



Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 18th CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

House of Representatives

Vol. 3

Monday, January 20, 2020

No. 33

CALL TO ORDER

At 4:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Aurelio “Dong” D. Gonzales Jr. called the session to order.

PRAYER

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Please rise for a minute of silent prayer and meditation.

Everybody rose for the silent prayer.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Please remain standing for the singing of our National Anthem.

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

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

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.) relinquished the Chair to Speaker Alan Peter “Compañero” S. Cayetano.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alan Peter “Compañero” S. Cayetano.

I move to suspend the session.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE SPEAKER. The session is suspended.

It was 3:02 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:04 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE SPEAKER. The session is resumed. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). To the Members of the House of Representatives of the Eighteenth Congress, our Speaker, Alan Peter S. Cayetano, will address us on a very important matter.

SPEECH OF SPEAKER CAYETANO

THE SPEAKER. “For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Iyan po ang nasa Jeremiah 29:11 and Jeremiah is considered a prophet by Jews, by our brother Muslims and Christians. During this opening of our session dito po sa 2020—it is a very symbolic year as 2020 is the symbol of perfect vision—it is quite a challenge for all of us, Members of Congress, as we begin our legislative sessions.

We begin with a lot of faith and hope but, of course, with also a lot of sadness and concern for our kababayan in the CALABARZON area. People are holding us to our commitment that the Eighteenth Congress will be reliable, will be relevant and will be responsive to the needs of our people. It is also very challenging because we only have eight weeks and if you are given one or two minutes each to speak today, some of you will speak about the farmers, the fisherfolk, the OFWs, the PWDs, our different ethnic groups around the country na mayroon pang discrimination o may problema sa kanilang ancestral lands. We will talk about our territorial integrity, our sovereignty. We may talk about the problems of our vendors and micro, small and medium enterprises. We can talk about the problems of our transport sector. So, we will have to find a way, just as we did during the budget deliberations, not only to work faster or to work harder but also to work smarter and in this regard, we will be giving full support to all

of our committees and committee chairpersons so that we will be able to do more in the next eight weeks.

We have partnered with the Duterte administration to give people a safe and comfortable life. Iyan po ang sinabi ng ating Pangulo, “safe and comfortable life.” Isang komportable at ligtas na buhay para sa lahat ng Pilipino. This is quite a challenge now for the people in Laguna and Cavite. I heard Quezon has already started accepting evacuees, and if I am not mistaken, 8,000 already, and especially, of course, from the hardest hit which is Batangas.

Well, let me start out by thanking the first responders from the municipal to the city and the provincial disaster response units, to the NDRRMC, to all the volunteers, to the PNP, the BFP, the DSWD, the DOST, to all our Members of Congress not only from CALABARZON but those of you like our Majority Leader who immediately convened and tried to solicit some assistance and support, salamat po. Sa ating mahal na Pangulo, na sa aking paniniwala ay nandoon ulit po sa Batangas mamayang hapon and had been there to see the situation in the ground, thank you for your immediate help. Sa lahat ng ating kababayan na nagdadasal, sumusuporta, nagbibigay, this is a challenge for Congress not only to deal with the Taal Volcano eruption but to come up with long-lasting reliable solutions, programs and mechanisms to address disasters and calamities.

Sino po sa inyo na Miyembro ng Kongreso dito ang hindi nakatikim ng one form of disaster or calamity sa inyong distrito? Over the years, sa disaster mitigation, grabe na po ang awareness, but we have to do our part and I would prefer that before we end our sessions in March, Congress will already be paperless and we will have a zero waste system, even preliminarily, in order. We have to live by example. Over the years, iyong response system po ng gobyerno, in the last three administrations, I believe, has stepped up. Kung titingnan ninyo po ang relief efforts, yes, marami pa ring kulang but for those of you who have been in Congress for the last decade or so, if you still remember, sa ilan po sa ating mga kababayan dito, let us say iyong mga Kapampangan sa Pinatubo, hindi ba, napakalayo na po ng quality at saka speed noong pagresponde natin but a big but is that medyo nagkukulang pa rin tayo pagdating sa rehabilitation.

Sa rehabilitation, plan at execution, medyo mahina po. Bakit po? Because we face about 15 to 20 strong typhoons a year, and maybe one or two super typhoons. We have earthquakes, we have volcanic eruptions, and those are beside iyong flooding at saka fire and everything else. I see a lot of you nodding. Congressman Belmonte, siyempre sa QC, you are no stranger to this.

Let us not wait for the people who were affected by Yolanda, by Marawi, by Ursula, by the earthquakes

in Mindanao, by Sendong and Pablo, and even those affected by Pinatubo. Let us not wait for them to remind us again that, yes, let us take care of CALABARZON, pero doon sa mga lugar nila ay hindi pa tapos ang rehabilitation. Sa Pinatubo po, may mga areas pa rin na hindi pa rin nakakabalik sa sariling towns, ang mga tinamaan po ng lahar.

So, now that the government is fully focused on relief efforts and in evacuating ang mga kababayan natin still in the danger zone, I think Congress can be a partner. Hindi po tayo makikipagpaligsahan, hindi po tayo gagawa ng separate plan but we will have parallel efforts. I thank Secretary Lorenzana and Secretary Año who were supposed to be here at 5:00 p.m. today to meet with the CALABARZON Congressmen but then the President is going to Batangas and so, they will be with him but they immediately said, “We will not only send a Usec but we will come ourselves because we want to work out the details with you.”

So, this afternoon, we have a meeting with 11 Congressmen led by our Minority and Majority Leaders, kasama po ang key committees natin sa social services, sa agriculture, sa disaster management, and we have tasked Cong. Lucy Torres-Gomez, who is no stranger in also handling disasters, to consolidate our short-term, long-term and medium-term efforts for the people of Batangas, Laguna and Cavite.

We want to come out with a feasible, strategic and comprehensive rehab plan and assign one entity, regardless of whether it is one person, one agency, one department, that will be fully accountable because, for example, at this point in time, how do we ask the DSWD, the DILG, the DOH, “O ano na nangyari sa Ursula?” Iyong sa housing, papaano na or how do we ask the NHA, “Kumusta na ba iyong mga tinamaan ng lindol or linog sa Davao Region” when they are busy with CALABARZON now? So, we have to learn from our mistakes in the same manner that we learned from our mistakes when it came to Yolanda and Pinatubo and thus, we have stepped up sa rehabilitation.

So, I would like to get your support, mga mahal kong Miyembro ng Kongreso, that it is time for us to act, but it is also time for us to listen. Kanina pong lunch, I consulted po the leadership of the House, including the Minority Leader and upon motion of the Majority Leader and if the motion is passed, then we will have to get the concurrence of the Senate. The leadership of the House is proposing that we hold our session on Wednesday in the Batangas City Convention Center as one of the biggest evacuation centers is this sports coliseum beside the convention center. Aside from the speech of Cong. Lucy Torres-Gomez later, the proposal is that we move to become a Committee of the Whole to listen to the different Representatives coming from all over Laguna, Cavite, Batangas, listen to the first responders, listen to those who are directly affected.

So I wish all of us well and I thank you all for the record-breaking attendance, speed and quality of work that we did in 2019. Ladies and Gentlemen, mga mahal kong Miyembro ng Kongreso, we have our work cut out for us but I have faith that together, we can struggle as one, we can win as one.

So, thank you and God bless. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, in view of the unanimity in spirit and the consensus arrived at by the leaders of the House in your office, and at your instance, we move to hold the session this Wednesday at the Batangas City Convention Center at 1:00 p.m., and the details on the transportation shall be explained and disseminated tomorrow.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (A.). I second the motion, Mr. Speaker. I seconded, Mr. Speaker, because on June 15, 1991, we Kapampangans also experienced this eruption—the Mt. Pinatubo eruption. Kaya po napakahalaga po sa amin na pumunta tayo sa Batangas at doon tayo mag-session, doon tayo mag-hold ng Committee of the Whole. Nakita ninyo naman po that the Province of Pampanga, kami po ang pinakaunang pumunta sa Batangas because we know what they are feeling.

So, Mr. Speaker, kaya po ako tumayo is to second the motion para po doon natin gawin iyong ating session.

Salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. There is a motion.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, we would like to recognize the Minority Leader.

THE SPEAKER. The Minority Leader is recognized.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, upon consultation with the Minority bloc, we concur, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. There is a motion to hold the regular session on Wednesday in Batangas City, at the Batangas City Convention Center. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

May the Chair request the Majority Leader to communicate this to the Senate to get their concurrence in accordance with the constitutional requirement of holding a session in another area aside from where we regularly hold our sessions.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, that will be done before the end of the day.

THE SPEAKER. May I request the Secretary General and the Sergeant-at-Arms to make the necessary arrangements. Over the weekend po, may pumunta na po tayong mga staff sa convention center and it is outside the danger zone, and it is an area that will be secured. So, with the permission of the Body, the Majority Leader will announce the time tomorrow. I think we are looking at around 1:30 p.m. instead of 3:00 p.m. and transportation will be provided to those who want to go, from the Batasan here or from the Taguig-Makati area, to Batangas.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Yes, I move to suspend the session.

THE SPEAKER. The session is suspended.

It was 3:18 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:19 p.m., the session was resumed with Deputy Speaker Aurelio “Dong” D. Gonzales Jr. presiding.

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

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker.

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

ROLL CALL

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). 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. 33, dated January 20, 2020.**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. The Speaker is present.

Mr. Speaker, the roll call shows that 232 Members responded to the call.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.).
With 232 Members responding to the call, the Chair
declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I
move that we approve Journal No. 32 dated November
7, December 2, 4, 9 to 11, and 16 to 18, 2019.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Secretary General is directed to read the
Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 5856, entitled:

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

By Representative Chungalao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND
TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 5857, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE DUCLIGAN
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ANNEX IN
BARANGAY KINAKIN, MUNICIPALITY
OF BANAUE, PROVINCE OF IFUGAO

FROM THE DUCLIGAN NATIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN
INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
TO BE KNOWN AS KINAKIN NATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Chungalao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5858, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE STA. MARIA
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL EXTENSION
IN BARANGAY POTIA, MUNICIPALITY
OF ALFONSO LISTA, PROVINCE OF
IFUGAO FROM STA. MARIA NATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN
INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
TO BE KNOWN AS POTIA NATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Chungalao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5859, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE HAPID NATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL ANNEX IN BARANGAY
BIMPAL, MUNICIPALITY OF LAMUT,
PROVINCE OF IFUGAO FROM THE HAPID
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING
IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS
BIMPAL NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Chungalao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5860, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE LAWIG NATIONAL
HIGH SCHOOL EXTENSION IN BARANGAY
PANOPDOPAN, MUNICIPALITY OF
LAMUT, PROVINCE OF IFUGAO FROM
THE LAWIG NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL,
CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN
AS PANOPDOPAN NATIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR”

By Representative Chungalao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5861, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING SUPPORT

MECHANISMS AND PROTECTION FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS ON MATTERS OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE FOR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT”

By Representative Fortuno
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5862, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING BUHI LAKE AND BATO LAKE IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF BUHI AND BATO RESPECTIVELY, IN THE PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR AS ECOTOURISM ZONES”

By Representative Fortuno
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

House Bill No. 5863, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING A SCHOLARSHIP GRANT FOR EVERY FILIPINO FAMILY”

By Representative Fortuno
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 5864, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL ORGANIC AGRICULTURE PROGRAM AND AMENDING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF RA 10068 OR THE ORGANIC AGRICULTURE ACT OF 2010”

By Representative Ramirez-Sato
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 5865, entitled:

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

By Representative Tutor
TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

House Bill No. 5866, entitled:

“AN ACT REAPPORTIONING THE PROVINCE OF BULACAN INTO SEVEN REGULAR DISTRICTS”

By Representatives Silverio, Sy-Alvarado, Pancho, Villarica and Robes
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5867, entitled:

“AN ACT FURTHER EXPANDING THE

JURISDICTION OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURTS, METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURTS, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS, AND MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURTS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’ ”

By Representative Nograles (Jericho)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 5868, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING TWO (2) ADDITIONAL DIVISIONS OF THE COURT OF APPEALS IN DAVAO CITY WHICH WILL HANDLE CASES COMING FROM THE ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH JUDICIAL REGIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 129, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980,’ AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Nograles (Jericho)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 5873, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE MANUFACTURE, DISTRIBUTION, SALE, IMPORTATION AND USE OF ALL ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND HEAT STICKS IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Bagatsing
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY AND THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 5880, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE MANDATORY ESTABLISHMENT OF A POPULATION OFFICE IN ALL PROVINCES, CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 488(A) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991 AS AMENDED’ ”

By Representative Baronda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5883, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A SHARI’A JUDICIAL DISTRICT COMPRISING THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN AND THE CITY OF PUERTO PRINCESA, FURTHER AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLES 138, 147, AND

150 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1083, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘CODE OF MUSLIM PERSONAL LAWS OF THE PHILIPPINES,’ AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Abueg-Zaldivar
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 5884, entitled:

“AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE (CENRO) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DENR), HAVING JURISDICTION OVER THE PARCEL OF LAND SUBJECT OF THE APPLICATION, TO ISSUE TREE-CUTTING PERMITS TO LANDOWNERS FOR THE CUTTING, GATHERING AND UTILIZATION OF NATURALLY GROWN TREES IN PRIVATE AND/OR TITLED LANDS SUBJECT TO THE GUIDELINES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES”

By Representative Abueg-Zaldivar
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill No. 5885, entitled:

“AN ACT INTEGRATING THE PALAWAN STATE UNIVERSITY–COLLEGE OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (PSU-CCRD) EXTERNAL CAMPUSES IN THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN AND IN THE CITY OF PUERTO PRINCESA AS REGULAR CAMPUSES OF THE PALAWAN STATE UNIVERSITY (PSU), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7818, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Abueg-Zaldivar
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 5886, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PARALEGAL PROFESSION AND CODIFYING THE PARALEGAL PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT GUIDELINES”

By Representative Nograles (Juan)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

House Bill No. 5893, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING THE MAGNA CARTA OF BARANGAY ANIMAL HEALTH WORKERS”

By Representative Amante-Matba
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5894, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JULY 28 OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN CABADBARAN CITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE ‘CABADBARAN CITY DAY’ ”

By Representative Amante-Matba
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5895, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING ALL GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO PLANT AT LEAST ONE TREE AS A PREREQUISITE FOR GRADUATION AND FOR OTHER RELATED PURPOSES”

By Representative Amante-Matba
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5896, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING UNIVERSAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES, STANDARDS, SPECIFICATIONS, AND POLICIES FOR THE CREATION OF BARRIER-FREE BUILT ENVIRONMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND TOURISM FACILITIES TO ENHANCE THE DIGNITY, INDEPENDENCE, MOBILITY, SAFETY, AND CONVENIENCE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, SENIOR CITIZENS, WOMEN AND CHILDREN, AND OTHER SECTORS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS FOR THEIR FULL INCLUSION, PARTICIPATION, NON-DISCRIMINATION, PROVIDING FOR FUNDING, INCENTIVES AND PENALTIES THEREOF, AND REPEALING BATAS PAMBANSA 344”

By Representatives Chatto and Arroyo
TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SENIOR CITIZENS

House Bill No. 5897, entitled:

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

By Representative Dalipe
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5898, entitled:

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

By Representative Dalipe
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5899, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE IMPORTATION, MANUFACTURE, DISTRIBUTION AND SALE OF CHILDREN’S PRODUCTS CONTAINING HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF”

By Representative Dalipe
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 5900, entitled:

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

By Representative Dalipe
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5901, entitled:

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

By Representative Dalipe
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5902, entitled:

“AN ACT IMPOSING STIFFER PENALTIES FOR CHILD ABUSE, EXPLOITATION AND DISCRIMINATION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7610, AS AMENDED”

By Representative Dalipe
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 5903, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH

SCHOOL IN BARANGAY BUENAVISTA IN ZAMBOANGA CITY, TO BE KNOWN AS BUENAVISTA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Dalipe
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5904, entitled:

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

By Representative Dalipe
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5905, entitled:

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

By Representative Dalipe
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5906, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT 10667, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A NATIONAL COMPETITION POLICY PROHIBITING ANTI-COMPETITIVE AGREEMENTS, ABUSE OF DOMINANT POSITION AND ANTI-COMPETITIVE MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS, ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE COMPETITION COMMISSION AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR’ ”

By Representative Quimbo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

House Bill No. 5907, entitled:

“AN ACT EXTENDING THE NATIONAL FEEDING PROGRAM TO UNDERNOURISHED CHILDREN IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS THEREBY AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT 11037, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A NATIONAL FEEDING PROGRAM FOR UNDERNOURISHED CHILDREN IN

PUBLIC DAY CARE, KINDERGARTEN AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS TO COMBAT HUNGER AND UNDERNUTRITION AMONG FILIPINO CHILDREN' AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

By Representative Quimbo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5908, entitled:

"AN ACT CREATING THE SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCE CORPORATION"

By Representative Quimbo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 5909, entitled:

"AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY MANIKLING, MUNICIPALITY OF SAN ISIDRO, PROVINCE OF DAVAO ORIENTAL TO BE KNOWN AS MANIKLING NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

By Representative Almario
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5910, entitled:

"AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY MARAGATAS, MUNICIPALITY OF LUPON, PROVINCE OF DAVAO ORIENTAL TO BE KNOWN AS MARAGATAS NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

By Representative Almario
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5911, entitled:

"AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY SANGHAY, CITY OF MATI, PROVINCE OF DAVAO ORIENTAL TO BE KNOWN AS SANGHAY NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

By Representative Almario
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5913, entitled:

"AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A BASIC

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR VIRTUAL BANKING AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

By Representative Salceda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

House Bill No. 5914, entitled:

"AN ACT CREATING TWO (2) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT AND ONE (1) ADDITIONAL BRANCH OF THE MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT IN THE PROVINCE OF LAGUNA TO BE STATIONED AT THE CITY OF CABUYAO, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 14, PARAGRAPH (E) AND 29 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. 5915, entitled:

"AN ACT STANDARDIZING THE APPROPRIATE CLASS SIZE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS NATIONWIDE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

By Representative Lacson
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5916, entitled:

"AN ACT ESTABLISHING A FIVE HUNDRED (500)-BED CAPACITY HOSPITAL FOR TEACHERS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF"

By Representative Lacson
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 5917, entitled:

"AN ACT MANDATING THE STANDARDIZATION OF CLASSES AND FACILITIES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS"

By Representative Lacson
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5918, entitled:

"AN ACT SEPARATING THE CITY OF SAN PABLO FROM THE THIRD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF LAGUNA TO CONSTITUTE THE LONE

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF
SAN PABLO”

By Representative Aragon
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL
GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5922, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS AND TECHNICAL-
VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO
ENSURE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY
OF THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY FROM
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL THREATS,
THEREBY CREATING A SAFETY AND
SECURITY COMMITTEE FOR THIS
PURPOSE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Cabochan
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND
TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 5923, entitled:

“AN ACT PROMOTING THE USE OF
URBAN FARMING IN THE COUNTRY’S
METROPOLITAN AREAS TO ADDRESS
FOOD SECURITY CONCERNS AND
REGENERATE ECOSYSTEM FUNCTIONS,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE”

By Representative Cabochan
TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FOOD
SECURITY

House Bill No. 5924, entitled:

“AN ACT INCORPORATING THE VALUE OF
RESPONSIBLE, FAIR, AND TRUTHFUL
USAGE AND ENJOYMENT OF SOCIAL
MEDIA IN SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Cabochan
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON
HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 628, entitled:

“RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE
PRODUCERS, WRITERS, DIRECTORS,
ACTORS/ACTRESSES OF THE MOVIE
QUEZON’S GAME FOR GARNERING
SEVERAL AWARDS OR RECOGNITION AT
THE CINEMA WORLD FEST AWARDS, THE
INDIE FEST FILM AWARDS, ACCOLADE
GLOBAL FILM COMPETITION,
MARYLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM
FESTIVAL, WORLD FEST-HOUSTON

INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO
FESTIVAL, RAMGATE INTERNATIONAL
AND TV FESTIVAL, NEAR NAZARETH
FESTIVAL (NNF), CINEMA WORLD FEST
ANNUAL GALA”

By Representative Abante
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
INFORMATION

House Resolution No. 629, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND
COMMENDING THE YOUNG MAN FROM
LEVERIZA, MALATE, 5TH DISTRICT OF
MANILA, CARLOS EDRIEL YULO FOR
WINNING 2 GOLD AND 5 SILVER MEDALS
IN THE MEN’S ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS IN
THE 30TH SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES”

By Representative Bagatsing
TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND
SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 635, entitled:

“RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND
CONGRATULATING SPEAKER ALAN
PETER S. CAYETANO, CHAIRMAN OF
THE PHILIPPINE SOUTHEAST ASIAN
GAMES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE
(PHISGOC), THE HONORABLE ABRAHAM
N. TOLENTINO, PRESIDENT OF THE
PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE, ALL
THE ORGANIZERS AND VOLUNTEERS,
AND OUR FILIPINO ATHLETES FOR THE
SUCCESSFUL AND HISTORIC CONDUCT
OF THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED 30TH
SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES”

By Representatives Singson and Rodriguez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 636, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TO SUPPORT THE RESUMPTION OF
THE PEACE TALKS BETWEEN THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES
(GRP) AND THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC
FRONT OF THE PHILIPPINES (NDFP)
BASED ON PREVIOUS AGREEMENTS
BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES INCLUDING
THE HAGUE JOINT DECLARATION
OF 1992 AND THE STAND-DOWN
AGREEMENT ON JUNE 2018”

By Representatives Abante, Abellanosa, Acop,
Advincula, Agabas, Aglipay, Albano, Vargas
Alfonso, Alvarez (Franz), Alvarez (Genaro),
Aragon, Aumentado, Bagatsing, Barba,
Baronda, Barzaga, Belmonte, Benitez, Bernos,

Biron, Bolilia, Bordado, Brosas, Cabatbat, Cagas, Calderon, Caminero, Canama, Castelo, Castro (France), Cayetano (Maria Laarni), Celeste, Chungalao, Crisologo, Cuaresma, Cueva, Cullamat, Dagooc, Dalog, Datol, Defensor (Lorenz), Defensor (Michael), Deloso-Montalla, Duavit, Dy (Faustino Michael), Ebcas, Enverga, Eriguel, Ermita-Buhain, Escudero, Ferrer (Juliet), Flores, Fortun, Fortun, Fuentebella, Gaité, Garbin, Gato, Gonzales (Neptali), Guico, Guya, Haresco, Hataman, Hofer, Kho (Elisa), Labadlabad, Lacson, Lagman, Legarda, Limkaichong, Lopez, Loyola, Lusotan, Maceda, Mangudadatu, Mariano-Hernandez, Mariño, Martinez, Matba, Mendoza, Momo, Nograles (Jericho), Nograles (Juan), Ong (Jose), Ortega, Pacquiao (Alberto), Pacquiao (Rogelio), Palma, Pancho, Panotes, Peña, Pimentel, Quimbo, Ramirez-Sato, Ramos, Rivera, Robes, Rodriguez, Mercado, Romero, Romualdo, Roque, Sacdalan, Sagarbarria, Sakaluran, Salceda, Salo, Sangcopan, Saulog, Savellano, Singson, Singson-Meehan, Suansing (Estrellita), Suarez (Aleta), Suarez (David), Sy-Alvarado, Tallado, Tambunting, Tejada, Tolentino, Torres-Gomez, Tupas, Ty (Allan), Ty (Diego), Umali (Ma. Victoria), Uy (Juliette), Villafuerte, Villanueva (Eduardo), Villanueva (Noel), Zarate and Zubiri

TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND UNITY

House Resolution No. 637, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING CONCHITA MENDOZA OF THE CITY OF CALBAYOG, WESTERN SAMAR ON THE CELEBRATION OF HER ONE HUNDREDTH YEAR AND FOR BEING THE PIONEER TINAPA MANUFACTURER IN THE CITY OF CALBAYOG AND HELPING MAKE CALBAYOG TINAPA A CULINARY STAPLE AND A SOURCE OF PRIDE FOR CALBAYOGNONS”

By Representative Sarmiento

TO THE COMMITTEE ON VISAYAS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 638, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION COMMENDING HON. JOCELYN SOLIS-REYES OF QUEZON CITY REGIONAL TRIAL COURT, BRANCH 211 AND URGING THE LEGAL COMMUNITY AND FILIPINOS TO CONTINUE TO UPHOLD THE RULE OF LAW”

By Representative Barzaga

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Resolution No. 639, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES TO REPORT OUT WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY FOR PLENARY ACTION A CONSOLIDATED VERSION OF EIGHT (8) PENDING BILLS PROPOSING FOR THE RENEWAL FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS OF THE LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISE OF ABS-CBN CORPORATION”

By Representatives Lagman, Violago, Tambunting, Pimentel, Billones, Belmonte, Castro (France), Zarate, Cullamat, Gaité and Brosas

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

House Resolution No. 640, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION COMMENDING CARLOS YULO FOR HIS SUCCESSFUL STINT IN THE 2019 SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES BAGGING TWO (2) GOLD AND FIVE (5) SILVER MEDALS FOR THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Guico

TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 641, entitled:

“HOUSE RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS' AFFAIRS TO INVESTIGATE THE DEATH OF JEANELYN PADERNAL VILLAVENDE, AN OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKER IN KUWAIT, ALLEGEDLY AT THE HANDS OF HER KUWAITI EMPLOYERS, AND CONDUCT AN INQUIRY INTO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS' IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2018 PHILIPPINE-KUWAIT MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT TO SAFEGUARD THE LIFE AND LIMB OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS”

By Representative Mendoza

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 642, entitled:

“HOUSE RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS' AFFAIRS, COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, AND THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION,

ON THE CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR
THE 1.2 MILLION OVERSEAS FILIPINO
WORKERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND
IMPLICATIONS ON THE PHILIPPINE
ECONOMY OF THE ESCALATING IRAN-
USA CONFLICT”

By Representative Mendoza
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Message dated December 17, 2019, informing the House of Representatives that on even date the Senate designated Senators Ronald “Bato” dela Rosa and Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III as additional conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1074, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 109, 141, 142, 143, 144, 147, 263, 263-A, 265, AND 288-A OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”;

and House Bill No. 1026, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 141, 142, 143, 144, 147, 150, 152, 263, 265, AND 288-A, AND ADDING A NEW SECTION 290-A TO REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Message dated December 19, 2019, informing the House of Representatives that on December 18, 2019 the Senate approved the Conference Committee Report of the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1074, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 109, 141, 142, 143, 144, 147, 263, 263-A, 265, AND 288-A OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

and House Bill No. 1026, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 141, 142, 143, 144, 147, 150, 152, 263, 265, AND 288-A, AND ADDING A NEW SECTION 290-A TO REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter dated 13 November 2019 of Juanito Victor C. Remulla, Governor, Trece Martires City, Province of Cavite, submitting the Quarterly Financial Report of Operations for the Ending of 3rd Quarter 2019 on the Local Government Support Fund – Conditional Matching Grant to Provinces (CMGP) for Road Repair, Rehabilitation and Improvement.
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated 25 November 2019 of Edgardo R. Masongsong, Administrator, National Electrification Administration, providing the House of Representatives with a copy of their Annual Report for Calendar Year 2018.
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

Letter dated December 2, 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 September 2019.
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE
AND SECURITY

Letter dated 4 December 2019 of Maria Catalina E. Cabral, Ph.D., CESO I, Undersecretary for Planning and Public-Private Partnership (PPP), Office of the Secretary, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), submitting to the House of Representatives the Project Briefers as of November 25, 2019, including the List of Priority Projects of PPP of the DPWH and Toll Regulatory Board (TRB), for implementation, ongoing, and completed by the DPWH.
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS
AND HIGHWAYS

Letter dated 4 December 2019 of Marilou P. Mendoza, Chairperson, Tariff Commission, providing the House of Representatives a copy of the Commission’s Annual Report for Calendar Year 2018.
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND
MEANS

Letter dated December 9, 2019 of Maria Gleda E. Lim, State Auditor V, Supervising Auditor, Audit Groups CGS I and II-Water Districts and Other CGS Stand Alone Agencies, Regional Office No. VI, Commission on Audit, furnishing the House of Representatives a copy of the Annual Audit Report on the Libacao Water District, Poblacion, Libacao, Aklan for the years ended December 31, 2016, 2017 and 2018.
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated 10 December 2019 of Sec. Adelino B. Sitoy, Presidential Adviser on Legislative Affairs and Head, PLLO, submitting the details on Appropriations, Obligations and Disbursements of the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office (PLLO) for the month ending November 30, 2019, pursuant to Section 101 of Republic Act No. 11260.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letters dated 10 and 11 December 2019 of Janice G. Ayson-Zales, Deputy Director, Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), furnishing the House of Representatives with duly certified and authenticated BSP issuances, to wit:

1. Circular No. 1064 dated 03 December 2019;
2. Circular No. 1065 dated 03 December 2019; and
3. Circular No. 1066 dated 04 December 2019.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Letter dated 17 December 2019 of Janice G. Ayson-Zales, Deputy Director, Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), furnishing the House of Representatives with a duly certified and authenticated copy of BSP Circular Letter No. CL-2019-086 dated 2 December 2019.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Letter dated 19 December 2019 of Janice G. Ayson-Zales, Deputy Director, Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), furnishing the House of Representatives with a duly certified and authenticated copy of BSP Circular No. 1067 dated 13 December 2019.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Quarterly Financial Report of Operations for the Quarter Ending September 30, 2019, Province of Ilocos Norte on the Local Government Support Fund – Conditional Matching Grant to Provinces (CMGP) for Road Repair, Rehabilitation and Improvement.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

2018 Annual Report of the Department of Trade and Industry.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Balitang DAR, The Official Newsletter of the Department of Agrarian Reform – Special Edition.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRARIAN REFORM

Letter dated December 20, 2019 of Salvador C. Medialdea, Executive Secretary, Office of the President, Malacañang, transmitting two (2) original copies of Republic Act No. 11464 which was signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, entitled:

“AN ACT EXTENDING THE AVAILABILITY OF THE 2019 APPROPRIATIONS 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.”

TO THE ARCHIVES

Letter dated January 6, 2020 of Salvador C. Medialdea, Executive Secretary, Office of the President, Malacañang, transmitting two (2) original copies of Republic Act No. 11465 which was signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, entitled:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

TO THE ARCHIVES

Letter dated January 8, 2020 of Salvador C. Medialdea, Executive Secretary, Office of the President, Malacañang, transmitting two (2) original copies of Republic Act No. 11466 which was signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, entitled:

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

TO THE ARCHIVES

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of the Committee on Public Works and Highways and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 179), re H.B. No. 5887, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN CEBU CITY AND CEBU PROVINCE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 20

Sponsors: Representatives Madrona, Ungab and Del Mar

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Public Works and Highways and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 180), re H.B. No. 1079, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A COASTAL ROAD CONNECTING THE CALOOCAN, MALABON, NAVOTAS AND VALENZUELA AREA (CAMANAVA) TO THE PROVINCES OF BULACAN, PAMPANGA AND BATAAN, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Madrona, Ungab and Sy-Alvarado

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Public Works and Highways and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 181), re H.B. No. 5888, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE THIRD DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICE IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF M’LANG, PROVINCE OF COTABATO, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 3117 and 4247

Sponsors: Representatives Madrona, Ungab and Tejada

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Public Works and Highways and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 182), re H.B. No. 5889, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NATIONAL HIGHWAY FROM LANA DEL NORTE INTERIOR CIRCUMFERENTIAL ROAD IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TAGOLOAN, PROVINCE OF LANA DEL NORTE TO THE MUNICIPALITY OF TALAKAG, PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON, WITH A CROSSROAD AT BARANGAY MALIMBATO, MUNICIPALITY OF TAGOLOAN, PROVINCE OF LANA DEL NORTE AND CONNECTING ROADS TO THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY IN ILIGAN CITY THROUGH BARANGAY PUGAAN, ILIGAN CITY AND TO THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY IN MARAWI CITY THROUGH THE MUNICIPALITY OF KAPAI, PROVINCE OF LANA DEL SUR, TO BE KNOWN AS THE MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN UNITY HIGHWAY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 3988

Sponsors: Representatives Madrona, Ungab, Dimaporo (Khalid), Dimaporo (Abdullah), Acosta-Alba and Siao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Public Works and Highways and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 183), re H.B. No. 497, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CIRCUMFERENTIAL ROAD FROM THE FIRST DISTRICT (NORTH) TO THE SECOND DISTRICT (SOUTH) OF CEBU CITY”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Madrona, Ungab and Del Mar

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Public Works and Highways and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 184), re H.B. No. 5890, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE ILIGAN CITY DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1994

Sponsors: Representatives Madrona, Ungab and Siao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Public Works and Highways and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 185), re H.B. No. 5891, entitled:

“AN ACT RECONSTITUTING THE LANA DEL NORTE DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICE IN THE PROVINCE OF LANA DEL NORTE INTO TWO SEPARATE DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2287

Sponsors: Representatives Madrona, Ungab, Dimaporo (Khalid) and Dimaporo (Abdullah)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Public Works and Highways and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 186), re H.B. No. 5892, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A NEW DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICE IN THE FOURTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2503

Sponsors: Representatives Madrona, Ungab and Roque
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 187), re H.B. No. 5912, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JULY 27 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NATIONAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9645, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘COMMEMORATION OF THE FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF IGLESIA NI CRISTO ACT’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 369, 2488, 3441, 3730, 4720, 4831, 5251 and 5460

Sponsors: Representatives Deloso-Montalla, Olivarez, Castelo, Santos-Recto, Agabas, Nieto, Quimbo and Savellano
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Higher and Technical Education and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 188), re H.B. No. 5919, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TESDA) TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT CENTERS IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF ALIAGA, CUYAPO, LICAB, NAMPICUAN, QUEZON, AND STO. DOMINGO, IN THE PROVINCE OF NUEVA ECIJA, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2406

Sponsors: Representatives Go (Mark), Ungab and Suansing (Estrellita)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Higher and Technical Education and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 189), re H.B. No. 5920, entitled:

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

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1232

Sponsors: Representatives Go (Mark), Ungab and Espina
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Higher and Technical Education and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 190), re H.B. No. 5921, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TESDA) TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT CENTERS IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF ALABAT, GUINAYANGAN, GUMACA, AND TAGKAWAYAN IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEZON, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 2454, 2455, 2456 and 2457

Sponsors: Representatives Go (Mark), Ungab and Tan (Angelina)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Cooperatives Development (Committee Report No. 191), re H.B. No. 5925, entitled:

“AN ACT MAKING THE POSITION OF A COOPERATIVE OFFICER MANDATORY IN THE MUNICIPAL, CITY AND PROVINCIAL LEVELS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 287, 619, 1058, 2436, 2851 and 3024

Sponsors: Representatives Canama, Suansing (Estrellita) and Ebcas
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Local Government (Committee Report No. 192), re H.B. No. 1497, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JUNE 20 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF GUINAYANGAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Villanueva (Noel) and Tan (Angelina)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Local Government (Committee Report No. 193), re H.B. No. 656, entitled: “AN ACT DECLARING OCTOBER 22 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ROSARIO, PROVINCE OF CAVITE IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Villanueva (Noel) and Abaya

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Local Government (Committee Report No. 194), re H.B. No. 5944, entitled: “AN ACT DECLARING APRIL 28 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF AURORA TO COMMEMORATE THE DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF DOÑA AURORA ARAGON-QUEZON”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1566

Sponsors: Representatives Villanueva (Noel) and Angara

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Local Government (Committee Report No. 195), re H.B. No. 5945, entitled: “AN ACT DECLARING MARCH 8 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF COMPOSTELA VALLEY”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 384

Sponsors: Representatives Villanueva (Noel) and Zamora (Way Kurat)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Lady from the Third District of Batangas, the honorable Rep. Ma. Theresa V. Collantes, on a question of privilege.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.).
The Lady Rep. Ma. Theresa “Maitet” V. Collantes of the Third District of Batangas is recognized.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. COLLANTES

REP. COLLANTES. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of collective and personal privilege. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, this Representation humbly stands before you today to request for a much-needed help on behalf of the people of the Third District of Batangas. The Third District of Batangas is composed of 10 municipalities and two cities located around Taal Lake which includes the Taal Volcano Island itself. The 10 municipalities are Balete, Talisay, Laurel, Agoncillo, San Nicolas, Sta. Teresita, Alitagtag, Cuenca, Mataas na Kahoy and Malvar, and the two cities are Sto. Tomas and Tanauan.

Mr. Speaker, at 1:20 p.m. of January 12, 2020, Taal Volcano erupted after remaining relatively quiet for nearly half a century. I am certain everyone here in one way or another witnessed the events that transpired after Taal’s awakening. Some of us may have even experienced the ill effects brought about by the eruption and the resulting ashfall. However, no one felt the wrath of Taal Volcano more than the people of the Third District of Batangas as they witnessed first-hand and experienced in full the devastation that came with Taal’s eruption. I, myself, heard the terrifying explosion from the town of Balete coming from the volcano and felt the ground shake on that fateful Sunday.

Mr. Speaker, this Representation is very grateful that no human lives were lost that day. This is largely because of the quick response of the government, both national and local, to implement a timely and well-coordinated evacuation process. We, Batangueños, are very thankful for the outpouring of support and unselfishness displayed by our fellow Filipinos, both in and out of government, during this time of tragedy.

Let me give special mention and thank the following on behalf of the people of the Third District of Batangas.

Maraming salamat sa ating mahal na Presidente Rodrigo Duterte for being on top of the situation in coordinating evacuation and relief efforts.

Maraming salamat sa mga Senador at aking mga kapwa Kongresista sa inyong agaran at kusang loob na tulong sa aming mga Batangueño.

Maraming salamat sa DPWH for providing the manpower and equipment necessary to immediately make the roads affected by the ashfall passable in order that relief goods and aid can reach the evacuees.

Maraming salamat sa DSWD for providing relief goods starting Monday up to the present and for posting psychiatrists in evacuation centers to address the mental trauma and stress-related problems.

Maraming salamat sa DOH for sending medicines and medical teams to the evacuation centers to prevent the outbreak of disease.

Maraming salamat sa DepEd for allowing the use of schools as evacuation centers.

Maraming salamat sa PNP at AFP for assisting in

the evacuation and distribution of relief goods, and ensuring that peace and order is maintained during these trying times.

Marami ring salamat sa lahat ng aming kapitbahay na LGUs for sharing and making their facilities available to the people who were forced to leave their homes.

Maraming salamat sa Phivolcs for tirelessly monitoring the volcanic activity.

Maraming salamat sa DA for pledging to rebuild the farm-to-market roads destroyed by the continuous volcanic earthquakes.

Maraming salamat sa DTI at DOLE for pledging to implement programs in support of our people.

Marami rin pong salamat sa private sector for your generosity in contributing your time and resources to help us in Batangas.

This Representation is truly amazed at how people from all walks of life, from near and far, both big businesses and personal support, all joined hands to help ease the suffering of my constituents. Mr. Speaker, the response of our countrymen during this calamity truly made me feel proud to be a Filipino. Maraming salamat pong muli sa lahat ng taong nagbigay ng abot-kaya nilang tulong. Hindi po makakalimot ang mga Batangueño sa kanilang utang na loob sa sambayanang Pilipino.

Mr. Speaker, despite everything that have already been given and done, I am afraid I cannot say it will be enough to sustain us for the long haul. Eight days have passed since the Taal Volcano first erupted and we are still in the midst of this catastrophe as the battle is still very far from over. I have been going around and speaking to our people who are now scattered over a hundred evacuation centers or are living with relatives and friends in and outside Batangas. Mr. Speaker, I have heard and I continue to hear the cries of my people, and I cry with them. My constituents tell me, “Wala na po kaming kabuhayan. Wala na po ang aming alagang baka, kalabaw, kambing, manok, baboy, kabayo, isda at aming mga tanim.” They ask me, “Hanggang kailan ga ho ito? Puputok pa ga ho ang bulkan? May babalikan pa ga ho kaming tahanan? Papaano na ga ho ang aming pagsisimula ulit?” Mr. Speaker, I wish I knew the answers to these questions, but only God knows the answers right now.

Mr. Speaker, as of January 17, 2020, the estimated damage in agriculture alone in the Province of Batangas amounts to over two billion pesos, mostly due to the devastation in the Third District of Batangas. Over 26,000 families were forced to leave their homes. Five out of the 10 towns in the Third District of Batangas, namely: Agoncillo, Balete, San Nicolas, Laurel and Talisay are now virtually ghost towns as these are in total lockdown. Our district has now infamously earned the nickname “ground zero”.

Mr. Speaker, although we Batangueños are said to be proud and brave, matapang, hindi sumusuko

at lumalaban hanggang sa huli, I cannot help but think that the obstacles our people face ahead seem insurmountable. I feel that we will not be able to face it alone. In the midst of this seeming hopelessness of our people, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, fellow workers in government, mga kababayan, we need you now more than ever. Kailangan namin ang inyong tulong at suportang hanggang makabangon kami.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the eight rays of the sun in our beloved flag symbolize and represent the eight provinces that first rose against the colonial occupation to fight for Philippine independence. One of those provinces is the Province of Batangas. Batangas has always been there for the Filipino people. Ngayon naman po na kami ang nangangailangan, umaasa po ang bawat Batangueño na kami ay inyo ring sasamahan upang makabangon muli ang Batangas. Finally, may we ask all of you to join us in fervent prayer for the safety of our people. With this distinguished Body behind the people of the Third District of Batangas, I am confident that we will arise from this tragedy together. Sa inyong mga kamay at puso inilalagak ko ang mga hinaing, mga pangarap at ang kinabukasan ng aming mga kababayan.

Bangon Batangas. Mabuhay ang Pilipino. Mabuhay ang ating Inang Bayang Pilipinas. Maraming-maraming salamat po. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Definitely, Batangas will bounce back.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, I move that the speech of Honorable Collantes be referred to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the speech of Representative Collantes is referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Lady from the Sixth District of Batangas, the honorable Deputy Speaker Vilma Santos-Recto, on a question of privilege.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Deputy Speaker from the Sixth District of Batangas, Hon. Vilma Santos-Recto, is recognized.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. SANTOS-RECTO

REP. SANTOS-RECTO. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, honorable Members of the House

of Representatives, good afternoon. I rise to bring to the attention of this honorable Body the plight of our people in Batangas whose lives took a sudden turn when Taal Volcano erupted. It was frightening and shocking when the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology raised the alert level of Taal Volcano to Alert Level 4. Raising the possibility of an explosive eruption, whose timing and scale are a mystery to us all, is an alarming and horrifying nature of this volcano. This is aggravating and burdening our people who are anxious now, more than ever, about their families and their future.

Mr. Speaker, here is the situation now: The data showed that as of January 19, 2020, 11:00 p.m., according to the Batangas Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office or PDRRMO, there are 448 evacuation centers within and outside of Batangas serving more or less 41,000 families or about 180,000 individuals, while some families opted to stay with their relatives and leave the evacuation centers.

According to the Phivolcs, those residing within the 14-kilometer radius of the volcano need to be evacuated under Alert Level 4. These are the towns within the 14-kilometer radius danger zone that are classified as high-risk zones: the municipalities of Agoncillo, San Nicolas, Talisay, Balete, Mataas na Kahoy, Lemery, Laurel, Taal, parts of Cuenca, Alitagtag, Sta. Teresita, San Jose, Malvar, Tanauan City and Lipa City, and also parts of Tagaytay City and Cavite Province.

Ang mga Kinatawan po ng Batangas sa Kongresong ito, mula kay Cong. Eileen Ermita-Buhain, Cong. Ranie Abu, Cong. Maitet Collantes, Cong. Lianda Bolilia at Cong. Marvin Mariño, kasama po ang inyong lingkod, ay nagtutulong-tulong para mabigyan ng ayuda ang lahat ng mga naapektuhan ng pagsabog ng Bulkang Taal. Kami po sa Lalawigan ng Batangas ay nagsama-sama upang tulungan ang isa't isa, kasama po ang aming Gobernador Dodo Mandanas, Bise Gobernador Mark Leviste, lahat po ng mga mayor at mga opisyaes sa buong Lalawigan ng Batangas, kasama po si Senador Ralph Recto.

Let me take this opportunity to thank everyone, from our Pres. Rodrigo Roa Duterte, Vice Pres. Leni Robredo, fellow Members of the House of Representatives led by Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, Majority Leader Martin Romualdez and all the Deputy Speakers for all their support, assistance and prayers. Maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat. I would also like to thank the local government units within Batangas Province, and also from other provinces, cities and municipalities, for the support and assistance they have extended to those affected by this disaster. Thank you to the private sector, the private individuals and many others who took and are still taking the initiative in their own way to support all the efforts to alleviate the situation of our province and our evacuees. Maraming salamat po sa pagtulong

at patuloy na pagtulong sa amin pong mga kababayan, sa mga Batangueño.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to thank the Phivolcs team led by Usec. Renato Solidum for updating and informing us about the volcano's status. Naalala ko pa noong ako po ay Gobernador ng Batangas, isa po si Undersecretary Solidum na laging nangunguna sa pagsasagawa po ng Taal Volcano Hazards Awareness and Preparedness Seminar-Workshops para sa local government units ng Batangas. Ibinabahagi po niya ang kaniyang kaalaman tungkol sa mga katangian ng Taal Volcano at ang kahalagahan ng pagkakaroon ng tinatawag na "Disaster Preparedness and Response System" bilang paghahanda sa oras ng pagsabog nito. Ito ay patuloy nilang ginawa at pinagbubuti pa ang sistema. Sa palagay ko ay nakatulong ito nang malaki kung kaya't naging zero casualty at naging mabilis ang pagsasagawa ng evacuation sa paanan ng bulkan nang biglang sumabog ito noong Linggo, January 12, 2020.

Ako po ay bumisita sa ilang evacuation centers, kasama si Sen. Ralph Recto at ilang opisyaes ng Batangas, para makita po ang kanilang kalagayan at masigurado po natin na sila ay nasa maayos na kinalalagyan. Mabuti naman at sila po ay nasa maayos na kalagayan.

Mr. Speaker, alam ko pong maraming hamon pa ang haharapin nila sa mga susunod na araw kaya lagi ko naman pong sinasabi sa kanila na huwag silang mawawalan ng pag-asa. Dapat sumunod sila sa mga pinag-uutos para sa kanilang kaligtasan at patuloy na magdasal para sa kaligtasan po naming mga Batangueño.

There is a vital need to require municipalities to establish a permanent evacuation center. These evacuation centers must be equipped with capabilities and facilities to respond and serve the needs of our people who would be affected by disasters and calamities. Ito po iyong evacuation na tinatawag natin one-stop shop. With this, we will avoid the displacement and disruption of classes of our school children when classes resume. According to the Department of Education, classes in 120 schools have stopped because the schools are being used as evacuation centers. This is what I envisioned when I filed the bill requiring all the cities and municipalities to establish a permanent evacuation center, which I hope would be immediately passed by Congress. In addition, I hope we can craft more laws that would improve our local government units' disaster preparedness capabilities so that we can ensure the safety, health and economic well-being of our people.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, our chief volcanologist said that the volcano is dangerous because an explosive eruption is still possible, and that is why our people have to stay outside the danger zone and temporarily

take shelter in evacuation centers. Nahaharap po sila sa buhay na walang kasiguraduhan, walang tirahan, walang hanapbuhay, walang gaanong pantustos sa mga pangunahing pangangailangan, walang gaanong makakapitan. Ang agrikultura po nila ay nasira, namatayan sila ng mga hayop na kanila pong ginagamit sa kanila pong hanapbuhay. Pag-asa po ang aming pinanghahawakan dito, there must be something to hold on to, the very reason there must be hope for everyone. There must be comprehensive plans for the future of our fellow Batangueños.

Mr. Speaker, I will propose to this Body the creation of a Taal Commission, at the appropriate time, for the relief, rehabilitation and assistance to those affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano. I also urge Congress to make a realignment of funds in coordination with the Committee on Appropriations, the Department of Budget and Management and other sectors of the government for the immediate release of funds. This is to address the crisis caused by the volcano activity and ensure the immediate rehabilitation and resettlement of our fellow Batangueños. Pinag-uusapan na po ng malawakan ang plano kung paano matutulungan ang atin pong mga kababayan sa long term. Resettlement, rehabilitation and recovery programs and reconstruction of roads are some of our topmost priorities.

Mr. Speaker, alam po natin na limitado ang kakayahan ng atin pong mga local government units na tulungan sila kaya ako po ay nananawagan na patuloy nating suportahan at damayan sila sa mabigat na pasanin po ng ating mga kababayan sa Batangas na tinamaan ng pagsabog ng Taal Volcano. Sa ngayon po masasabi natin na overwhelming at sobra-sobra pong tulong ang umaabot sa aming lalawigan para sa mga biktima po ng pagsabog ng Taal Volcano. Akin lamang ipinagdarasal na sana po ay huwag naman kaming dumating sa panahon na tinatawag na donor's fatigue. Huwag naman po sana dahil kakailanganin po namin kayo ng mahabang panahon.

Rehabilitation and reintegration will take a while. It will not be easy to get back on our feet, but with determination, and with your help, we will be able to do that. Sabi nga po ng isang mangingisda sa lawa ng Taal, if I may quote, "Habang kami ay buhay ay sadyang may pag-asa." Ang pagmamalasakit natin dito sa pamahalaan, ng mga nasa pribadong sektor at maging ng mga pribadong indibidwal sa kanilang kapakanan ang nagbibigay po sa kanila ng pag-asa.

Muli po, sa inyong lahat, maraming-maraming salamat at pagpalain po tayong lahat ng Panginoong Diyos.

Mabuhay po ang Lalawigan ng Batangas. Mabuhay po ang mga Batangueño.

Maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat. (*Applause*)

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

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, I move that the speech of Honorable Santos-Recto be referred to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the speech of Deputy Speaker Santos-Recto is referred to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Lady from the Fourth District of Batangas, Hon. Lianda B. Bolilia, on a question of privilege.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.).
Congresswoman Bolilia from the Fourth District of Batangas is recognized.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. BOLILIA

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, sinubok ang tapang ng Batangueño, binago ang mukha ng isang barako. Katulad ng balisong na sumisimbulo sa katatagan ng lalawigan, ang Batangueño ay mananatiling matatag at lumalaban.

Taal Volcano is one of the world's smallest volcanoes, yet it is truly a case of "small but terrible." Since its eruption last Sunday, families have fled their towns and are now staying in evacuation centers, while some are with their friends and relatives, anxiously waiting and hoping for the day that they will be able to come back home. The latest eruption of Taal Volcano left behind a mournful sense of gloom and desolate landscape covered in thick layers of ash. It destroyed thousands of houses and livelihood, damaged roads and infrastructure, wasted agricultural products, displaced animals, closed businesses, and opened large fissures in the ground. The normalcy of life temporarily came to a halt.

The beautiful yet deadly Taal Volcano, for hundreds of years, has sustained and nurtured generations of Batangueños. Its majestic view captured our imagination, thereby making it a tourism hotspot which spurred the economic growth of surrounding towns. Yet, the volcano is also very much capable of destroying communities around it. The reality is that Taal Volcano's restlessness in the aftermath of its eruption highlighted our country's vulnerability to the most destructive forces of nature due to our geographic location in the Ring of Fire.

Mr. Speaker, my district, the Fourth District of Batangas, has not been directly affected by the volcano's eruption. It has become a safe haven for the evacuees coming from different municipalities. This Representative has been doing the rounds and has been to 20 evacuation centers in and out of the Fourth

District with the hope of uplifting the evacuees' spirit and maintaining equanimity in this difficult situation. It is heartbreaking to see men and women crying, children trembling, who are clearly experiencing physical, psychological and emotional stress. Just this morning while I was in an evacuation center in the Municipality of Taysan, I approached a man in his 60s. He was bound to a wheelchair and while I was asking about his condition, tears ran down his face. His sobs echoed untold suffering. He is a stroke survivor and could not talk. He has no family.

The evacuees are in disbelief on what had become of their lives and hopes for the future. How can this be happening to the place which used to be their version of paradise? How can this be happening to a place where they built their homes, raised their families and pursued their dreams? Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I have no answer to these. Kapag kinumusta natin ang mga evacuees, sasabihin nila sa inyo, "Wala na po kaming babalikan, wala na kaming kabuhayan, nawala na ang lahat." Sasabihin ko, "Makakabalik kayo, tatayo kayo uli at magkakaroon kayo uli ng kabuhayan" but, Mr. Speaker, I know that what I am saying is uncertain and I am just hoping.

Despite all of these challenges, the overflowing show of solidarity and support of our kababayans stirred up powerful emotions in me. I have never seen such an act of humanity, may it be big or small. Volunteers and donors from all walks of life came in droves to provide relief. The evacuees may have a rough time right now but they remain steadfast because of the massive support they get from their fellow Filipinos.

Maraming salamat. Maraming salamat sa national government. Maraming salamat sa Presidente, sa Bise Presidente. To the Members of the Senate, to the national agencies, to the Members of Congress, to my colleagues here in the House of Representatives, to the local government units, to the private sector, maraming-maraming salamat po. I hope that this bayanihan spirit will be sustained and we do not tire of or become fatigued in extending whatever help we can because this situation may drag on for months. Iyong bagyo ay alam natin kung kailan matatapos. Iyong baha, sa malao't madali ay huhupa. Iyong sunog ay kayang pigilan ng bumbero pero ang trahedyang ito sa Bulkang Taal, hindi mo alam kung ilang araw, kung ilang buwan kang maghihintay.

Mr. Speaker, I know things look bleak right now. Large sections of municipalities in Taal Volcano's shadow have to rise, literally and figuratively, from the ashes. The adverse impact will set our communities back by years or decades and leave the people vulnerable to physical, social and economic hardships. Rehabilitation, reconstruction and sustainable recovery efforts to help restore livelihoods, assets and economic activities are colossal tasks. Both the national and local governments must put forward a post-disaster response strategy to rebuild lives, livelihoods and communities in a manner that leads to long-term

sustainable development. I am confident that my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives will heed the call to action towards a more responsive and enhanced disaster risk management and preparedness.

In closing, I would like to say that my fellow Batangueños are incredibly inspirational to all of us as Taal Volcano's wrath has not damaged the legendary Batangueño spirit. Just like the volcano, the Batangueños may be calm on the surface but underneath them is their burning determination and fierce resolve to overcome and win in the most difficult challenges. Taal Volcano may expel its wrath over and over again throughout decades and even centuries, but the Batangueños' love affair with its volcano will never be extinguished.

Ala e, sigurado naman tayo, pagkatapos ng lahat ng ito, mas tatalim at tatalas ang balisong sa Batangas, babalik ang sigla ng mukha ng isang barako at tatayo muli ang Batangueño!

Maraming salamat po at magandang hapon.
(*Applause*)

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

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, I move that the speech of Honorable Bolilia be referred to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The speech of Congresswoman Bolilia is referred to the Committee on Rules for appropriate action.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, I move for a one-minute suspension of the session.

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

It was 4:25 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:25 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Lady from ACT-CIS Party-List, Hon. Rowena "Niña" O. Tadiran, be recognized on a question of privilege.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Rep. Niña O. Taduran of Party-List ACT-CIS is recognized.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. TADURAN

REP. TADURAN. Magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat at nawa ay naging maligaya at ligtas ang inyong bagong taon.

G. Ispiker, bago ko po simulan ang aking privilege speech, hinihiling ko po sa ating lahat dito na mag-alay tayo ng isang maikling panalangin para sa mga kababayan nating Batangueño at mga kalapit na lugar na ngayon ay nakakaranas ng takot at pangamba sa panganib na dulot ng pag-aalbuoto ng Bulkang Taal.

Diyos naming makapangyarihan, itinataas namin ang aming mga puso sa Iyo ng may kagalakan para sa lahat ng Iyong lalang sa mundong ito kung saan man kami ay nabibilang para sa Iyong patnubay sa aming mga kailangan at para sa Iyong karunungan na gumagabay sa landas ng buong kalawakan.

Diyos naming makapangyarihan, muli kaming humaharap sa panahon ng unos dulot ng pagsabog ng Bulkang Taal. Naniniwala kami na sa pamamagitan Ninyo ay mapapahupa ng Iyong makapangyarihang kamay ang bangis nito.

Iligtas Mo po kami sa kapahamakan, lalo na ang mga residente, bata man o matanda, mayaman man o mahirap. Nawa ay paigtingin Mo rin po sa amin ang diwa ng damayan, pagmamalasakit at pangangalaga sa kapwa at kalikasan. Ito ang aming samo at dalangin sa ngalan ni Kristo, kasama ng Espiritu Santo.

Amen.

G. Ispiker, bago pa man ako sumalang sa pambihirang pagkakataong ito, taimtim kong pinag-isipan at kinonsulta ang mga taong alam kong higit na nakakaunawa sa akin kung tama ba at makatuwiran ang paglalahad ko sa sinapit mula sa kamay ng mga mapagsamantalang indibidwal sa loob mismo ng isang mall car park na inakala kong ligtas at mapapangalagaan ang seguridad ng bawat sasakyang nakaparada doon. Bagama't tuluyan nang humupa ang insidenteng aking kinasangkutan, minabuti kong tumayo ngayong hapon ito hindi upang wasakin ang kredibilidad ng establisimyentong sangkot kung hindi maging eye-opener sa mga kapwa ko Mambabatas at bawat mamamayan, gayundin ang hangarin kong maiwasan, kung hindi man matuldukan, ang mga insidente ng nakawan sa mall car parks o alinmang pribadong kahalintulad nito.

G. Ispiker, marahil ay alam na ng karamihan ang hindi kanais-nais na nangyari sa aking sasakyan noong hapon ng ika-anim ng Enero ng taong

kasalukuyan. Para sa mga hindi pa nakakabatid, hayaan po ninyong ilahad ko ang nangyari at nawa ay maging simula ito upang muli nating ikonsidera ang pagsasabatas ng mga panukalang may kinalaman sa mall car parks at kahalintulad na establisimyento. Batay sa naging salaysay ng aking anak, bandang alas tres ng hapon, matapos akong ihatid sa Malacañang upang saksihan ang paglagda ni Pangulong Duterte sa 2020 National Budget, ay ipinarada ng aking driver, kasama ang ilan sa aking staff, ang sasakyan sa car park ng isang malaking mall sa Sta. Mesa, Maynila. Lumabas muna ng sasakyan ang aking anak, kasama ang driver at ilan sa aking staff, upang kumain habang naghihintay sa akin. Mag-a-alas singko ng hapon nang tawagan ko ang aking driver ngunit hindi siya sumasagot kaya minabuti kong tawagan ang aking anak. Ayon sa kaniya, nang puntahan ng driver at aking staff ang aming sasakyan—sila ay nasa isang telco company sa loob mismo ng mall upang magpa-load—natuklasan ng mga ito na basag na ang salamin sa tagiliran at maraming gamit sa loob ang nawala. Nagmamadali akong nagtungo roon upang personal na makita ang lahat. Kung kaya ko lang liparin ang nasabing mall mula sa Malacañang, ginawa ko. Buti na lamang isa sa ating mga kasamahan ang nagsilbi kong knight in shining armor sa katauhan ni Deputy Speaker Conrad Estrella III ng ABONO Party-List at hindi ko ikinahiyang makisakay sa kaniyang kotse na siyang naghatid sa akin sa naturang mall.

G. Ispiker, nanlumo ako pagdating sa pinangyarihan ng krimen. Hindi ko napigilang maiyak dahil sa halong takot at galit. Takot dahil hindi ko alam ang gagawin ko kung may masamang nangyari sa aking anak at sa mga kasamahan ko. Galit dahil may nagsamantala at nagnakaw ng aking mga gamit. Higit pang nakakalungkot ay ang mabagal na pagtugon ng mall security at customer relations service sa naturang insidente. Lumabas sa aking pagsusuri at pagtatanong na walang CCTV camera na nakatutok sa lugar kung saan nakaparada ang mga sasakyan. Ang mga CCTV camera ng car park ay nasa entrance at exit lamang. Wala ring security guard na nag-iikot sa car park. Nakalagay sa parking ticket na ang bayad sa paggamit ng parking space ay P40. Ang tanong: Ang P40 ba ay bayad lang sa parking space o bukod doon, may iba pa bang tungkulin ang may-ari ng car park?

G. Ispiker, ako po ay hindi isang abogada na malalim ang kaalaman sa batas subalit hindi naman po ako mangmang upang hindi maunawaan na kapag nagbayad ka sa parking slot, may obligasyon ang may-ari ng car park na tiyaking hindi ka magagambala sa buong panahon ng iyong pagparada ng sasakyan.

Isang payak na halimbawa ay ang kontrata ng pag-upa sa bahay. Kapag nagbayad ka ng upa ay may

tungkulin ang may-ari na siguruhin na walang iistorbo sa iyo sa pananatili mo sa nasabing bahay.

Ibig sabihin nito ay hindi lang parking space ang binabayaran sa car park. Kasama dapat sa bayad ang pagtitiyak na walang mangyayaring masama sa sasakyan habang nakaparada ito. Hindi maaaring sabihin ng may-ari ng car park na wala silang pananagutan kung sakaling manakaw o may mangyaring masama sa sasakyan. Kaakibat ng pagtanggap nila ng bayad ay ang tungkuling pangalagaan ang seguridad ng mga sasakyan at ng mga bagay sa loob nito.

G. Ispiker, malinaw na hindi nagampanan ng mall car park ang tungkuling ito at ang katibayan nito ay ang kawalan ng mga CCTV camera na nakatutok sana sa mga nakaparadang sasakyan. Kung may security guard sana na nag-iikot-ikot ay magdadalawang isip ang salarin o mga salarin. Sa palagay ko, kung hindi ako isang Mambabatas ay hindi pagtutuunan ng pansin ng mall ang pangyayari. Nagkataon lamang na isang Mambabatas ako kung kaya sila na mismo ang nakipag-ugnayan sa aking staff. Papaano kung isang karaniwang Juan Dela Cruz ang biktima, pakikilingan kaya ang kaniyang hinaing?

Sa aking pagninilay-nilay, marahil ay niloob ng Maykapal ang nangyari. Siguro ay may mahalagang mensahe sa likod ng nakawang naganap. G. Ispiker, panahon na siguro upang muling pag-aralan ng Kapulungang ito kung makatarungan ba na hayaang maghugas-kamay ang mga may-ari ng car parks tuwing may mananakaw na sasakyan o may mawawalang gamit sa loob nito. Wala ba talaga silang pananagutan dito?

Noong mga nakalipas na Kongreso ay may mga panukalang batas na isinumite upang panagutin ang mga may-ari ng mall car parks kung sakaling mawala ang sasakyan o may mawala sa loob nito o may masira dito. Sa hindi ko malamang dahilan, wala ni isa man sa mga panukala ang naging ganap na batas. G. Ispiker, ako po ay nagsaliksik at nalaman ko na ang Lungsod ng Makati ay mayroon nang batas tungkol dito, Ordinance No. 2001-096 at sa ilalim ng ordinansang ito, pinapanagot ang may-ari ng parking facility kapag may nawalang gamit sa loob ng sasakyan, may nasira o nawala mismo ang isang sasakyan. May isang desisyon ang Kataas-taasang Hukuman din akong nabasa, ang kaso ng *Triple-V Food Services, Inc. vs. Filipino Merchants Insurance Company, Inc.* (General Register No. 160544, dated February 21, 2005). Sa kasong ito ay sinabi ng Korte Suprema na may pananagutan ang may-ari ng parking area nang mawala ang kotse na nakaparada roon. Ito ay sa kabila na may nakasaad sa parking ticket na “The management and staff will not be responsible for any loss of or damage incurred on the vehicle or of valuables contained therein”.

Sabi pa ng Korte:

The parking claim stub embodying the terms and conditions of the parking, including that of relieving petitioner from any loss or damage to the car, is essentially a contract of adhesion, drafted and prepared as it is by the petitioner alone with no participation whatsoever on the part of the customers, x x x, who merely adheres to the printed stipulations therein appearing. While contracts of adhesion are not void in themselves, yet this Court will not hesitate to rule out blind adherence thereto if they prove to be one-sided under the attendant facts and circumstances.

G. Ispiker, sa pagkakaunawa ko sa desisyon na ito, ang parking claim stub daw na naglalaman ng lahat ng napagkasunduan, kabilang na ang pagpapawalang-sala sa may-ari ng car park kung sakaling may mangyari o mawala ang sasakyan, ay isang uri ng kontrata ng adhesion na ginawa ng may-ari ng car park at walang kinalaman ang may-ari ng sasakyan. Hindi raw mag-aatubili ang Korte Suprema na ipawalang-bisa ang mga ganitong uri ng kontrata, lalo pa at napatunayan na masyadong pabor ito sa isa sa mga partido ng kontrata.

Bilang karagdagang kaalaman, marahil ay batid ng nakararami ang isang TV report ni G. Doland Castro noong ika-pito ng Enero ng taong kasalukuyan, bandang alas sais bente-kuwatro ng gabi na nagsaad na batay sa kanilang datos na nakalap, umaabot sa 72 insidente ng basag-kotse sa Quezon City noong nakaraang 2019 ang naitala ng Quezon City Police District. Ang ibig sabihin, parang karaniwan na lang ang ganitong insidente na tila ba hindi masolusyunan ng mga otoridad. Magtataka kayo marahil kung bakit ang datos ni Ginoong Castro ang aking naging basehan, at ito ay sapagkat ang pambansang kapulisan ay bigong magbigay ng datos ukol dito at mistulang ipinagturur-turuan ang aking staff kung saan makakakuha ng payak na datos.

G. Ispiker, ang aking naranasan mula sa kamay ng mga mapagsamantalang indibidwal ang siyang naging mitsa upang isulong ko ang panukalang batas na siyang magre-regulate upang magkaroon ng uniform parking fees at kung hanggang saan ang dapat na maging pananagutan ng mall car park owners at iba pang private establishments na nagtataglay ng kahalintulad na car parks.

Kaisa ako ng ating magiting na kasamahan sa Kamara na si Cong. Wes Gatchalian na isinusulong ang House Bill No. 3262 o higit kilala bilang “AN ACT REGULATING THE IMPOSITION OF FEES FOR THE USE OF PARKING SPACES AND FACILITIES IN SHOPPING MALLS, HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS AND SIMILAR ESTABLISHMENTS, INCLUDING VACANT LOTS USED EXCLUSIVELY

FOR PARKING AND PRESCRIBING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF.” Maigting ang aking paniniwala na kung maisasabatas ito, higit na magiging responsable ang car park owners at iba pang car park establishments na mapangalagaan at masiguro ang interes at kapakanan ng kanilang customers. G. Ispiker, sa mga pagkakataong ito, umaapila ako sa mga kapwa ko Mambabatas na magkaisa tayo upang matigil na ang labis-labis na paniningil at pananamantala ng car park owners sa itinatakda nilang parking fees. Panahon na upang masawata ito at ma-regulate ang controversial parking fees.

Ako po ay isang munting tinig lamang sa karimlan na nananawagan sa aking mga kapwa Mambabatas na bigyan natin ng pansin ang suliraning ito. Ako po ay naniniwala na kapag nagbayad ka ng parking fee sa alin mang malls o car parks, may tungkulin sila na pangalagaan ang seguridad ng iyong sasakyan at lahat ng mga nasa loob nito. Hindi po ito isang isyu lamang para sa isang mall, manapa’y saklaw ng paglalahad kong ito ang lahat ng malls at iba pang private car parks sa buong bansa, na kanilang obligasyong tiyakin at siguruhin ang bawat sasakyang pumaparada kasama na ang anumang mahahalagang bagay na nasa loob nito. G. Ispiker, sa labanang ito, maihahalintulad ko ang aking sarili kay David na humamon sa dambuhalang si Goliath, subalit hindi ako natatakot dahil alam ko na kakampi ko ang Diyos at nasa tabi ko kayo. Ilang insidente pa ba tulad ng karanasan kong ito ang hihintayin natin upang tuluyang matigil ito? Kapag pinagkaisahan natin ang dambuhala, tiyak ang ating tagumpay.

Muli po, maraming salamat sa inyong pakikinig, at kasihan nawa tayo ng Maykapal.

Dios Mabalos po.

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

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that the speech of Honorable Taturan be referred to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The speech of Congresswoman Taturan is referred to the Committee on Rules for appropriate action.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

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

It was 4:43 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:45 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, may I move for the election of the following Members to various Committees:

Rep. Romualdo read the names of the House Members elected to the various Committees per Journal No. 33, dated January 20, 2020.

COMMITTEE ON GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

As member:

Rep. “Kuya” Jose Antonio R. Sy-Alvarado

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

As member:

Rep. Eric Go Yap

COMMITTEE ON FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

As member:

Rep. Micaela S. Violago

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. YAP (E.) AS LEGISLATIVE CARETAKER OF BENGUET

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that Rep. Eric Go Yap of the Party-List ACT-CIS be designated as the Legislative Caretaker for the Lone District of Benguet.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

PRIVILEGE HOUR

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, today being a Monday, I move that we open the Privilege Hour.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the first Member to avail of the Privilege Hour is the Lady from the Party-List ACT Teachers. I move that we recognize Rep. France L. Castro.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Representative of ACT Teachers, Rep. France Castro, is recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. CASTRO (F.L.)

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

Magandang hapon, G. Ispiker at sa mga kapwa ko Mambabatas. Gusto ko lang pong iparating ang kalagayan ngayon ng mga biktima ng Taal Volcano eruption. Noong nakaraang Sabado, naging bahagi po ako ng relief operation na pinangunahan ng mga guro mula sa Quezon City Public School Teachers Association. Nagpunta kami sa Munisipyo ng Ibaan na command center at sa San Agustin Elementary School kung saan mayroong 13 families at 76 indibidwal ang nandoon. Kasalukuyang walang pasok sa buong Ibaan kung kaya apektado rin ang mga estudyante kahit hindi sakop ng danger zone ang Ibaan. Sunod kaming nagpunta sa Tanauan, Batangas, sa Pantay Elementary School, kung saan nandoon ang Pantay command center na may record na 17 evacuation centers at nagkakanlong ng 123 families o 390 individuals. Base sa aming paglilibot, Mr. Speaker, napansin namin na ang mas nagsusustina ng mga pagkain at pangangailangan ng mga evacuees ay ang ispontanyong donasyon at relief operation mula sa mga indibidwal, mga NGO at iba't ibang mga organisasyon. Nasaan iyong mga prepositioned na food packs na dapat naka antabay kung magkaroon ng sakuna at ang iba pang mga ayuda mula sa national government?

Dahil ginawang evacuation center ang mga eskuwelahan, nawawalan ng pasok ang mga estudyante at walang kasiguruhan kung kailan sila makabalik sa kanilang mga klase, imbes na dapat ay may mga permanenteng evacuation centers dahil hindi naman bago sa atin ang mga kalamidad tulad ng mga bagyo, lindol at ito nga, pagsabog ng bulkan. Kung pagbabasehan ang kasaysayan, masasabing matindi at destructive ang pagsabog ng Bulkang Taal ngunit parang hindi ganap

na handa ang ating gobyerno. Sa halip na dagdagan ang pondo ng mga front-line agencies sa disaster response tulad ng mga LGUs, DILG, DSWD, DepEd at iba pa, ang pondo nito ay lalo pang nabawasan. Sa pag-aaral po, Mr. Speaker, ang Pilipinas ay ang pang-siyam na bansa sa disaster risk worldwide. Mahigit na 20 typhoons ang dumadalaw kada taon sa ating bansa. Noong isang taon po sa Mindanao ay iyong earthquake naman at noong 2013 ay iyong typhoon surge. So, 74 percent po ng ating populasyon, Mr. Speaker, ay bulnerable sa disaster.

Sana po ay maging maagap at epektibong matulungan ang mga nasalanta o iyong ating mga kababayan na kabilang dito sa sinasabi nating danger zone. Ang ayudang naisip ng gobyerno ay sa pamamagitan ng pautang o calamity loan. Sabi nga ni Tatay at ni Nanay na nakausap namin sa isang evacuation center, nagpapasalamat sila sa dami ng mga pagkain, sa dami ng mga suportang materyal na kakailanganin sa evacuation center pero iniisip nila ngayon kung saan sila pupunta, kung ano ang kanilang mga magiging hanapbuhay o livelihood dahil ayaw naman daw nila na sa habang panahon ay nakahingi ng suporta sa ating gobyerno. So ito, Mr. Speaker, ang tinitingnan namin na dapat nating paghandaan bukod pa po doon sa sinasabi nating permanent evacuation center sa bawat tatlo o apat na barangay para po doon sa dumarating po ang anumang sakuna o disaster ay mayroon pong permanenteng pupuntahan ang ating mga kababayan at hindi sa ating mga eskuwelahan. Alam naman natin po, Mr. Speaker, napakahalaga ang edukasyon sa ating mga kabataan at kung sa ganitong sakuna at kapinsalaan ay mapipinsala din ang karapatan para sa edukasyon, ano na lang po ang magiging kalidad ng ating edukasyon ng ating mga kabataan?

Hindi na bago sa ating bansa ang kalamidad ngunit hindi pa rin ganoon kahanda ang gobyerno. Hanggang ngayon ay hindi pa rin tapos ang pagbibigay ng Yolanda assistance kahit anim na taon na ang nakalipas, pati na rin iyong mga tulong noong Bohol earthquake. Dapat, Mr. Speaker, matuto na po tayo ng leksiyon at hindi na maulit ang tinatawag nating “criminal negligence disaster response and assistance” na nangyari doon sa Yolanda.

So, ito lang po, Mr. Speaker, at magandang hapon sa ating lahat.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the speech of Rep. France Castro be referred to the Committee on Rules.

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

The speech of Congresswoman Castro is hereby referred to the Committee on Rules for appropriate action.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the next Member to avail of the Privilege Hour is the Representative from the KABATAAN Party-List. I move that we recognize Rep. Sarah Jane Elago.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. Sarah Jane I. Elago of the Party-List KABATAAN is recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ELAGO

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, G. Ispiker.

First and foremost, KABATAAN Party-List, its chapter leaders and members, and this Representation would like to extend our solidarity to all the evacuees facing the adversity of the calamity's aftermath. We convey our gratitude and appreciation to all donors, volunteers and public servants who are leading and contributing to the relief and rehabilitation efforts following the eruption of Taal Volcano. Nais po rin naming batiin, G. Ispiker, ang lahat ng nagtutulungan sa Tulong Kabataan Relief and Rehabilitation Network at ang hindi na mabilang na mga indibidwal at organisasyon na nagtutulungan para sa mga kagyat na pangangailangan ng ating mga kababayan at pakikiisa sa pangmatagalang pagsasaayos at pagtatayo muli ng mga nasalantang lugar. Asahan ninyo po na kasama ninyo rin ang mga kabataan tungo sa pagbangon ng lahat ng apektado na mga komunidad. Babangon rin ang ating mga komunidad at kinakailangan ng mahigpit na pagkakaisa upang iyan ay makamtan.

G. Ispiker, hangad din naming bigyan ng parangal at pagpupugay ang mabuting gawi at ambag nina Rio John Abel at Maximino Alcantara III na parehong 22 years old, at si Darwin Lajara na 26 na taong gulang. Sila po ang tatlong estudyante at mga kabataan na nasawi sa aksidente sa daan. Sila po, G. Ispiker, ay pauwi na mula sa paghahatid ng tulong sa mga nagbakwit matapos ang pagsabog ng Bulkang Taal. Mr. Speaker, we must never forget their good deeds and contribution. We shall celebrate and honor the lives of Rio Abel, Maximino Alcantara and Darwin Lajara by heeding the call for volunteerism and genuine service to the nation and the people. Before this Representation proceeds, Mr. Speaker, let us all offer them a moment of silent prayer.

Tunay na ang buwan ng Enero, G. Ispiker, ay napuno ng mga akto ng tulongan at pagmamahal tuloy-tuloy ang Tulong Taal sa iba pang nasalanta ng mga kalamidad. Huwag rin po nating kalimutan na sa susunod na buwan ng Pebrero ay buwan rin po ng

pagmamahalan—pagmamahalan ng mga matrikula at iba pang bayarin sa mga eskuwelahan. For the information of the honorable Members of this august Chamber, the submissions for all proposals for tuition and other fee increases have already started this month, and consultations on the proposed increases will be held next month, February, based on the CHED and DepEd guidelines.

Amid the displacement, loss and devastation wrought by typhoons Tisoy and Ursula, earthquakes in Mindanao, and the eruption of Taal Volcano, we call for the immediate imposition of a national moratorium on tuition and other fee increases on all educational institutions. Apart from our efforts and calls to provide immediate relief and fast distribution of aid to all affected communities, a tuition moratorium is necessary to give the people, especially the parents and students, a much-needed respite as they rebuild their homes and their lives while ensuring learning continuity. The onslaught of typhoons and earthquakes in the second half of 2019 alone left billions of damages to schools, hospitals, homes, with thousands of evacuees and displaced students, teachers and workers. This 2020, classes in Tisoy and Ursula-hit areas will resume in tents or other temporary learning spaces. "Double shifting" of classes is also being implemented to accommodate the high number of students. Since the eruption of the Taal Volcano, the Department of Education has reported that about 2.4 million students are affected, with 1,055 personnel and 30,814 learners in 78 public schools located in the 14-kilometer radius danger zone of the volcano, and about 1,600 classrooms in 141 nearby public schools which are accommodating more than 58,000 people.

Congressional support for learning continuity, and strengthened oversight on calamity and quick response funds are imperative as they are matters of urgency and necessity. Now is also the right time to tackle our measures on building permanent evacuation centers, as we have witnessed the dire effect of calamities one after the other on the operations of our public schools. Particularly in higher education, more than half of the students, 52.7 percent or 1.7 million, are enrolled in private institutions out of the total number of 3.2 million. Fee hikes in private higher education institutions almost doubled since the enactment of the TRAIN Law, which likewise contributed to unprecedented price increases in food and other commodities.

Kung titingnan po natin sa nakaraang tatlong taon lamang, narito po ang mga tuition and other school increases at kapansin-pansin dito kung gaano halos na dumoble ang mga naging pagtataas o pagmamahal ng mga matrikula at iba pang mga bayarin sa eskuwelahan. Mula po noong academic year 2017-2018, mula sa 6.96 percent nitong nakaraan lamang na academic year, ito na po ay naging 10.7 percent. Para naman sa other school

fees, hindi lang po tuition ang nagtataas kundi iyong mga napakarami pang mga bayarin sa eskuwelahan, mula 6.9 percent noong 2017 hanggang 2018, ito po sa ngayon ay nasa 12.89 percent o kumbaga ay nasa P250 kada estudyante at kada term sa isang academic year. In fact, Mr. Speaker, stopping these increases on tuition and other school fees is long overdue because of the skyrocketing cost of education due to the decades-long policies of deregulation and commercialization, while wage increases remain very low. Any tuition and other school fee increase spells an additional burden aggravated by the already high prices of goods, meager salaries and contractualization, on top of the dire impact of Rice Tariffication Law on farmers and agriculture at large.

Mr. Speaker, sa ating mga kapwa Mambabatas, mga kapwa lingkod-bayan, sobra-sobra na po ang paghihirap ng ating mga kababayan, lalong-lalo na sa gitna pa ng kalamidad. It is in this light that we strongly urge Congress, our fellow legislators, to support the call for a national moratorium on tuition and other school fee increases and to exhaust all means to support learning continuity in all disaster-hit areas.

Maraming salamat po, G. Ispiker.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the speech of Representative Elago be referred to the Committee on Rules.

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

The speech of Congresswoman Elago is referred to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to avail of the Privilege Hour, I move that we close the same.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CHANGE OF REFERRAL OF H. RES. NO. 571

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move for the change of referral of House Resolution No. 571, entitled: RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGEDLY ONEROUS

CONCESSION AGREEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE TWO WATER CONCESSIONAIRES, NAMELY MANILA WATER COMPANY, INC. AND MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC., from the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization to the Committee on Rules.

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

House Resolution No. 571 is referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, we move to acknowledge the presence of the guests of our Majority Leader, Hon. Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez—they were here a while ago and they are from the Municipality of Teresa, Rizal: Hon. Raul S. Palino, Municipal Mayor; Hon. Jose Jeriel S.D. Villegas, Municipal Vice Mayor; Sangguniang Bayan Members: Hon. Aurelio G. Selibio, Jr., Hon. Cris Apa Francisco, Hon. Joshua T. San Jose; Hon. Bong Santiago, Hon. Niño S. Damaso, Hon. Fernand N. Dela Cruz; SK Federation President, Hon. Jerrievonn F. Bertiz; ABC President, Hon. Jose M. Manlangit; and ABC President and Sangguniang Bayan Member, Hon. Howard Francisco.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The guests of Majority Leader Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, na kanina po ay nandito, palakpakan po natin. (*Applause*) Welcome to the House of the People.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5832

Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, I move that we continue the consideration of House Bill No. 5832, and that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 5832, entitled: AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF FILIPINOS OVERSEAS AND FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT, DEFINING

ITS MANDATE, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

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

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary situation is that the measure is still in the period of sponsorship and debate. I move that we recognize Rep. Mario Vittorio “Marvey” A. Mariño to continue his sponsorship of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Rep. Mario Vittorio “Marvey” A. Mariño is recognized to continue his sponsorship of the measure.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, the first interpellator would be Rep. Ferdinand R. Gaité of Party-List BAYAN MUNA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Congressman Gaité of BAYAN MUNA Party-List is recognized.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Kagalang-galang na Ispiker. Pahihintulutan ba ng ating Sponsor ng House Bill No. 5832 regarding the creation of the Department of Filipinos Overseas and Foreign Employment para sa clarifications o mga ilang katanungan hinggil sa iminumungkahing bagong departamento, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MARIÑO. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po. Puwede ho bang malaman, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ano ba ang pinaka-kaibuturan kung bakit, sa kasalukuyan, pagkatapos ng practically almost 50 years ng pagpapatupad ng tinatawag na labor export program ay magtatayo ngayon tayo ng isang full-pledge na departamento, kumpleto na may department secretary, may undersecretaries, assistant secretaries and full complement and obviously, kapag ito ay maaprubahan, magkakaroon din ng kaukulang budget ito. Ang programang ito na dati ay ipinapatupad ng Department of Labor and Employment ay ngayon ay ililipat sa naturang proposed department. Ano ho ba ang pinakabuod o rationale sa mungkahing pagtatayo ng departamentong ito, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, siguro po ang isa sa pinaka-importanteng rason na kailangan natin ang departamentong ito, the Department of Filipinos Overseas and Foreign Employment, ay ang kagustuhan na rin ng ating mga overseas Filipino workers—na nararapat naman na ngayon natin ibigay sa kanila—sa

matagal na nilang minimithi na departamento upang sa gayon ay isa na lamang departamento ang kanilang pupuntahan para humingi ng tulong o kaya ay kumuha ng mga information at malaman din nila iyong mga policies para din sa proteksiyon ng kanilang mga karapatan.

Ito po siguro ay sinimulan noong sila ay humingi ng tulong sa ating Pres. Rodrigo Duterte, at iyan naman ay sinabi ng ating Presidente during the SONA. Siguro po ay talagang napapanahon na, at alam ko pong matagal na itong pino-propose at ngayon ay pinag-uusapan dahil, sa tingin ko po, parami nang parami ang ating mga overseas Filipino workers. Nasa humigit-kumulang 2.3 million na po sila kaya malaki po ang kontribusyon ng ating mga overseas workers at sa dollar remittances na lamang nila ay umaabot na sa US\$30 billion sa isang taon. So, nararapat lamang po na bigyan natin ng pansin ang kanilang mga kahilingan upang sa gayon ay mabigyan sila ng kaukulang tulong, lalung-lalo na po sa ngayon na maraming problema ang hinaharap ng ating mga Filipino overseas workers.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa kasagutan sa katanungan, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na ito daw, ayon sa inyo, ay bunga ng clamor o demand ng ating mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat para sa usapin ng pakikipag-ugnayan sa gobyerno, lalo na sa usapin ng employment abroad na, ayon sa inyo, ito ay mapadali. Kumbaga ang essence ay one-stop shop.

Bakit po ba, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor? Sa ngayon, may mga ilang ahensiya ng gobyerno na gumagampan na ng tungkulin nito, kabilang diyan ang mga ahensiya tulad ng Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, na kung hindi ninyo po tatanungin, ang Kinatawag ito ay nagsilbi sa ahensiyang ito for 16 years bilang isang empleyado. Gayundin ang Philippine Overseas Employment Administration na itinatag rin na isa pang institusyon para rin paglingkuran daw ang interes ng mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat. Nandiyan din iyong Commission for Filipinos Overseas o CFO. May bahagi ang Department of Labor and Employment sa mga ahensiya dito, kasama ang kanilang Philippine Overseas Labor Officers o POLOs, para sa usapin ng pagtingin doon sa kalagayan ng ating mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat, tulad na rin ng Department of Foreign Affairs na may mga programa at serbisyo para sa kanilang assistance to nationals abroad.

Hindi pa ho ba sasapat ang mga ahensiyang ito doon sa pagtugon ng mga pangunahing pangangailangan ng ating mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat? Napakarami—hindi ko alam sa ibang bansa kung mayroon rin silang ganoong kahalintulad na mga government agencies na bunga na nga ng nabanggit na labor export program—ang mga ahensiya ng gobyerno na itinilaga para lamang bigyan ng katugunan ang malaking suliranin ng ating mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat. Hindi

pa ho ba sasapat ang naparakaming ahensiyang ito at sa inyong tantiya ay kailangang magtayo pa ng isang departamento para bigyan ng tugon ang mga suliranin ng ating mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, iyon na nga po ang problema—napakarami po noong mga tinatayo o tinatalagang mga ahensiya tulad ng POLO, OWWA at iyong sa Social Welfare and Development Department. Sa pagdami po noong mga ahensiya na ito ay lalo pong nalilito iyong ating mga kababayan kapag sila ay may problema kaya nga po gusto natin na under sa isang departamento lamang ang kanilang lalapitan. Sa umpisa pa lamang na sila ay made-deploy, alam na nila kung saan ang kanilang pupuntahan at ano ang puwedeng mangyari sa kanila sa sandaling sila ay pumunta sa ibang dako ng mundo upang magtrabaho.

Ito pong mga nabanggit kanina na mga ahensiya ay dapat lamang po itong pagsama-samahin sa isang departamento upang sa gayon ay isa lamang iyong Secretary na sabihin na natin na magmamando upang sa gayon ay hindi po mangyari na puro coordination lamang ang ginagawa ng bawat isang ahensiya. For example, isa pong manggagawa ang lalapit para humingi ng tulong sa DSWD pero iyon pala ay mayroon din siyang problema doon sa mga pananamantala sa kaniyang mga kamag-anak na OFW and so, hindi po iyon ang tamang departamento. Kaya nga po pino-propose natin na magkaroon ng isang departamento upang sa gayon, lahat po ng mga ahensiyang ito ay magsama-sama at sila ay makikinig sa isang Secretary na siyang nakakaintindi at puwede silang direktang bigyan ng kautusan kung ano ang gagawin tungkol sa mga pangangailangan ng ating mga manggagawa.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa inyong kasagutan, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Johnny Ty Pimentel.

Doon sa tinagal ko sa aking pagtatrabaho, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sa OWWA, naalala ko ang paulit-ulit na usapin hinggil sa patakaran ng overseas employment at kung hindi po ako nagkakamali, ito ay sinimulan, at least bilang isang formal program, noong panahon ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos noong 1970s bunga na nga rin noong napakalaking demand for Filipinos sa Middle East, bunga rin noong pagtaas ng presyo ng langis na nag-require ng napakaraming manggagawa. Bagamat totoo na sa ating kasaysayan, marami na pong migration ng mga Pilipino sa iba't ibang bansa, kahit noong panahon pa ng first migration ng mga Pilipino sa Estados Unidos bilang maging

mga pineapple at apple pickers, workers na nasa tuna cannery sa Alaska at iba pa—at ang iba nga po dito ay nakilala bilang mga magigiting na OFWs tulad ng poet na si Carlos Bulosan—pero kung mababalik tayo ngayon dito sa kasaysayan ng pagkakaroon ng overseas employment program, gusto ko lang malaman kung ano po ang tingin ng ating Kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, dito sa konsepto na dapat ang overseas employment program ay isang pansamantalang programa sapagkat ito ay hindi tumutugon doon sa pangmatagalang lokal na empleyo sa sarili nating bansa, tulad na rin ng hangarin ng mga ibang gobyerno sa kani-kanilang mga bansa.

Ang labor export program ay isang phenomena sa Pilipinas at ilang mahihirap na bansa because normally, any government will strive to provide local employment so that mas malapit sila sa kanilang mga pamilya at mas mapo-protektahan sila ng kanilang mga gobyerno, matitiyak iyong mga pangangailangan nila ng gobyerno bilang policymakers sa usapin ng labor relations, at napoprotektahan iyong kanilang karapatan bilang mga manggagawa.

Dito ngayon sa ating labor export program, sa aking pananaw, ang layunin rin nitong pagtatayo ng isang departamento ay hindi na gagawing isang stop-gap measure ang labor export program because by the mere fact that we are establishing a department, we are essentially saying that forever na magiging overseas Filipino workers ang ating mga manggagawa. Forced migration ang tawag ng mga ibang grupo dito sapagkat napipilitan sila magtrabaho sa ibayong dagat bunga ng kawalan ng oportunidad dito sa ating bansa o di kaya kung may oportunidad, ito ay trabahong kontraktwal, trabahong mababa ang pasahod at trabahong walang kasiguruhan sa trabaho.

Sa pagtatayo ba ng departamento, ang sinasabi ba natin, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na tayo ay forever na magde-deploy ng mga manggagawa na napipilitang magtrabaho abroad sa halip na lumikha tayo ng lokal na trabaho sa ating bansa para kahit paano iyong ating gobyerno mismo ay napoprotektahan nito ang ating mga manggagawa? Sa pananaw po ng ating Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ito ba ang isang layunin rin ng naturang departamento?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, sa akin pong pananaw ay hindi po natin polisiya ang paalisin ang ating mga kababayan upang magtrabaho sa ibang bansa. Nagkataon lamang po na ito ay isa nilang karapatan, ang pumili kung ano ang makakagaling sa kanilang buhay kaya po ang karamihan ay naghahanap ng ibang oportunidad sa ibang bansa, pero ito po, sa akin pong pananaw, ay isang opportunity lamang, na dapat ay itinuturing natin na isang asset na sila ay matututo sa ibang bansa dahil pagdating doon, sila ay maraming matutunan at dadating ang panahon ay magagamit nila

ang kanilang mga natutunang skills at mga pinag-aralan kapag bumalik sila dito sa ating bansa.

Nagkataon lamang po na marami ang population ng ating bansa at marami din ang naghahangad ng magandang buhay at sinabi ko nga po, iyan po ay isang karapatan. Katulad po ng inyong lingkod, ako po ay nagtrabaho sa Amerika ng 12 taon at ako po ay nakabalik at ngayon po ay naglilingkod sa ating gobyerno, at ganoon din po sa karamihan. Ito po ay hindi permanenteng polisiya, bagkus, ito po ay itinuturing nating parang tini-train lang natin sila sa ibang bansa. In fact, in China, Mr. Speaker, ang mga tao po doon ay ini-encourage na magtrabaho sa ibang bansa upang sila ay matuto, to explore the world, upang sila ay makabalik na mayroong kaalaman galing sa ibang bansa.

Napakasuwerte nga po natin dahil dito sa atin, dito sa ating bansa, marami tayong mga skilled workers sa ibang bansa kaya marami tayong workers na puwede pang bumalik dito sa ating bansa. Sa bansang Japan po, ito ay naubos na dahil wala po silang sapat na population upang sila ay magkaroon pa ng mga skilled workers sa darating na panahon.

Naghahanap na po sila ng foreign workers. Dito po sa atin, marami ang natuto sa ibang bansa at dahil sa Build, Build, Build Program ng ating bansa sa ngayon, ako po ay naniniwala na karamihan sa kanila ay babalik. Hindi po sila natutuwa—ako po ay saksi—na sila ay nagtatrabaho sa ibang bansa at wala po akong nakita o na-interview na nagsabi na natutuwa na sila ay malayo sa pamilya dahil ang gusto po nila ay makabalik dito. Kung sila man po ay nakapagtrabaho ng 10 o 15 taon, sinisigurado ko po sa inyo, na sila ay babalik dito.

Malamang hindi po nila magagamit dito iyong kanilang skills kaya dapat nga mayroon tayong departamento na naghahanda sa pagdating nila dahil ang kanilang kaalaman ay isang malaking kayamanan dahil puwede po silang maging negosyante, puwede po silang maging farmers and thus, they will also contribute in a sense. Hindi po natin polisiya ang paalisin ang ating mga kababayan at kaya nga po natin ginagawa ang departamentong ito ay upang masiguro ang long-term effects at long-term strategy para po sa ating mga kababayan, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Doon sa paglilinanaw na totoo po na hindi talaga dapat long-term program ang overseas employment sapagkat, tulad nang nabanggit, tungkulin ng mga pamahalaan ng iba't ibang bansa na sa halip na sapilitan o forced migration ang nagaganap—tama po iyong obserbasyon ninyo sa nabanggit na pagtatrabaho sa ibang bansa—ang mga kapwa Pilipino natin na nagtatrabaho doon ay mas nais na makabalik sa ating bansa para kasama ang kanilang mga pamilya, para kasama ang kanilang mga kaibigan at bumalik sa

kulturang sanay na sila, dahil kahit paano, may mga mekanismo para kapag may suliranin o problema ay mayroon silang malalapitan, mababalikan at iba pa.

Ito nga po iyong nabanggit, ano, na totoo naman iyong sinasabing tayong mga Pilipino ay mayroon naman talagang opportunity or choice na magtrabaho sa ibang bansa—totoo iyan. Sa totoo lamang po, nandito nga iyong aking mga kapatid at sila po ngayon ay nagtatrabaho sa ibang bansa pero nagretiro na nga lang po sila ngayon. Alam ko na kung mayroong oportunidad dito sa bansa, kung ang klimang pang-ekonomiya, pang-pulitika, pang-kultura ay angkop para sa kanilang pangangailangan, nasa pinakaibuturan ng kanilang puso ang manatili sa ating bansa. Ang nangyayari po kasi ngayon, tulad nang nabanggit, marami ang nagtatrabaho sa ibang bansa dahil napipilitan, forced migration, dahil nga po sa nabanggit na walang supisyenteng oportunidad para sa trabaho sa ating bansa at kung mayroon man, ito ay nagbibigay ng mababang pasahod o hindi kaya naman ay trabahong hindi regular o iyong tinatawag nga nating kontraktwal na trabaho tulad po ng nabanggit.

Recently, nabalitaan o nabatid ninyo iyong nangyari kay Joanna Demafelis, na noong 2018, habang nagtatrabaho sa Kuwait, ay pinaslang siya ng kaniyang amo. Mas recent, si Jeanelyn Villavende, na isa ring OFW na may hangarin rin at pangarap na makapagtrabaho sa ibang bansa para maaaring makapagkaroon ng bagong pagsasanay, kumita ng mas magandang pasahod, ngunit ang nakakalungkot, bumalik na nasa kabaong.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Pimentel relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aurelio "Dong" D. Gonzales, Jr.

Ito ang ilan lamang na sinasapit ng marami nating mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat, iyong ating mga domestic helpers na sa buong daigdig ay ating makikita. Ang ating mga ibang mga manggagawa ngayon na nakikipagsapalaran sa mga kondisyon at kalagayan na bago sa kanila, hindi angkop sa ating kultura, nawawalay sa pamilya, lumilikha ng mga suliraning sosyal dahil sa pagkawalay na ang kadalasan ay mag-asawa, at bagamat totoo at hindi natin ikinakaila ito, sila ay nakakatulong sa ekonomiya bunga ng kanilang niririmitang dolyares, riyal at iba pang mga kinikita sa pagtatrabaho ng ating mga manggagawa. Hindi kaila ang napakalaking kontribusyon ng ating manggagawang Pilipino sa ating ekonomiya ngunit ang kapalit ay mga Jeanelyn Villavende, mga Joana Demafelis.

Hindi ko na masasabi ang napakarami pang iba na mga suliranin noong ako ay nagtatrabaho sa OWWA. Hindi po pala ako—pagkaklaro lang, hindi po ako nagtrabaho bilang OFW kundi ako po ay nagtrabaho sa ahensiya ng gobyerno na ang tungkulin ay magbigay

ng tulong sa kagalingan at welfare ng ating OFWs na dumaranas ng ganitong mga suliranin dahil sila ay sapilitang nagtatrabaho sa ibang bansa bunga ng kawalan ng oportunidad sa ating bansa. Ngayon, iyong departamento ay itatayo natin at sa pagkakaunawa ko, may mga opisina dito sa naturang ahensiya na ipagpapatuloy pa rin, essentially, ang promotion ng overseas employment. Medyo naguguluhan ang Kinatawagang ito.

Bakit pa natin, again, ipo-promote ang overseas employment? Noong March 2017, si Pangulong Duterte na mismo ang nagsabi, he vowed in 2017 that in the next 10 years, no Filipino will ever have to be forced to work abroad as it will just become an option and no longer a necessity. Kung gayon, magtatayo tayo ng departamento, pagkatapos after 10 years, wala na palang kliyente ang departamentong ito kasi wala nang magtatrabaho or at least, mababawasan ang bilang ng mga manggagawa na sapilitang magtatrabaho sa ibang bansa. Ano ngayon ang rasyonal? Bakit parang mayroong disconnect that you are now establishing a department on one hand but you are saying, on the other hand, na mawawala o mababawasan na ang bilang ng kliyente ng naturang departamento? Saan po ang koneksiyon, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sa ganitong dalawang patakaran na parang magkasalungat?

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Johnny Ty Pimentel.

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, unang-una, mayroon po tayong probisyon sa Bill na after 10 years, ire-review natin ang kahalagahan o ang need sa departamentong ito. So, we will find out in the next 10 years but it is easier said than done. Alam ko po na gusto natin na lahat ng tao ay may trabaho dito pero hindi po iyan ang reyalidad. Ang reyalidad po ay napakarami pa ring tao ang gustong pumunta sa ibang bansa although I think na kapag na-create itong departamento, maso-solusyonan iyong ibang trabaho na kailangan lamang ng job matching dahil iyong iba po nating mga kababayan na nasa abroad, hindi nila alam kung papano sila lilipat dito sa ating bansa. Alam ko po, mismo sa Batangas City, napakadami ng industries na naghahanap ng engineers, skilled workers pero sa ngayon ay hindi na sila makakita dahil nasa abroad nga po ang ating skilled workers. I think the creation of this department will really help in matching the jobs to the workers. Iyong sinasabi po ninyo na namatay, si Jeanelyn Villavende, kasama siya sa high risk jobs tulad ng mga household help. Ang sa akin nga po ay huwag na tayong magpadala ng household help. Sila ay very vulnerable. Bakit hindi po natin i-train sila para ma-upgrade iyong kanilang skills? Siguro sa pamamagitan din ng departamentong

ito, hindi na sila magiging household help at bagkus, sila po ay mapupunta sa mga service-oriented na trabaho.

Marami rin naman po akong na-interview na OFWs na may success stories din naman. Sila po ay natutuwa, sila ay masaya sa kanilang trabaho, at every year or every two years, bumabalik sa ating bansa kung saan marami ding success stories na ating naririnig. Kaya lamang ay, siyempre, ang naha-highlight ay iyong mga namamatay at nakakalungkot nga po ang mga ito. Ito nga pong ginagawa nating departamento ay hindi para sila ay mas lalong masaktan o mapinsala sa abroad, kundi ito nga po ay tulong.

Kini-create po natin ang departamento na ito: mayroon pong mga undersecretaries na tututok sa kanilang pangangailangang ligal at, in fact, iyon nga pong kaso ni Jeanelyn ay mayroon pang na-hire na dekalidad na abogado doon sa Kuwait upang makasuhan iyong kaniyang employer. So, ang departamentong ito ay para makatulong at hindi po ito para i-promote na paalisin o ipadala sa ibang bansa ang ating mga kababayan. Ang reyalidad po ay kaya sila ay nandodoon dahil siguro ay hindi lang nila nalalaman ang available jobs na kinakailangan dito. Ako po ay saksi sa amin sa Batangas City—napakadami pong naghahanap ng employment—ng mga employer na naghahanap ng mga tao upang magtrabaho sa kanilang LNG power plants, sa kanilang oil depots at iyong sa amin, sa power industry. Ito po, sa construction pa lang ay napakadami na pong pangangailangan, kaya sa tingin ko po ay mayroon talagang dapat na departamento na kasama dito iyong mina-match ang trabaho sa workers para hindi na po sila umalis, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa ating kapita-pitagang Kinatawan mula sa Batangas na ngayon ay sinasalanta nga ng Bulkang Taal. Mabalik po tayo doon sa nabanggit ninyo na mayroon kayong tinatawag na “sunset review provision.” Tama po ba, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na mayroong provision na pagkalipas ng 10 taon, ire-review ang naturang batas para alamin kung dapat bang ipagpatuloy ang departamento, buwagin ang departamento, i-reorganize ang departamento at iba pa? Tama po ba ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MARIÑO. Tama po, Mr. Speaker, nasa Section 25.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po. Dito naman po ulit ako na medyo hindi ko masyadong ma-appreciate kung bakit after a short span of 10 years, as I understand it, ang mga ahensiya na nabanggit ko kanina na existing na tulad ng OWWA, POEA, CFO and the agencies under the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Labor and Employment, ipagsasanib sa isang ahensiya and after 10 years, we might say, “Naku, mali yata

itong naitayo natin. Lumiliit na ang bilang ng OFWs. Mag-reorganize tayo ulit.” Hindi po ba na ang 10 years na binabanggit natin ay, kumbaga, kung sa direksiyon ng deployment ng OFWs ay nag-peak na at ngayon ito ay pababa na, pagkatapos ay magtatayo tayo ngayon supposedly ng departamento para magkaroon ng isang focused na ahensiya na mag-aasikaso ng kanilang pangangailangan.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, iyong 10 years ba, ang direksiyon eventually na after ma-review kung mayroon pa bang rationale sa pagpananatili ng departamento, maaaring pagkatapos nito ay magkaroon na naman ng pagbabago o hindi kaya ang pagbubuwag nang naturang ahensiya dahil hindi na naman pala kailangan. Tama po ba ang aking appreciation, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MARIÑO. Lahat naman po ng bagay ay mayroong pagbabago, Mr. Speaker, kaya nga po tayo ay naririto at binabalangkas natin, at minsan ay binabago natin iyong mga batas. Hindi po natin alam kung after 10 years ay ganoon na nga, na baka hindi na nga natin kailangan ng ganitong departamento dahil may sapat na trabaho na ang mga kapwa nating Pilipino dito sa bansa natin. Mas nakakatuwa po iyon pero hindi natin masasabi kung after 10 years ay kailangan pa natin ito o baka mas lalo pang kailangan.

Ang sinasabi lang po natin, nilagay lang ito sa Bill pero puwede naman natin gawing mas mataas o mas mababa pero ginagawa po natin ito para sa kasalukuyang sitwasyon. In five years, if somebody can propose na buwagin na natin ito—depende na po sa mga Mambabatas sa mga susunod na Kongreso at karapatan din naman ng mga Mambabatas—kahit po ilagay natin na 10 years o 20 years pero kung gustong baguhin ng Kongreso, ito ay mababago. Ang sinasabi lang po ay ito ho ang proposal sa ngayon at ito ang pangangailangan ng sitwasyon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Sa ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor, aware po ba kayo ngayon doon sa estadistika hinggil sa deployment abroad for the past one or two years? May observation ba kayo? Nabanggit ninyo na baka in five years' time or even shorter ay bumaba ang bilang ng OFWs at mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat. Mayroon ba tayong datos para malaman kung ano na ba ngayon ang current trend ng overseas employment, especially in the light of what just happened recently in the Iran-US conflict where, because of the assassination of one leader of Iran, nagkaroon na naman ng heightening of tensions in the Middle East?

Pinag-uusapan nga a few weeks ago, dapat may pag-uusap nga sa komite dito sa Kongreso hinggil sa ano ang gagawin doon sa hindi po 10,000, hindi 50,000, hindi 100,000, kundi iyong milyong mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat, specifically dito sa Middle East? Ito

ay maaaring lumala sapagkat hindi pa natin alam ang end story ng magaganap.

Gayundin, iyong policies tulad noong Saudization kung saan ang Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, bilang isang programa nila para mabigyan ng trabaho ang kanilang mga mamamayan, binabago na ang orientation na sa halip na mag-hire ng mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat tulad ng mga Pilipino, Indonesians, mga Pakistani at iba pa, kapwa nationals na ng Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ang pinapapasok sa kanilang mga iba't ibang trabaho sa kanilang mga pagawaan.

Mayroon po ba kayong handang estadistika ngayon hinggil sa current trends ngayon, lalo na in the light of these developing situations where Filipinos—everytime may mangyari lang sa ibang bansa, sigurado ay may mga Pilipino—kaya ano ang tantiya ngayon ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor sa current trends regarding overseas employment, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, mayroon po akong datos dito. Siguro umpisahan ko po noong 2012—ang deployed overseas Filipino workers ay 1,802,031; sa 2013, 1,836,345; bahagya pong bumaba noong 2014, 1,832,000; sa 2015, tumaas po ng kaunti sa 1,844,000; sa 2016, tumaas din at naging 2,112,000; at sa 2017, bumaba sa 1,992,000. Iba-iba po iyong mga sitwasyon. Tama po kayo na dapat nga ay pinag-aaralang mabuti ang mga sitwasyon sa bawat areas kung saan marami tayong OFWs, lalong-lalo na sa Middle East na mayroong nagaganap na tensyon sa ngayon.

So, sigurado po iyan ay mayroong total deployment ban. Sigurado po ay bababa ang numero ng ipapadala na mga OFW. Kasama dapat iyan sa pinag-aaralan ng departamento at dapat po ay ma-inform agad, in advance, kung ano ang mga nangyayari, for example, in America, in the Middle East, in Asia, para po malaman natin kung saan mas safe ipadala iyong ating mga Filipino workers.

Usually naman po diyan, for example, noong bumagsak po ang oil and gas industries ay nawalan po ng maraming trabaho iyong ating mga kababayan pero lumilipat lamang po sila sa ibang lugar dahil nga po mayroon na silang set skills at sila ay hinahanap din noong mga recruitment agencies. Siguro, ito na iyong pagkakataon na kapag napabalik po natin iyong ibang Pilipino o hindi na payagan na sila ay umalis, mas mama-match po natin sila sa mga trabaho dito, na pupuwede naman pala sila dito sa ating bansa kaya nga po mas lalong kailangan ang departamentong ito. Kung sinasabi po natin na sapat iyong mga ahensiya ngayon ay bakit natin hindi nama-match o hindi po natin nagagawan ng paraan ito? Kaya nga po mas kailangan lalo ang departamento na ito upang sa gayon ay matutukan natin nang mas maayos pa kung papaano pabalikin sila dito o kung papaano sila pipigilan umalis.

Unang-una, doon na lamang sa treaty with another country, for example, sa Kuwait, napakahigpit ng ating mga agreement sa bansa na iyan dahil kapag may violation, may mga consequence po. Alam ko na hinigpitan na natin iyong ating treaty with Kuwait pero ganoon pa man, mayroon ding nangyari, may namatay, kaya nga po nangyari iyong total deployment ban. Ganoon pa man, ako po ay naniniwala na ang departamento na ito ay mas higit na makakatulong sa ating mga overseas Filipino workers, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa kasagutan, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Gusto lang ipabatid sa ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor na itong mga ahensiyang nabanggit—POEA, OWWA kung saan ako nanggaling dati, at mga iba pa—naniniwala ako na mayroon na mga ilang programa doon sa binabanggit ninyo, especially iyong tinatawag ninyo pong return program. Meaning, doon sa pagbabalik ng ating mga Filipino workers mula sa ibayong dagat at para sila po ay ma-integrate sa ating ekonomiya, sila ay bibigyan ng pagkakataon either magtayo ng sariling negosyo, makapagtrabaho, magkaroon ng investments o maging entrepreneur sa ating bansa.

Mayroon nang existing na programs ang mga ahensiya and as a matter of fact, sa Department of Labor, at bahagi rin nito ang OWWA, itinalaga na iyong programa, ang Reintegration Program, ngunit alam naman natin na, sa totoo lamang, iyong binabanggit na programa ng overseas employment, sa totoo lamang, ay hindi na po ito stop-gap measure. Noong 1970s, iyan po ang sinasabi pero hanggang ngayon ay tuloy-tuloy pa rin ang overseas employment. Bagamat totoo na bumababa ang bilang pero ang danger po nito ay bunga na nga rin ng mga kalagayan sa buong daigdig na, dahil rin sa krisis ng ekonomiya nila, ay lumiliit na rin ang bilang ng maaari nilang i-employo. Gayundin sa ating mga seafarers at marami sa kanila ang hindi na rin ma-deploy abroad bunga na rin doon sa mga tumataas na mga pamantayan sa kanilang pagtatrabaho in terms of educational attainment, trainings, ratings and the like kaya hindi na mag-qualify iyong ating mga seafarers. Ang nakakabahala, dahil sa nakita kong datos, halos very significant iyong figure ng pagbagsak ng bilang ng ating mga manggagawa, lalo na iyong mga seafarers na, sa totoo lamang, may panahon po sa kasaysayan ng Pilipinas na ang mga seafarer galing sa Pilipinas ay nag-comprise ng substantial figure of overseas workers na nasa mga shipping industries at iba pa. Doon sa nabanggit na buong programa ng gobyerno, dahil nga sa kakulangan ng totoong industriyalisasyon na binabanggit ninyo para magkaroon ng sariling trabaho sa ating bansa, dahil sa kawalan nito ay hindi pa rin sapat ang empleyo. Kung mayroong empleyo ngang natitira, hindi ito mga regular na trabaho at kung mayroon mang trabaho, hindi ito nagbibigay ng nakabubuhay na sahod.

Tama nga iyong obserbasyon ninyo na walang mga manggagawa ang gustong tumagal na mawalay sa kanilang mga pamilya at sabi pa ninyo, marami kayong nakausap at nagsabi na nalulungkot sila dahil nawawalay sila. Maaaring iyong iba ay gustong pumunta sa ibang bansa para maging turista at mag-enjoy ng sights pero hindi iyong magtrabaho nang napakatagal at mawalay sa pamilya, na maaaring magdudulot ng mga maraming suliraning sosyal at iba pa.

Panghuli po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ito po iyong isang concern rin. Ako po ay naging Pangulo rin ng organisasyon ng mga kawani sa pamahalaan, iyong COURAGE, at ang isang laging ipinangangamba ng mga kawani ay, everytime na magkaroon ng pagtatayo ng departamento, na parang napakagandang pakinggan pero sa kabilang bahagi, sinasabi rin na bubuwagin o i-a-absorb iyong ibang ahensiya ng pamahalaan dito sa ahensiyang ito. Nandiyan iyong POEA, nandiyan iyong CFO, at bagamat doon sa huling version na nabasa ko, ang OWWA ay ituturing na attached agency pa rin ng naturang departamento bunga na nga rin ng ang kalagayan ng OWWA, hindi ito pondo ng gobyerno kundi pondo ng mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat bunga ng kanilang kontribusyon—ito po ay isang trust fund. Dito sa reorganisasyon na ito, dito sa pagtatayo ng bagong departamento, may proteksiyon ho ba ang mga manggagawa na maaapektuhan na naman ng naturang reorganisasyon doon sa pagtatayo ng departamento, but at the same time, iyong pagbubuwag ng mga kaukulang mga opisina na sinasabing i-integrate sa bagong departamento, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MARINÑO. Mr. Speaker, tama po kayo. Iyon pong mga ahensiya na nabanggit ay i-a-absorb pero iyong OWWA po ay isang attached agency pa rin dahil ito ay isang pribadong pondo na galing sa mga OFW. Ang maganda po rito ay ang magiging Chairman ng pangangasiwa ng pondo ay ang Secretary. So, lahat naman po ng mga ma-a-absorb na ahensiya ay mayroong tinatawag na, siyempre, security of tenure ayon sa Civil Service at susundin naman po iyong lahat ng mga batas nang sa gayon sila ay mailipat ng maayos doon sa bagong departamento, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa paglilina, Mr. Sponsor, ngunit doon sa nabasa kong mga dokumento, may probisyon pa rin talaga na those employees affected by the reorganization of the organization or the department, the new department, may mga probisyon doon sa usapin ng kanilang separation. Sa kanilang pagkatanggal sa trabaho—marami sa kanila ay mga kasama ko pa rin sa OWWA, sa POEA—pero after serving those agencies for several years, malalagay na naman sila sa panganib dahil wala hong assurance na mananatili pa rin sila sa trabaho, lalo na doon sa nais pang manatili sa serbisyo.

Naglagay doon ng probisyon na bibigyan daw ng kaukulang mga benepisyo pero kung ang benepisyo ay hindi naman nila hinahabol at ang employment ang habol nila, sila ay sapilitang matatanggal. Bagamat may benefits sila but in terms of separation from any organization, as we have observed, iyong tanggalan ay talagang laging nagaganap at iyan ang laging concern ng Kinatawang ito, lalo na sa karapatan at kagalingan ng ating mga manggagawa.

Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, bilang pagtatapos, naniniwala po ako na ang pagtatayo ng departamento ay hindi pangunahing magiging solusyon sa mabigat na suliranin ng ating mga OFWs. Nakakalungkot iyong sinapit nila Joanna, Jeanelyn at libo-libo pang mga manggagawa na dumanas ng ganitong karahasan mula sa kanilang mga employer. Marami pa ang masasabing dumaranas pa rin ng matinding kahirapan at marami akong kaibigan at kamag-anak na pare-pareho ang kanilang binabanggit na mga suliranin—ang kaukulang atensiyon ng gobyerno sa kanilang kalagayan kung kaya sa halip na sapilitang employment o labor export program ang itulak, tama po, at naniniwala akong sumasang-ayon rin ang ating Sponsor, na dapat ang Philippine Overseas Employment Program ay matigil o di kaya ay mabawasan na at sa halip, iyong option ay iyong mga nagnanais na lamang, at hindi sapilitan, na magtrabaho sa ibayong dagat ang bigyan na lang ng ganitong kaukulang oportunidad.

Nakakapangamba rin na kahit sa pagtatayo ng bagong departamento, mismo ang gobyerno, sa halip na tulungan sila, ay nagpapataw pa ng napakaraming state exactions. Ibig sabihin, akala natin ay ang laki na ng kanilang kontribusyon sa ekonomiya pero sa bawat hakbang ng manggagawa na magtrabaho sa ibayong dagat, iyong gobyerno ay naririyang para singilin siya sa kaniyang pasaporte, sa pagbayad ng kaniyang fees sa OWWA, POEA at ngayon, pati ang PhilHealth, kaya dinagdagan pa ang pabigat sa ating mga OFWs. Kung kaya iyong ating tinaguriang mga bagong bayani, hindi iyan ang dapat nating isukli sa ating mga tunay na nagpapakahirap at naglalagay sa kanila sa panganib sa pagtatrabaho sa ibayong dagat. Pangunahin sana, ang pinaka-bottom line sana, ay hanapan ng paraan para silang mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat ay manatili na sa ating bansa at mabigyan ng oportunidad na magtrabaho dito, dahil sila ang nagbibigay ng kabuuang kontribusyon sa ekonomiya ng Pilipinas na para sa ikabubuti, hindi lamang sa kanila kundi ng buong sambayanan.

Gayundin sana, sa hangarin ng Kinatawang ito na maprotektahan natin hindi lamang ang ating mga OFWs, ang mga manggagawa sa ibayong dagat at ang iba't ibang mga Pilipino na humaharap ng napakaraming suliranin sa ibang bansa, kundi gayundin iyong mga manggagawang nagtatrabaho sa mga naturang ahensiya na kapag ito ay itinatag ay magkakaroon rin ng epekto sa kanilang trabaho at kabuhayan.

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

REP. MARIÑO. Thank you, Honorable Gaité.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the next Member who wishes to interpellate our distinguished Sponsor is our Minority Leader, the Gentleman from the Sixth District of Manila, Rep. Bienvenido M. Abante Jr.

I move that the Gentleman be recognized.

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

REP. ABANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Sponsor of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, allow me to ask some leading questions on the said Bill, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MARIÑO. It would be an honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, I have been travelling to many countries for the past 25 or more years and most of these countries, Mr. Speaker, would be the Middle East countries like Kuwait and UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain. Therefore, I have first-hand knowledge of the problems that are besetting our OFWs. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I am in favor of a total ban on the domestic helpers being employed not only in Kuwait but all over the Middle East because of the many, many problems that our domestic helpers have been encountering. Ever since the Thirteenth Congress where I became a Member of, I have already called on the government to have a total deployment ban to those countries.

Anyway, the first question, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, you know, under Section 4 of House Bill No. 5832, the DFO “shall be the primary agency under the Executive Branch tasked to protect the rights and promote the welfare of Filipinos overseas.” Under Section 3, letter d, FOs are referred to as “Filipino nationals outside the Philippines, whether permanent or temporary, including OFWs and their dependents abroad, tourists, pilgrims, students, trainees, religious missionaries, among others,” Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Is that right?

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

REP. ABANTE. On the other hand, Republic Act No. 7157, which is also known as the Philippine Foreign Service Act of 1991, gives the DFA mandate to implement Philippine foreign policy which includes,

and I quote: “Protection of the rights and promotion of the welfare and interest of Filipinos overseas.” Can you please enlighten this Representation as to House Bill No. 5832 delineating the services provided by the Department of Filipinos Overseas Act from the DFA mandate under Republic Act No. 7157, considering that the DFO definition of FOs is specific but almost all-encompassing and similar to the mandate of the DFA, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, Minority Leader, the Bill also has a one-country team approach, meaning, the head who is the ambassador or the consul general, will recommend to the DFO Secretary in coordination with the Department of Foreign Affairs and let the Secretary know of such interest of our Filipino workers. So, it is still the DFA, through the ambassador or the consul general, who would recommend to the Secretary of this Department in case it is created.

REP. ABANTE. Precisely, Mr. Speaker, that would be my second question, but the other question would be, where do the services of the DFO end and the services of the DFA begin?

Now, this Representation is asking this because there may be overlapping services and there would not be a clear mandate on who will actually lead or which will be the lead agency, Mr. Speaker, if we are not going to correct the seeming overlapping provisions of the measure that we are talking about now and the law concerning the Department of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, the Secretary of this Department would be the one in-charge of everything in relation to employment and policies, but the DFA, of course, as the one having a relationship with a foreign country, will recommend some policies on, for example, agreements with the different countries. Then, of course, the ambassador or the DFA officials or the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs would still talk to this Secretary in case this Department is created.

I know there are always overlapping jobs as far as the DFA is concerned. That is the present situation also. Sometimes the Department of Labor or the Secretary of the Department of Labor will have to coordinate with the Department of Foreign Affairs on how to approach certain issues because of national security issues. Of course, the Secretary will have to coordinate with the Department of Foreign Affairs as far as national security issues are concerned. For example, the total ban on workers for deployment to Kuwait, that entails the observation of the Department of Foreign Affairs. So, maybe there is a suggestion from the Minority Leader to clarify the laws as far as this Bill is concerned but as far as I know, the Department of Foreign Affairs

has the say as to the relationship with any, let us say, foreign employer. Like I said, there is a one-country team approach wherein the ambassador will be the lead negotiator as we say, or the consul general would be the one giving the policies or recommendations to the Secretary of the Department. Obviously, the Secretary of this Department would not go beyond the Department of Foreign Affairs as far as those relationships are concerned. It is always a consultation; there is always a recommendation whether to proceed with the agreements or as to whether there is a conflict or whether there is a question of law.

So, if there is a suggestion from the good Minority Leader, I would be happy to amend any of the provisions of this Bill.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. I am sure that we would be in favor of further amending House Bill No. 5832, Mr. Speaker.

All right. Now, considering your point, my second question would be on Section 14 of House Bill No. 5832 which, to me, further sows confusion on the mandate of the DFO and DFA. While House Bill No. 5832 provides a one-country team approach as you have been explaining, designating the ambassador or the consul general as the leader of the mission, in the second sentence the ambassador is relegated to a recommendatory position to the DFA Secretary, without any input or mention of the DFO.

So, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, can you please enlighten this Representation on the seeming absence of the DFO Secretary in matters that will be clearly within its jurisdiction and mandate as protector of Filipinos overseas. If we are not going to correct this, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, where there are such overlapping provisions, instead of consultation, instead of the two Departments connecting well, there might arise some confusion. There might arise not only overlapping functions but also owning and disowning of responsibilities, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. MARIÑO. Well, as seen on Section 14, Mr. Speaker, it says, “in coordination with the Secretary of the DFA.”

REP. ABANTE. Yes.

REP. MARIÑO. So if there is another word, a stronger word—maybe “consultation,” “coordination”—so that is what I see on Section 14. but like I said, if there are any suggestions from the Minority Leader, I will be glad to amend this Section when the time comes during the period of amendments.

REP. ABANTE. Yes, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Now, this Representation would

like to suggest, therefore, that a clear delineation and mandate for the DFO be made, drawing a line between the DFO's mandate and services and the DFA's mandate, considering Section 14 of House Bill No. 5832. This will clearly sow confusion especially in times of crisis management for our Filipinos overseas if it is left unchecked, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

I want to thank you so much for favoring certain amendments to the bill, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. MARIÑO. Thank you, Mr. Minority Leader. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Yes. Well, the third question would be this: With respect to the regulatory power of the DFO in terms of operations of private recruitment and manning agencies and related business, is this power quasi-judicial or merely administrative in character?

REP. MARIÑO. Well, there is an Undersecretary for Foreign Employment as far as the concerns of recruitment agencies, if that is what the Minority Leader means.

REP. ABANTE. Let me just make it clear, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, does the DFO, according to our Bill here today, have the power, under Section 4, letter (r) of the Bill, to adjudicate and mete out penalties, suspension and blacklisting, and prosecutorial and subpoena powers? Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, kung ito po ay regulatory power lang at wala po noong tinatawag nating "quasi-judicial power," ano po ang magiging ngipin ng Department of OFWs as it is, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MARIÑO. As of right now, Mr. Speaker, it is only administrative powers that are given by this Bill but I think it was deleted in the latest version, the quasi-judicial powers. I guess this would be administrative in nature and then prosecution will be recommended as far as criminal liabilities are concerned.

REP. ABANTE. Yes. I am saying this, Mr. Speaker, because I would like to be clarified because this is one of the delicate and dangerous issues haunting our OFWs. They do not have a department or an executive branch that will readily provide a remedy for such unscrupulous recruitment and manning agencies. In reality, Mr. Speaker, this has been going on for many years. Marami na pong nangyayari dito na mga tinatawag nating mga "unscrupulous recruitment," Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Gusto ko lang i-clarify po ito because nais na po nating tanggalin iyong mga "hao-siao" na mga recruitment na tini-take advantage po lamang ang ating mga OFWs, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. MARIÑO. My apologies, Minority Leader. I

think the section you are mentioning has already been deleted in the latest version. So, it is not included in the new version, Mr. Minority Leader.

REP. ABANTE. Not included?

REP. MARIÑO. That is correct.

REP. ABANTE. Okay. The fourth question would be this: Section 4, letter Z of the Bill transferred all the functions assigned to the DOLE relative to OFWs, as provided under the Migrant Workers Act of 1995 and OWWA functions under Republic Act No. 10801. Under Section 19, the DFO "shall exercise administrative supervision over the OWWA x x x as an attached agency for purposes of policy and program coordination, monitoring and evaluation." It is given two years to exist for purposes of evaluation. Is that true, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

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

REP. ABANTE. Section 2 of Republic Act No. 10801 provides that OWWA "shall be one of the principal agencies of the State to serve and promote the rights, interest and welfare of OFWs and their families." Following our question on DFA delineation, where does the services of DFO end and the OWWA services begin?

REP. MARIÑO. Well, the OWWA services cover the OFWs who have contributed their membership fees. So, the benefits would be given to those who are members or who are contributors of the fund, Mr. Speaker, but that is aside from the other benefits that the Department can provide for those who are not contributors to the OWWA fund.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, you know, the OWWA is a very rich agency because of the contributions of the OFWs. In fact, right now, I think they have about 20 billion and whenever we have that kind of money which is not being used as it should be used, it is always prone to corruption, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. One of the very reasons I will support this Bill is we would like to stop the corruption that is going on in OWWA right now as far as distributing these contributions of the OFWs is concerned, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. MARIÑO. I agree with the Minority Leader, Mr. Speaker. In fact, it is on the Bill itself, where it says that two years after the effectivity of this Act, the Department shall conduct a review of the administration, operations and functions of OWWA as an attached agency. So, I guess that is another bill, Mr.

Speaker. In terms of maybe understanding the benefits given by OWWA, that is another separate issue as far as this Bill is concerned, but it is included in this Bill that there will be a department review of operations and functions.

So, later, Mr. Speaker, we can find out how many beneficiaries have the OWWA fund been given out to in the years that passed and how much fund do they have as of right now. The Minority Leader is correct that it is around 19.7 billion as of October 2019, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Is Section 19, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, amending Republic Act No. 10801?

REP. MARIÑO. Not necessarily, Mr. Speaker. It is just a provision that it shall conduct a review.

REP. ABANTE. Because if that would be the case, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I think it is better to abolish the OWWA. Let me repeat, Mr. Speaker, it is better to abolish the OWWA in favor of the Department of Filipinos Overseas Act, Mr. Speaker. What do you think of that?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, that was a heated debate during the Committee hearing, whether OWWA would be an attached agency or should be subsumed by this Department but the fact is, it manages private funds, Mr. Speaker. So, to protect the funds, we provided that OWWA will be attached to instead of subsumed by this Department because we cannot mix the private funds with the public funds as of right now. I just want to pass this measure on the creation because it is a government reorganization but we do not want to include the issue as far as the mixing of the private funds and the public funds is concerned. So, as of right now, Mr. Speaker, the trustees will be the same trustees managing the fund, but the Department Secretary will be the Chairman of the OWWA fund if in case this Bill on the creation passes.

So, basically, the Department Secretary has administrative supervision over the OWWA Administrator and also, he is the Chairman of the trust fund. In a later time, like I said, it would be another bill maybe, or after two years, this Bill shall be reviewed or the OWWA's function shall be reviewed as to what to do with the fund. As of right now, that is not part of the Bill, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Of course, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, when this Bill was still being tackled, I think, in the Seventeenth Congress, I was not yet here in the House but how I wish that I have been there to debate in the Committee concerning this, Mr. Speaker.

Now, you talk about the OWWA handling private funds. The fact is this: Yes, these are private funds

because these are the contributions of the OFWs, yet, when an agency of the government is the one acting as the steward of such funds, they become, in a way, public funds. Therefore, there must be, you know, a real, disciplined stewardship of the funds, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. That is the very reason, as I have said, I am supporting this Bill because we would like to really check the corruption, Mr. Speaker.

Anyway, the fifth question I would like to ask is this: The declared policies of House Bill No. 5832 require inclusive decision-making and are participative under Section 2 (h). In Section 2 (i), it recognizes NGOs, trade unions and other entities as stakeholders to the welfare of OFWs and yet, under Section 7, on the appointment of the DFO Secretary, Section 8 on structure of the DFO, and Section 9 on qualifications, the OFWs' opinions, suggestions and representations are not even mentioned. They are not given any real participative decision.

What can you say about this, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, the Department created the positions of Secretary and also five undersecretaries.

Under the five undersecretaries, there are assistant secretaries to assist the different OFWs sectors.

If I may look at Section 12, there are sectoral and industry task forces: "The Department is empowered to create a sectoral and industry task forces, technical working groups and advisory bodies or committees for the furtherance of its objectives." So, under Section 12, there is a provision in which additional private sector representatives such as from the OFWs, academe, private industries as well as other national government agencies and local government units, may be appointed to these sectoral and industry task forces. This is under Section 12 of the Bill. So, it includes the other sectors, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I do not think that would be enough to protect our Filipinos overseas if they do not have any real representation. The officials of the DFO, if ever this becomes a law, are not even required to consult with the OFW representatives or other stakeholders. To me, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, sana naman na kung sino po ang magiging secretary, undersecretary, assistant secretary, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ay iyong talagang nalalaman ang lahat ng problema ng OFW at talaga namang sila ay nabibilang sa mga naging OFW sapagkat napakarami naman, Mr. Speaker, na mga dating OFW na maaaring makatulong upang mas maging maganda ang departamentong ating pinag-uusapan ngayon. What do you think, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MARIÑO. Well, tama po rin ang ating Minority Leader na dapat po ay may nalalaman iyong

ating mga opisyal. Ako rin po ay naniniwala na being public servants, whether undersecretary or assistant secretary, they should listen to the different sectors which they represent. Sabi ko nga po, mayroong mga undersecretaries na nakatutok mismo sa mga, for example, iyong atin pong Undersecretary of Foreign Employment, under the Secretary, mayroon pong assistant secretary heading each of the following units at mayroon po ditong Licensing, Employment and Welfare, Government Placement Sector, Land Based Sector, and Sea Based and Fisherfolk Sector. So, mayroon po naman itong nakaatas na mga assistant secretaries and undersecretaries para po matutukan iyong mga pangangailangan ng mga iba't ibang sektor.

Ang atin pong Section 9 sa Qualifications, mayroon po ditong provision sa ating Bill na, if I may read, Mr. Speaker:

No person shall be appointed as Secretary, Undersecretary, or Assistant Secretary of the Department unless a natural born citizen and resident of the Philippines, of good moral character, of proven integrity and competence in public administration, and expertise preferably in migration governance affecting Filipinos overseas, particularly OFWs.

No person involved in the business of recruitment of OFWs, shall be appointed as Secretary, Undersecretary or Assistant Secretary of the Department with relatives up to the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity.

So, mayroon pong ganitong probisyon, maybe because baka po magkaroon ng iba't-ibang impluwensiya, may kaniya-kaniyang hatak ng impluwensiya, kaya ina-avoid din po natin na magkaroon ng ganoong klaseng problema ang ating departamento. Ito po ay kine-create natin para patas sa lahat ng mga sektor at hindi po para bigyan lamang ng pansin ang isang sektor dahil iyong undersecretary or assistant secretary ay nabibilang doon sa whether if it is Sea-Based or Land-Based Sector, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Naiintindihan ko po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Sa akin lang po, kung puwede akong mag-suggest, dapat mayroon pong isang clear provision that is provided in designating a representative from the private sector with that qualification you just mentioned, either an undersecretary or assistant secretary who will provide inputs from the private sector and the OFWs as well as serve as control for the DFO, provided that he or she will be able to pass all the requirements in Section 9, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. MARIÑO. Like I said, Mr. Speaker, any amendments from the good Minority Leader would

be welcome. Ito naman pong na-create nating undersecretaries ay hindi limited sa lima kaya ang ibig pong sabihin ay mayroon pong kapangyarihan ang Ehekutibo, lalo ang Presidente, na mag-appoint ng karagdagang undersecretaries upang sa gayon, iyong sinasabi po ng ating Minority Leader ay makasama, kung hindi man ngayon, ay sa darating pang panahon. The Bill does not limit the number of undersecretaries, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Dalawang tanong na lang po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Thank you for laboring with me on these answers.

Section 13 of the House Bill designates ATN Career Officers Corps (ACO) as a pool similar to the Foreign Service Corps. We all know how hard it is to enter the FSO Corps. What would this type of service provide for the DFO? Will the ACO be provided to all employees of the DFO?

Now, this Representation is asking because this DFO is a much-needed agency for purposes of providing services to Filipinos overseas. If they will undergo the same training as the FSO, while the DFO has been running, employees will not be readily available. What do you think of that, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MARIÑO. That is correct. Under Section 13, there is an ATN Career Officers Corps to be established and under the Civil Service rules and regulations, there is a training program, a merit promotion system and a system for deployment and recall. So, I think this training is also necessary so that we will have qualified officials as far as this Department is concerned.

REP. ABANTE. All right. Last question, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, is this: In the Bill, there is no mention of the creation of a bank or financial institution and hospitals that will cater to OFWs although under Section 5, letter (m) of the Bill provides that the DFO shall provide social and welfare services to OFWs, including insurance and remittance services. Ngayon, pinag-usapan na po ito and I think it was in the last Seventeenth Congress where a bank was proposed for the OFWs, and even a hospital was proposed in Congress for them. So, maitanong ko lang po rito—iyon pong bangko ng OFW na dating Postal Bank, iyon po ba ay mapapasailalim sa Central Bank o ito po ay may kaugnayan din naman sa Department of OFWs, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

Pati po iyong hospital, ito ba ay mapapasailalim sa DOH o mayroon din po itong kaugnayan o mapapasailalim po dito sa ating pinag-uusapang House Bill No. 5832?

REP. MARIÑO. Mr. Speaker, wala po doon sa version na ito iyong creation of the hospital at hindi po

siya kaya siguro noong Secretary of this Department dahil ito po ay under ng Department of Health. Hindi po ito mama-manage ng Secretary of Filipinos Overseas and Foreign Employment at baka po kapag sinama ko pati iyon dito ay mag-iiba po ang Bill na ito dahil iba na po dapat siguro ang proposal na iyon kung saka-sakaling dumating sa panahon na kailangan iyong hospital para mga OFWs. Sa ngayon po, hindi po iyon napasama dito sa Bill and I think the bank also is not under this Department or this Secretary because the banks are supervised and regulated by the Central Bank of the Philippines, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Travelling for many years in the Middle East, Mr. Speaker, and other places, and knowing the plight of our OFWs, I have been asking the OFW leaders if they really would like to have a Department of Filipinos Overseas and many of them agree, many of them are in favor of creating a department. Ang kanila lang pong nais sabihin o ang kanila lang fear ay baka na naman ito ay maging isang malaking walang pakinabang na departamento sa mga OFW sapagkat mapupuno rin po ito ng mga opisyal ng ating gobyernong napakatagal na sa iba't-ibang ahensiya na wala naman po talagang ginawa, ano po. Iyon po ang iyak ng mga OFW.

Itong Bill, House Bill No. 5832, if approved will perhaps create a department na kinakailangan po talaga. We have heard about OFWs stories then and now, some are tragic, others are consequential, and still others are successful and I hope na ito po talagang departamentong ito, kung maging batas po ito, ay talaga po naman na makakatulong to protect and serve the OFWs. Iyon po ang nais po natin dahil ayaw po natin na mag-create lang po tayo ng isang departamento na hindi rin po nila magagawa ang dapat nilang gawin na binigay na mandate po sa kanila ng Kongreso.

While we laud our OFWs as our bagong bayani, you know, this Representation feels that, of course, it is not enough that we recognize them for what they are but we also have to protect and help them, and what better way to do this is perhaps to create a department solely for that purpose—funded, efficient and ready to help at a moment's notice, and the officials, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, would not be prone to corruption.

Now, this Representation squirmed when the specter of a protracted war between the US and Iran hovered over the Middle East last January 3, 2020 when a US airstrike in Baghdad assassinated Qasem Soleimani, the Chief of Iran's elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Overseas Forces. The immediate thinking was the displacement of over 2.1 million Filipinos across the Middle East, including illegal workers. While the Philippine government did make the evacuation plan its

number one priority, if there was really a department that is directly dealing with them, perhaps, our OFWs will be better served. Ang nais lamang natin, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, kapag tayo po ay nagkaroon ng ganitong departamento ay talaga naman pong maisaayos po natin ang napakaraming problema ng ating OFWs ngayon. Iyon po ang panalangin ko, iyon po wish ko, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

Maraming-maraming salamat po sa inyong mga kasagutan, and I hope and wish, Mr. Speaker, if this House Bill No. 5832 will become a law, that this will truly serve, protect and help all our OFWs.

Thank you very much.

REP. MARIÑO. Thank you, Mr. Minority Leader. Mr. Speaker, for the information also of the good Minority Leader, there is a Section 24 which provides for a Congressional Oversight Committee.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5832

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 5832.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the visitors of Rep. Ferdinand R. Gaité of BAYAN MUNA Party-List. They are from the United States of America, namely: Jun Tugade, Ofelia Fausto and May Gaité, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). To the visitors of Rep. Ferdinand R. Gaité, welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. 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 following House Resolutions on First Reading, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 643, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO THE RECENT TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION”

By Representative Barzaga
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 644, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE REPORTED EXTENSION OF PILOT TESTING FOR MOTORCYCLE TAXI AND TO PROVIDE GUIDELINES AFFECTING THE SAME”

By Representative Bagatsing
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 645, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING THE METRO MANILA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (MMDA) ON THE SUCCESSFUL STAGING OF THE 2019 METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL AND FOR OFFICIALLY LAUNCHING THE ACCEPTANCE OF ENTRIES FOR THE METRO MANILA SUMMER FILM FESTIVAL”

By Representative Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON METRO MANILA DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 646, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE EVIDENT LACK OF SECURITY AND SAFETY MEASURES BEING IMPLEMENTED IN MAJOR COMMERCIAL PUBLIC ESTABLISHMENTS SUCH AS MALLS, SHOPPING CENTERS AND OTHER SIMILAR ESTABLISHMENTS”

By Representative Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 647, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE HOUSE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED LOPSIDED CONCESSION AGREEMENT ENTERED BY THE GOVERNMENT WITH THE AYALA-PANGILINAN CONSORTIUM LIGHT RAIL MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (LRMC)”

By Representatives Yap (Eric)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 648, entitled:

“RESOLUTION COMMENDING ACT TEACHERS PARTY-LIST REPRESENTATIVE FRANCE CASTRO FOR BEING AWARDED THE 2019 FEBE ELIZABETH VELASQUEZ TRADE UNION RIGHTS AWARD”

By Representatives Zarate, Gaité, Cullamat, Brosas and Elago
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Resolution No. 649, entitled:

“AN URGENT RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE DECISION OF THE INTER-AGENCY TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP TO EXTEND THE PILOT IMPLEMENTATION OF MOTORCYCLE TAXIS”

By Representative Lim
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 650, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF HONORABLE NESTOR B. FONGWAN, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LONE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF BENGUET IN THE EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS”

By Representatives Cayetano (Alan Peter), Romualdez (Ferdinand) and Abante
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 651, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE COMPASSION, SOLIDARITY, SUPPORT AND EMPATHY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE INJURED, DISPLACED AND BEREAVED VICTIMS OF TYPHOON URSULA”

By Representatives Cayetano (Alan Peter), Romualdez (Ferdinand) and Abante
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 650

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 650.

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 hereby directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 650, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF HONORABLE NESTOR B. FONGWAN, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LONE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF BENGUET IN THE EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS.

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

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 650

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 650.

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

House Resolution No. 650 is hereby adopted.
The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 651

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 651.

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 hereby directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 651, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE COMPASSION, SOLIDARITY, SUPPORT AND EMPATHY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE INJURED, DISPLACED AND BEREAVED VICTIMS OF TYPHOON URSULA.

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

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 651

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 651.

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

House Resolution No. 651 is hereby adopted.
The Majority Leader is recognized.

RECONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL
OF H.B. NO. 2674 ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we reconsider the approval on Second Reading of House Bill No. 2674 to introduce some perfecting amendments.

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

The approval on Second Reading of House Bill No. 2674 is hereby reconsidered.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 2674
ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we consider House Bill No. 2674, contained in Committee Report No. 174, as reported out by the Committees on Transportation, and Appropriations.

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 hereby directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 2674, entitled: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A DISTRICT BRANCH OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LABO IN THE FIRST DISTRICT OF CAMARINES NORTE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

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

PERIOD OF AMENDMENTS

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

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

The period of amendments is hereby opened.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move to consider Committee amendments but there being none, I move that we consider individual amendments.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, earlier, we distributed to all the Members copies of the substitute bill to House No. 2674. Pursuant to Section 104 of our Rules, I move to amend by substitution the entire Bill as contained in Committee Report No. 174.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we consider individual amendments.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member who wishes to propose any individual amendments, I now move that we close the period of amendments.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on House Bill No. 2674, as amended, on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). There is a motion to approve House Bill No. 2674, as amended. 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. 2674, AS AMENDED, ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 2674, as amended, is hereby approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

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

It was 6:44 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:47 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session until tomorrow, January 21, Tuesday, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The session is suspended until tomorrow, January 21, Tuesday, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

It was 6:48 p.m.