong kumpetisyon, magmumura ang presyo ng langis. Ang tanong ko po, sa palagay ba ninyo ang objective ng batas na iyon, kung titingnan natin ngayon, ay nangyari nga ba? Nagmura nga po ba ang ating langis at ito ba ay nakatulong sa ating mga kababayan, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minority Leader?

REP. ABANTE. Naku, hindi po, Mr. Speaker. Hindi po sapagkat noong naging batas iyan, ako ay isa sa mga laban diyang sapagkat naniniwala ako na hindi po talaga magkakaroon ng fair competition dito.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po, Mr. Minority Leader.

Tama po. Kung ating babalikan, noong ipinasa ng Kongreso at naging batas ang Republic Act No. 8479, sinabi ng batas at ng authors nito na ang kompetisyon ay maganda sa ating ekonomiya pero kung titingnan po natin ngayon, ang naging papel ng ating pamahalaan at ng gobyerno ay parang announcer na lang. Ina-announce lang nila na bukas, “Hoy, mag-ingat kayo at tataas na naman ang presyo ng mga petrolyo. Hoy, bukas magro-rollback naman.” Magtataas o magro-rollback lang at kagaya ng nabanggit ninyo, bababa ng 10 sentimos pero sa susunod na araw ay magtataas naman ng piso kada litro.

Iyon po ang naging kalakaran magmula ng maisabatas ang Republic Act No. 8479. Sa halip na, ang sabi po natin noon, buwagin ang cartel ng langis—ang four o three sisters ba iyon? Ngayon nga po, kayo na rin ang nagsabi at binanggit ninyo kanina

na kapag nagtataas sila, tayo ay nagtataka kung bakit halos pare-pareho rin iyong itinaas nila at pare-pareho rin iyong ibinaba ng presyo. Para bang sinasabi nila na ang kanilang ginagastos, ang cost of production and even the distribution of oil for each of these companies, malaki man o maliit, ay pare-pareho. Ano po ba ang palagay ninyo kung bakit ito nangyayari.

REP. ABANTE. Ako nga po ay nagtataka sapagkat kamakailan, noong binomba ng isang bansa ang dalawang oil plants sa Saudi Arabia, bigla kaagad nagkaroon ng news na baka tumaas ang presyo ng langis. Mayroon po akong tinanong na opisyal ng DOE. Sa palagay ko, ang tinanong ko pa nga yata ay si Secretary at ang sabi niya ay mayroon naman tayong sapat na supply. Sapat na supply ng langis na ang ibig sabihin ay hindi masyadong maaapektuhan sa pagtaas ng presyo nito pero wala pang isang linggo, Mr. Speaker, tumaas na at ang dahilan ay iyong pag-atake at pagbomba sa Saudi Arabia. Nakakapagtaka naman po, sa palagay ko, itong mga oil companies ay gustong-gustong magkaroon ng bombahan sa oil plants para magtaas sila ng presyo ng langis. Iyon ang akala ng mga tao. Hindi lang ako ito. Ito po ang akala ng karamihan sa taumbayan. I am just speaking in behalf of my constituents. Iyan po ang akala nila.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po, kagalang-galang na Minority Leader. Tama po kayo at lahat nga tayo ay nagtataka dahil sa pagkakaalam natin ay mayroon talaga silang isang buwan na buffer stock.

REP. ABANTE. Yes.

REP. ZARATE. Kaya kahit ngayong araw ay bombahin man ang pinagkukunan natin ng langis, hindi po dapat na sa susunod na araw ay automatic kaagad na tumaas ang presyo ng langis dahil iyong stock nila ay iyong dating stock pa rin. Iyon po ang ating pagkakaintindi diyan. Ang problema po talaga ngayon sa sinasabi nila na rehimen ng deregulation, naniniwala ba kayo na tayo ay bulag kung magkano talaga ang presyo ng langis galing sa ibang bansa na dadalhin dito hanggang sa pumping station. Alam po ba natin talaga kung magkano ang presyuhan, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ABANTE. Sa totoo lang po, Mr. Speaker, hindi ko alam. In fact, hindi naman sinasabi ng oil companies kung magkano talaga ang presyo sa merkado ng langis. Hindi natin alam kung ilang porsiyento ang kanilang pagtaas. Dapat lamang bantayan po ito ng ating pamahalaan. Mayroon po tayo ngayong tinatawag na Philippine Competition Commission na ayon sa batas, iyan ang dapat nilang gawin. Ang DOE naman ay dapat maging bantay po sa mga bagay na ito sapagkat ang naapektuhan dito ay hindi ang mga mayayaman na

kayang-kayang bumili ng gasolina. Ang naapektuhan po dito iyong maliliit na mga tao natin, hindi ang mga may-ari ng mga sasakyan, kung hindi iyong maliliit at mahihirap na gumagamit ng langis araw-araw, hindi lang po sa mga motorista kung hindi sa mga planta at iba pa.

REP. ZARATE. Tama po. Salamat, kagalang-galang na Minority Leader. Iyon po ang isyu talaga ang matagal ng isyu. Kahit noong una pa mang termino ng Kinatawag ito sa Sixteenth Congress and even in the Seventeenth Congress, pinupukpok na po natin ito. Kahit na nasa rehimen ng deregulation, iyon po ang nakita nating evils of deregulation, bulag tayo, hindi natin alam at kung ano na lang ang sabihin ng oil companies ay tinatanggap na lang natin kahit na hirap na hirap na ang mga mamamayan. Kaya po talagang itinutulak natin ang isa sa regulators natin, specifically the Department of Energy.

Para sa kaalaman ng ating kagalang-galang na Minority Leader, Mr. Speaker, during the Seventeenth Congress, naitulak natin ang Department of Energy na gumawa ng paraan. Sa halos maraming pagkakataon na sinasabi nilang “wala kaming magawa dahil deregulated na ang oil industry,” we pointed out to them, under Section 15, paragraph (a) of Republic Act No. 8479, kahit under the regime of deregulation, the Department of Energy has powers—for example, power to gather and compile appropriate information concerning the industry, and to investigate from time to time the organization, business, conduct, practices and management of any person or entity in the oil industry. Sa tingin po ng Kinatawag ito, ang section na ito gives ample power for the Department of Energy na tingnan kung paano ba ang presyuhan ng oil companies by asking information and because of that, actually, naglabas po talaga ang Department of Energy ng memorandum circular in April of this year, if I am not mistaken, mandating the unbundling of oil prices.

Ang ibig sabihin, katulad po ng presyuhan ng kuryente, dahil kahit ang kuryente ngayon ay deregulated na rin, at least sa kuryente ay nakikita na natin ang unbundling nito kung magkano ba ang binabayaran nating distribution cost, generation cost, missionary cost and all the other costs. Nandoon po lahat iyan sa ating resibo. Iyan po ang gusto nating mangyari din sa presyuhan ng langis.

Sa tingin po ba ninyo, kagalang-galang na Minority Leader, tama ang ganitong tunguhin ng ating Department of Energy or ng regulators patungkol sa presyuhan ng mga produktong langis, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ABANTE. In reality, mukhang ang inyong binanggit na probisyon ay hindi naman nangyayari, hindi po ginagawa. For example, kaya binanggit ko po iyong sinabi ni Marikina Rep. Stella Quimbo na bakit



sabay-sabay ang pagtaas ng presyo? Ngayon, sa tingin ko po, ang ating mga kababayan, kung tawagin, ay “very patient to a fault.” Ang ibig sabihin, tinatanggap nila ang mga bagay na ito kahit hindi nila gusto. This is being taken advantage by those people na napakayaman na. Tatal, hindi naman nagko-complain ang mga Pilipino. Tatal, hindi naman nagsasabi ang mga Pilipino. Tatal, hindi naman nag-aaklas ang mga Pilipino. Sa palagay ko, it is time that this House of the People should take the cudgels of really representing our people when it comes to a very unfair competition like this, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po, Mr. Minority Leader. Tama po iyon dahil mayroon nga itong Philippine Competition Commission pero babalikan ko lang po iyong usapin ng unbundling para hindi na tayo maging bulag. Noong nilabas ng Department of Energy ito, when it was about to be implemented, ang masama dito, kagalang-galang na Minority Leader, iyong oil companies po ay nagsampa ng kaso sa korte at sa kasalukuyan ay naka temporary restraining order o TRO.

REP. ABANTE. Kayo ang nagsampa?

REP. ZARATE. Ang big oil companies ang nagsampa sa korte laban sa DOE para hindi ho ma-implement iyong unbundling. Ano po ba ang nilalaman ng unbundling circular na iyon? Kung natuloy ho sana iyon, kung natuloy po at na-implement iyon dahil po sa matagal nating pagtutulak, malalaman natin kung magkano, halimbawa, on a weekly basis ang international content, ang presyuhan sa international market, including import and freight costs. Pangalawa, ano iyong taxes na binabayaran ng oil companies. Pangatlo, take components ng oil price, halimbawa for charges, cost for refining, storage, handling, marketing, profit margin, et cetera. Sa ganoong pagkakataon, kung magtataas sila bukas ng 80 sentimos ay malalaman natin kung justified ba iyon. They will have to reflect the components ng presyo na iyan. Kapag nag-roll back naman sila sa susunod na araw, the same thing, so, kaya ko po pino-point out ito dahil ito sana ang isa nating paraan, na kung hindi man natin mapipigilan ang pagtaas ng presyo, at least there will be transparency.

REP. ABANTE. Yes.

REP. ZARATE. Maging transparent sila at ito rin ang nagiging trend ngayon sa other sectors from energy. Maalala ko noon sa ating pagdinig naman sa telecommunications companies, we are also going to that direction. Ito bang charges natin sa internet, how were they able to come up with these charges? Sana nga po, kagalang-galang na Minority Leader at ng buong House, tingnan natin ito.

I will go further, Mr. Speaker. We have to revisit and review the Oil Deregulation Law dahil nakita na po natin iyong ipinangako ng Oil Deregulation Law na magmumura ang kuryente at makikinabang ang mamamayan dito pero ang nangyari po talaga, ang nakikinabang lang ay ang oil oligarchs. Ang mamamayan po, mura pa rin ng mura ngayon—pinagmumura na lahat dahil sila po ang nagpapasan. Siyempre, banggitin na rin natin ang naidagdag na presyo ng langis ngayon—since 2018, 2019 hanggang next year, papasanin natin ang excise taxes ng oil products dahil sa TRAIN Law.

So iyon po. Siguro, ang gusto nating puntuhin dito, and I hope sasang-ayon ang ating Minority Leader, we have to revisit this Oil Deregulation Law. Second, tingnan natin, nang dahil po sa privatization and deregulation, dati ang Petron—kung puwede lang isingit ito—ay pagmamay-ari ng gobyerno. Tama po ba?

REP. ABANTE. Yes.

REP. ZARATE. Tama po. Noon alam naman po natin na mayroong oil cartel, kapag nagtaasan sila ng presyo, ang panglaban natin ay ang Petron dahil ang Petron ay pagmamay-ari ng Estado, ng gobyerno, at hindi negosyo ang kaniyang sadya. Kaya kahit tumaas ang presyo ng ilang oil companies, mababa ang presyo ng Petron.

REP. ABANTE. Mayroon pa po ba kayong balita, Mr. Speaker? Balita ko ang Petron ay pag-aari na ng Saudi Arabia. Ang ibig sabihin, kung ang Saudi Arabia po ay isa sa mga may-ari ng Petron, dapat mababa ang langis at gasolina nito—dapat mababa.

Gusto ko pong sabihin din naman exactly, Mr. Speaker, ang panawagan ko na magkaroon ng transparency dito, ang panawagan ko na ang DOE na nangangalaga ng ating enerhiya should be the lead agency upang tawagan at talagang sabihin sa ating oil companies, “O maging transparent kayo. Sabihin ninyo sa amin kung bakit kayo nagtaas. Sabihin ninyo sa amin kung bakit kayo magbababa. Sabihin ninyo sa amin kung bakit kinakailangang magtaas ng presyo ng gasolina next week.”

REP. ZARATE. Yes. Tama po. Salamat, kagalang-galang na Minority Leader. Iyon nga po ang dapat na direksiyon. Nakakalungkot lang pero nakakapanggalit din dahil na-TRO nga ang direksiyon kung saan patungo ang ating energy sector. Itong pagtaas sa presyo ng langis na halos wala nang kontrol ang ating pamahalaan, ano po ba sa tingin ninyo, maliban sa panukala nating i-review ang Oil Deregulation Law. Second, if possible, i-renationalize uli, ang ibig sabihin, bilhin uli siguro ng gobyerno ang Petron. Ano po sa tingin ninyo ang puwedeng magawa ng House of Representatives para

maibsan ang problemang pinapasan ng ating mga kababayan, G. Ispiker, Mr. Minority Leader?

REP. ABANTE. Tama po kayo, kinakampihan ko, Mr. Speaker, ang pag-review sa Oil Deregulation Law. Tama po kayo, kung kinakailangan po na ibalik natin ang regulatory power ng gobyerno, ibalik natin. Kinakailangan na ang House of the People ay talagang tingnan na mabuti kung ano po ang magagawa natin upang ang mga nagtataasan na presyo ng langis, ng kuryente, ng tubig, ay mabigyan natin ng lunas sapagkat naniniwala po ako na hindi magtatagal, mawawalan na ng pasensiya ang taong bayan.

Sinabi ko po kanina sa isang committee hearing that those who have less in life must have more of law. Iyon ang nais kong sabihin pero mukhang hindi nangyayari ito, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat, kagalang-galang na Minority Leader. So, kayo po ay sumasang-ayon sa mga panukala na katulad sa nangyayari ngayon sa kuryente, na kahit mayroon tayong maraming puna pa rin diyan pero sa ngayon, kapag nagtataas ng kuryente, ang Meralco ay kailangang mag-file ng petisyon sa Energy Regulatory Commission.

REP. ABANTE. Yes. I agree.

REP. ZARATE. Kayo ba ay sumasang-ayon doon sa panukala na ibalik din natin ang ganitong kalakaran pagdating po sa presyuhan ng langis, Mr. Minority Leader.

REP. ABANTE. Yes.

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat po.

So, ang lumalabas po ngayon ay talagang kahit in a regime of what we have now, a deregulatory regime, ay mayroong puwedeng gawin ang pamahalaan, mayroong puwedeng gawin ang ating mga regulators. Ang nagiging problema po natin ngayon ay kung nagiging passive din ang ating mga regulators, iyong tinatawag nilang regulatory capture na kahit mayroong poder ay hindi ho ini-exercise ang poder at diyan ho siguro papasok ang ating kagawaran, ang ating Kongreso in the exercise of our oversight function, na pukpukin ang mga ahensiyang ito na gawin ang kanilang duties and obligation especially to protect the interest of our consumers, Mr. Minority Leader, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Sana po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the passive attitude of the government o iyong mga ibang ahensiya natin, iyong ating mga regulators ay hindi po ito bordering o tumatama sa korapsyon sapagkat ang kalaban po natin dito ay hindi mga mayayaman. Ang kalaban po natin dito iyong mga

may-ari ng mga oil companies na kayang-kaya nilang umikot sa batas, kayang-kaya po nilang to go around the law, kayang-kaya po nilang magbayad ng anuman, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Kaya hindi po ako kailanman natatakot sabihin na tigilan na po natin ang corruption tungkol dito sapagkat corruption na naman ang usapan na ito.

REP. ZARATE. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Minority Leader, Mr. Speaker. Tama po dahil sa totoo lang po, taon-taon ay itong mga oil companies, hindi naman ho nagre-report na nalulugi sila.

REP. ABANTE. Hindi po.

REP. ZARATE. Bilyon-bilyon ho ang kinikita nila and in fact, tumataas ho, pataas nang pataas iyong kita nila. Halimbawa po, in 2018, ang Petron lang po, iyong kanyang income tumaas ng 16 percent and it posted a P9.5 billion income. Bilyon po iyan. So, kaya po talagang ang hamon din, sa tingin ko and I hope sumasang-ayon kayo, na sa napakaraming panukalang batas at panukalang resolusyon na tina-tackle ng Kongreso, hamon din sa atin na bigyan din ng priority ang mga ganitong bagay na araw-araw ay may epekto ho sa atin—lalong-lalo na sa ating mga ordinaryong mamamayan. We can debate and discuss so much about how devaluation will be made on a particular property, but everyday, we are faced with the situation, iyong hand-to-mouth situation noong ating mga kababayan na affected by a single increase in the prices of oil the next day or an increase in the price of electricity or water for that matter.

REP. ABANTE. Katulad lang po iyan, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, noong aming Committee hearing ng Metro Manila Development at pinag-uusapan po natin iyong tubig dahil magkakaroon ng rationing sapagkat bumababa po iyong water level sa Angat Dam. Kakampihan ko po sana iyong Manila Water at saka iyong Maynilad, sasabihin ko po sana na intindihin naman natin sila sapagkat kung talagang walang masyadong tubig sa Angat Dam, anong magagawa nila? Hindi naman pupuwede iyong desalinization sapagkat mas mahal. Aba, noong narinig ko ha, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, na kumita ang Manila Water ng P6 billion ngayong taon, at hindi pa tapos ang taon, at kumita ang Maynilad ng P7 billion, aba, pambihira naman. Ano bang ibig sabihin nito? Bakit para bang ang mga may-ari ng malalaking kumpanya, they are more profit-oriented than people-oriented? Ang pakiusap natin naman ay pansinin naman ang taong-bayan. Hindi po iyong tayo na lang ay rake ng rake in ng pera para magkaroon tayo ng maraming pera para tayong nakikipagtagisan ng sinong mauuna sa Forbes listahan ng mga mayayaman sa bansa natin.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po, Mr. Minority Leader, Mr. Speaker. Wala na po akong mga clarificatory questions. Gusto ko lang pong irehistro talaga na panahon na natingnan natin, that we have to really revisit and examine this regime of privatization and deregulation especially of our public utilities, especially of very sensitive products like oil. Ang ipinangako po nitong biyaya, at uulitin ko po, ay para raw sa ating mga mamamayan pero talagang hindi ho nangyayari. Kayo na rin po ang nagbanggit na ang nakinabang dito ay iyong mga oligarkiya, iyong mga power oligarchs, energy oligarchs, oil oligarchs, dahil taon-taon naman bilyong-bilyon ang kanilang kinikita pero iyong serbisyo papunta sa mamamayan ay really wanting. I hope this Congress, especially coming from us in the Minority, can make some inroads in pushing for important legislations that will address the concerns of our ordinary people.

Maraming salamat G. Ispiker, Mr. Minority Leader, for the chance of clarifying some points.

REP. ABANTE. Salamat po. Well, the only request I have, Mr. Speaker, ay sana po we will not provoke the patience of our people because it is wearing thin. Ako lang po ay nasusuya na, you know, at palagay ko, maraming taong-bayan natin ang nasusuya na rin.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

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

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize Hon. Sergio C. Dagooc of APEC Party-List for his interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). The Honorable Dagooc is recognized.

REP. DAGOOC. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Salamat po at may natitira pang oras. Ang Kagalang-galang po ba na Minority Leader ay tatanggap ng mga maiksing katanungan lang po lamang para makauwi na tayo?

REP. ABANTE. Opo. *(Laughter)*

REP. DAGOOC. Is the Minority Leader aware that there is a multiplier effect in the cost of fuel and oil in all of the sectors in the society?

REP. ABANTE. Please enlighten me, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. DAGOOC. Ang mga planta po natin, because I am in the power sector, sabi nga kanina ni kagalang-galang BAYAN MUNA Rep. Caloy Zarate,

na tumataas din ang presyo ng kuryente. Ang gusto ko lang ipaliwanag dito ay dapat maintindihan natin doon sa unbundled rate na mayroon pong generation.

Ang maaapektuhan lang po in any increase and decrease in the oil price is iyong generation lang po hindi po iyong distribution kasi nakapako po iyong distribution charge ng mga distribution utilities like Meralco ang electric cooperatives. Ang apektado po dito na sinasabi ko na multiplier effect is, ang panggatong po sa lahat ng mga planta na pinanggalingan po ng mga kuryente na dini-distribute ng mga distribution utilities ay may diesel pa po. Ang gamit po sa operation nila, sa mga kumpanya na iyon ay diesel din at saka gasoline doon sa mga sasakyan nila. So, the moment na magtaas po iyong presyo ay ipapasa po nila. Sa generation charge, dalawang klase po iyong babayaran ni distribution utilities sa pinanggalingan o pinagkunan nito na planta, iyong tinatawag na CRF o capital recovery fee na fixed po iyon for the whole duration of the contract. Iyong isa pa po ay iyong variable cost which is very dependent basically on the cost of fuel na panggatong sa planta.

Ngayon, during the importation pa lang ng oil na iyan, ng fuel na iyan, pinapatawan na po ng excise tax. Tax one, kapag iginatong mo na sa planta iyan, ang mapo-produce niya ay one-kilowatt hour, iyan ang magiging generation component kasi binibili namin sa planta iyan. Iyan ang generation charge, at mayroon na namang value-added tax iyon na 12 percent. Pagdaan nito sa transmission, systems loss, distribution, puro po may 12 percent na VAT iyon.

Ngayon, iyong mga kumpanya po, iyong mga industries na nagpo-produce ng construction materials and even in the services sector, kuryente po ang ginagamit. Hindi po sila makatakbo kung walang kuryente and since mahal na po iyong kuryente, dahil nagmahal iyong generation component ay ipapasa din po nila iyon sa end users. Ang lahat naman dito ay pasapasa ang nakaugalian at ang magsa-suffer po ay iyong end users dahil wala na pong mapasahang iba. In effect, magmamahal po iyong services, magmamahal po iyong mga products natin dahil tataas iyong production cost dahil gumagamit sila ng kuryente.

Pati po iyong tubig. Iyong tubig natin ngayon ay binobomba na po and pumps are using electricity. The moment na tumaas iyong cost of electricity, magmahal po iyong production ng tubig. Iyong mga water districts natin ngayon—na nagiging district na lang dahil walang water—binobomba na po nila ngayon iyong tubig and they are using electricity because these water pumps are driven by electricity. Ipapasa din po nila iyong cost doon sa consumer ng tubig.

REP. ABANTE. Ang ibig sabihin, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, na ang talagang apektado dito ay iyong end users.

REP. DAGOOC. Tama po iyon, end users, dahil lahat po ng manufacturing, pati iyong sa services sector, ipinapasa lang po nila iyong cost of production, cost of services with a net margin or a profit. Ngayon, iyong end users, iyong kumakain sa restaurant, iyong gumagamit noong mga products na iyon, sino ang papasahan nila e sila iyong gumagamit? So, they will end up paying all the costs na nag-multiply mula doon sa pagtaas ng fuel hanggang doon sa cost of services and products.

So, iyan lang po, Mr. Speaker, honorable Minority Leader, ang gusto kong ipaliwanag sa publiko, sa ating mga end consumers or end users.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you po for the enlightenment. Sa palagay ko ay napakahalaga po nito sa mga taong nakikinig po sa atin ngayon.

REP. DAGOOC. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we terminate the Privilege Hour.

Mr. Speaker, sorry, correction—I move to refer the speech of the honorable Minority Leader Benny Abante,...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). Including the interpellations.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. ... including the interpellations, to the Committee on Rules.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we terminate the Privilege Hour.

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

The Privilege Hour is terminated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 386

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that

we consider House Resolution No. 386, contained in Committee Report No. 69, as reported out by the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). 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. 386, entitled: RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE 2019 ASEAN-REPUBLIC OF KOREA COMMEMORATIVE SUMMIT (ARCS) AND WELCOMING THE BILATERAL SUMMIT BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

#### ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 386

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 386.

I so move.

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

House Resolution No. 386 is adopted.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until three o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, November 20, 2019.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Marcoleta). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the session is adjourned until Wednesday, November 20, 2019, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

*It was 7:14 p.m.*