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CALL TO ORDER

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

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

Please rise for a short prayer to be led by the honorable Deputy Speaker Evelina Escudero.

Everybody rose for the Invocation.

INVOCATION

REP. ESCUDERO. *Heavenly Father, as we gather this afternoon in this session, we ask You to be in our midst. Enlighten our hearts and minds, and help us make decisions that will be pleasing to You. Help us discuss pressing matters at hand in a reasonable way and to be willing to give up having our own way for the good of all.*

Lord God, we also ask You to make this session productive and as should be in the case in all our endeavors as legislators. Help us to always uphold the interests of our constituents as well as the interests of the Filipinos in general.

We also include in our prayers the victims of recent calamities, of the earthquakes in Mindanao and other calamities in the other parts of the country. May they not despair and find hope in You. May we also open our hearts to help them in any way that we can.

All these we ask in Jesus name. Amen.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

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

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

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

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mme. Speaker, I move that we defer the calling of the roll.

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

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mme. Speaker, I move for the deferment of the approval of the Journal of the previous session.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mme. Speaker, I move that we now proceed to the Reference of Business.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Secretary General will please read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 5510, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE MANUFACTURE, USE, SALE, PACKAGING, DISTRIBUTION AND ADVERTISEMENTS OF VAPOR PRODUCTS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Herrera-Dy

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

House Bill No. 5511, entitled:
“AN ACT AMENDING EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 209, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE FAMILY CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, AS AMENDED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 227”

By Representative Guico
TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 5512, entitled:
“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE RULES AND POLICIES ON THE DOMESTIC ADMINISTRATIVE ADOPTION PROCEEDING OF FILIPINO AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Saulog
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 5513, entitled:
“AN ACT STRENGTHENING EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10410, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘EARLY YEARS ACT OF 2013’, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Acop
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 5514, entitled:
“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NO CALLS AND NO TEXT REGISTRATION SYSTEM AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Romulo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

House Bill No. 5515, entitled:
“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A HEALTH PROMOTION FUND AND HEALTH PROMOTION COMMISSION TO OVERSEE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HEALTH PROMOTION IN THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Nograles (Juan)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 5516, entitled:
“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL POLICY IN PREVENTING TEENAGE PREGNANCIES, INSTITUTIONALIZING SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR TEENAGE

PARENTS, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Nograles (Juan)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON POPULATION AND FAMILY RELATIONS

House Bill No. 5517, entitled:
“AN ACT RECOGNIZING WESTFIELDS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, INC., AS AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION OF INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER, GRANTING CERTAIN PREROGATIVES CONDUCIVE TO ITS GROWTH AS SUCH, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Lazatin
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5518, entitled:
“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR DRIVERS’ EDUCATION AS AN ELECTIVE FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS”

By Representative Lazatin
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5519, entitled:
“AN ACT CONVERTING THE MABALACAT CITY EXTENSION OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) LOCATED IN MABALACAT CITY, PAMPANGA INTO A REGULAR LTO DISTRICT OFFICE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Lazatin
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 5520, entitled:
“AN ACT STRENGTHENING FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS IN SCHOOLS AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10611”

By Representative Escudero
TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FOOD SECURITY

House Bill No. 5521, entitled:
“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Fernandez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 5522, entitled:
“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE INCLUSION

OF THE STUDY OF THE CONSTITUTION AS A SUBJECT IN THE CURRICULUM OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS UNDER THE ENHANCED BASIC EDUCATION (K TO 12) PROGRAM”

By Representatives Defensor (Lorenz) and Gorriceta

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5523, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING HOTELS AND RESORTS WITH SWIMMING POOLS AND BEACH FRONTS TO EMPLOY LIFEGUARDS”

By Representative Aragon

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

House Bill No. 5524, entitled:

“AN ACT REORGANIZING THE COMELEC OFFICES”

By Representative Dalipe

TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND ELECTORAL REFORMS

House Bill No. 5525, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY PASILMANTA IN ZAMBOANGA CITY, TO BE KNOWN AS PASILMANTA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Dalipe

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5526, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE RULES AND POLICIES ON THE DOMESTIC ADMINISTRATIVE ADOPTION PROCEEDING OF FILIPINO AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Villafuerte

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 5527, entitled:

“AN ACT FURTHER EXPANDING THE JURISDICTION OF THE METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURTS, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS IN CITIES, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS, AND MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURTS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE

‘JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980,’ AS AMENDED”

By Representative Villafuerte

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 5528, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE PHILIPPINE MARSHAL SERVICE, DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONS AND POWERS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Villafuerte

TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 5529, entitled:

“AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE ADVANCE USE OF THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS’ 2019 EXCESS TARIFF REVENUES FROM RICE IMPORTATION, AND OTHER POSSIBLE SOURCES, AS A SPECIAL EMERGENCY FUND SETTING-UP THE RICE FARMER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AS DIRECT CASH TRANSFERS TO RICE FARMERS”

By Representative Villafuerte

TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 5530, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-PURPOSE FISHERY BREEDING FARM AND HATCHERY FOR THE PRODUCTION OF MILKFISH (BANGUS) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CARMEN AND IN THE ISLAND GARDEN CITY OF SAMAL (IGACOS), PROVINCE OF DAVAO DEL NORTE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Dujali

TO THE COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES RESOURCES

House Bill No. 5531, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND BENEFITS TO THE DEPENDENTS OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES (AFP), PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP), BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION (BFP), BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY (BJMP), NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (NBI), PHILIPPINE DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY (PDEA), PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD (PCG) AND BUREAU

OF CORRECTIONS (BUCOR) WHO ARE KILLED OR PERMANENTLY INCAPACITATED WHILE IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTY OR BY REASON OF THEIR OFFICE OR POSITION”

By Representative Hernandez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY AND THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY

House Bill No. 5532, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING AN ADDITIONAL BRANCH OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE PROVINCE OF LAGUNA TO BE STATIONED AT THE MUNICIPALITY OF LOS BAÑOS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14, PARAGRAPH (E) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Mariano-Hernandez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 5533, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TESDA) TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT CENTER IN THE CITY OF CABUYAO, PROVINCE OF LAGUNA, TO BE KNOWN AS THE CABUYAO CITY TESDA TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT CENTER, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Mariano-Hernandez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 533, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION APPEALING TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR TO IMPLEMENT ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS, THE PROPOSAL OF A ‘FOUR-DAY WORK WEEK’ ”

By Representative Barzaga
TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Resolution No. 534, entitled:

“RESOLUTION FOR THE SPECIAL

COMMITTEE ON BASES CONVERSION, OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE RESOLUTION OF THE SANGGUNIANG BAYAN OF CAPAS, TARLAC, REQUESTING FOR A REVIEW OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7227 OR PROCLAMATION NO. 163, SERIES OF 1993, TO EXCLUDE FOR MILITARY USE PORTIONS OF ZONE C (CROW VALLEY), IN THE SAID MUNICIPALITY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Cojuangco, Yap (Victor) and Villanueva (Noel)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMUNICATION

Letter dated November 4, 2019 of Delfin N. Lorenzana, Secretary, Department of National Defense, submitting the Department’s report on the implementation of Martial Law in Mindanao covering the month of August 2019.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Natural Resources (Committee Report No. 84), re H.B. No. 4119, entitled:

“AN ACT REVERTING FISH PONDS WHICH HAVE BEEN UNUTILIZED OR ABANDONED FOR A PERIOD OF THREE (3) YEARS TO FORESTLANDS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 43 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 705, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED FORESTRY REFORM CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Barzaga and Villarica
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

PRIVILEGE HOUR

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mme. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move that we open the Privilege Hour. I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mme. Speaker, I now move that the Gentleman from the Second District of Maguindanao, the Hon. Esmael G. Mangudadatu, be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

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

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. MANGUDADATU

REP. MANGUDADATU. Thank you so much, my colleagues. Mme. Speaker, thank you.

Mme. Speaker, my venerable colleagues in this august Chamber, Ladies and Gentlemen: *Assalamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wah Barakatuho!*

A pleasant afternoon to one and all.

A few days from now, a group of people will be commemorating the memory of their departed loved ones who passed away in the most gruesome election-related violence in our country and in what was also dubbed as the “single deadliest event for journalists” in world history.

As the 10th anniversary of our collective loss is nigh, I take this liberty to stand in privilege before you today to share my experience, thoughts and reveries regarding the ghastly 2009 Maguindanao massacre: my experience, thoughts and reveries as a Member of this country’s lawmaking Body, as a former elective local official, as a local leader who had to be courageous and strong for the sake of the families of his departed supporters, relatives and friends in the media, and as a brother who lost his siblings, as a husband who lost his wife, and as a father to his children who lost their mother.

So, where did it all begin, some of you may ask.

As law-abiding and peace-loving Filipinos who are also clamoring for changes “to secure to ourselves and our posterity the blessings of independence and democracy under the rule of law and a regime of truth, justice, freedom, love, equality and peace” in the province of Maguindanao, my family and I made the decision for me to file my candidacy for the gubernatorial race of Maguindanao in spite of the odds. Kung sa Tagalog, malaki na makapal na pader ang aking babangain sa aking pagtakbo bilang Gobernador ng Maguindanao para sa lokal na halalan ng 2010. But at that time, we must act in spite of all odds; otherwise, our province would forever be thrown in the dustbin of history as the epitome of leadership incompetence, ruinous corruption and pointless nepotism.

With the death threats that I had been receiving left and right, my family, being full-blooded Maguindanaon Muslims, decided to let the women in our family file on my behalf my Certificate of Candidacy, and we opted for this course of action because as Muslims, we took to

heart the declaration of Allah in the Qur’an, specifically the Fourth Chapter in An-Nisa verses 34 and 127 to 130 that, in essence, mandate us to respect women.

Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, the seal of the prophets even declared, “Beware, the best of you is he who is the best towards his women, and I am the best among all of you toward my women” (Muhajjah al-Baydha, volume 3, page 98).

In the Book Sira Al Nabavieh, Book No. 4, page 251, Prophet Muhammad was quoted to have said:

People of your wives have rights over you and you have rights over them. I command you to do good to women because they are trustees from God in your hands and they have become lawful to you by defined law.

These injunctions that seeped into our Muslim traditions have led me to believe that even if the Ampatuans hated me for my guts to run for Governor, they would still treat the women such as my wife, as well as my relatives and friends with utmost respect and reverence, because in Maguindanao culture and in Islam, we accord high regard upon women, children and elderly, and they are not to be included in any conflict among the men and families or clans.

Moreover, I earnestly believed that with the presence of friends of our friends, the media and the lady lawyers would deter any attack upon the convoy of my wife due to the special attention that the media industry was receiving from the local and international organizations, including the United Nations as part of the amplified calls to further protect all media personnel from harm so that they can have freedom to practice their profession. Kumbaga, untouchable ang media kahit nasa war zone pa sila. However, on the fateful morning of November 23, 2009, at the national highway of Ampatuan, Maguindanao, the convoy of my wife, even as they were accompanied by media personnel and lady lawyers, was flagged down by hundreds of armed men, led by Unsai Ampatuan Jr. and Police Chief Inspector Sukarno Dicay who forcibly took them to a slope of rolling hills in a remote sitio in Barangay Salman, Ampatuan, Maguindanao. My own wife and her companions were brutally killed in broad daylight. Most of the victims’ mangled bodies were hastily buried with their vehicles riddled with bullet holes.

Unsai Ampatuan Jr. and his minions mercilessly took away from us my wife, siblings, close relatives and associates and 32 media practitioners, and 6 other civilian casualties who were mistaken as part of their convoy. Fifty-eight people had their lives lost and 58 families and some more had their lives changed forever.

To say that I was very heartbroken when the bloodbath took place is an understatement. Words are not

enough to describe the utter shock and the consequent grief and sadness that I felt when I learned about the incident. I was literally speechless for a few days as if my whole being were crushed by the improbability of the incident to happen, but nevertheless, it happened, as if a black hole pierced my heart when someone so special to you was taken from you so suddenly, yet so grievously. Sleeplessness, severe anxiety and, I admit, an unceasing quest for retribution filled my whole being.

I felt very sorry for the 58 families, most especially to the orphaned children and to the mothers who had to bury their departed sons or daughters. I felt downtrodden and extremely dejected because I knew that with the untimely and cruel murder of one family member, it was also as if death had been brought to a certain extent to the life of the victim's family.

If only the voice of reason and fear of God had reigned in that most unfortunate moment and the victims were allowed to walk away for just even five minutes, then, there would be no need for grief, agony and an outpouring of cries for justice. But no, they were not allowed to walk away.

Instead, they were mercilessly and odiously killed in broad daylight like a sharp machete that efficiently slashed over a row of a helpless stalks of grasses. Not only were they brutally murdered, many of them, especially my wife, siblings, relatives and my friends in the media, were literally slaughtered as they were shot on each of their breasts and in their private areas. My wife alone, Genalyn, bore 17 gunshot wounds in her body, including a long, deep hack at her backside.

To accept the reality of what happened to my wife, siblings, relatives, supporters and friends in the media was a very difficult task that was imposed on me and to the families of the victims. But I learned belatedly that the aftermath, that is, the search to achieve justice had become graver, a daunting task. You have to bear the spectacle of seeing your family, friends and supporters wallow in pain, misery, anger and suffering due to the loss of their loved ones. While at this, you also have to contend with maintaining your sanity, as you also wallow in unbearable pain, misery, suffering and disbelief. I was very angry that the human side of me wanted to take the law into my hands and avenge the deaths of my loved ones, friends and supporters. But then, my fear of Allah and my desire to put an end, even in my own small ways, to the senseless ridos or cyclic killings among feuding clans in my beloved province of Maguindanao, have caused me to entrust my plight to Allah and to seek justice through our courts and the Philippine criminal justice system.

Masyado pong mahirap ang pinagdadaanan naming mga biktima ng 2009 Maguindanao massacre. Mme. Speaker, hindi po biro iyong dami ng aming mga nailuha, iyong aming mga kaba, iyong aming mga

adjustment. Hindi po biro ang aming pagkadismaya sa pagbaliktad sa testimonya ng ilang witnesses namin sana. Hindi rin po biru-biro lang ang aming mga pagod, agam-agam at mga panalangin habang inaantay namin ang pagbibigay ng karampatang katarungan sa karumaldumal na kamatayan ng aming mga mahal sa buhay, samantalang alam na alam namin na marami sa mga kasabwat ang hindi pa nahuhuli at pagala-gala lang doon sa amin.

Personally speaking, Mme. Speaker, hindi rin po biru-biro lang ang lagi na lang ako kinakabahan dahil siyam na beses na rin ako sinubukang patayin sa pamamagitan ng mga bomba o hindi kaya sa pag-ambush. Marami na ring attempts na kidnap-in at ambush-in ang aking mga anak.

Mme. Speaker, my dear colleagues, maintindihan man din siguro ninyo ang pait at sakit bilang isang ama o ina kapag mapilitan kayong ilayo na lang nang husto sa inyo ang inyong mga anak, at makiusap na lang sa kung sinu-sino na bigyan na lang sila ng ibang identidad para hindi malaman ng ibang tao na mga anak ninyo pala sila.

Maintindihan ninyo man din iyong takot na lagi ko lang nadarama sa tuwing may nababalitaan akong nabaril at napatay na kabataan, pati na nga ang labis kong paghihinagpis noong namatay ang aking minamahal na ina nang may mabigat na kalooban dahil hindi niya nakita ang pagbaba ng hatol at ang pagkamit namin ng makabuluhang hustisya sa pagkamatay ng aking minamahal sa buhay.

Opo, marami na po sa aming kanya-kanyang pamilya ang pumanaw na dito sa ibabaw ng mundo na hindi man lang nadudungawan ng sinag ng katarungan, subalit hindi pa rin po kami bumibitiw sa aming pananampalataya sa ating hudikatura. Kami ay patuloy pa rin pong nananalig na ang katarungan na aming inaasam ay aming makakamtan.

Mme. Speaker, honorable colleagues in this Chamber, I stand before this august Body to speak on behalf of the 58 murder victims because they can no longer speak for themselves, for as the saying goes, "A dead man tells no tale."

As the 10th anniversary of the Maguindanao massacre is approaching, we, the family of victims, are still waiting for the dispensation of justice. We express our dismay over the defense's ploy to make-up stories, alleging the recantation of our witness' testimony. They may have succeeded in doing that on two of our listed witnesses back then, but we believe that they are not going to succeed in their machinations because we trust that our courts and the Justice Department, with Pres. Rodrigo Roa Duterte at the helm of the government, will not allow any mockery of the justice system or for evil to triumph over good. And though it further delayed our quest for justice, we still welcome the one-month postponement of the promulgation of the court decision

on the multiple murder case we filed 10 years ago, which is dubbed as marathon trial. As Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." Hence, even if we still have to wait the promulgation of judgment, we are certain that, in one way or another, we shall still attain justice.

We thank the Department of Justice and Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes of Quezon City, RTC Branch No. 221 for trying, attending to and giving priority to all the cases we have filed in relation to the 2009 Maguindanao massacre.

Nakapaghintay at nakapagtiis po kami ng 10 taon at ang karagdagang isang buwang paghihintay ay aming tatanggapin nang maluwag, kaakibat ang aming panalangin na sana ay mapaboran kami ng korte base sa aming credible na ebidensya. Ang isang buwan na pagtitiis ay aming makakaya kung ang katumbas nito ay mabibigyan na rin, sa wakas, ng katahimikan ang kaluluwa ng aming mga minamahal sa buhay.

Nonetheless, on behalf of the 58 murder victims and their respective families, I am appealing to Pres. Rodrigo Roa Duterte, to the Supreme Court of the Philippines, to the Department of Justice, and to Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes for justice, real justice, to be served and the maximum penalties be imposed.

Both parties of the case have already presented their evidences, arguments and witnesses. We rely on the impartiality of the judge in trying the case, Mme. Speaker. We are praying and appealing for a verdict that is acceptable to us, to the media community, and to everybody else who is longing for the end of impunity in our land. Thus, we are ardently praying that God will hinder any outside intervention from anyone out there that may adversely influence the judge's decision. We are praying and appealing for an acceptable verdict on the basis of the testimonies of the eyewitnesses, credible witnesses, and the concrete pieces of evidence that have been presented by the prosecution in the course of the court proceeding which have never been impeached, refuted and rebutted by the defense.

Kung sakali mang hindi kami papanigan ng husgado, Mme. Speaker, masasabi ko na hindi talaga ito magiging katanggap-tanggap sa amin na mga pamilya ng mga biktima. Ano nga ba ang dahilan at nangyari ang lahat ng mga ito? Who has the corporate power to order the transport and use of a provincial government equipment, like the backhoe, to excavate large holes intended as mass graves for the bodies and vehicles in an effort to cover-up for their crime?

With Allah as our witness, we have placed our trust and faith in our courts and in the Philippine criminal justice system. Ipinapanalangin po namin na sana ay hindi kami mabibigo, dahil naniniwala kaming lahat sa buong katapatan ng husgado na naglitis ng kaso na papanig sa katotohanan at malakas na ebidensiya ng prosekusyon laban sa mga akusado na walang awang

kumitil sa buhay ng 58 mga inosenteng mga tao, kasama na rito ang aking asawa, mga kapatid, mga kamag-anak, mga kakampi at mga kaibigan sa media outlets.

Mme. Speaker, we do not wish for another Maguindanao massacre to take place; thus, we are clamoring for the dispensation of a favorable verdict on our side because we all know that there is just too much crime, just too much killing going on around us, and the dispensation of a guilty verdict may act as a deterrence to some elements out there, for it shall strongly signify that this government strictly means business and its war against criminality and impunity.

On behalf of the 58 murder victims and their respective families, I am clamoring for real justice to be served, to remind everyone of the wisdom of walking away from confrontation or temptations, no matter how strong the urge is. All it takes for us is to stop and walk away even for just five minutes to think for ourselves of the net goodness we may attain when we refrain from acts of criminal retaliation or violence.

On behalf of the 58 murder families, I am asking for real justice to be served so that this may act as a reminder to some power-hungry politicians out there that murder and other forms of impunity will not go unpunished, be it in this life or in the hereafter.

On behalf of the 58 murder victims and their respective families, I am praying for a verdict favorable on our side as it has been a long, long time coming for the victim's families to receive closure.

So as not to repeat some glaring lapses that I had observed in the past, I humbly ask for this Chamber to initiate a legislative intervention in the operations of the Philippine National Police. Specifically, I seek for the Congress of the Philippines to pass a bill, and for this matter, further amend Republic Act No. 6975, mandating the Philippine National Police and augmenting funds for the same institution to establish a dedicated scene of the crime operation or SOCO team in each of the 1,489 municipalities in the country, to conduct immediate crime scene processing such as collecting, handling and preserving of evidences over crimes happening in their jurisdiction. I do this because when I experienced the Maguindanao massacre, it took us three days before we were able to secure SOCO personnel to properly investigate the crime. Hindi po kasi lahat ng mga probinsya, let alone mga munisipyo o siyudad sa ating bansa ay may PNP-SOCO team. In the case of the Maguindanao massacre of 2009, kinailangan pa po naming mag-request ng SOCO team from PNP Region XII dahil walang maipadala na SOCO team and PNP Maguindanao Police Provincial Office at ang PNP Police Regional Office-ARMM. This is despite the fact that Maguindanao Province and its fellow ARMM composite provinces are heavily populated and are among the provinces that register the highest in terms of crime rates in the country. The need for a

SOCO team to be present in all municipalities, or at least in big municipalities, is made more pressing in Muslim communities or in areas which are inhabited by Muslims because our traditions require to bury our dead relatives within 24 hours from the time of his/her death. Hence, for those victims of violent crimes who are Muslims, there is an urgent need for him/her to be autopsied within the 24-hour limit and this cannot be done without a SOCO team nearby. The fast and competent investigation of crimes and the facilitation of the consequent prosecution of such crimes in court will discourage individuals from seeking extrajudicial remedies such as rido and the like, since families of the victims are now more confident that they can secure justice in our justice system. In the final analysis, having an efficient SOCO team in all or at least in big municipalities will greatly aid in the achievement of justice in our country.

Once the bill is legislated and enacted into law, the SOCO team will be able to outrightly process and preserve the crime scene, and maintain the genuineness and credibility of the pieces of evidence left and found in the scene of the crime for its admissibility in court.

In a few days, I will have my own version of this bill and I am appealing to you, Mme. Speaker, and to my colleagues in this Chamber, to urgently pass the bill for it is of utmost necessity, and an efficient and immediate crime scene investigations can significantly improve the chances of successful, fair prosecution of crimes in our country.

There are so much more that we have to do, and passing this bill will be part of the process so that the crimes like the Maguindanao massacre will be investigated fast and thoroughly, thus, discouraging those who have the intention to commit such grisly crimes in the future.

To many who are still suffering, 10, 20, 30 years of waiting for justice, this has been much too long, and the waiting can sometimes be discouraging, but there is still hope. This proposal to establish a SOCO team in every municipality is, at least, one step forward toward the fast and fair dispensation of justice. It may take some time to see this proposal and its objectives to take form and turn to reality, but let us not lose heart. Let us persevere; let us keep the faith.

Before I end my speech, may I request everybody to offer a one-minute prayer in silence in memory of those who perished in the Maguindanao massacre.

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

Everybody rose for a minute of silent prayer.

REP. MANGUDADATU. Thank you so much.

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

REP. MANGUDADATU. May the Allah bless their souls and to continue to guide their families. Let their names be remembered and echo in the four corners of this Chamber.

Kung pupuwede lang po, mamarapatin po ninyo na banggitin ko ang mga pangalan ng mga biktima, including my wife, Genalyn Tiamson-Mangudadatu.

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

REP. MANGUDADATU. Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

My wife Genalyn Tiamson-Mangudadatu; my sister Eden Mangudadatu; Rowena Mangudadatu, my cousin; Manguba Mangudadatu, my aunt; Faridah Sabdulah, my cousin; Faridah Mangudadatu, my sister; Farina Mangudadatu, my sister; Concepcion Brizuela, my lawyer; Cynthia Oquendo, my lawyer; Catalino Oquendo, the father of Cynthia Oquendo; Rasul Daud; Alejandro “Bong” Reblando from *Manila Bulletin*, correspondent; Henry Araneta of DZRH; Napoleon Salaysay, DZRO Manager; Bartolome “Bart” Maravilla, Bombo Radyo; Jhoy Dulay, *Goldstar Daily*; Andy Teodoro; Ian Subang; Leah Dalmacio; Gina Dela Cruz; Maritess Cablitas; Neneng Montano; Victor Nuñez; Ronnie Evarado; Daniel Tiamson; Reynaldo Momay; Rey Merisco; Ronnie Perante; Jun Legarta; Val Cachuela; Santos Gatchalian; Joel Parcon; Noel Decena; John Caniba; Art Betia; Ranie Razon, freelance journalist; Archie Ace David; Fernando “Ferdz” Mendoza; Eduardo Lechonsito; Cecille Lechonsito; Mercy Palabrica; Daryll delos Reyes; Wilhelm Palabrica and Anthony Ridao.

May we receive justice in the name of Allah or the Lord.

Sana po, Mme. Speaker, and my colleagues in this Chamber, sa darating na Disyembre, makukuha na namin ang hustisya.

Allah bless us.

Thank you very much.

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

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mme. Speaker, I move to recognize Hon. Rowena Niña O. Taturan of ACT-CIS Party-List for her manifestation.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

REP. TADURAN. Thank you, Mme. Speaker, and Majority Leader.

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

MANIFESTATION OF REP. TADURAN

REP. TADURAN. Kami po sa ACT-CIS Party-List sa pangunguna po ni Cong. Eric Go Yap, ni Cong. Jocelyn P. Tulfo at ang inyong lingkod, we empathize and sympathize sa atin pong kapwa Kongresista na si Hon. Esmael G. Mangudadatu ng Second District of Maguindanao, kasi bilang isa rin pong media practitioner at nasa fourth estate, alam ko po iyong nararamdaman niya dahil kami rin po sa media ay nawalan po kami ng 45—mga magulang at ang kanilang mga pamilya dahil nga po sa massacre na ito.

So, we are one with our nation in awaiting justice for the massacre victims and their families. We feel and share their pain because regardless of religion, we are brothers and sisters. May that fateful day never be repeated anywhere in the world.

God bless them all.

Maraming salamat po.

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

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mme. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech ...

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker, may we be given a chance to manifest.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Jose “Lito” L. Atienza Jr. for his interpellation.

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

MANIFESTATION OF REP. ATIENZA

REP. ATIENZA. Mme. Speaker, the issue raised by our colleague is one that bothers not only Mindanao, but also the whole country and the whole world.

Papaano po iyong kasong alam naman nating lahat kung ano ang nangyari, 10 taon na ay wala pa ring desisyon? Ito po ang larawan ng ating katarungan. Kaya dumarami ang krimen, hindi nahuhuli ang may sala. Kaya ako po ay nagpapahayag ng 100-percent support for the initiative of Gentleman Mangudadatu.

The BUHAY Party-List is most concerned with this issue, in the same manner that we demand that justice be meted out to all those killed in cold blood, who up to now have not been given justice in the country.

Andiyan po si Cesar Climaco. Andiyan po si Evelio Javier ng Antique. Andiyan po si Ninoy Aquino ng ating bansa. Sila pong lahat ay pinaslang subalit hanggang ngayon, wala pong inihahayag ang ating Department of Justice na mga may sala at dapat panagutin. Tawagin na natin itong Department of Injustice because they do not render justice to our people, and one of the main reasons to the breakdown of order in the nation, precisely, is the inability of government to bring justice to those who commit crime, especially heinous crimes of murder, assassination, killings of people helplessly without even the government bothering to do something about it.

Kaya kasama po ang BUHAY Party-List, nananawagan kami kay Pangulong Duterte. Ipakita po ninyo, Ginoong Pangulo, ang inyong tunay na pagmamalasakit sa ating katarungan.

The only way towards progress is an efficient justice system. For as long as our criminal justice system is what the Gentleman has pictured to all of us, we will not be able to solve the problems of the nation no matter what we do in Congress.

Those who are guilty of the Maguindanao massacre should be put forward and rendered justice, not tomorrow but today. As we recall the heinous crime committed on innocent people, they must answer here in this life at hindi dapat ipaubaya sa kamay na lamang ng Panginoon—katarungang ibibigay ng Pilipino sa kapwa mga kriminal na Pilipino. Ikulong, pagdusahin—iyan lang ang tanging paraan and we will continue to call the attention of the government on this issue as we join hand with our brothers who are grieving on the loss of their loved ones in the Maguindanao massacre. We commend the courage of our colleague as we also admire his consistent sustained effort to render justice to his beloved. Ganoon din po ang nararamdaman ng inyong lingkod. Naghihimsik po ang ating damdamin na ang mga pumapaslang sa bansa ay hindi napaparusahan. Iyon ang dahilan kaya tayo, hanggang ngayon, ay naghahirap. Hindi natin mabibigyan ng solusyon ang problema ng ating ekonomiya kung hindi pinagdurusang mga may sala at ikinukulang ang mga kriminal.

Maraming salamat po.

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

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mme. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of Honorable Mangudadatu, together with the manifestations, to the Committee on Rules for its proper disposition.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The speech of Honorable Mangudadatu is referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Christopher V.P. De Venecia. They are the members of the National Council on Disability Affairs, namely: Ms. Maria Celia Fernandez, School Division Superintendent; Ms. Socorro Dimalanta, SPED Supervisor; and Ms. Valentina Hortaleza, Principal West Central School Pangasinan, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The guests of Hon. Christopher De Venecia are welcome to the House of Representatives. Please stand to be recognized. *(Applause)* Thank you.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Rudy S. Caoagdan, DPA, from the Second District of North Cotabato. From the Pederasyon ng mga Kapisanan ng Senior Citizens ng Kidapawan City, namely: Morita Gayotin, Alexander Nalzora, Mila Cinco, Benedicta Yamomo, Constancio Vilvestre, Mary Joeralyn Eda, Lolita Palgalan, Ramona Abaratigue, Quirino Espenida Letada, Anania Sarce Sarigumba, Alfredo Daquio, Exequiel Apoluna, Conrado Abalos, Myrna Baron, Adelaida Letada, ...

I am sorry.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Mayroon pa?

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mayroon pa pala.

... Bernarda Veras, Margarito Labado, Praxides Manayaga, Romulo Oton, Merlita Alado, Ursulino Lumantao, Benita Estrada, Rogelio Genosas, Norma Caadyang, Daniel Gersava, Marilyn Santos, Federica Aliling, Proceso Posadas, Erlinda Pantaleon, Nena Suarez Emnace, Dioscora Panique, Amada Gornez, Sonia Pedrajas, Corazon Del Monte Lucero, Paciencia Aspilla Descartin, Nepomocena Quimco Delos Santos, Gloria Catipay Sarce, Rizalina Ribay Nahilat, Florita Lana Magbanua, Luzviminda Rebamonte Panisa, Milagros Tayo Atam, Felicissima Cania Verdon, Dionesia Likit Bulawan, and Alma Letada Cabiles, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The guests of Hon. Rudy Caoagdan from the Pederasyon ng mga Kapisanan ng Senior Citizens ng Kidapawan City, Inc., are all welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mme. Speaker, I also move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Majority Leader Ferdinand Romualdez and Hon. Yedda Romualdez of Tingog Sinirangan Party-

List, from the University of the Philippines–Visayas Tacloban College, Division of Management.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The guests of Hon. Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, of Tingog Sinirangan Party-List Representative Yedda Marie K. Romualdez are welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mme. Speaker, may we also acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Josefina B. Tallado of the First District of Camarines Norte. They are Hon. Leslie Esturas, Hon. Samie Avellano, Hon. Arlene Connigo, Hon. Elmer Malaluan, Hon. Levy San Antonio, Hon. Santiago Valdez, Hon. Rodel Cardenas, Hon. Analyn Ajero, Hon. Norberto Murillo, Hon. Brigido Tuacar, Hon. Christopher Buesing, Hon. Romel Regidor, Hon. Antonio Mayao, Hon. Michael San Jose, Hon. Educardo Jueves, Hon. Antonio Obina, Mr. Domingo Bacero and Mr. Fernando Bragais.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The guests of Hon. Josefina Tallado from the First District of Camarines Norte are welcome to the House of Representatives.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mme. Speaker, may we also acknowledge the presence of the guests of Deputy Speaker Pablo John F. Garcia from Toledo City, province of Cebu. They are Bonifacio Tatad Jr., SP Secretary; Bryan M. Barquin, Amilen Pardillo, Godofredo Longakit, Feligrena Resane, Dannah Lee, Tyfel Abad, Sylvia Donan, Bernardita Segismar, Zimbad Rosil, Azenith Alcomendras, Abraham Alimines, Celerina Mahilum, Maria Eugena Pabonita, Jason Pilapil and Sionnette Fernandez.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The guests of honorable Deputy Speaker Pablo John F. Garcia from Toledo City, province of Cebu, are welcome to the House of Representatives.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mme. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of the guests of the honorable Rep. Paul Ruiz Daza and Rep. Jose “Jun” L. Ong Jr. From the Faculty and Law students of the University of Eastern Philippines-College of Law: Faculties Atty. Daryl Basiloy and Atty. Clarence Miscreola; Administrative Staff Nemia Onrejas, Alfredo Tico, Jonathan Camacho, Irene Ambida and Robert Gallardo; and students Betty Ganzo, Nona Kareen Cerbito, Shiela Loreno, Andrew Acedera, Deil Evan Orot, Stacey

Pederio, Dave Matthew Abella, Gerry Ombrog and Kenneth Avalon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). The guests of Honorable Daza and Honorable Ong are welcome to the House of Representatives.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate of Party-List BAYAN MUNA for his privilege speech.

I so move, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Arenas). Hon. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate is recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ZARATE

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat, Mme. Speaker. Bago po ang lahat, on behalf of the Makabayan bloc, gusto kong ipaabot sa ating kasamahang si Cong. Esmael “Toto” G. Mangudadatu ang aming pakikiisa sa kaniya, kasama na ang pamilya ng 58 na naging biktima ng Ampatuan massacre.

Mme. Speaker, sa ika-23 ng Nobyembre ay magmamarka ang isang mahalagang pangyayari sa ating kasaysayan at sa kasaysayan ng karapatang pantao sa daigdig. Ang darating na ika-23 ng Nobyembre ay ang International Day to End Impunity na itinalaga sa araw kung kailan pinaslang ang 58 katao, kabilang ang 32 media workers, sa bayan ng Ampatuan, sa probinsiya ng Maguindanao noong ika-Nobyembre 23, 2009.

Mme. Speaker, mga kapwa ko Mambabatas, isang dekada na ang nakalipas mula nang maganap ang karumal-dumal na Ampatuan, Maguindanao massacre—ang pinakamadugong araw para sa mga mamamahayag o journalists sa ating kasaysayan sa buong mundo.

Marahil, dahil sa tagal ay nakakalimutan na ng iilan kung gaano kalagim ang araw na ito. Kung atin pong babalikan, Mme. Speaker, tinambangan ng humigit-kumulang 100 armadong katao, mga private army ng warlord clan na Ampatuan, ang convoy ng media at ng mga tauhan at pamilya ng noon ay Buluan Town Vice Mayor Esmael Mangudadatu na patungo sana sa opisina ng Commission on Elections upang maghain ng kanyang Certificate of Candidacy bilang Gobernador ng probinsiya ng Maguindanao. Ang ilan sa mga babaeng naging biktima ay ginahasa at mas masahol pa, pinagbabaril ang kanilang mga ari. Pinagbabaril din ang dalawang mga buntis. Pagkatapos nilang pagbabarilin, ang lahat ng kasama ng convoy at ang isang sasakyan na napadaan lamang, mga sibilyan, sa pinangyarihan ng pagpatay, ay inihulog na lamang sa nakahandang hukay sa gilid ng kalsada, ang mga katawan ng mga biktima, kasama na ang maybahay ng ngayon nga ay ating

kasamahan sa Kongresong ito, si Rep. Esmael “Toto” Mangudadatu ng Ikalawang Distrito ng probinsiya ng Maguindanao. Kasama din, Mme. Speaker, sa mga napaslang ang aking matalik na kaibigan at kasamahan sa Union of People’s Lawyers in Mindanao na si Atty. Concepcion “Connie” Brizuela, na siya ring abogada ng pamilyang Mangudadatu.

Mme. Speaker, mga kapwa ko Mambabatas, anong klaseng sistema ang nagluluwal ng ganitong klaseng karumal-dumal at garapalang maramihang pagpatay? Anong klaseng lipunan ang nagbibigay ng kapangyarihang pumatay sa isang pamilya at ang kakayanang mag-aruga ng mga berdugo sa kanilang bakuran? Anong klaseng sistema ang nagkakait sa hustisya ng ganitong kabigat na krimen sa loob ng isang dekada o 10 taon?

Mme. Speaker, the Ampatuan massacre, for one, is emblematic of the dangers posed by private armies, militias, and paramilitaries and how it became one of the pillars of the reign of impunity in our country, then and now. Yet, the government, then and now, is not clearly serious in addressing this problem, for one, until now, Executive Order No. 546, issued by then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in 2006, which allows the arming of civilian volunteer organization by local officials, is still in place and not yet rescinded.

It was the same Executive Order No. 546 cited by the Ampatuans to justify the existence of its “private army” to consolidate its dynastic hold of Maguindanao and the then Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, but in the guise of supposedly fighting the Moro revolutionary groups.

As it is now, Executive Order No. 546 is still an available tool for warlords and powerful politicians to justify arming their militias for political and economic ends. It is not surprising then, Mme. Speaker, that impunity still rages in the country, resulting in more cases of extrajudicial killings and other forms of human rights violations.

Mme. Speaker, mga kapwa ko Mambabatas, ang kawalan ng pananagutan sa Ampatuan, Maguindanao massacre ay salamin at tanda ng umiiral na inhustisya sa ating bayan na pinaghaharian ng mga naghahari-harian, kung saan ang higit 27,000 na pinatay, 5,000 sa tala ng PNP at halos 23,000 homicides under investigation sa giyera laban sa droga ay tila isang numero na lamang.

Napakaraming pagpatay, napakaraming patunay sa pagkabigo ng hustisya sa ating lipunan. Naghahari ang mga mamamatay-tao sa ating bansa.

Walang puknat din ang pagsisiil sa mga karapatan ng mga aktibista at mga kritiko lalong-lalo na sa kasalukuyang administrasyon, ang mga nag-iingay at tumututol laban sa mga paglabag sa karapatang pantao at hustisya para sa mga pinaslang. Tokhang sa mga aktibista ang ginawa sa Negros Island nitong kamakailan lang. Kinatok tsaka pinagbabaril ang 14 na

mga magsasaka sa magkanugnog na baryo sa Negros Occidental sa tinawag na Canlaon massacre na naganap nito lamang Marso ngayong taon. Ito, Mme. Speaker, ay kasunod naman sa nataguriang Sagay massacre na pumaslang din sa siyam na gutom na mga magtutubó sa parehong probinsiya noong Oktubre noong nakaraang taon.

Sa kabilang banda, Mme. Speaker, kung hindi ka naman papatayin ay bubulokin ka na lamang sa mga piitan. Nasa higit 600 na ang mga political prisoner, mga aktibista, peace advocates, manggagawa, katutubo, mga magsasaka, na ikinukulong sa gawa-gawang kaso upang pigilan ang kanilang paglahok sa mga organisasyon o sa mga pulitikal na pagkilos o diskurso. Ito ang mga kasong karaniwan ay mga tanim-bala, tanim-bomba upang tiyaking makukulang nang mahabang panahon nang walang tiyansang makapagpiyansa. Mme. Speaker, ito ay isang tahasang pagsisiil sa karapatan at pagyurak sa hustisya at demokrasya, ngunit ito ay laganap ngayon sa ating bansa.

Sagasa pa rin sa karapatang pantao at demokrasya ang ginagawang pag-raid naman sa mga ligal na opisina ng mga pangmasang organisasyon nitong nakaraang buwan lamang. Ang mga organisasyong ito ay kilala sa pagtindig laban sa paglabag sa mga karapatang pantao, korapsyon, at iba pang mga isyung pambayan at ekonomiko. Ginambala ang araw ng mga yumao noong nakaraang mga araw nang pasukin ang opisina ng aming partido, ang BAYAN MUNA, at iba pang progresibong organisasyon sa Bacolod, Escalante, at maging dito sa Maynila. Dinakip ang 64 na katao kabilang ang mga menor de edad sa Bacolod at Escalante, at dalawa sa Maynila dahil mayroon daw silang mga baril at mga pampasabog na natagpuan sa mga bahay at opisina.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Arenas relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Johnny Ty Pimentel.

Kakatwa man at di kapani-paniwala ang paratang na ito, G. Ispiker, dahil nakakulong pa rin ang aming mga kasamahan. Hanggang sa kasalukuyan, tuloy-tuloy pa rin ang banta ng pag-aresto at raid sa iba't iba pang mga opisina. Ito ay ang isa pang mukha ng pasismo at impunity sa ating bansa sa kasalukuyan.

G. Ispiker, mga kapwa Mambabatas, tinakasan na ba tayo ng hustisya at pagpapahalaga sa buhay at karapatan ng mamamayan? Napakadalas at napakalaganap na ang patayan, kawalan ng hustisya, panggigipit at karahasan na tila normal na itong mga pangyayari ngayon. Hindi natin ito dapat payagan at hayaan, G. Ispiker.

Kamakailan ay nagsimulang mangalap ng suporta ang Makabayan bloc, ang BAYAN MUNA, Gabriela Women's Party, ACT TEACHERS at KABATAAN Party-List na suportahan ang mga Mambabatas laban sa persekusyon sa aming partido at mga miyembro, kabilang ang iba pang mga demokratikong organisasyon.

Ang inyo pong suporta para sa Makabayan bloc ay ang pagtindig para sa mga demokratikong proseso kung saan tayo ay kabahagi at kabilang. Ito ay pagtindig para sa karapatan. Ito ay pagsuporta para sa pag-iral ng hustisya sa ating bayan. Pagtindig din ito laban sa impunity o kawalang-pananagutan sa ating bayan.

Mr. Speaker, sa ika-10 taon ng ating pag-aalala sa Ampatuan, Maguindanao massacre at sa International Day to End Impunity, higit pa sa pag-alala sa mga napaslang at sa panawagan ng hustisya para sa karumaldumal na krimen na ito ay nananawagan po tayo sa inyo, mga kapwa ko Mambabatas, na labanan natin ang mga panukala at polisiyang sumasagasa sa karapatan ng ating mamamayan. Tanggihan ang mga batas na nagpapalalim at magpapalawak sa patayan at karahasan.

Wakasan natin ang isang sistemang nagluwal ng diktador na katulad ng diktador na si Marcos, nagluwal ng pasista at korap na mga kasunod pang mga administrasyon, sistemang nagbunsod ng estado ng walang pananagutan o state of impunity sa ating bansa.

Wakasan natin ang sistemang nagpapahintulot sa mga sumunod na mga rehimen at administrasyon pagkatapos ng diktador na si Marcos na ipagpatuloy ang mga parehong patakaran na tuloy-tuloy na nagpapahirap sa ating mga mamamayan.

At, Mr. Speaker, sa ika-23 ng Nobyembre, ang mga pamilya at kaibigan ng mga biktima ng Ampatuan massacre ay muling igigiit at isisigaw ang paghingi ng katarungan para sa mga biktimang pinaslang. Kaya, ang atin pong panawagan, pumanig sa demokrasya, karapatang pantao at kalayaan. Ang lagim ng Ampatuan, Maguindanao massacre ay lumalaganap sa ating bayan. Dapat po natin itong labanan.

Nais ko pong tapusin, G. Ispiker, ang aking talumpati sa paghingi ng ilang minutong katahimikan upang atin pong masaksihan ang isang—para po maalala natin ang mga naging biktima ng Ampatuan massacre.

(Video presentation)

REP. ZARATE. Hustisya para sa mga biktima ng Ampatuan, Maguindanao massacre!

Hustisya para sa lahat ng biktima ng walang kapanagutan or impunity!

Karapatan ng mamamayan, ipaglaban!

End impunity, now!

Maraming salamat, G. Ispiker. *(Applause)*

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

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the privilege speech of Honorable Zarate to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The privilege speech of Hon. Carlos Zarate is hereby referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the Privilege Hour.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Privilege Hour is hereby suspended.

ROLL CALL

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we call the roll.

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

The Secretary General will please call the roll.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is reflected in Journal No. 29, dated November 20, 2019.**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Mr. Speaker, the roll call shows that 214 Members responded to the call.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Jose L. Atienza Jr.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). With 214 Members responding to the call, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, did we hear it right, 214?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Yes, 2-1-4.

REP. ATIENZA. We would like to again manifest that there is a discrepancy of 36 votes, because our count is only 172. So, we have a quorum?

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

REP. ATIENZA. So, why make up a number of 214? For what purpose? To orient us to dishonesty? To make up numbers where there are none? Why do we not announce that 172 Members are on the floor—we have a quorum. So, I am again calling the attention of the Secretariat on this very bad habit of adding more Members present where there is none.

Thank you.

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

PRIVILEGE HOUR

Continuation

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the Privilege Hour.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Privilege Hour is resumed.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize Hon. Ferdinand R. Gaité from the Party-List BAYAN MUNA for his privilege speech.

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

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. GAITE

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po.

Sa ating kagalang-galang na Speaker, sa lahat ng ating kapita-pitagang mga Kasapi ng House of Representatives, isang magandang hapon.

Tumindig kasama ang mga magsasaka. Tumindig kasama ang mga magsasaka ng Samar.

G. Ispiker, mga kagalang-galang na Kinatawan, magandang hapon.

Nitong nakaraang linggo, noong ika-11 hanggang ika-12 ng Nobyembre, nagtungo ang Representasyong ito sa Las Navas, Northern Samar at nakiisa sa ginanap na fact-finding and mercy mission na inorganisa ng Stand with Samar-Leyte Network, isang kalipunan ng iba't ibang organisasyong nagtataguyod sa karapatang-pantao at kagalingan ng ating mga kababayan sa nabanggit na rehiyon.

Sa pagtutulungan ng iba't ibang organisasyon, at sa tulong din ng ilang mga kapwa Mambabatas sa Samar at Leyte, na aming taus-pusong pinasasalamatan sina Rep. Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, Rep. Yedda Marie K. Romualdez at Rep. Jose “Jun” L. Ong Jr.,

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

tayo ay nakapagbigay ng paunang tulong sa ating mga kababayan.

Sa dalawang araw na ginanap na fact-finding and mercy mission, labis po akong nabahala sa mga isinalaysay ng ating mga kababayang Las Navasnon.

Hindi lamang nila idinaraing ang pagbagsak ng kanilang kabuhayang dulot ng nagdaang tagtuyot at pananalanta ng mga peste, idinaraing din nila ang tumitinding militarisasyon, at ang kaugnay nito, ang malawakang paglabag sa kanilang karapatang-pantao.

Sa Eastern Visayas, ang industriya ng kopra ang pinakamalaking sub-sektor ng agrikultura. Tinatayang humigit-kumulang 70 porsyento ng mga magsasaka sa naturang rehiyon ay nabubuhay sa industriyang ito. Itong 70 porsyentong ito ng ating mga kababayang magsasaka sa rehiyong ito ang binabatbat ngayon ng krisis, kung saan literal na sayad sa lupa ang presyo ng kanilang produktong kopra. Ayon sa mga magsasaka, umabot ang pinakamababang presyo nito sa napakaliit na lamang na P5 kada kilo.

Sa buwang ito ng Nobyembre, ang regional average buying price ng kopra ay umaabot lamang ng P10 kada kilo, na ibayong napakalayo sa halaga nitong nakaraang taon na umabot ng P35 kada kilo. Nangangamba ang ating mga magsasaka na tuluyan pang babagsak ang presyo ng kopra sa harap ng patuloy na paglawak naman ng industriya ng palm oil sa naturang rehiyon.

Isa pang pangunahing produkto ng mga Las Navasnon ay ang abaca. Pangalawa nga ang Northern Samar sa may pinakamalaking produksyon ng abaca sa bansa, at nagluluwal ng humigi't kumulang 3,000 metriko tonelada ng nabanggit na produkto. Ngunit kagaya ng industriya ng kopra, ito rin ay nanganganib. Pinepeste nang mahigit isang taon na ng tinatawag na bunchy top virus ang mga abaca na nakakaapekto sa kalidad at dami ng abaca fiber. Balita ng mga kababayan nating magsasaka na bumabagsak ang kanilang average yield mula 200 kilograms tungong 20 kilograms na lamang simula noong kumalat ang naturang virus. May ilang lugar din na tuluyan nang walang abacang nabubuhay.

Pinepeste rin ang kanilang palayan ng bacterial leaf blight pest na lumalanta sa mga kanilang mga tanim bago pa man ito maging handa sa pag-ani. Kaunti na nga ang naaani, mababa pa ang kita dahil sa pagbagsak ng presyo ng palay.

Dahil sa mga nabanggit, talagang bagsak ang kabuhayan ng ating mga kababayang magsasaka, subalit hindi lamang peste, natural na kalamidad at tagtuyot ang sanhi ng kanilang pagdurusa. Kasabay ng pang-ekonomiyang unos ay dumaranas din sila ng unos ng militarisasyon.

Matapos ilabas ng Malacañang ang Memorandum Order No. 32, na nagbibigay daan sa pagdaragdag ng

puwersa ng pulis at militar sa mga probinsya ng Negros, Bicol, at Samar, ay higit na lumala ang paglabag sa karapatang pantao sa mga nabanggit na probinsya.

Sinasabi ng pamahalaan na ang kautusang ito ay kinakailangan upang supilin ang lawless violence, subalit sa karanasan ng ating mga magsasaka, sa mga kagaya nilang mga sibilyan, sa kanila nakatutok ang baril ng mga otoridad. At hindi lamang mga baril, maging ang mga bomba ay nakadirekta na rin sa kanila.

Noong kaumagahan ng Oktubre 26 ay nagbagsak ng tatlong 500-pound bombs ang F-50 fighters ng 8th Infantry Division ng Philippine Army sa Barangay Capoto-an, Las Navas. Ayon sa pahayag ng AFP, dinudurog daw nila sa pamamagitan ng surgical strike ang isang kampo ng New People's Army sa naturang barangay. Ngunit ayon sa isang ginang na aming nakausap, walang kampo ng NPA sa lugar na humigit kumulang ay 10 metro lamang ang layo mula sa kaniyang tahanan. Ayon sa kanya, ang binomba ay ang kaniyang sakahan at munting taniman ng gulay.

Ilang araw na nawala ang kaniyang mga anak na kumaripas ng takbo dahil sa takot sa ginawang pambobomba.

Mr. Speaker, 24 na pamilya ng Brgy. Capoto-an ang binulabog ng surgical airstrike na ito noong araw na iyon. Silang lahat ay nagsilikas patungo sa mga karatig na barangay at hindi na makabalik sa kanilang mga lupaing sakahan. Dalawang araw matapos ang airstrike ay tinipon naman ng mga sundalo ang mga residente ng Brgy. Sag-od, ilang oras ang layo mula sa Brgy. Capoto-an. Sa pagtitipong ito ay pilit na pinapaamin ang mga residente na sila ay mga armadong gerilya.

Marami pang salaysay sa paglabag sa karapatan ang aming narinig at naitala sa aming pagpunta sa Las Navas. Paghalughog sa mga tahanan, hamletting ng mga komunidad, paninira at pagkuha ng kagamitan, pananakot, at pagbabanta. Ito ay lakas-loob na ibinahagi sa amin ng ating mga kababayang magsasaka at hinihiling din nila na inyo silang pakinggan.

G. Ispiker, mga kapwa ko Kinatawan, hangarin natin na magkaroon ng kapayapaan at katahimikan sa ating bayan, pero hindi ang katahimikan ng sementeryo gaya ng nililikha ng kampanyang kontra-insurhensya ng pamahalaang Duterte.

Ang kapayapaang ating hangad at dapat na abutin ay kapayapaang nakabatay sa hustisyang panlipunan. Kapayapaang iniluluwal ng makabuluhang mga reporma. Kapayapaang nagbibigay ng pag-unlad sa buhay at kumikilala sa dignidad ng ordinaryong mamamayan.

Mr. Speaker, walang kapayapaan kung namamayani ang takot sa ating mga komunidad, kung ni hindi na makatapak muli sa kanilang mga sakahan ang ating mga magsasaka dahil sa takot na maging biktima ng mga nasa otoridad na dapat sana ay nagtitiyak ng kanilang kaligtasan.

Mga kapwa ko Kinatawan, nananawagan ang ating mga kababayang magsasaka, tumindig tayo para sa kanila.

Agad na tugunan ang krisis sa agrikultura.

Tulong hindi giyera, bigas hindi bala, at lalo't higit hindi bomba.

Itigil ang paglabag sa karapatan ng mamamayan. Kagyat na ipatigil ang Memo 32, pambobomba at pandarahas sa mga komunidad.

Stand with Samar and Leyte, stand with our farmers. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, ...

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The privilege speech of Honorable Gaité is referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the Privilege Hour.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) There being none; the motion is approved.

The Privilege Hour is hereby suspended.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, we are in receipt of the Certificate of Nomination submitted by the LPGMA Party-List before the Commission on Elections, naming Allan U. Ty as a second nominee of said party-list.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the untimely demise of Rep. Rodolfo B. Albano of LPGMA Party-List, I move that we allow Hon. Allan U. Ty to take his oath in open session to assume the position vacated by the late Representative Albano.

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

The Secretary General is directed to call the Representative of Party-List LPGMA to take his oath of office before this Body.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. The Representative of LPG Marketers' Association (LPGMA) Party-List, Hon. Allan U. Ty, is requested to proceed to the rostrum to take his oath. The family is also requested to join the Honorable Ty.

The colleagues of Honorable Ty, the Region II bloc is also requested to proceed to the rostrum to join Honorable Ty in his oath-taking.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). May we request all the Members of the House of Representatives and all our guests in the galleries to please rise to witness the oath-taking of our new Member, and may I further request the Deputy Speaker for Party-Lists, Deputy Speaker Conrado M. Estrella III to administer the oath.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Pimentel relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Conrado M. Estrella III.

Thereafter, Rep. Allan U. Ty, the members of his family and his colleagues ascended the rostrum and took his oath of office as Party-List LPG Marketers' Association (LPGMA) Representative in the House of Representatives before Deputy Speaker Conrado M. Estrella III.

OATH-TAKING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Estrella). Please raise your right hand and repeat after me.

I, ALLAN U. TY, of Barangay San Fermin, Cauayan City, Isabela, having been elected to the position of Representative of LPG Marketers' Association (LPGMA) Party-List, hereby solemnly swear that I will well and faithfully discharge to the best of my ability the duties of my present position and of all others I may hereafter hold under the Republic of the Philippines; that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Philippines; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the laws, legal orders, and decrees promulgated by the duly constituted authorities of the Republic of the Philippines; and that I impose this obligation upon myself voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion.

So help me God.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Estrella). Congratulations! (*Applause*)

REP. TY (A.). Thank you, Sir.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Estrella relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Johnny Ty Pimentel.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, in order to allow our Members to meet and extend their greetings to Hon. Allan U. Ty of LPGMA Party-List, I move that we suspend the session for a few minutes.

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

It was 4:40 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:42 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, we would like to acknowledge the presence of the guests of the Honorables Edgar M. Chatto, Erico Aristotle C. Aumentado and Kristine Alexie B. Tutor of the province of Bohol. They are the members of the Philippine League of Secretaries to the Sanggunian–Bohol Chapter, headed by their President Mrs. Julita Lim and accompanied by Christine Aguman, Jourdel Mario Anabieza, Annabelle Anunciado, Onil Berro, Pantaleon Cadao, Necifora Calamba, Gilbert Cenabre, Alpjos Delima, Ardissa Estavilla, Marlyn Iyo, Diosdado Jimenez, Julita Lim, Maria Maquiling, Claudia Narisma, Bonifacio Paje, Gemma Piezas, Imee Raut, Frank Rom, Karen Rosco, Helen Sarmiento, Hilda Tan, Julie Tinaja, Edgar Villafuerte, Russel Villas, Luisa Rom, Raphael Maquiling, Yolanda Corciega, Marciano Ayuban, Bryan Bulabos, Elias Bolanio, Richard Perez, Antonio Muring, Ruel Carias, Cesyl Balahay, Ruth Boybanting, Victoriana Delambaca, Ritchie Tongco, Nathaniel Pame, Al Coquilla, Kaithlyn Balahay, Jonna Loy-a and Letecia Paigalan.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). To the guests of Representatives Chatto, Aumentado and Tutor, welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Antonio “Tonypet” T. Albano of the First District of Isabela for his manifestation.

REP. ALBANO. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Hon. Tonypet Albano is recognized.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. ALBANO (A.)

REP. ALBANO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen.

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Body for the condolences we received for the family in the passing of my late father, Congressman Rodolfo B. Albano, LPGMA Party-List Representative.

As the Bible has said, there is a time for mourning and there is a time for celebration. Indeed, today even if I am mourning, I am asked to equally celebrate because I know for a fact that the next Representative who took his oath right now, Congressman Allan Ty, will surely be a beacon and light in this august Chamber, not only he is welcome in this august Chamber, but also, I know for a fact that he will do his utmost duty to uphold the principles of our Body. And so, with that, together with my family, we thank the honorable Congressman Ty for lending—as many of you know, the LPGMA Party-List was headed by the three-termer Hon. Arnel Ty and the first nominee was my father when Hon. Arnel Ty had already finished his three terms, but the second nominee is Congressman Allan Ty, and so, on behalf of my family, we really thank Congressman Allan Ty for giving strength and life to my deceased father. Again, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. *(Applause)*

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

PRIVILEGE HOUR

Continuation

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

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

The Privilege Hour is resumed.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Edgar M. Chatto of the First District of Bohol for his privilege speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The Hon. Edgar M. Chatto is recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. CHATTO

REP. CHATTO. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

In the 2018 survey, the Philippines ranked third just behind India and Pakistan among countries most vulnerable to climate change. This year, in the Global Peace Index report released by Australia-based Institute

for Economics and Peace, the Philippines is now first among the list of countries facing the highest risk of climate change hazards.

The study finds that 47 percent of the country's population is in areas highly exposed to multiple climate hazards such as earthquakes, tsunami, floods, tropical cyclones, and drought.

Honorable Speaker, my dear colleagues in this august Chamber, I stand before you today as a Member of this esteemed Body nine years ago, from the year 2001 to 2009, as a principal author of the Tourism Act of 2009, and as present Chair of the House Committee on Climate Change.

November is Climate Change Consciousness Month. This year, we celebrate the 12th Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week from November 18 to 25, with the theme, "Adapting for A Sustainable Future." Consequently, both Republic Acts No. 9593 or the Tourism Act of 2009 and Republic Act No. 9729 or the Climate Change Act of 2009 were passed on the same year, and both are celebrating their decade anniversary this year. This is significant because tourism is a major economic factor in the country, rather, contributing P2.2 trillion or 12.7 percent of the total GDP and generating 5.4 million employment for the year 2018 alone. Sustaining tourism, which is highly dependent on our natural resource, amidst the threat of climate change, is a challenge we all face now.

During my second and third terms in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Congresses, I chaired the House Committee on Tourism. Our aimed goal then was the passage of a law that would lay the national tourism framework in the country. Working for the passage of a law, way back then, was not easy. It took us five years to convince all stakeholders of the importance of a national framework on tourism.

Republic Act No. 9593 or the Tourism Act, hence, paved the way, among many others, for the formulation of the National Tourism Development Plan; major re-organization of the Department of Tourism, including its attached agencies; due recognition to the private sector; and the creation of the convergence program of relevant agencies of government and on tourism infrastructure. As a result, we now have 12 international gateways, ports are further being developed, tourism destinations are continuously being improved and many of our tourism highways are either been constructed or rehabilitated.

Republic Act No. 9729 or the Climate Change Act of 2009, on the other hand, created the Climate Change Commission as the principal climate policy-making body of the government. The National Framework Strategy on Climate Change for 2010-2022 was formulated and translated to National Climate Change Action Plan of 2011-2028 which sets the directional plan for the government in implementing short-, medium- and long-term actions in seven thematic areas: food security, water sufficiency,

ecological and environmental stability, human security, climate smart industries and services, sustainable energy and knowledge, and capacity development.

Upon coming back as a legislator for the Eighteenth Congress, and having finished my three terms as Governor of the province of Bohol, I accepted the Chairmanship of the Committee on Climate Change. It is an advocacy close to heart and is intimately related to almost everything I can commit myself to as a public servant—environment, agriculture, food security, health and tourism.

The big challenge is herculean to say the least, but I know, honorable Speaker, my dear colleagues, that I have this august Chamber as partners in this fight against the adverse effects of climate change.

According to the DOST-PAGASA, and I quote:

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has set out two central approaches in dealing with climate change. The first is to address the root cause by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from human activity. Well, the second is to manage its impacts.

According to the Climate Change Commission, while the Philippines contributes next to nothing to the climate change problem in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, yet we suffer the brunt. Nevertheless, we are making a stand because we believe a resilient low-carbon future is the only pathway that will secure inclusive, enduring development for all. There is no excuse for inaction. It is our moral and intergenerational responsibility to build the capacities of our communities to these impacts and to greater steps to protect our oceans.

In March last year, His Excellency President Rodrigo R. Duterte signed the landmark Paris Agreement on climate change that calls for the reduction of carbon emissions which have been linked to the occurrence of natural disasters and extreme weather conditions.

Two months ago, youths across the globe joined in protests to call on world leaders to respond decisively on the climate emergency with climate justice. Greta Thunberg, a teen environmental activist and the face of Global Climate Strike efforts has been making waves in exacting accountability and creating awareness.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, recommends for the Philippines:

x x x to listen to the science in the report and push for more integration of climate actions that would go beyond the time frame of their political positions. The government should really push for more ambitious targets in terms of adaptation and mitigation, because adaptation is not enough. The ecosystem-based adaptation should be in conjunction with mitigation or reduction of emissions.

“Fiercer storms and drier droughts”, is how they describe the effects of climate change in the country. And as we stand here, we are not surprised. We had typhoons Ondoy and Yolanda. In Bohol, a state of calamity was declared recently due to the drought in the farmland. Indeed, climate change is the new normal.

Focusing on tourism alone, we cannot deny the value of tourism for the country. Our major asset: our natural resources. But, travel in general, contributes to carbon footprints, unregulated practices of the tourism sector, and tourism activities have an adverse effect on our natural resources. Unless we mainstream sustainable tourism, we fail our natural resources, we fail the next generation.

According to the World Tourism Organization, sustainable tourism is:

Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of the visitors, the industry, the environment, and the host communities.

Hence, Mr. Speaker, Your honor, adaptation and mitigation advocacies must be made part of tourism promotions. There are a thousand and one ways to do that: from economic or eco-friendly designs of buildings and facilities, cleanliness and sanitations, ecotourism practices and activities, conservation efforts to tree planting in tourism sites—the possibility is vast.

Furthermore, according to the WTO:

Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them.

It has been said that climate change is irreversible, but it is not unstoppable. The Philippines’ vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change gives us no excuse to be complacent in our mandate.

We have a lot to do. First on the list is the strengthening of the functional and organizational structure of the Climate Change Commission. We need to allocate for research, for development of technical experts, for the empowerment of LGUs and communities and for the implementation down to the household level.

We need to strengthen the whole-of-government approach in climate change. We need to replicate best practices. In Bohol, for example, we are among the first provinces in the country which approved an ordinance declaring our strong stand for, “No Coal Policy.”

Finally, political leaders, including Members of Congress, carry a lot of influence on our respective constituencies. Being strong advocates on climate change adaptation and mitigation, both in policy development and in actual day-to-day living, can make a big difference in developing a resilient community. It should start with us: as leaders and as Members of our respective communities.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Daghang salamat. (*Applause*)

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

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the privilege speech of the Honorable Chatto to the Committee on Rules for appropriate action.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) There being none, the motion is approved.

The privilege speech of Hon. Edgar M. Chatto is hereby referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Sarah Jane Elago of the Party-List KABATAAN for her privilege speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Hon. Sarah Jane I. Elago is recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ELAGO

REP. ELAGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First and foremost, I would like to greet everyone a hopeful and love-filled International Children’s Day on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child or UNCRC, a human rights treaty which sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children.

Kaninang umaga lang ho ay nanggaling ang Representasyon na ito sa isang pagdiriwang dito sa may Sunken Garden sa UP–Diliman, kung saan nagsama-sama ang mga estudyante mula sa iba’t ibang mga paaralan upang magkaroon ng isang makabuluhang pagkakaisa sa pamamagitan ng mga laro, mga pagtatanghal, mga quizzes, at upang maipakita na sila na mismo ang naghahangad na ang mga karapatan na nakalagay sa UNCRC ay kanilang makamit at magamit upang maipagtanggol ang karapatan pa ng iba.

Then, Mr. Speaker, let me now proceed to sharing the unity statement made by various youth and student organizations in response to the statements of the National Youth Commission and the Department of the

Interior and Local Government on their celebration of the first National Students Day observed in November 17. The statement reads:

We, student and youth formations are gravely alarmed over the attempts of a few government agencies to malign the 1st National Students' Day Youth Camp, a two-day activity, which is in line with the celebration of the International Students' Day in the Philippines.

Enacted into law on August 8 of this very year, Mr. Speaker, Republic Act No. 11369 recognizes November 17 as National Students' Day. This law, co-authored by KABATAAN Party-List here in the House of Representatives, aims to recognize the invaluable contribution of student activism to Philippine democracy. The law even encourages support for exercises and activities launched by students during the observance of National Students' Day which is in Section 4 of the said law.

With this, we are disappointed at the NYC and the DILG for trying to discredit activities launched by students and youth, that the NYC has an event to be held on November 16 about drug addiction should not hinder the NYC from supporting other activities so that more students and young people can participate in the celebration and address many youth-related issues aside from drugs, such as democratic rights in schools, discrimination based on SOGIE, education, health and sexuality, science and technology, good governance, climate justice, and national sovereignty, among others.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, we slam the DILG for insinuating that the event will be used by "communist-led front organizations" for their own agenda. This is an insult to all the youth formations that are working together to conduct this activity. If this continues, we fear that the time will come when student-led activities will have to undergo similar scrutiny and be maliciously tagged instead of getting endorsement and support from duly mandated agencies.

We would like to remind our government officials who made those statements that the International Students' Day was spearheaded by the International Students' Council in 1941 to commemorate the killing of nine student leaders in Prague and the closing of all Czech universities and colleges in 1939, after student protests were held that year to denounce the fascist Nazi regime of Germany.

Now that our schools are under the same threats of campus militarization and the crippling of academic freedom, and while we live in times of intensified crackdown among the Filipino youth and students who

are exercising their civil and political rights to assert for a better life and a better future, it is high time that we support all efforts in celebrating the National Students' Day, not only on November 17, the whole month of November or even in any day that the students deem appropriate in their schools and in their communities to identify and fulfill the role of young Filipinos today in nation building. The coordinated attacks by the said government agencies on the youth camp give us more reasons to come together and forge stronger unities to advance the welfare of students, youth and the Filipino people.

Nagpapasalamat po ako, Mr. Speaker, dahil sa kabila po ng mga naturang statements laban sa pagsasagawa ng #youthpower, two-day youth camp sa selebrasyon ng National Students' Day, naging matagumpay ang event na ito. Nadaluhan ito ng halos 300 na mga student-leaders mula sa iba't ibang mga pamantasan at kolehiyo, at narito po ang ilan sa mga litrato noong naturang event.

Marami pong mga nagpunting mga tagapagsalita mula sa iba't ibang civil society organizations. Mayroon din po tayong mga nagsalita tungkol sa mga karapatan ng mga estudyante mula mismo sa Commission on Human Rights. We had a guest from the PLCPD na nagsalita naman po tungkol sa kanilang efforts to curb teenage pregnancy at sa pag-address ng issues na may kinalaman sa pangkabuuang pangkalusugan ng mga bata at ng mga kababaihan.

Nariyan din po ang nag-discuss ng challenges pagdating sa pagpapatupad ng reproductive health. Nagbigay din po ng updates pagdating sa pagbibigay ng age-appropriate sexuality education sa ating mga pamantasan.

Gayundin, we had the likes of Dean Tony La Viña who gave a talk on the updates on climate negotiations and actions po ng Pilipinas pagdating sa pandaigdigang panawagan ngayon ng mga bata at mga kabataan na magkaroon ng kongkretong aksyon, hindi lang sa salita kundi maging sa gawa, sa pagtatanggol ng ating kalikasan at pagre-respond sa krisis na pangklima. In fact, Mr. Speaker, marami po tayong mga kasamahan dito sa House of Representatives ang nagsabi na sila ay handang-handa na makipagtulungan pagdating sa pag-aaral pa ng siyensya, ng agham na nasa likod ng kung paano natin pa mabibigyan ng makabuluhan na aksyon ang climate emergency.

Gayundin, Mr. Speaker, ako po ay pinakanagagalak, bagamat hindi po ako nakadalo doon sa kabuuan ng dalawang araw, nadaluhan ko po ang kanilang resolution-building, kung saan ang mga nag-attend na mga estudyante, student leaders, mga head ng kanilang mga organizations, sila po ay nagkaroon ng breakout sessions kung saan sila ay gumawa ng mga resolusyon na nais nilang maipabatid sa atin at maipaabot sa mga

Miyembro ng Kapulungang ito. Ang ilan po diyan ay may kinalaman sa proteksyon ng ating indigenous peoples and cultural communities. Nariyan din po ang hinggil sa agricultural workers at farmers. Ito po ang ilan doon sa mga nasulat nilang resolusyon, at inaanyayahan ko po ang mga legislative staff, ang mga opisina ng ating mga kasamahan na tulungan po natin pinuhin iyong esensya ng kanilang mga panawagan.

Ang ilan po diyan ang pagtatanggol sa karapatan ng mga indigenous people para po sa sariling pagpapasya. Nariyan din ang paglaban sa tinatawag nilang development aggression, na sila naman po ay suporta sa pag-unlad ng kanilang pamayanan, ngunit nararapat din na kilalanin ang kanilang mga karapatan, gayundin ang karapatan ng ating mga kababayan na katutubo sa kalidad at abot-kaya na edukasyon.

Gayundin, Mr. Speaker, pagdating naman po sa usapin na pang-agrikultura, sila po ay nananawagan kung maaari ay magkaroon ba ng caravan sa kanilang mga eskuwelahan tungkol sa efforts ng Kapulungang ito na may kinalaman sa agriculture, food security at agrarian reform.

Pagdating naman po sa health and sexuality, sila po ay nagtatanong kung kumusta na ba ang pagpapatupad ng bagong pasa nating batas na mas pinalakas na HIV-AIDS policy sa buong bansa, at kung paano ba nila magagamit iyong kanilang mga proyekto at programa sa eskuwelahan para makatulong sa pagpapalakas ng implementasyon ng nasabing batas.

Pagdating naman po sa mandatory ROTC, sila po ay nananawagan na kung maaari ma-review na muna natin ang National Service Training Program, gayundin ang kasalukuyang kalagayan ng ating mga senior high school sa K to 12.

Pagdating naman po sa mga maralitang tagalungsod ay iyong pagtulong sa kanilang kampanya na magbuo ng development plans na on-site or in-city, na hindi po sila aalis sa lugar na kung saan sila may kabuhatan, o kung hindi talaga natin maiiwasan na sila ay lilipat ng lokasyon, dapat po ay may tiyak na kasiguraduhan sa trabaho at gayundin sa kabuhatan.

Pagdating naman sa press freedom, may isang resolusyon na nananawagan na dapat tayo mag-promote ng editorial independence sa mga campus press. At ang advisers po nila na ina-assign sa ating mga press, ang guidelines nila ay pang-technical lang at hindi dapat sila nariyan para i-censor ang mga sinusulat ng ating mga mamahayag na pang-campus.

Panghuli at napakaimportante po sa atin ang isang resolusyon na may kinalaman sa mabuting pamamahala. Marami po sa mga nagpunta doon sa National Students' Day Camp ay mga nagnanais maging susunod na mga mambabatas dito sa House of Representatives, susunod na senador, susunod na mayor, maski susunod na pangulo ng Pilipinas, at nagnanais po sila na atin nang

mapalakas ang sistema ng ating hustisya, ang pag-iral ng batas na napakahalaga para sa mabuting pamamahala sa ating lokal at sa pambansang antas. Nariyan po ang kanilang mga resolusyon at ang Representasyon na ito mula sa KABATAAN Party-List, ay nagagalak at talagang hindi na makapaghintay na mabigyan kayong lahat ng mga kopya ng resolusyon na ito, at nawa'y lahat din po ay madinig natin dito sa loob ng Batasang Pambansa.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Again, mabuhay po ang lahat ng mga child rights defenders na nagdiriwang ngayong araw. Hindi pa tapos ang ating laban. Gayundin sa lahat ng mga nag-celebrate sa buong bansa ng National Students' Day. Una ko po itong na-celebrate noong 2014 bilang tagapangulo ng National Union of Students of the Philippines. Matagal na po iyan sine-celebrate dito sa Pilipinas, at inaasahan po natin na iyan ay ating ipapamana pa sa mga susunod na henerasyon.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Maraming salamat sa lahat.

Happy National Students' Day! Happy International Students' Day!

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

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the Hon. Sarah Jane Elago to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The privilege speech of Hon. Sarah Jane Elago is referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Privilege Hour is hereby terminated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we include some additional coauthors for House Bills No. 5421, 5437, 5477, 5490 and 5491, as contained in the list to be submitted by the Committee on Rules.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

OMNIBUS CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILLS
ON SECOND READING

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider bills under the Calendar of Business for Thursday and Friday. Pursuant to our Rules, I move for an omnibus consideration of the following measures:

1. House Bill No. 5421, under Committee Report No. 74; and
2. House Bill No. 5490, under Committee Report No. 77.

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

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider that the respective Explanatory Notes of the bills as the sponsorship thereon.

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

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to interpellate or speak against the said measures, I move that we terminate the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of amendments and approve the Committee amendments, if there are any, as contained in the measures' respective Committee Reports.

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

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, there being no individual amendments, I move that we terminate the period of amendments.

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

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 5421 and House Bill No. 5490 on Second Reading.

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

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). As many as are in favor of the approval of the bills enumerated in the omnibus motion, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

OMNIBUS APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILLS
ON SECOND READING

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

The bills enumerated in the omnibus motion are hereby approved on Second Reading.*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5490
ON SECOND READING

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 5490, contained in Committee Report No. 77, as reported out by the Committee on Legislative Franchises.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). 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. 5490, entitled: AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO BICOL BROADCASTING SYSTEMS, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8092, ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING THE BICOL BROADCASTING SYSTEMS, INC. (BBSI),

* See MEASURES CONSIDERED (printed separately)

A FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN REGION V.”

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize the distinguished Chairman of the Committee on Legislative Franchises to begin sponsorship of the measure.

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

REP. FORTUNO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Explanatory Note of the Bill be considered as the sponsorship speech on the measure.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

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

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

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 5490 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). As many as are in favor, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 5490 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 5490 is hereby approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

PRIVILEGE HOUR *Continuation*

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move to reopen the Privilege Hour.

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

The Privilege Hour is hereby resumed.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize the Hon. Edgar Mary S. Sarmiento for his privilege speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The Hon. Edgar Mary Sarmiento is hereby recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. SARMIENTO

REP. SARMIENTO. Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker, Majority Leader. Magandang gabi po sa ating lahat.

Nagpapasalamat po ako at binuksan muli ang Privilege Hour.

Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, good evening.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and the Philippine National Police for a job well done, lalung-lalo na po sa PNP, hindi naman po negative lahat.

Last October 17, 2019, 87.83 kilos of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu amounting to almost P600 million were intercepted during an operation of the Philippine National Police Regional and Provincial Drug Enforcement Units of Region VIII, Philippine National Police Samar Provincial Office, One Locality Gandara Municipal Police Station and PDEA Samar Provincial Office in Gandara, Samar, under the First District of Samar, which resulted in the apprehension of six suspects including a 14-year-old boy and a pregnant woman. They are all residents of the provinces of Cebu and Cavite.

Based on the intelligence reports from the Police and Drug Enforcement Unit, and the interviews of the apprehending officers, the drugs seized were sourced in Luzon and were for delivery to a buyer in Cebu. It is accessed right now, Mr. Speaker. Along the nautical highway, on this case specifically, the eastern seaboard or the Eastern Nautical Highway as the transit connection, it was indeed a successful anti-illegal drugs operation. However, it is sad to say that this success story of our operatives was turned, no less than by a fellow Member of this House of Representatives, into an opportunity to unduly malign and defame the First District of Samar. Ladies and gentlemen, this is a poor use of politics and the reason that this country is having a hard time moving forward.

I received a copy of this information, and it is in my possession. Accusations had been thrown, and it is sad to say, to a media outlet that is giving them false information. I wanted to present this on the screen but I was advised not to.

The first accusation, Mr. Speaker, is that the drugs apprehended last October 17, came from Calbayog City. The second is that the drug, allegedly are rampant in the First District of Samar, particularly, in the city of Calbayog.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know what is happening to our system, but clearly, I have presentations to make, and I think that is on the other part of the screen—ayan po, kitang-kita ninyo po ang ebidensya, ang drugs na nahuli sa Samar.

Mr. Speaker, ako po ay naging Vice Chairperson of the House Committee on Dangerous Drugs noong Seventeenth Congress, at ako po ay naging miyembro ng ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly or AIPA Fact-Finding Committee or AIFOCOM to combat the drug menace last 2017, and Mr. Speaker, it has been my policy consistently, to closely monitor the PDEA and the Philippine National Police, to make sure that the First District of Samar, if possible, the entire province of Samar, if warranted, Mr. Speaker, the entire Island of Samar is drug-free.

It is so sad that this incident is being used as a political tool. Huwag naman po natin, Mr. Speaker, tapakan ang ibang distrito na ginagawa ang lahat upang labanan ang iligal na droga.

Mr. Speaker, I just want everybody to know what kind of accusation is being made if the leaders of the First District of Samar want to do something for the betterment of our constituents. The Calbayog City of Samar, this is a first class city in Region VIII, nakikita po natin, nandiyan po sa screen, it serves as the commercial, industrial and fishing center of the entire province of Samar. Currently, and I just want this to be put on record, one of the tigers among the urban centers of Region VIII, based on the 2017 Annual Financial Report for the local government released by the Department of Finance last November 2018, its

assets totaled approximately P2.51 billion, making it the third richest city of Region VIII.

Mr. Speaker, Calbayog City also ranks number one among the seven cities of Eastern Visayas with the highest resiliency competitiveness index in the region. This index, of course, Mr. Speaker, is the capacity of the locality to facilitate businesses and industries to create jobs, raise productivity and increase the income of its citizens.

With this development, it goes to show the relevance, Mr. Speaker, that the leaders of the First District of Samar, particularly the city of Calbayog, are serious in their mission to improve the lives of all Samarons and to put a stop into the proliferation of illegal drugs.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I am so shocked by these accusations. Mr. Speaker, I just, again, want to put this on record that these are all false. Mr. Speaker, clearly, as a Member of the legislative branch of government and the judicial branch of government, whatever it is, Mr. Speaker, documentary evidences will always outweigh fabricated allegations.

Case in point, Mr. Speaker, on the first accusation that the drugs came from the city of Calbayog; this is outrageously false. To prove my point, Mr. Speaker, kitang-kita naman po ang sinasabi ng former director ng Region VIII na si Dionardo Carlos in his press briefing na ang drugs po ay nanggaling sa Luzon, specifically sa Cavite, noong October 15 papunta po ng Cebu. Ayan po, kitang-kita po ang sinasabi.

Furthermore, the personalities arrested during the operation, ayan po, makikita po natin, sinasabi po diyan lahat. Now, the personalities, Mr. Speaker, who were apprehended, not one single individual is from the city of Calbayog. Iyan po ay galing lahat sa Cebu.

On the second accusation, Mr. Speaker, that illegal drugs are rampant in the First District of Samar, particularly Calbayog City, again, Mr. Speaker, this is totally false. Ever since I was called to office and became a public servant, Mr. Speaker, I have always supported our government's war on drugs. Again, ulitin ko po, noong Seventeenth Congress, nagtatrabaho na po tayo against sa illegal drugs. Kung titingnan po ninyo ang city of Calbayog, highly affected po, zero. Tingnan ninyo po, and this is on record, Mr. Speaker, these are properly documented. I can bring the record at any given time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, nasasaktan po ako. This is one thing I am hoping that we, Members of the House of Representatives, should respect our own districts. Huwag po tayong makialam sa ibang distrito at tingnan ninyo po muna ang distrito ninyo bago po ninyo puntahan ang distrito ko.

Mr. Speaker, tingnan ninyo lang ang ginawa ko. Ngayon po, nakikita natin kung saan ang droga ay nanggagaling, sa Luzon, dinadala po sa Cebu, dinadala sa Mindanao, saan dinadala—sa nautical highways po natin. Ano po ang ginawa ng inyong public servant

na nanggaling sa Samar? Ako po ay Vice Chair ng Dangerous Drugs Committee ng House. Tingnan ninyo po, sinulatan po natin ang Philippine Coast Guard at ang Philippine Ports Authority, requesting them to impose, at iyan po on record, stricter measures in all our ports such as putting mandatory checkpoints in order to prevent the movement of illegal drugs across provinces throughout all our nautical highways.

Mr. Speaker, I speak today to plead and remind all House Members to practice, Mr. Speaker, practice the standard of ethics, the unwritten rule that is expected of us. Let us not resort to this dirty trick, Mr. Speaker. Let us not attempt to bring one personality down, rather, and I just want to put this on record—whatever wrong should be properly recorded as wrong and whatever is right should be correspondingly be given the admiration they truly deserve.

Nangyari na po sa atin ito, Mr. Speaker, babalikan po natin ang nangyari sa Philippine National Police, kung saan ang ginawa po ng ninja cops, at ayan na po ang nangyari, hanggang ngayon ay wala pa po tayong Chief ng Philippine National Police.

Mr. Speaker, to end my privilege speech, this Representation from the First District of Samar is very thankful to the Majority Leader, to the Speaker, for opening again the Privilege Hour here in the House of Representatives, my dear colleagues. Let us work together, let us maintain the high rating we achieved.

To the Speaker of the House, let us work together to protect this institution, the House of Representatives, the House of the People. Bigyan po natin ng pagkakataon, magtulungan po tayo, dalhin po natin ang Republika ng Pilipinas sa kabutihan at huwag sa kasamaan.

I end, Mr. Speaker, once again. Maraming salamat po sa ating lahat.

Thank you. Good evening, everyone.

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

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that the privilege speech of the Honorable Sarmiento be referred to the Committee on Rules for appropriate action.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The privilege speech of the Hon. Edgar Mary Sarmiento is referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Hon. Arlene D. Brosas of GABRIELA Party-List be recognized for her privilege speech.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Hon. Arlene Brosas is recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. BROSAS

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, fellow Members of the House of Representatives, and dearest guests, a pleasant afternoon.

On November 20, 1959, leaders from different parts of the world gathered and adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child at the United Nations General Assembly. On November 20, 1989, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child or the UNCRC was also adopted by the same organ. Hence, today is a very special day as we celebrate Universal Children's Day and the 30th anniversary of the UNCRC. Lahat tayo ay minsang dumaaan sa pagkabata kung kaya't hayaan ninyo akong batiin ang lahat ng narito sa kapita-pitagang Kapulungang ito ng Happy Children's Day.

G. Ispiker, bagama't dapat tayong magsaya ngayong araw, nararapat din tayong mabahala sa magiging kinabukasan ng mga bata sa kasalukuyan. Nandiyan ang banta ng pagsasabatas ng pagpapababa ng minimum age of criminal responsibility o MACR. Gagawing kriminal ang mga bata imbis na ituring na biktima at lalapatan ng naaangkop na rehabilitasyon at serbisyong ipinagkailang sa kanila ng lipunan.

Kabi-kabila ang militarisasyon sa kanayunan na naghahasik ng takot sa murang isipan ng mga bata. Ang mga paaralang naipundar ng mga katutubo para sa kanilang mga anak ay sinira at pinagbabantaang bobombahin. Maraming bilang din ng mga bata ang walang makain. Maraming bilang ng mga bata ang walang akses sa serbisyong pangkalusugan. Maraming bilang ng mga bata ang hindi nakakatamasa ng maayos na edukasyon. Maraming bilang ng mga bata ang nawalan ng magulang dahil sa war on drugs na mas kilala sa tawag na Oplan Tokhang. Maraming bilang ng mga bata ang umiiyak dahil ikinulong ang kanilang mga magulang gamit ang mga peke o gawa-gawang kaso. Maraming bilang ng mga bata ang nawalan at mawawalan ng tirahan dahil sa sunud-sunod na demolisyon. Laganap din ang kaso ng pang-aabuso, tumitindi ang karahasan, at sumisidhi ang kahirapan.

One of the issues that have a detrimental effect on the lives of Filipino children is environmental destruction. Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, despite the opposition of indigenous communities and environmental advocates, the administration is set to push through with the Kaliwa Dam Project. Mr. Speaker and fellow Members of this august Chamber, this China-funded project puts the lives of the indigenous people, the local communities and our country in a perilous situation. The damage that this will cause poses a threat to the future of our children.

Labis na nababahala ang Kinatawag ito sa pagpapaaalis ng mga katutubong Dumagat-Remontados sa kanilang lupang ninuno. Ang pagpapatayo ng dam na ito ay malaki ring banta sa pagkasira ng ekolohikal na balanse ng kapaligiran. Napakaraming species sa Sierra Madre ang maaapektuhan. Tinatayang 424 na pamilya ang mapapaalis at 100,000 residente ang maaaring lumubog sa baha kung ipagpapatuloy ito. Dahil sa epekto nitong pagsira ng kalikasan at paglubog sa katubigan ng malaking ektarya ng kagubatan at kalupaan, lalo lang nitong dinadagdagan ang greenhouse gases, tulad ng methane gas na siyang nakapagpapalala ng krisis sa klima o climate change.

Despite this project being unlawful and harmful in many ways, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources issued an Environmental Compliance Certificate or ECC last October 11. Sa pamamagitan ng pagpasok sa kasunduang ito sa China at sa pagbibigay ng ECC, ibinenta na rin ng ating gobyerno sa kamay ng dayuhan ang haharapang bukas ng mga bata at kabataan ng susunod na henerasyon.

Sabi ni President Duterte kamakailan lamang hinggil sa Kaliwa Dam na, “My concern is the welfare, the greatest good for the greatest number.” Ngunit kita sa napakalalang epekto nito sa mga bata, sa kalikasan, sa komunidad ng mga katutubo at sa mamamayan mismo ng Pilipinas na hindi ito para sa greatest good for the greatest number.

G. Ispiker, ginagamit daw ang issue ng water crisis upang bigyang katuwiran ang proyektong ito, upang bigyang katuwiran ang pangungutang ng Pilipinas sa dayuhang bansa na siyang magbibigay pasakit sa susunod na henerasyon. Ito ay bahagi diumano ng mga proyektong pangkaunlaran. Ngunit kaunlaran para kanino?

Nais bigyang diin ng Kinatawag ito na kung magpapatuloy ang mga ganitong polisiya, ilulubog lamang nito ang susunod na salinlahi, ilulubog sa baha bunga ng pagkasira ng kalikasan at ilulubog sa utang bunsod ng mga proyektong pagkakakitaan lamang ng iilan. Tutulan natin ang mga proyektong magdudulot ng pagkasira ng kalikasan dahil ang pagkasira ng kalikasan ay pagkasira din ng kinabukasan ng ating mga anak.

Magkaisa tayo para hawanin ang daan tungo sa magandang bukas ng mga bata at ng susunod na salinlahi.

Maraming salamat po. Muli, magandang hapon at maligayang araw ng mga bata sa inyong lahat.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that the privilege speech of Hon. Arlene Brosas be referred to the Committee on Rules for appropriate action.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The privilege speech of Hon. Arlene Brosas is hereby referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Aurelio “Dong” D. Gonzales Jr. of Pangasinan—Pampanga, I am sorry, for his privilege speech.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Hon. Aurelio “Dong” Gonzales of Pampanga is hereby recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. GONZALES (A.)

REP. GONZALES (A.). Thank you, Mr. Debonair Deputy Speaker and Presiding Officer.

To our Majority Leader, Martin Romualdez, and to my dear colleagues, magandang hapon po sa ating lahat.

Tumayo po ako dahil I am monitoring the farmers in my district, the Third District of Pampanga, from June, July, August, September, October, and the harvest time was last week of October.

Alam ninyo po, iyong kapwa magsasaka, kawawa po sila. Nag-invest po sila, namuhunan po sila ng P13 per kilo sa palay. Sad to say, naibenta lang po iyong palay nila at P9 per kilo with a moisture content of 40 percent. Meaning to say, hindi pa tuyong-tuyo iyong palay kaya kinuha nila ng lower than P13. So, meaning to say, my fellow farmers are—mayroon silang negative P4 per kilo.

In our district, we have, I think, 6,000 farmers and 4,000 hectares of agricultural land. Kawawa po. During harvest time and during irrigation time, I am monitoring them, talagang umiiyak sila sa hirap kasi wala silang mapagkuhanan ng pera. Some farmers went to the other lending company to borrow P2,000, P1,000 with an interest of 10 percent per month. So, bale 5-6 po iyon, masyadong mataas iyong interes. Kawawa po.

Iyong anak nila, nag-aaral. Buti na lang, nandiyang iyong mga kasama kong Kongresista sa Pampanga dahil malaking tulong iyong pinapaaral namin iyong kanilang mga anak. In our district, bawal po ang hindi nag-aaral. In our district, kung wala kang pambayad ng tuition fee, if you are in a private school or in a government school, sabi ko sa kanila, “Kami na ang bahala.” So, iyon ang puwede naming maitulong.

Kahapon po ay nagkaroon po ako ng consultative meeting with the Regional Director of the Department of Agriculture, the Regional Director of the Department of Agrarian Reform and the CDA, the Cooperative

Development Authority. Gumawa po ako ng proposal sa kanila na maganda kasi gusto ko talagang matulungan. Kanina, galing ako sa Pampanga, sa distrito ko, at kausap ko na naman po iyong mga group of farmers sa Mexico at sa Sta. Ana. Nagpapatulong po sila, and they heard that Secretary William Dar will give P15,000 per farmer. What is the formula? Hindi po natin alam iyong formula ni Secretary Dar kung papaano niya idi-distribute iyong P15,000 per farmer.

Mr. Speaker, ganito kasi iyan, sa isang magsasaka, minsan, mayroon landowner iyan. Iyong landowner, ipapa-till mo, ipapasaka mo sa isang farmer at ang resulta noon, kung nagka-profit kayo ng P15,000 per hectare ay divided by two mo iyon and that is equivalent to P7,500 per hectare. Iyon ang kita sa bawat ektarya sa bawat lupa ng mga magsasaka.

Ngayon, hindi po kumita—negative. So, meaning to say, iyong namuhunan, halimbawa, sa isang ektarya, talo. E hindi mo na puwedeng singilin iyong advance noong farmer kasi nga lugi. Nalugi kayo ng P5,000 per hectare, iyong P5,000 nagamit na niya sa kaniyang araw-araw na panggastos, pangkain, pang-breakfast, pang-allowance ng mga bata at iba pang gastusin ng mga farmer. So, kawawa po sila.

I am calling the attention of the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, i-identify ninyo pong maayos kung papaano iyong P10 billion. As of now, we have P7 billion na available as per the spokesperson of the Department of Agriculture. Seven billion and another P3 billion—they are looking at another P3 billion to distribute this P15,000 per farmer.

Ang question, kung ikaw ay landowner at ikaw ay farmer, kanino mo ibibigay iyong P15,000? Eh di dalawa iyon. Kasi hindi ko po nakikitang effective iyong gagawin ng Department of Agriculture. Ito po iyong ginawa namin kahapon sa meeting. I proposed na ano ang mga requirement ng bawat farmer? Kaysa bigyan mo ng P15,000 per farmer, bigyan natin iyan. Kung mayroon tayong—if we have a mantra, Build, Build, Build sa Department of Public Works, kailangang mayroon din tayong mantra sa Department of Agriculture. Ano iyong mantra na iyon? We have this Modernization Act. Ano iyon?

Una, Department of Agriculture, i-supply po natin ang equipment. Ano iyong kailangan nila? Four by four tractor, iyong 4x4 tractor na iyon, nagkakahalaga lang po iyon ng P1.5 million.

Pangalawa, ang requirement ng bawat magsasaka ay mga seedling. Iyon, puwede nang ilibre, iyong hybrid ng mga taga-Department of Agriculture.

Pangatlo, ang sinabi ko sa kanila, kakausapin ko si Secretary Dar at si Speaker na kung pupuwede ay bigyan natin sila ng subsidy sa fertilizer, iyong mga farmer. Kung halimbawa, P980 per kaban iyong abono, iyong fertilizer, siguro bigyan natin ng 30 percent discount. Kung mayroon tayong pantawid-gutom dito

sa DSWD, kailangang bigyan din natin ng tulong itong mga kapatid nating magsasaka dito sa ating bansa. So, give them subsidy or for the fertilizer. Eh, halimbawa, P980 per kaban, bigyan natin ng diskuwento. Malaking bagay na savings na ng isang farmer iyon.

Pang-apat, iyong kanilang sinasabing—kasi nga sinabi ko kanina sa inyo, there is 40 percent moisture content. You know why? Ang Public Works and Highways, bawal nang gamitin as solar dryer iyong mga bypass road, iyong mga national road, iyong mga provincial road, iyong mga barangay road. Bawal na po iyan sa Public Works. We cannot use the roads para patuyuin natin iyong palay. So, kailangang bigyan sila ng mechanical dryer. Magkano iyong mechanical dryer? Iyong mechanical dryer as per my director, ang halaga ng mechanical dryer ay P1.7 million per unit.

Sa aking distrito, I have 10 cooperatives. Two, mayroon akong ilang asosasyon. Pangatlo, mayroon iyong tinatawag na personal na nagsasaka sa kaniyang sariling kakayahan. So, tatlo po iyan. Isa, sa cooperative; two, association; three, the personal capacity to till their own land. Ngayon, kung bibigyan natin ng mechanical dryer iyan at blower, palagay ko una ibebenta nila iyong palay nila ng P11 per kilo. Ibenta mo iyan sa NFA, kapag tuyong-tuyo na iyan, kukunin ng P20—P20 per kilo ng NFA kasi fully dried na po iyon. Tuyong-tuyo na iyon. Kapag basa ang palay, hindi mo puwedeng ibenta nang mataas at sigurado ako ang presyo niyan ay hindi lalayo sa P9 hanggang P11.

Iyon, Mr. Speaker, kaya ako tumayo. Ngayon, iyong iba pang requirements nila pagkatapos ng mechanical dryer, sprayer, so kailangan natin iyang i-mill. Iyong palay, gagawin nating bigas. Kailangan niyan matulungan natin kasi kung wala silang ganoon ay dadalhin pa nila sa mga retailer. So, mas lalong mahal iyong magiging resulta ng kanilang harvest na mga palay.

So, ito po, mayroon akong diagram sa inyo, Mr. Speaker. Ito ang kaniyang title, ABIAS. You know, abias is kanin. ABIAS is “A”—ito pong “A” ang sinasabi ng ABIAS is Advanced—tawag dito, labo na mata ko yata, Mr. Speaker—to modernize the rice farming techniques of our farmers. So, ito po ang proposed modern rice farming technique ng inyong abang lingkod. Iyong masigasig na farmers associations: 4x4 tractor. Number two, pagkatapos mong binungkal iyong lupa, magtatanim tayo, we need seedlings. Pangatlo, pag naitanim na natin iyan, kailangan natin ng fertilizer; pagkatapos nating itanim iyan, mangangailangan tayo ng irigasyon.

Ang sinasabi ko sa kanila, ihingi rin tayo ng subsidy sa Department of Agriculture kahit magkakaroon lang tayo ng P10 discount per liter sa diesel. Ang ginagamit po natin sa diesel kasi is per litro, mahal po iyan. Kaya kung mabibigyan natin ng subsidy ng P10 pesos per liter

ang ating magsasaka ay malaking bagay po sa kanila iyan. Makakatipid sila sa fertilizer, makakatipid sila sa diesel, makakatipid sila sa fertilizer, iyon pong tatlong iyon, iyon ang major requirements ng isang farmer. Ngayon, itong rice mill na ito kailangan po natin ipundar. Manggagaling sa Department of Agriculture iyong rice mill mechanical equipment para doon na lang kino-convert iyong palay into rice at iyong circulating dryer.

Pangalawa, iyong isang bodegang malaki. Iyong mga kooperatiba kasi, they are requiring a warehouse. The cooperative required a warehouse para if you are 100 farmers, sa isang kooperatibang iyon, kung mababa iyong palay, may pera iyong kooperatiba. Halimbawa, may 100 kaban ka, 100 x 50, that is 5,000 kilos; 5,000 kilos times mo ng P9 per kilo, so that is P45,000. Iyong P45,000 na iyon, ibibigay mo sa bodega nila, sa warehouse nila, “O, sige, Dong, bigyan mo muna ako ng P15,000, ibobodega ko muna iyong palay sa warehouse natin habang pinapatuyo natin iyong palay, habang naghahanap tayo ng dryer para tumaas naman iyong presyo kaysa sa ibigay mo iyong P9 per kilo versus P20 per kilo, kung ibebenta mo iyan sa NFA.”

Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, this is the time to help our farmers. Alam ninyo po, ang sinasabi nila, “Hindi na po kami nag-aral, ginaganito pa rin kami.” Kawawa naman po ang ating mga kapatid na magsasaka. That is why it is time to help, my dear colleagues, Mr. Speaker, and invite in one of our hearings para maisiwalat natin iyong problema ng farmers kay Secretary Dar.

In summation of this, Mr. Speaker, ang sinabi kong pitong items sa inyo, kung bibigyan mo ng P15,000 per farmer, multiply mo, times 6,000, that is equivalent to P90 million—P90 million versus bili tayo ng four-wheel tractor, bili tayo ng combined harvester with dryer, bili tayo ng rice mill, bili tayo ng hand tractor, bigyan natin ng subsidy ng diesel, bigyan natin ng subsidy sa fertilizer, palagay ko po it is equal, pareho po iyon, and that is a long-term situation. Iyon po ang puwedeng makakagamot sa atin, sa ating kapwa magsasaka. Huwag po nating ibigay iyong P15,000 sa mga farmer; otherwise, bukas wala na iyan, bukas ipambibili na ng pamalengke, ipabibigay na lang na allowance sa ating mga estudyante.

So, ito po, inuulit ko, Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, ABIAS, ABIAS. Abias is rice. In Kapampangan, kanin is abias. Ang ibig sabihin nito, Advanced Bio-Infrastructure Agricultural System, priority project of Cong. Dong Gonzales, in my district.

So, iyon lang po, at least nagkaroon kayo ng ideya na talagang kawawang-kawawa iyong ating mga kapatid na farmers.

Maraming-maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker; at dakal pong salamat. Mayap a gatpanapun pu kekayu ngan.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that the privilege speech of Hon. Dong Gonzales of Pampanga be referred to the Committee on Rules for appropriate action.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The privilege speech of Hon. Aurelio “Dong” Gonzales is referred to the Committee on Rules.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that Hon. Bienvenido “Benny” M. Abante Jr. be recognized for his manifestation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Minority Leader Benny Abante is recognized.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. ABANTE

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, I just would like to make a manifestation. I came in late in our two deliberations here because of my commitment to the committee hearings and other meetings I had to attend. So, let me make a manifestation of my “Yes” vote on the following House bills:

1. House Bill No. 5437, entitled: AN ACT EXTENDING THE AVAILABILITY OF THE 2019 APPROPRIATIONS FOR MAINTENANCE AND OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES AND CAPITAL OUTLAYS TO DECEMBER 31, 2020, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 65 OF THE GENERAL PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11260, THE GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF FISCAL YEAR 2019;

2. House Bill No. 5477, entitled: AN ACT ESTABLISHING MALASAKIT CENTERS IN ALL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) HOSPITALS IN THE COUNTRY AND IN THE PHILIPPINE GENERAL HOSPITAL (PGH), PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES; and

3. House Bill No. 5306, entitled: AN ACT SEPARATING THE SITIO OF LADOL FROM BARANGAY POBLACION IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ALABEL, PROVINCE OF SARANGANI AND CONSTITUTING IT INTO A DISTINCT AND INDEPENDENT BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY LADOL.

Mr. Speaker, this is my manifestation of my support to these three House bills. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Duly noted, Minority Leader.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we close the Privilege Hour.

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

The Privilege Hour is hereby terminated.
The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Lianda B. Bolilia, Representative of the Fourth District of Batangas. They are the Barangay Captains of the municipality of Rosario, province of Batangas, headed by ABC President Isagani Larosa.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). May we request the guests of Rep. Lianda B. Bolilia to please stand. Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we also acknowledge the guests of our Minority Leader Bienvenido M. Abante Jr. They are the Officers and Barangay Chairmen of Asosasyon ng Nagkakaisang Kapitan (ANAK) ng Sta. Mesa: Paulito Linis, Antonette Lacap, Danilo San Bueno, Cristina Lara, Ma. Antoinette Paraiso, Allan Unarse, Renato Ebreo, Panfilo Laconico, Eulie Abellar, Catalino Tres Reyes Jr., Dingracion Nidoy, Virgilio Llamoso, Lito Erasquin, Emilet Quirante, Jose Milo Lacatan, Rogelio Jamito, Luisito Buenaventura, Adoracion Andaya, Purificacion Go, Elmo Canino, and Jose Palajurin; and also, the officers of the Senior Citizen Chapter of Barangay 833 of Pandacan, Manila, led by President Aida Pasibigan, Vice President Lucy Reyes, Secretary Gloria Ferrer, Treasurer Tony Tan, and PRO Lorna Gozarin; and other guests: Preacher Dan Lorenzo, Kagawad Orly Reyes, and Alma Tiongson, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). To the guests of Honorable Benny Abante, our Minority Leader, welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 78 *Continuation*

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 78, and that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) There being none, the motion is approved.

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 78, entitled: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DEFINITION OF PUBLIC UTILITY, FURTHER AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 146, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "PUBLIC SERVICE ACT", AS AMENDED.

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

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary situation is that the measure is still in the period of sponsorship and debate. I move that we recognize Rep. Sharon S. Garin to continue her sponsorship of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Rep. Sharon S. Garin is recognized to continue her sponsorship of the measure.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Lorenz R. Defensor for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Honorable Nonoy Defensor is recognized.

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I know if the good Lady from AAMBIS-OWA is willing to answer questions from this Representation.

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

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). Mr. Speaker, the definition of "public utility" as proposed under this Bill has been a contentious issue. In fact, it has raised questions as to its constitutionality. However, while we have a long and extensive Constitution, will the good Sponsor agree with me that it was never the intent of the framers of our Constitution to have a rigid and inflexible Constitution.

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

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). In fact, if we go over the deliberations of the Constitutional Commission, in particular the deliberations on August 13, 1986, will the good Sponsor agree with me that we can see that the framers of our Constitution were open to the idea

of leaving it to Congress to determine certain areas of investments, as well as particular aspects of franchises issued for public utilities to allow Congress to determine certain areas as well as certain parameters of public utilities and franchises?

REP. GARIN (S.). Yes, Mr. Speaker. In fact, this has been done not only by Congress but also the Supreme Court itself also has done this.

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). That is correct.

Mr. Speaker, if we go over the deliberations of August 13, 1986, in particular, Volume 3 thereof, pages 262 and 266, we can see that the framers and the members of the Constitutional Commission were open to: first, allowing Congress to determine certain areas where foreign investments may enter into; second, as I said earlier, the scope and parameters of franchises under public utilities. In particular, will the good Sponsor agree with me that under page 266 of the deliberations, the honorable Commissioner Gascon said, and I quote, “we allow Congress to prescribe certain areas where foreign investments may enter into”?

REP. GARIN (S.). Yes, I agree, Mr. Speaker, and this has also been a statement reaffirmed by the Supreme Court as well, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). Insofar as the parameters and scope of public utilities and franchises are concerned, Commissioner Davide, the future Chief Justice said that we should allow Congress to determine the scope and extent of certain public utilities and franchises, issued thereon.

Second, Commissioner Bernardo Villegas also stated under the deliberations that we should allow Congress to determine the scope because there are so many different conditions in public utilities that they cannot determine at that time when they were drafting the Constitution.

Is that correct, Mme. Sponsor?

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

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). Mme. Sponsor, can you tell us the state of our telecommunications industry insofar as our ranking in terms of internet speed which is so essential to the economic progress of our country?

REP. GARIN (S.). Mr. Speaker, the text and call are the most expensive and the broadband is the slowest, Mr. Speaker. So, we have one of the worst in service but also the most expensive.

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). That is correct.

Mr. Speaker, out of the 15 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, we are the slowest in terms of internet service which is so essential to progress to business and to industry.

Can you give us a brief description of the state of our transportation sector, Mme. Sponsor?

REP. GARIN (S.). Mr. Speaker, in terms of marine transport, our agricultural products, 50 percent of that cost is actually the shipping cost, in terms of marine transport. In air transport for example, this has improved. Before, it was very expensive and the service was not really the best, but it has improved because of the influx of competition, having three, I think, three competitors in the industry such as Cebu Pacific, Philippine Airlines and Air Asia, also Tiger Air. But land transport, I think, we are all witnesses to the delays as well as the long lines for LRT, MRT, the frequent inefficiency of the services in land transport, in rail, especially, this has been a perennial problem, not only those living in Metro Manila but as well as other urban cities in the country, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). That is correct, Mr. Speaker. While transportation and communication have been conventionally classified as public utilities, legally speaking, Mme. Sponsor, under our Civil Code, how are transportation and communications classified under Article 1732 of the Civil Code? Is it correct to say that they are classified legally as common carriers?

REP. GARIN (S.). Yes, Mr. Speaker. Transportation, yes.

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). If we exclude transportation and telecommunications under the definition of public utilities in the proposed Bill, Mr. Speaker, may I know that in terms of regulation, is there anything that will affect the regulation of the government as well as the appropriate licenses, franchises or certificates of convenience insofar as their operation is concerned? Is there any effect at all?

REP. GARIN (S.). No, Mr. Speaker. The regulations applying now, whether it is foreign-owned or Filipino-owned, will likewise apply should this proposal pass, the proposed amendments to the Public Service Act. Well, during this time, it is being regulated by LTFRB, for example, and it should be 40-60 in terms of ownership, should the Public Service Act pass the amendments and it will be classified not anymore as a public utility and it will be open to foreign investments, a hundred percent investment of foreign investors, it will still apply. The regulations of the LTFRB will still be the same wherever their route should be, their responsibility as common carriers, with due diligence, that they should practice, that will still apply. The only difference is that the ownership will be different. We will allow foreign investments more than 40 percent.

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). Is it also correct that regardless of whether it is 60 percent owned by Filipinos or 100 percent owned by foreign investors, that same company will still register and be regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission? And if any franchise, if any, is issued, that same franchise will have to undergo the process of scrutiny of this Body before it can be issued to a transport or telecommunications company?

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

Just to elaborate on my answer, Mr. Speaker. The authority of CAB over air transport or CAAP, Department of Energy in terms of electricity, DOTr, ERC, LTRFB, all of the powers and functions and the authority of these administrative agencies will still be the same whether we pass the amendment to the Public Service Act or not. In fact, it will be more stringent because we have made some general changes in which the penalties have been increased because right now, the penalties, as is, the Public Service Act is only P200 per day. We have increased it to a maximum of P2 million a day, which is more reasonable because this will apply to bus companies, to shipping companies as well as airline industries, as well as electricity companies, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). That is correct. Mr. Speaker, in fact, in the deliberations of the 1987 Constitution, if we go back to the Journals, we can see that originally, the Constitutional Commission intended that only 25 percent will be owned by foreign owners. It was raised to one-third and eventually, it was increased to 40 percent.

Mme. Speaker, before we end, just to stress on the regulations side, what would you prefer, a 100 percent foreign-owned company whose articles of incorporation lists down its incorporators, its board of directors, its management team and registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the same officers are updated annually through the General Information Sheet also submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission, or a 60 percent Filipino-owned company investing in transportation and 40 percent owned by foreigners where, actually, it is completely possible that the 60 percent stockholders owned by Filipinos are controlled by the 40 percent minority foreigners that we can never find out if they can hide it very carefully. Would that scenario be better or worse for the country?

REP. GARIN (S.). The first choice would be better, Mr. Speaker, because, in fact, the second scenario that was explained by the good interpellator is existent in many industries, ranging from electricity to transportation to telecommunications. With the proposal of opening it to foreign investors, there will be more

transparency as far as the ownership and management of these companies in which we are practically unveiling the corporate bill in this sense, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). So, would you agree with me, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Sponsor, that in terms of transparency, in terms of regulation, as well as national security, it would be best if we can have a foreign company listed, openly regulated and transparent, rather than a 40 percent owned foreign company where we cannot completely control or determine specifically who has the beneficial ownership or who has the actual control.

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

REP. DEFENSOR (L.). Mr. Speaker, I have no further questions for the good Sponsor. I would like to thank her for answering questions I proposed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 78

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 78.

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

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, may I please be allowed to acknowledge the presence of my guests from the Rotary Club of Central Fairview and Aginaldo, Cavite. They are: Cesar Muñoz Jr., Amelita Banzon, Cris Perido, Emily Alarte, Dianica Mensah, Freeman Mensah, Ric Doria, Flor Camerino Sico, Sylvie Meis, Evelyn Dominguez, and Jon Peter Ferrer.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). To the guests of Rep. Bernadette “BH” Herrera-Dy, welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the Additional Reference of Business.

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

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

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary General read the Committee Report and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding reference:

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Local Government (Committee Report No. 85), re H.B. No. 5568, entitled: "AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY GUINHALINAN IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BAROBO, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR" recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 904
Sponsors: Representatives Villanueva (Noel) and Pimentel
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. HERRERA-DY. I move that we suspend the session.

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

It was 6:18 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:19 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until three o'clock in the afternoon of Monday, November 25, 2019.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the session is adjourned until Monday, November 25, 2019, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

It was 6:19 p.m.