



Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 18th CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

House of Representatives

BATANGAS CITY CONVENTION CENTER

Vol. 3

Wednesday, January 22, 2020

No. 34

CALL TO ORDER

At 1:34 p.m., Speaker Alan Peter “Compañero S. Cayetano called the session to order.

THE SPEAKER. The session is called to order. Please stand for the invocation to be led by Rep. Ma. Theresa V. Collantes of the Third District of Batangas.

Everybody rose for the Invocation.

INVOCATION

REP. COLLANTES. Let us put ourselves in the presence of the Lord.

Almighty God, at times such as this when we realize that the ground beneath our feet is not as solid as we had imagined, when we admire Your creation and realize it can be destroyed in seconds, we plead for Your mercy.

So many people are afraid, they wait in fear of Taal’s next eruption, they roam the streets in shock at what they see, they feel the dusty air with wails of grief.

Comfort them, Lord, in this disaster. Be their rock when the earth refuses to stand still and shelter them under Your wings when homes no longer exist.

Pierce too our hearts with compassion, those of us who watch from afar. Bless the Members of this Congress as we continue to craft laws for our countrymen.

Move us to act swiftly to work for legislation that will benefit the evacuees and once everything has normalized, the images of destruction have stopped filling the news, and our thoughts return to life’s daily rumblings, let us not forget that we are all the work of Your hands and Your love will never leave us.

All these we implore in Your holy name. Amen.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE SPEAKER. Amen.

Please remain standing for the singing of the Philippine National Anthem.

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

THE SPEAKER. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, in this historic gathering of the Members of the House of Representatives of the Eighteenth Congress, we, the Members of the House, will hear your opening remarks on this momentous occasion in demonstration of the Malasakit Policy of our Pres. Rodrigo Roa Duterte, particularly now that we are here in Batangas City, the center venue of the evacuation operations; to institute reforms and initiatives to create a Department of Disaster Resilience in the hope to stave off the number of casualties, to minimize and mitigate the damages, and to have a better, stronger Republic in pursuance of the President’s call for a safer and comfortable life for all Filipinos.

Mr. Speaker, you have the floor.

SPEECH OF SPEAKER CAYETANO

THE SPEAKER. Love God above everything and everyone with all our hearts, spirit and mind; and love others as we love ourselves.

We are here today to show Batangas, including Cavite and Laguna, that we love you as we love ourselves. Yes, there is a risk of being here, but you are facing that risk every single day. So, what is one day for your national Congress, the House of the People, to be here with you to listen and to hear you so that we may legislate effectively.

First, I would like to thank President Rodrigo Roa Duterte sa kaniyang malasakit at ilang dalaw na sa mga areas na apektado. I would like to thank DILG Secretary Año who is leading the Cabinet cluster with Sec. Delfin Lorenzana, all the first responders, Governor Mandanas who is a former colleague—nandiyan po siya sa likod—Vice Governor Leviste—I think he is also here—the nine mayors and of course, Mayor Dimacuha, and the Representatives of Batangas. Salamat po sa inyo na despite lahat ng problemang dinadanas ninyo, tumulong kayo i-organize ito and so, tulungan po ninyo kami na magbunga ng husto iyong first session held outside the Batasang Pambansa as we want to go home having a clear vision of what needs to be done,

not only in the areas of response and relief, but also in the area of rehabilitation. Thus, we will be hearing different representatives from the evacuees, barangay captains and mayors today at babaunin po natin pauwi ang kanila pong mga bilin sa atin ngayong hapon. Hindi ko po nabanggit ang lahat ng dapat pasalamatan. Kasama ang mga kapatid natin sa media na nag-risk din ng buhay nila, lalo doon sa mga nag-cover noong unang araw—salamat po sa inyo. Still, I think the best way na kami ay magpasalamat sa inyong lahat is also through concrete actions and I thank you the Deputy Speakers and of course, the Committee on Rules.

Majority Leader, you have the floor.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of our guest speakers today. With leave of the House, we shall be hearing them individually and at this point, I would like to introduce the first three who will be speaking and I will introduce them one by one. They are Barangay Capt. Jocelyn Bayanay of Alas-as, San Nicolas, Batangas; then Mayor Daniel Reyes of Agoncillo, Batangas; followed by Mayor Lester De Sagun, San Nicolas, Batangas—local officials of the LGUs under the district of Congresswoman Collantes.

Mr. Speaker, those are the first guest speakers whose presence that I move to acknowledge and we shall proceed after you affirm the acknowledgment of their presence.

THE SPEAKER. Yes, Majority Leader. So, we will now entertain a motion to convert into a Committee of the Whole so that we may hear them speak directly to us; then we will suspend the Committee of the Whole when the sponsorship speech will be given by Cong. Mario Vittorio “Marvey” A. Mariño followed by the speech of Cong. Lucy Torres-Gomez.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Yes. Mr. Speaker, for efficiency and to expedite the process, we will just merely need the leave of the House so that we may continue as a full session and we shall just introduce and we shall hear the three speakers. At this point, Mr. Speaker...

THE SPEAKER. So, there is a recommendation by the Majority Leader to allow the guests that we have today—actually, they are our hosts at tayo po ang guests—to be able to address us directly.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) If there is no objection, then we unanimously approve the suggestion/motion of the Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

the roll until after a number of our guest speakers shall have given their briefing to the House and I would like to assure the Speaker that we have an overwhelming attendance here. We have over 170 Representatives at this point and still a number of them have signified their intent to join us and are on their way here.

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

The roll call is deferred, and the Chair would like to thank each and every Member who went out of their way to make sure that he or she attends this session. Salamat po sa inyong lahat

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, we move to proceed with the brief Reference of Business and direct the Secretary General to read the resolution and the committee report for referral to the appropriate committees.

THE SPEAKER. 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 Resolution on First Reading and Committee Report, and the Speaker made the corresponding reference:

RESOLUTION

House Resolution No. 662, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO WORK WITH ALL THE CONCERNED AGENCIES TO PASS THE PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET TO EXPEDITE EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIVE ASSISTANCE TO THOSE AFFECTED BY THE TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION”

By Representatives Cayetano (Alan Peter), Romualdez (Ferdinand), Abante, Duterte, Mariño, Abu, Ermita-Buhain, Collantes, Bolilia, Santos-Recto, Tolentino, Ferrer (Luis), Barzaga and Fernandez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Government Reorganization, the Committee on Disaster Management, the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 200), re

H.B. No. 5989, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF DISASTER RESILIENCE, DEFINING ITS MANDATE, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 04, 30, 164, 195, 338, 398, 563, 885, 1151, 2001, 2133, 2192, 2451, 3023, 3084, 3142, 3182, 3214, 3245, 3348, 3459, 3490, 3542, 3913, 3999, 4301, 4313, 4401, 4577, 4709, 4710, 4800, 4844, 5335 and 5803

Sponsors: Representatives Mariño, Torres-Gomez, Salceda and Ungab

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

THE SPEAKER. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, at this juncture, with leave of the House, I move that we allow our first guest to speak before the Body about her concerns in order for us to listen to them and better understand their plight.

We call upon Barangay Chairperson Jocelyn Bayanay of Alas-as, San Nicolas, Batangas.

HON. BAYANAY. Magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat.

Ako po si Kapitana Jocelyn T. Bayanay, Bayan ng San Nicolas. Ako po ay biktima ng trahedyang ito ng Taal Volcano. Ang akin pong hinihiling sa araw na ito ay mabigyan po kami ng pansin at tulong para sa aking mga kabarangay dahil wash-out po ang lahat ng aming ari-arian at kabuhayan. Wala pong itinira, pati ang aming bahay, kahapon po, lahat po, sa nangyaring pagputok ng bulkan. Kaya ang akin pong mga kabarangay ang siya ko pong inaalala sa ngayon dahil wala po silang sisilungan at babalikan sa aming barangay.

Ako po ay narito para humingi ng tulong na pangkabuhayan, financial assistance nila at kabahayan, na kung sakali po ay maparating po ninyo ang aming kahilingan sa ating Presidente; at nandito po kayong lahat, ito ay damang-dama ko po. Kaya po nandito ako ay para maiparating ko po na ang aking mga kabarangay, sa nakikita ko po sa ngayon, ay wala pong matitirahan. Nandito po lahat kami sa evacuation center, at talaga po kami ay ni isang ari-arian, wala po kaming nadala.

Ako nga po ay nakiisa sa aking mga kabarangay. Alas nuwebe pa po ng umaga ng Linggo ay iniayos ko po lahat ng aking mga kabarangay—bata at matanda ang una kong pinalikas—para rin po ay wala po silang makitang aksidente man lang sa aking barangay. Ako po, sa totoo lang po, ang aking mga kabarangay ang

inuna ko. Nagbaybay po ako sa bawat sektor ng aking mga kagawad para pagdating po ng pagputok ng bulkan ay wala na po silang lahat. Nagpapasalamat nga po ako na nang pumutok ito ay wala pong isa mang natira sa aking barangay at aking mga kabarangay ay nailikas pong lahat at pinasambot ko po sa aming mayor na si Lester De Sagun.

Ako po, unang-una, ang hinihiling ko po sa inyo na matulungan ngayon ang aking pong 388 households, 1,800 plus na population. Ngayon po, ipinadadama ko po sa inyo ang lahat ng aming mga pighati at nararamdam sa kasalukuyan.

Ako po, ang hinihiling ko rin na ang aming kabuhayan ay huwag sana po ninyong alisin ang aming palaisdaan. Doon po nagmula—ngayon po, ang pag-aaral po ng mga bata, tumigil na rin po kaya paano po masusuportahan po ng mga bawat magulang kung wala na po kaming pangsuporta sa aming lugar—wala na po. Aalisin pa ho ninyo ang hanapbuhay namin at kami po, saan po namin dadalhin ang aming mga kabarangay.

Iyon po ay ipinadadama ko, Mr. Speaker, na sana po ito ay maparating po ninyo ang aming mga kahilingan ng aking barangay.

Marami pong salamat sa inyo at sana po, ang aming hinihiling na ito ay madinig ng ating Presidente. Maraming salamat po.

THE SPEAKER. Salamat, Kapitana Jocelyn. Makakarating po ito at narinig po ng lahat ng Kongresista ang inyong mga hinaing.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move that we allow our next guest speaker, Mayor Daniel Reyes of Agoncillo, Batangas, to address the Plenary.

Mayor Reyes, you may stand up to be recognized.

HON. REYES. Mr. Speaker, honorable Members of the Eighteenth Congress, Governor Mandanas and the provincial government officials of Batangas, fellow mayors and other municipal officials, my fellow Batangueños, good afternoon.

Agoncillo is a fourth-class municipality belonging to the Third Congressional District of the province of Batangas. Our Congresswoman is Congresswoman Maitet Collantes. It has a population of more than 44,000, land area of 49.96 square kilometers, and it is within the 14-kilometer radius danger zone of Taal Volcano.

It is primarily agricultural. Our fishermen depend on wild fishing of the famous tawilis and maliputo, as well as cultivated tilapia and bangus. We have a total of 1,500 fish cages, the second biggest, in Taal Lake. The farmers along the lake shore produce root crops like cassava.

Those in the midland and highland produce bananas, coconuts, mangoes, avocados, and other fruit-bearing trees. There are also onions and leafy vegetables which they bring to the market as far as Manila. There are also several poultry farms, contract growing for both broiler and layers. A majority have backyard piggeries. Others tend to cows and goats.

They say that Taal Volcano is one of the most difficult, if not the most difficult volcano, to study. Hence, on January 12, 2020, from Alert Level 1, it increased to Alert Level 4 in just a matter of hours. There was a festivity in one of the biggest barangays when the volcano erupted, thus, many people were not in their respective houses. Hence, they left in great haste amidst the relentless, intensified shaking of the earth, the deafening sound of erupting volcano, armed with nothing but themselves. Others remained in denial and so delayed evacuation, notwithstanding the tremors and ash fall.

In just few hours, the “Magandang Agoncillo,” as our town is known, has become deserted, devastated, and its people displaced. Our people are now scattered all over Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Quezon, Manila, even as far as Nueva Ecija. Thanks to modern technology and social media, we were able to locate most, if not a hundred percent, of our constituents.

Prior to the Taal Volcano eruption, we were all aware that the hog industry suffered losses due to swine flu. The live weight price, which used to be P105 per kilo, is now P55 per kilo. Before the eruption, the price was barely increasing but now, they were either forced to sell for so low a price or they left the hogs in what was left of our town. Both farmers and feed suppliers are left empty-handed, drowning in loans. The crops have withered, the fishes have escaped from the cages as the cages were pulled from the depths of the lake due to heavy ash fall. Pansipit River dried up and the lake receded. Fissures literally gobbled up houses, with the cracked structures creating new creeks. Out of the 44,000 populace, 9,000 are in evacuation centers and the rest succumbed to the comforting arms of relatives, friends and strangers with good heart.

In spite thereof, there are still a lot to be grateful for—there was zero casualty for the record, families have more time for each other, the bayanihan spirit emerged once more and perhaps, the rare opportunity to address this Eighteenth Congress, to name a few. However, we do not know if we could keep it so. Our people, in spite of stern warnings and the presence of armed personnel, have been sneaking in through various ways in order to feed their animals. They have been begging ceaselessly, howling for mercy, to allow them to retrieve or feed their animals. Now, I know the feeling of being heartbroken and yes, it is extremely painful.

All our 17 elementary and high schools, two private schools, day care centers, banks, and commercial

establishments have not been spared. Based on the partial record of our LGU, there are 9,000 households. Many houses collapsed, others have big cracks, but most may no longer be safe to live when we get a green light to go back. Even the existing municipal hall, the new events center, the new municipal hall under construction, may no longer be serviceable. The local government has been trying its best to improve its governance especially pertaining to revenues and public service, thus, its vision of “Magandang Agoncillo, Magandang Serbisyo Publiko” and we were consistently attaining that until this eventuality.

Exactly 10 days after that fateful day, I am here, before your Honors, exhausted, stressed and most of all, grieving for the plight of our kababayans. What keeps me going, though, is my conviction that the national government, through this Congress, has ears that listen, a heart that cares and the capacity to make things happen. I keep telling our people that what God has taken, He will replace with something better. So now, I ask, with all humility, to allow me to take home to my people one thing—not an empty promise, but hope. Let me be the carrier of light, even a spark, but a light nonetheless.

We need medical and psychological intervention to help us cope up with the situation we are now in. We need to tick off from their worries the animals they left because if we leave them, they will die, and that will add more time to the rehabilitation process. I humbly suggest that funds be allocated to retrieve these animals for government purchase or some other equally doable solutions. As for the domestic animals, they too must be rescued because they are also part of the family. Our 15,000 or so families need sturdy shelters they could go home to. They also need employment or livelihood so that they can regain their dignity. We cannot live on dole-outs for long. That will be more devastating to us because we need to provide for our families. Our pupils and students need strong schools; people need marketplaces, health centers, recreational facilities and the municipal hall that will serve as the seat of the local government.

Members of the Eighteenth Congress, we beg you to help us rebuild a more resilient, fortified and well-planned community—ang mas magandang Agoncillo.

Thank you very much.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, the next guest who will speak will be the Mayor of San Nicolas, Batangas. He will please rise.

HON. DE SAGUN. Sa bumubuo po ng Eighteenth Congress, sa pangunguna po ni Speaker Cayetano, magandang hapon.

Ang bayan po ng San Nicolas, Batangas, ay fifth-class municipality. It po ay nasa ilalim ng

Ikatlong Distrito po ng Batangas sa pangunguna po ni Congresswoman Maitet Collantes. Sa bayan po ng San Nicolas matatagpuan po ang ruins ng Taal Church na siya pong nasira noong pumutok din ang Taal Volcano way back 1754. Ang lugar po namin ay talaga pong napakaganda. Diyan po ninyo makikita ang perfect view ho ng Taal Volcano. Kita rin po ninyo diyan ang parte ng Cavite, nakikita rin ninyo ang Tagaytay. Kita rin ho diyan ang parte ng Laguna, iyon hong Mount Makiling.

Alam ninyo po, noong linggo pong iyon ng tanghali, talagang napakabigat po sa akin ang dumaang pagsubok. Ako po ay first-term lang na mayor pero nadanasan ko ho ang ganitong kahirapan. Ang amin pong bayan ng San Nicolas ay binubuo po ng 18 barangay at sa 18 pong iyan, dalawa hong barangay ang nasa volcano island. Noon pong nag-e-evacuate ang aking mga kababayan, dinala po muna namin iyan sa Agoncillo at pagkatapos from Agoncillo, dinala ho sa San Nicolas. From San Nicolas, dinala sa Taal; pagkatapos, noong nag-declare na rin po ang bayan ng Taal ng forced evacuation, nangalat na po iyan sa kung saan-saan. Kung saan po dinala ang abo ng Bulkan ng Taal, nandoon din po ang aking mga kababayan.

Alam ninyo po, ang San Nicolas po ay naka-lockdown pero bakit ho ba bumabalik ang aking mga kababayan? Bumabalik ho ang aking mga kababayan sapagkat ho nagbabakasakali sila na mapakain ang kanilang mga hayupan dahil umaasa pa rin ho sila na sa pagbalik nila ay doon pa mag-u-umpisa ang kanilang kabuhayan. Wala naman po akong kababayan na gustong bumalik sa delikadong lugar kaya laang po, ano ho ba talaga ang kanilang gagawin kapag hindi ho sila pumunta doon? Paano ho iyong pag-uumpisahan nilang buhay pagkatapos ng aming mga hinaharap nito?

Kung hindi naman sila ay babalik, baka naman po abutin din sila doon. Kaya ako po ay nakikiusap, sa pamamagitan ng Eighteenth Congress, baka ho puwede naman bilhin ng ating pamahalaan ang mga hayupan nila at kapag nabili po natin, sa pagdating ng araw at natapos na ito, baka ho puwedeng ibalik natin sa kanila at iyon din naman po ang kanilang magiging livelihood.

Alam ninyo po, iyong nag-aasikaso o nagki-cater na mga LGUs sa amin, malaki rin ho ang kinakaharap nilang problema. Isipin po natin na gagastusin na nila ang kanilang calamity fund sa hindi naman ho nila mga kababayan. Papaano din po kung sila po ay may pinagdaanan, at ngayon po ay una pa laang buwan ng taon, paano po—at huwag naman po sana—kung sila ho ay may pagdaanan simula February hanggang December na kalamidad? Kaya naman po ako po ay nakikiusap din na dapat po ang mga LGU ay matulungan din po natin sapagkat mabigat po sa kanila ang gumastos ng pera na hindi para sa kanilang mga kababayan.

Paano ho ba babangon ang katulad naming biktima ho ng pagsabog ng bulkan? Pinag-aralan ho

namin, mula sa pagkatapos ho ng problemang ito, ang pagbabalik namin sa aming bayan, na ang una hong gagawin ng aming mga kababayan ay ayusin o pandayin ang kanilang mga nasirang bahay. Buti sana ho kung sa maghapon ay maayos na nila ito. Siguro ho, pinakamahina na hong itatagal ho nito ay limang araw at sa limang araw ho na iyan na pag-aasikaso nila, bago sila bumalik sa kanilang mga trabaho, saan din po sila kukuha ng mga kakainin? Kami po, inuulit ko, ay fifth-class municipality kaya talaga hong napakabigat. Iyon hong aming dalawang barangay na nasasakupan, na nasa volcano island, wala na ho silang babalikang buhay, kabuhayan, bahay—lahat po. Pati ho itong dalawang kapitang ito, hindi ko ho alam kung ito ay may pamumunuan pa pagkatapos ho ng sakunang ito.

Kami ho ay nakikiusap din, sa pamamagitan ni Cong. Maitet Collantes, na sana ay matulungan ho ng pabahay ang mahigit dalawang libong katao ho na nasalanta doon sa volcano island. Sana rin po, sa pamamagitan ng Eighteenth Congress, na mabilis hong makabangon ang bayan ng San Nicolas sa pamamagitan ho ng pagre-rehabilitate, hindi lang sa pagmamay-aring pampubliko pero pati ho ng pribado.

Muli po, ngayon pa lamang po, sa inyong lahat, sa ngalan po ng mga mamamayan ng San Nicolas, maraming-maraming salamat po. *(Applause)*

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, the next guest who will share with us is from the tourism industry and she is a tour guide from San Nicolas, Batangas, Ms. Edwina S. Bilog.

MS. BILOG. Magandang araw po sa ating lahat. Ako po ay isa pong evacuees ng Barangay Alas-as sa laylayan po ng Bulkang Taal. Kami po ay humihingi, kami pong tatlo—ang Kapitan po ng Pulang-Bato, si Kapitana po ng Alas-as at ako—at kaming tatlo ay nandito po para po kami ay humingi sa inyo ng tulong, na kami po ay inyo pong matulungan na sana po kami ay mabigyan po ng kabuhayan, unang-una po iyong pangingsda at saka po sa tourism. Sana po ay inyo po kaming matulungan ng maipagpatuloy po namin ang hanapbuhay sa lugar po namin ng Alas-as.

Ako po ay taos-pusong pong nalapit po sa inyo na nawa po kami ay inyong tulongan. Ang amin pong mga anak ay hindi po namin kayang mapag-aral kung hindi po kami mangingsda at hindi po kami maghahanapbuhay po doon. Kami po ay handa—kumbaga, ang amin pong pagkatao ay, inaamin ko po sa inyo, hanggang doon lamang po ang kaya po namin. Sana po ay inyo po kaming tulongan.

Ako po ay naghihimok po sa mahal na Presidente, kay Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, sa inyo pong mga taga-Kongreso, na nawa po naman ang amin pong saloobin ay inyo pong pakinggan at sana po itong aming sinasabi at hinihiling po namin sa inyo ay inyo

po kaming mapagbigyan, alang-alang po naman sa aming mga anak para po may kinabukasan po naman ang aming mga anak.

Ako po ay nagpapasalamat ngayon—at ngayon pa lamang po ako ay nagpapasalamat po—kung kami po ay inyong pagbibigyan. Salamat po.

THE SPEAKER. Majority Leader, we would just like to assure Mayor Reyes, Mayor De Sagun, si Kapitana, and Ma'm Edwina na kumikilos na iyong national government. In fact, ang Department of Agriculture ay may programa na sa pagbili noong mga livestock, and all your Congressmen and Congresswomen, especially Congresswoman Collantes, have been meeting everyone. So, iyong buong puwersa ng Kongreso, Congress itself, the 300-plus individuals, the Congressional Spouses Foundation, the Lady Legislators, all blocs from Northern Luzon to the Mindanao blocs, are willing to help.

Alam naming hindi ito madali, iyong hihingin namin sa inyo, hihingin lang po naming sa inyo iyong kaunting numbers or information kasi, halimbawa, alam namin na pati iyon natabunan, hindi ba? I mean, the easiest is, ilang bahay iyan, e may record naman kayo sa munisipyo. But, for example, sa livestock, it will be easier for us to use our resources, that of Congress combined with the national government, kung malalaman natin na, for example, sa San Nicolas, there are 100 individuals, 50 of them have four o apat na baboy, three of them have ganito—hindi ba? So, we can also use the help of media para mag-match ng donor doon sa tao.

So, siguro all throughout our session today, ito lang ang gusto kong i-repeat—we will be here to help, commitment namin ito, but help us with the information we need para mas madali and it does not have to be complete. Kung sinong kapitan, nandito yata ang 15 o 16 na ABC Presidents ng mga pinakaapektadong lugar. Sinong mauna na mayroong activity, kahit partial, then we can start helping, but we do understand na pati iyong sa livestock, halimbawa, hanggang makabalik kayo sa lugar ninyo, hindi ganoon kadali iyon.

So, the Majority Leader will continue, but let me just assure all of you po na we are listening to you today pero may kumikilos na diyan. Personally, narinig kong magsalita si Secretary Dar at ina-announce na niya ang mga ito. Maybe, Congresswoman Collantes, what we can do is ask the DA and other agencies like Tourism, and DSWD, na magkaroon ng meeting sa mga officials nila para kung ano iyong guidelines at paanong ma-implement kaagad. Kasi naririnig nila sa radyo, napapanood sa TV, pero mukhang hindi bumababa sa level ng local officials.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5989 ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would like to pause for our guest speakers. Under the Calendar of Business, I move that we consider House Bill No. 5989, contained in Committee Report No. 200, as reported out by the Committees on Government Reorganization, Disaster Management, Ways and Means, and Appropriations.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 5989, entitled: AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF DISASTER RESILIENCE, DEFINING ITS MANDATE, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

THE SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate.

THE SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano) Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the period of sponsorship is opened.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). I move that the Chairperson of the Committee on Government Reorganization, our host Congressman today, the Hon. Mario Vittorio “Marvey” A. Mariño, from the Fifth District of Batangas, be recognized to begin sponsorship of the measure.

THE SPEAKER. (Rep. Cayetano). The Representative of the Fifth District, the Honorable Mariño, the Chairperson of the Committee on Government Reorganization, is hereby recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. MARIÑO

REP. MARIÑO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Speaker Alan Peter “Compañero” Cayetano, Deputy Speakers,

* Copies of the bill were distributed to the members earlier. Section 53, Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives provides that “[a] bill or joint resolution on Second Reading shall be read in full unless copies thereof have been distributed to the Members.”

Majority Leader, my dear colleagues, our Governor, Dodo Mandanas, Vice Governor Mark Leviste, members of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, our City Mayor, our members of the Sangguniang Panglunsod ng Batangas, guests, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Batangas City. Unang-una, maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, at dito ninyo ginanap ang isang makasaysayang sesyon na ito.

Kami po ay natutuwa at mukha pong nagkaroon kami ng pag-asa na muling makakabangon ang aming mga kababayan. As the Chairman of the Committee on Government Reorganization, I am honored to sponsor Committee Report No. 200, on House Bill No. 5989, AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF DISASTER RESILIENCE, DEFINING ITS MANDATE, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

This is a joint effort of the Committees on Government Reorganization and Disaster Management and also the distinguished proponents of the 35 bills which were consolidated. I would like to thank also the Chairperson of the Committee on Disaster Management, Hon. Lucy Torres-Gomez, and also all the heads of the technical working committee for consolidating the 35 Bills.

The 35 bills which are entitled, AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF DISASTER RESILIENCE, DEFINING ITS MANDATE AND POWERS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, is included in today's business.

Nagagalak po kaming mga Batangueño, lalong-lalo na po sa inyo, Mr. Speaker, na isinagawa ang ating session na ito. With the recent calamities that hit the Philippines, ito po ay isang napakaimportanteng departamento na maki-create.

Mr. Speaker, let me just give the objectives of this Department of Disaster Resilience (DDR) Bill:

1. To establish a primary government agency responsible for leading, organizing and managing the national effort to reduce disaster risk, prepare for and respond to disasters, recover and rehabilitate and build forward better after the occurrence of disasters;
2. To oversee and coordinate the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the disaster and climate resilience plans, programs, projects and activities;
3. To provide leadership in the continuous development of strategic and systematic approaches to disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, and rehabilitation;
4. To provide a clear and comprehensive direction in the implementation of plans, programs and projects to reduce the risk of natural hazards;
5. To create a government agency to institutionalize the policies, structures, coordination mechanisms and programs on disaster risk reduction management and

harmonize policies on climate change, sustainable development and environmental management;

6. To enable the government to quickly respond, prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate disaster and climate resilience plans and programs; and

7. To ensure that the government upholds the welfare of the people, particularly, the vulnerable sectors of society, especially the women, children, older persons, persons with disability, urban poor, indigenous people and providing citizens a safer, adaptive, resilient community.

We took note that the importance of carefully designing an organizational structure for the DDR shall function effectively and realize the legislative intent of the Bill.

Ito na nga po siguro, Mr. Speaker, ang hinihiling, hindi lamang ng lalawigan ng Batangas, manapa ay ng buong Pilipinas. Sa ganoon po ay mas lalo pong madali ang hinaing ng aming mga mayors na nandidito ngayon kung sino po ang kakausapin na departamento, isa lamang po iyong Secretary na kanilang lalapitan at matutugunan na po ang ating mga problema.

Kami po dito sa Batangas, alam po natin na matatampang ang mga Batangueño, matitikas at magigiting, pero kapag panahon po na pumuputok ang bulkan, mabilis din po naman kaming tumakbo, lalong-lalo na kapag may mga earthquake.

Alam ko rin hong matatampang at magigiting ang mga naririto ngayon sa Kongreso. Hindi naman po kayo pupunta rito kung hindi po kayo matatampang dahil may nagbabanta pong puputok ang bulkan, pero sana mabibilis din po kayong tumakbo.

Pero dito po sa amin sa Batangas, hindi po namin tinatakbuhan kailanman ang aming mga responsibilidad kaya po kasama po ako. Bagamat hindi po masyadong tinamaan ang Lungsod ng Batangas, kinukupkop po namin ang mga bayan na naapektuhan ng pagputok ng bulkan.

Ako po ay humihingi rin ng tulong, kung kinakailangan pong tiklop-tuhod kaming lumapit ay gagawin po namin.

Ako po ay natutuwa, Mr. Speaker, na kayo ay nagpunta rito upang marinig mismo sa aming mga kababayan na naapektuhan ng bulkan ang kanilang mga tinig. Ang akin pong mga kasamahan ay naa-appreciate po ang pagpunta ninyo rito. Kung kami lamang pong anim na Congressmen ang pupunta doon sa session at kami ay mananawagan, mas maganda po talagang marinig ninyo ang mga tinig nila. Kami po ay tuwang-tuwa at nagkaroon po kami ng pag-asa, lalo na po iyong mga evacuees, iyong amin pong mga mayor, at nakita ninyo po naman. Iyon naman pong mga Batangueño, kapag napangakuan ay tuwang-tuwa na, pero kapag natupad naman po ay lalo pong mas magaling.

Kami po ay umaasa, bilang nagkakaisang Batangueño na kami ay inyong tutulungan. Ang CALABARZON

naman po ay second sa NCR sa contribution sa GDP ng buong Pilipinas. Ako po ay nagpapasalamat sa mga lugar na kumupkop sa aming mga evacuees. Alam ko po iyong Laguna, Quezon at Tagaytay, sila po ay—ganoon po kabilis ang mga Batangueñong tumakbo, nakaabot po doon sa mga lugar na mga malalayo. Kaya kami po ay nagpapasalamat sa inyong tulong. Pero higit sa lahat, sa rehabilitation po na gagawin ngayon, kami po ay umaasa na mayroon pang pondo at sila po ay umaasa. Kaya po kami ay nananawagan, Mr. Speaker.

Ito pong Department of Disaster Resilience ay isang long-term solution na isa po kayo sa author at napakadami pong authors at sponsors nito. Ito po ay magandang panukala na makakatulong hindi lamang ho sa lungsod ng Batangas, manapa ay at sa buong Pilipinas.

Alam ninyo po kanina ay naluluha po ako. Noong pumutok po ang bulkan, naluluha po kami dahil sa sinapit ng aming mga kababayan. Pero noong matapos po, nakita namin na bumubuhos ang tulong. Lalo po akong napaluha dahil marami pa palang tao ang tumutulong. Mas marami palang may mabubuting puso kaysa doon sa mga nananamantala. Kaya sa tingin ko po ay makakabangon ang Batangas. Makakabangon po ang mga Batangueño sa tulong po ninyo at sa tulong po natin. Kaya iminumungkahi ko po, Mr. Speaker, na sana sa madaling panahon ay maaprubahan itong ating Department of Disaster Resilience. Ako po ay nakahanda na depensahan ito sa plenaryo sa mga darating na panahon. Pero po kung ang tanong po ay iyong budget, iyong budget po na gugugulin dito, siguro po ang akin pong kasagutan diyan ay kahit magkano po ang budget na ilagay dito, iyon naman po ay sapat at hindi po siya puwedeng katumbas ng buhay ng ating mga kababayan na maililigtas. Hindi lang po ating mga kababayan, kung hindi, kapag mayroon pong departamento na umaaruga sa ating mga Pilipino, ay mas na-wa-warningan pa tayo, at mas lalo pong resilient ang ating mga kababayan. Kahit magkano po iyang budget na iyan, sana po ay mabigyan ng pondo. Malaki po ang pag-asa namin Mr. Speaker, muli po, kami po dito, sa ngalan po ng aking mga kasamahang anim na Representante ng House of Representatives, kami po ay very appreciative na kayo ay nandiditong lahat. Kung kinakailangan ninyo pong mag-session dito buwan-buwan ay kami po ang bahala. Ito po ay puwede niyong gamitin. Ako na ho ang bahala sa Mayor ng lungsod na ito (*Laughter*) at sagot ko na po iyon.

Mr. Speaker, maraming, maraming salamat. Again, I wish to thank everybody at sana po maaprubahan ang ating panukalang ito.

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. Majority Leader, before that, in behalf of the Eighteenth Congress, nagpapasalamat

kami sa iyo, Honorable Mariño, hindi lang sa Bill na ito, at dahil sa sobra ang iyong suporta. Bakit po? Ang Majority Leader at ang head po ng ating Disaster Management and Resilience Committee na si Majority Leader, Hon. Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, at si Hon. Lucy Torres-Gomez, ay beterano ng Yolanda. Ang nag-second the motion na pumunta tayo dito, si Deputy Speaker Aurelio “Dong” D. Gonzales, Jr. kasama po ang mga Kongresista ng Pampanga, ay beterano din po ng pagputok ng Mount Pinatubo, ano? Ang mga tinamaan naman po sa inyo ng Ursula, ang mga Davao Congressmen po na tinamaan po ng earthquake ay nandito po sila. They all understand what we need. Congressman Mariño, we know that you have not only spent so much time on this. Iyong OFW Department or Overseas Filipino Workers’ Department, together with Hon. Joey Sarte Salceda, Hon. Ron P. Salo, and Hon. Enrico A. Pineda, alam namin na talagang tinatrabaho ninyo iyan, and then iyong Department on Water.

On behalf of the Eighteenth Congress, nagpapasalamat kami, not only for your hosting, pero sa ginugugol mo dito. And let me assure all Members of Congress, given the right circumstance, meaning, hindi tayo makakagulo, and the logistics are in place, kapag may nangyari sa lugar ninyo, the leadership of the House is more than willing to go there and to do something, hindi ba? But in this particular case, the Congressmen and Congresswomen of CALABARZON made it clear to us that it is a welcome development that we held the session here.

Let me assure each and every Member of Congress here that malakas na tayo sa relief at saka sa response pero mahina pa talaga sa rehab. So far, sa tatlo—sa apat natin na napakinggan iyon ang kanilang inaalaala na pag nag-fade na o pag meron nang ibang kalamidad baka makalimutan iyong walang bahay, iyong nawalan ng hanapbuhay at iyong mga bata na natigil sa pag-aaral. But let me assure our mayors, our ABC Presidents, our councilors—Governor Mandanas, you were in Congress for some time also, alam ninyo naman po na if institutional iyong change, that will guarantee na kahit wala na tayong lahat ay tuloy-tuloy ito.

So, Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION
OF H.B. NO. 5989

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 5989.

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

The consideration of House Bill No. 5989 is hereby suspended.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, again with leave of the House, I move that we allow the next set of guests to speak before the Body about their concerns.

THE SPEAKER. Before that, Majority Leader, may I kindly request Deputy Speaker Ranie Abu to continue presiding so I may also listen in front.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Deputy Speaker Ranie Abu is recognized.

At this juncture, the Speaker relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Ranie "Ranie" E. Abu.

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce the next guest, Karen Olvina of Agoncillo, Batangas.

Please rise.

MS. OLVINA. Good afternoon Speaker Cayetano and the rest of the Members of the Eighteenth Congress of the Philippines as well as the municipal mayors present.

January 12, 2020 was supposed to be a festive day for the people of Coral na Munti, one of the 21 barangays of our beloved town, Agoncillo. It was the feast of the patron saint, Santo San Gregorio. In my case, it was just a lazy afternoon. Ako po ay mag-isa lamang sa bahay dahil ang mga kasama ko po ay namimiyesta nang ako po ay biglang nagulantang ng isang tawag. At sinabi po na kailangan ko nang umalis dahil sumabog na daw po ang Taal Volcano. I actually did not believe what I heard. I thought it was fake news until I heard the sound of vehicles rushing to the streets and horns honking like crazy. Shortly, the tremors began and the ashes fell. I am grateful to be standing here in front of you today. It is only by the grace of God that I and thousands of my fellow Agoncillians are alive and safe.

Napakahirap po ng aming sitwasyon. Ang amin pong mga kababayan, humigit-kumulang na 44,000, at ang amin pong mga empleyado sa LGU at ang aming mga JO personnel were all displaced. Napakasakit po na sa isang iglap nagbago ang aming buhay. Marami po sa amin, including myself, ay maaaring wala ng tahanan at kabuhayang babalikan. Nagdurugo po ang aking puso para sa aming mga kababayan na itinataya ang kanilang buhay sa pagbalik sa aming bayan kahit mahigpit pong ipinagbabawal mapakain lamang ang kanilang naiwang alagang hayop at mailigtas kung anumang kakaunting natira sa kanilang ari-arian. Dati-rati napapanood ko lamang sa telebisyon ang ganitong mga eksena. Hindi ko po inaasahan na darating ang araw na ako mismo ay makakaranas ng ganito. Ang daming tanong sa aking

isipan: Kailan kaya matatapos ito? Saan at paano kami magsisimula?

Siguro po ay napapanood ninyo sa telebisyon ang extent ng devastation sa aming bayan. Agoncillo is practically "ground zero" now. Pero may kasabihan nga po tayong "every cloud has a silver lining." Today, we may be gripped with sadness and uncertainty, but we know and we believe that this too, shall pass, and something good will come out of this. Our struggles are indeed overwhelming but our God is greater. He said in His word that he will never leave us nor forsake us. And we can hold on to that promise.

This past week, we witnessed the outpouring of help from our kababayans. Napakarami pa rin po talagang mabubuti ang puso. Maraming nagbukas ng tahanan, hindi lamang sa kaibigan at kamag-anak, ngunit kahit sa mga estranghero. Ako po mismo, nitong nakaraang sampung araw, ay palipat-lipat ng tirahan, ngunit isang kaibigan po ang nagbukas ng kaniyang tahanan para sa akin. Pagdating ko po kanina sa Batangas Sports Complex, talagang ako po ay napaluha at nakita ko po ang katayuan ng aking mga kababayan sa evacuation center. Ako po ay napasambit ng panalangin at nagpasalamat po ako sa Panginoon na kahit ganito po ang sitwasyon ay may bubong pa rin po sa aking ulunan at ako po ay may hinihigaan rin pong kumportable pa rin po naman. Pero nagdurugo po ang puso ko sa mga kababayan kong nasa evacuation centers.

These past few days, talaga pong napakaraming nagbukas ng tahanan, nagbigay ng damit, pagkain, gamot, tulong pinansiyal at kung ano-ano pa. Patuloy lamang na laging may pag-asa. At alam ko na sa mga susunod na araw ay marami pang puso ang kakaugnayin ng Panginoon para tumulong sa ating bayan ng Batangas at sa tulong po ng bawat isa na nandito sa bulwagang ito.

Kami po sa aming bayan ay humihingi at kumakatok sa inyong puso na sa abot ng inyong makakaya ay nawa po ay ma-facilitate po lahat ng possible assistance na puwede pong ibigay sa amin pong bayan at gayundin po sa aming mga karatig-bayan kagaya ng bayan ng San Nicolas. Patuloy po tayong manalangin at manalig. We will rise above the ashes. Babangon ang Agoncillo. Babangon tayong mga Batangueño.

Salamat po. *(Applause)*

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, our next guest resource person is Barangay Chairman Ramon Gamu from Pulang-Bato, San Nicolas, Batangas.

Please rise.

HON. GAMO. Mr. Speaker, sa inyo pong lahat, magandang hapon po.

Bilang isa pong Punong Barangay ng Barangay Pulang-Bato, ako po ay kumakatok sa inyong mga puso hindi lang po sa ating bansa, sa lahat pong bansa, kumakatok po ako na kami po ay inyong tulongan, ang Barangay Pulang-Bato, San Nicolas, Batangas.

Dalawa lang po ang aking mensahe. Una po, ang mensahe ko po ay tungkol po sa aming mga paghahanapbuhay sa Barangay Pulang-Bato. Unang-una po, ang amin pong pag-aalaga ng tilapia sa fish cages po. Sana huwag ninyo pong alisin iyon dahil doon lamang po kami nabubuhay. At ang isa pa po, sa panghuhuli po ng aming tawilis sa Barangay Pulang-Bato din po. Sana po huwag ninyo iyong alisin at doon lang din po kami nabubuhay, sa amin pong mga hanapbuhay na iyon. At kung sakali pong iyon ay ibibigay ninyo sa amin, na huwag ninyo po kaming pagbawalan, iyon po ang madaling magbabangon sa amin pong barangay—iyon pong aming hanapbuhay na iyon. Sana po, maunawaan ninyo ang aming barangay. Nakita ko po ang aming barangay na sadya pong tabon na tabon po. Lahat po ng bahay, mga hayop, marami din pong namatay. Kaya po ako ay humihingi ng tulong sa inyo na kami po ay inyong tulongan, ang Barangay Pulang-Bato.

Ang pangalawa naman po, sana po sa dami ng aming kabarangay, na alam na po naman ninyo na wala na po silang babalikan sa aming barangay, ay sana po magkaroon naman po sila ng masisilungan kahit sa mga kabila pong dagat katulad po ng bayan ng San Nicolas. Sana po magkaroon po sila ng matutuluyan doon. Sa tulong po ninyo, aasahan po namin sa Barangay Pulang-Bato na kami po ay inyong tulongan.

Maraming-maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). For the information of everybody, iyon pong Barangay Pulang-Bato at Barangay Alas-as, iyan po iyong mga barangay na naroon po mismo sa bulkan, doon ho sa mismong isla ng bulkan.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F). Mr. Speaker, the next guest resource person is ABC President Aileen R. Ocampo of San Luis, Batangas.

HON. OCAMPO. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Alan Peter Cayetano, sa ating Presiding Officer and Deputy Speaker, Hon. Raneo Abu, Members of the House of Representatives, our dearest Governor Dodo Mandanas, Vice Governor Mark Leviste, and Sangguniang Panlalawigan members, city and municipal officers, municipal mayors, good afternoon po.

Ako po si Aileen Ocampo, ABC President po ng San Luis. Sadya pong malungkot at nakakapanghina ang nararanasan po namin dito sa Batangas.

So, ang San Luis po is a fourth class municipality, recipient po ng mga evacuees ng aming mga katabing

bayan. Katabing-katabi lang po kami ng Lemery at Taal. Sa provincial plan po ng disaster, isa po kami sa mga recipient. So, imagine po ninyo, ang dumating po na mga evacuees po sa amin ay, still counting po, 15,000 na po. Kami po, ang population po namin is 35,000 po and ang amin pong San Luis is almost 3,000 hectares lang po at 1.96 of Batangas' total area po.

So, ngayon po, noong day one, kami pong mga kapitan, automatic po nagpapa-convene po at ang kaniya-kaniyang mga barangay ay naka-ready po pagdating sa mga ganitong kalamidad. So, noong day one po, nagdating ang mga evacuees from different bayan at sobra pong nakakalungkot dahil ayaw ng mga evacuees na pumunta sa mga evacuation centers dahil ayaw po nilang makita at maranasan iyong kanilang nakikita sa mga social media po. So, ang ginawa po ng mga barangay captain, sabi po nila nakakaawa po naman sila kaya ang mga barangay po ay nagtulong-tulong na kalingain po sa kani-kanila pong mga barangay.

Sa amin po sa San Luis, 26 po ang barangay namin, lahat po ay may mga evacuees from different bayan. So, coordinated po kami sa aming MSWDO. Sa pangunguna po ng aming mayor, lahat po ng tulong ay ibinigay po namin.

Day one, siyempre po, ano pong aasahan natin sa isang fourth class municipality? Nagpakain po kami, tulong-tulong po ang mga taga-San Luis, at buong puso po naming silang tinanggap bilang bisita at hindi lang bilang evacuees. So, siyempre po, second day, thousands na po ang nadating. Nagdating naman po ang relief goods galing po sa mga private individuals at groups. Pero, ang mga barangay po namin ay sadya pong malalayo pero nakakarating naman po ang kanilang relief goods. Pero, imagine po natin, three times a day po namin silang pakakainin. Sa isang barangay po, minsan isang box ng de lata ay ubos po agad iyon sa isang kainan lamang po. Dumarating nga po iyong relief goods pero mostly po na dumarating ay mga damit at mga tubig po. Enough na po kami sa tubig at mga damit dahil sila po ay naglalaba rin po at may mga dala rin pong damit. So, ayaw pong tanggapin ng mga evacuees iyong mga damit po at tubig dahil may sapat po kaming tubig. Ang pagkain po ang lagi po naming hinihingi pati bigas.

Pero, day one, day two, day three, day four, ako po hands on po na nagre-receive ng mga dumadating na mga tao. Siyempre po iyong mga dumadating pong mga tao, siyempre po iyong mga donor po iba-iba rin ang mga ugali—may mga mababait, may mga nag-a-anonymous, may mga humble, may mga edukado, mayroon ding mga mayayabang. Pero kami pong mga tumatanggap sa San Luis, buong-puso pa rin po kaming nakikipag-usap pa rin sa kanila.

Pero, minsan po, sa social media, kaming mga nanunungkulan, sobra pong apektado dahil imbes na tumulong po sila, kaunti pong mali, nai-post ng sinuman pong mga tao doon, napapaniwalaan na po agad. Ang

relief goods po ay nakakarating sa bawat evacuees. Sobra pong spoiled at inaalagaan po namin ang mga evacuees. Sa mga mayor po na mga naapektuhan, huwag po kayong maniniwala sa mga social media po. Alagang-alaga po namin ang mga evacuees. So, ang mga naging problema po ngayon, ang mga residente po namin sa San Luis, sila din po ay apektado, kami rin po ay apektado dahil ang kabuhayan po ng aming mga kababayan, kabarangay ay sa mga katabing bahay po na naka-lock down. So, wala rin po silang mga hanapbuhay. Kaya ang sabi po nila, “Paano naman kaming mga residente? Ang evacueess naaalagaan ninyo nga, paano naman kaming bumoto sa inyo?” Lahat po ay sa amin pong mga—ang amin pong kalalagyan ngayon sa San Luis ay sobra pong hirap tulad din po sa nangyayari sa mga tumatanggap ng evacuees na mga towns po, mga kapitan na nag-aalaga sa mga evacuees. Sasabihin po nila na itinatago po namin ang mga dumarating na relief goods. Hindi po, dahil yung mismong nagbibigay po ng mga donasyon ay gusto po nilang direkta.

Dahil sa mga nangyari po noong mga nakaraan, nakikita sa social media, wala po silang tiwala sa mga nanunungkulan. Pero kung doon po sila sa aming kalalagyan, alam po nila at kita po nila kung ano iyong totoo. So, sa mga nandito pong mga media po, tulungan ninyo rin po kami na sana huwag maniwala na ang mga tumatanggap ng mga evacuees ay hindi po ibinibigay sa mga evacuees nila. Mayroon pong mga evacuees na marunong din pong manloko at magsinungaling. Iba’t iba pong tao ang amin pong kinakaharap. Iyong mga dala nilang mga ibinibigay na relief goods ay itinatakbo po nila sa kanila pong mga bayan dahil inilalagay sa kanilang mga bahay pagka binubuksan po ng six to 10 o’clock ang mga bayan na kapitbahay po namin.

So, sa inyo po, hinihiling ko po na sana ang katulad po namin sa San Luis na fourth class municipality ay bigyan pansin din po ninyo dahil kami rin ay apektado dahil katabing-katabi lang po kami ng mga bayan na naka-lockdown eh, doon po ang kinukuhanan ng mga hanapbuhay ng amin pong mga kababayan.

So, iyon po ang aming hiling sa atin pong Presidente, sa ating mga nandirito pong Congressmen, na sana ang fourth class municipality na katulad namin at tumatanggap ng evacueess ay isali ninyo sa mga tutulungan po ninyo.

Salamat po. (*Applause*)

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, our next guest resource person is Merthel Evardome, CESO V, Schools Division Superintendent of Batangas province.

MS. EVARDOME. Magandang tanghali po sa ating lahat, sa atin pong honorable Speaker, Alan

Peter Cayetano, to the honorable men and women of the House of Representatives, sa atin pong ginagalang na gobernador, Governor Dodo Mandanas, and kay Vice Governor Mark Leviste, at sa bumubuo po ng Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng probinsiya ng Batangas, kasama po ang ating mga iginagalang na mayor ng buong probinsiya ng Batangas. Magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat.

Ako po ang kumakatawan sa Department of Education dito po sa lalawigan ng Batangas—Merthel Evardome po from Quezon province.

Sa panig po ng DepEd, ang mga mag-aaral po namin mula sa locked down municipalities at saka po doon sa mga kalapit na bayan ay 50,975. Ang mga bata pong ito, kasama ang kanilang mga magulang, ay inaalagaan at tinanggap po ng halos 20 munisipalidad dito po sa Batangas province. Ang eskuwelahan po namin na wala pang evacueess ay iyon na lang pong nasa Lobo at Tingloy. Pero, ang mga taga-Lobo po, sa aming pagkakaalam, ay mayroon na rin pong inaalagaan o kinakalinga na mga evacuees mula sa iba’t ibang bayan.

Dito po sa 21 bayan na tinitirahan po ng ating mga evacuees, mayroon po tayong 219 schools—219 schools na mayroon pong mga evacuees—at ang total na classroom po na nagagamit ng ating mga kasamahan ay 2,558.

Pinag-aaralan po namin, at sa ngayon po at noon pang nakaraang linggo ay pinag-aaralan namin kung papaano namin maipagpapatuloy ang pag-aaral ng aming mga mag-aaral na naapektuhan po ng sakuna.

Sa amin pong pag-aaral at naibigay na rin po sa amin ng aming Central Office, mayroon po palang Republic Act No. 10821 or the Children’s Emergency Relief and Protection Act of 2015, mandating the local government units to identify locations for and establish safe inclusive child-friendly and gender sensitive evacuation centers para po hindi lang po sa ating mga mag-aaral, kundi para po sa ating mga kababayan na rin po.

Ngayon po, may mga bayan po tayo dito sa Batangas katulad po ng Bauan na halos buong eskuwelahan po ay inookupa ng ating mga kasamahan o ng atin pong mga evacueess. Kaya sa amin po sa DepEd, humihiling po kami sa atin pong local government executives, sa atin pong mga mayor, dahil nakalagay po dito sa Republic Act No. 10821 na ang unang-una pong puwede nating gawing evacuation center ay ang mga available na sports complex, kung anuman po gymnasiums, kahulihan po ang paaralan. At kapag po sa paaralan, kung mayroon din pong mga gymnasiums na puwedeng pagdalhan, doon po muna dadalhin, huli po ang mga classroom. Naaawa po ako sa akin pong mga narinig. Parang sabi ko nga po, parang hindi namin kayang paalisin sa aming mga eskuwelahan ang aming mga kasamahan at ang ating mga kababayan. Pero wala rin pong kalamidad ang puwedeng makapagpatigil sa pag-aaral ng ating mga anak.

Kaya humihingi po kami ng tulong sa atin pong local government executives na kung mayroon pong available na space para po mailipat o maalagaan natin ang atin pong kasamahan at kababayang evacuees. Sana po ay tulungan ninyo kami at handa po kaming makipag-coordinate sa inyong lahat. Sa ngayon po, ang Central Office po at ang Regional Office ay ina-identify po namin o na-identify na po namin ang ating mga mag-aaral na nasa evacuation centers at mayroon na rin po kaming mga hakbang upang maipagpatuloy po nila ang kanilang pag-aaral.

Nais ko rin pong ipaalam sa lahat na kahit po nasaan ang ating mga mag-aaral, kung saan man po silang evacuation center nakatira, sila po ay tuturuan ng amin pong mga guro at mga personnel na nandoon din po sa mga paaralang binabanggit po natin. Kung halimbawa man po na masikip at mayroon pa nga po tayong evacuees, nakikiusap po kami sa inyo pong lahat sa tulong po ninyo at sa aming local government executives na tulungan kami upang mailipat po namin sila, pero huwag naman po doon sa mga lugar na magiging mapanganib din po sa kanilang lahat.

Ang alternative delivery mode po ay gagamitin po namin. Alam ko po, Governor Mandanas, na laan pong mabigyan ang atin pong learners ng mga nararapat na school supplies upang matulungan po silang makabalik sa paaralan. Sa ngayon po, sa inyo pong lahat, sa atin pong mga iginagalang na Congressmen at Congresswomen, sa atin pong local government executives, sana po ay makausap namin kayo sa tulong po ng aming mga district supervisor upang mapag-usapan po natin kung saan po natin puwedeng mailagay pero ligtas pa rin ang atin pong kasamahang evacuees mula sa mga apektadong munisipalidad.

Iyon lang po at marami pong salamat sa inyong lahat. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Bago ko i-recognize ang Majority Leader natin, Ma'am, si Speaker Alan Cayetano ay nagkaroon na rin ng instructions sa amin na pag-aralan ang pagsasabatas ng isang permanent evacuation center Bill para halos lahat ng bayan, lahat ng local government units ay magkaroon na iyan. At diyan na rin napasok iyong ating Department na itatayo, ang Department of Disaster Resilience, para nga pagtuunan ng pansin na iyan.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Today, we are here in Batangas City at the insistence of our House Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano to be closer to the people affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano, to witness firsthand their situation, express our malasakit, and listen to their immediate needs and concerns.

The Members of the House have filed several measures which seek to provide aid, relief, resettlement,

rehabilitation, livelihood, development, and social programs and services to our beloved Batangueños, Caviteños and other communities adversely affected by the Taal Volcano eruption.

With this, Mr. Speaker, I now move that we open the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Before I act on that motion, Majority Leader, may I first recognize, for the benefit of everybody here, the Members of the Eighteenth Congress from Batangas province.

Mangyari lang tumayo po iyong mga kasamahan ko dito sa Batangas province na kasamahan ko sa Kongreso: from the First District, Cong. Eileen Ermita-Buhain; *(Applause)* ngayon lamang po—ayan, nariyan po siya, from the Third District, Cong. Maitet Collantes, ang naapektuhan nang todo-todo *(Applause)* ang mga bayan; from the Fourth District, Cong. Lianda Bolilia; *(Applause)* from the Fifth District, ang ating host, Cong. Marvey Mariño; *(Applause)* and from the Sixth District, ang atin pong Deputy Speaker Vilma Santos-Recto; *(Applause)* at ako po iyong sa Second District of Batangas. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

PRIVILEGE HOUR

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move again that we open the Privilege Hour.

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Lucy Torres-Gomez, my kababayan, a fellow Leyteño and, as the Speaker said earlier, a veteran of typhoon Yolanda, from whom we have learned so much. We are here in Batangas City for we are direct beneficiaries of the kindness, the hospitality, the generosity, the malasakit of the Batangueños for Batangas province and Batangas City, where the main ports, relief and rehabilitation efforts were launched.

Mr. Speaker, we would like to recognize Cong. Lucy Torres-Gomez, the Chairperson of the Committee on Disaster Management, to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Chairperson of the Committee on Disaster Management, Hon. Lucy Torres-Gomez, a veteran of typhoon Yolanda and Ormoc flooding, is recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. TORRES-GOMEZ

REP. TORRES-GOMEZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano; Deputy Speakers; Majority Leader Ferdinand Martin Romualdez; District Representatives of the affected communities, namely: Deputy Speaker Ranie Abu, Rep. Lianda Bolilia, Rep. Eileen Ermita-Buhain, Rep. Marvey Mariño, Rep. Vilma Santos-Recto, Rep. Bambol Tolentino, and Rep. Ma. Theresa Collantes; esteemed colleagues of the Eighteenth Congress, officials from the different local government units, and from the different government agencies, friends from the media, stakeholders, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

I would like to break down my very short speech into three parts, beginning with why we are holding a session here today; number two, giving you a quick rundown of what we have done so far; and number three, laying out the general overview of what we plan to take on as an institution to address this painful part of Taal's and our country's history moving forward.

Why are we here today? We are public servants and public service is essentially a relationship between the government and its people. In every relationship, dialogue is very important and so we are here today, bound by a sense of duty and responsibility, yes, but also fueled by compassion and empathy, to listen to the stakeholders, the ones most affected by this tragedy, because only by way of dialogue, by opening the lines of communication, and by being accessible will we be able to have a better grasp of the real situation on the ground.

Pakikiramay is also at the core of humanity and is a very Filipino trait and that, I am sure, you will all agree with me when I say that the best of humanity shines in the worst of times. Sa mga pinakamadilim na panahon nangingibabaw ang angking kabutihan ng tao, ang likas na kagandahang-loob at kabaitan ng mamamayang Pilipino.

To the residents of Taal, all those displaced and disrupted by this tragedy, as the Speaker always says, that time and again, we are the House of the People. May our presence today, full force as you can all see, be a gentle but firm reminder that we are here for you. We empathize with you. Alam namin ang pinagdadaanan din ninyo. Naiintindihan at ramdam namin ang hirap at pangangamba ninyo. In the same breath, we assure you that the government is working with you and for you.

Second, what have we done so far? Individually and collectively, we have helped significantly. Yes, we are legislators, and though we need not function as first responders because the government agencies like the DSWD, the DND, and the DOH have been quick to take that on, we also did not use that as an excuse not to help. On the contrary, many of us have clumped into little groups taking on relief efforts here and there, one after another. Those efforts escalate and continue on a daily basis.

On a different perspective though, moving forward, I believe that as an institution, Congress can effect

greater impact through the consolidation of our efforts in addition to working on and exercising oversight function on a long-term plan for rehabilitation.

As of yesterday, the Office of Civil Defense report revealed that there are, at least, 10,000 families who once lived in the Taal island—now, a permanent danger zone—have been resettled elsewhere, whether they like it or not. There are five towns that are definite no-build zones: Lemery, Taal, Agoncillo, Talisay, and San Nicolas. Because the situation is fluid, this is very much a developing story still. Plans will be dictated by and should be responsive to the turn of events.

The eruption of Taal Volcano underscores the need for the creation of the Department of Disaster Resilience, but much as we are expediting the process of its establishment, it is not prudent to rush the creation of such a critical institution. All the more, we exercise due diligence to ensure that the said Department strengthens existing systems instead of merely duplicating what is already there.

As our nation is yet faced again with one of the biggest challenges in modern times, let us work with the systems already in place, so that we can deliver fast and effective solutions especially to those who need it the most and more than just infrastructure. I would like to emphasize and prioritize the internally displaced families who had to flee from their homes, many of whom have come from the definite no-build towns. Their lives cannot be put on hold indefinitely.

While we have systems in place for disaster response, we also have a system in place for creating a recovery and rehabilitation plan. Unbeknownst to many, just 10 months ago, the NDRRMC, with its 42 agency membership, including civil society organizations and the private sector, approved a planning guide on creating a recovery and rehabilitation plan. This guide was initiated by the NEDA through the support of the World Bank and takes advantage of the global best practices as well as lessons from disaster response in past tragedies local and international.

With this guide, the NEDA can create a recovery and rehabilitation plan in about three months. Most critically, the guide employs science-backed risk assessments in putting together courses of action. Foremost would be to create a Taal-specific rehabilitation plan using the said template-based planning guide.

That said, I cannot emphasize enough that customization is a key. One concrete step that can be done immediately is the creation of the Resettlement Sub-committee to prioritize the Internally Displaced Persons and families. With enough support and funding, resettlement planning can already start with what we already know so far.

This, of course, should not hinder the process of gathering reliable baseline data. I repeat, please focus on a good data-gathering scheme, because our rehabilitation plan will only be as good as the

information that we started out with: number one, the number of affected families and persons. People who need immediate assistance due to the Taal eruptions and the number of internally displaced families and persons have drastically increased to over the past 10 days.

Number two, we have an idea of how far they were displaced. This map shows us the 14-kilometer danger zone where a 100-percent evacuation is mandated. You can see them on the screen. Although many families are most likely displaced within their own province, some have moved to greater distances to find some level of security.

Number three, we also know, although not wholly, the damages that were brought on key industries. Agriculture has racked up losses of P3.2 billion so far. Production of high-value crops and fisheries have taken the biggest tolls. I can only surmise that these sectors are the same ones that provided income to the affected families.

Number four, ashfall and fissures have both brought on temporary to permanent damage and destruction to buildings and other structures. Phivolcs has published a map of where the fissures are as shown in that map. These towns have already declared no-build zones.

The tourism industry, another leading employer in Batangas and Cavite, are naturally vulnerable to structural damages. On top of the no-build zones declared, we can begin to deduce which areas cannot be returned to or which houses are most likely unsafe to live in. Perhaps, we can already begin planning where IDP families could possibly be resettled; of course, with the help of sound science and engineering-based advice. Rest assured, and I say this again to all the Taal victims, rest assured that the HOR will not leave you to fend for yourselves. Your well-being, your transition and your future will drive the crucial actions we will take in the coming days.

All that said, and without any intention of sounding like an alarmist, it is by every measure far better for all of us to bond together and overprepare than to assume that an actual eruption will not happen. After all, we have been on Alert level 4 this past week.

On behalf of the Eighteenth Congress, I thank the Speaker for his solid commitment, solid and consistent commitment for rallying the Members in seeing this through. We pray and hope for the best, as we all work together, may God be with us all.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you, Hon. Lucy Torres-Gomez.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move to close the Privilege Hour.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, we would like to listen to our next set of guests-resource speakers. We would like to call Pastor Caesar Hernandez of the Good Shepherd's Baptist Church of Batangas City. Please rise.

PASTOR HERNANDEZ. Magandang hapon po sa ating lahat.

Sa atin pong Speaker of the House ng atin pong Eighteenth Congress, sa atin pong mga mayor na naririto, at sa lahat po ng mga kababayan na naririto, magandang hapon po. Tayo po ay nagpapasalamat na ginanap po dito sa ating bayan ang pagpupulong na ito. Dahil sa nalalaman din po naman natin na ang atin pong bayan ay nakaranas ng napakabigat na pangyayari, ang pagputok po ng Taal Volcano, na kung saan po ay napakarami ang nagdaranas ng kahirapan.

Ang inyo pong lingkod ay wala pong ginagawa kung hindi palagi pong tingnan ang mga balita upang alamin, malaman ang nangyayari sa atin pong mga kababayan. Ako po, bilang senior pastor, ay hindi din po nagpapabaya sa gawain sa pagtulong at gayon din po sa pag-alam ng mga nangyayari sa ating bayan.

Sa amin pong mga kasamahan, na hindi po naman natin ipinupuwera, kami po ay mayroon din pong malaking karanasang naranasan dahil mahigit-kumulang sa 18 pong mga gawain ay naapektuhan na kung saan po ang marami sa kanila ay nandoroon po sa paligid ng atin pong lake at ngayon po ay sila ay nasa sa iba't ibang lugar. Sila po ay kumakanlong doon na kung saan ang 10 o mahigit na 10 rin po namang mga kasamahan natin ay tumutulong sa atin pong mga minamahal na mga kasamahan sa pamamagitan ng atin pong pagdadala sa kanila ng atin pong mga ayuda sa panahong ito ng sakuna. Wala po tayong ginagawa kung hindi ang sila ay puntahan at tulungan sa kanila pong pangangailangan bilang atin pong mga kasama, atin pong mga kababayan. Iyan po ang ating ginagawa.

In fact, kami po ay nag-uusap, kami na mga kapastoran dito po sa Batangas, kung papaano kami makakatulong sa mga pangangailangang ito na iniisip po namin: Ano ang ating magagawa sa sitwasyong ito ng ating mga kababayan, ng ating mga kapatiran?

Kahapon po, kami po ay nagpupulong. In fact, hanggang doon sa malayong lugar ay nakikiugnay sa atin upang makatulong sa pangangailangan po ng ating mga kasamahan, mga kababayan na talagang natamaan ng kalamidad na ito. Sabi nga po namin ay salamat po sa ating gobyerno, sa ating pamahalaan, sa inyo pong pagsisikap, na hindi po natin napapabaya ang atin pong mga kababayan. At kami nga po ay nag-uusap

na kung sakali po na ang atin pong problemang ito ay matatapos na eh kami po ay nag-iisip kung paano natin matutulungan ang ating mga kababayang ito sa kanilang mga pangangailangan. Eh, iyan po iyong aming ginagawa at iyan po ay aming gagawin. Wala pong nagdidikta sa amin. Kami po ay sama-samang nag-uusap upang sa ganoon ay matulungan ang mga pangangailangang ito ng ating mga kababayan lalo higit sila pong naroroon sa mabibigat na kalagayan.

Kaya po naman, ngayon pong hapon, kami po naman ay nagpapasalamat, lalong higit sa atin pong pamahalaan, na higit na mayroon pong kakayanan na makatulong sa mga pangangailangang ito, na ang inyong presensiya kumbaga ay inaasahan po natin na talagang kayo po ay magiging kasama sa pagpasang ito, na hindi po lamang ang presensiya ay nandirito kung hindi doon po sa aking mga napakinggang mga pangungusap ng bawat isa.

Salamat po sa effort na inyong ginagawa and that is our expectation na sa mga huling araw ay madarama po ng bawat isa lalo higit ng mga nakaranas ng kasalatan ang tunay na tulong ng atin pong pamahalaan. At ang panalangin po natin ay tulongan po tayo ng ating Panginoong Diyos na tayo po ay makabangon sa mga mabibigat na karanasang ito.

Magandang hapon po sa ating lahat. (*Applause*)

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, the next guest resource person is Julie Ann S. Betita from the Magallanes Square Hotel, Tagaytay City.

MS. BETITA. Magandang hapon po, Mr. Speaker. Sa lahat po ng tao sa bulwagang ito, magandang hapon po.

Ako po si Julie Ann S. Betita from Tagaytay City, nagwo-work po ako, one of the stakeholders and representative po ng Tagaytay Tourism Council. Una po, nagpapasalamat po kami sa paglilina ni DILG Secretary Año at Usec. Solidum ng PHIVOLCS na ligtas na ang Tagaytay sa anumang sitwasyon ng Bulkang Taal.

Kami po ay nagkaroon ng kapanatagan ng kalooban na ang Tagaytay ay hindi na aabutin ng bay surge o ng tsunami sa kadahilanang mataas ang Tagaytay. Kami din po ay nagpapasalamat sa pagsuporta ng local government na makapagbukas iyong mga establisimiyento sa Tagaytay kasi po kami ay nabubuhay sa pamamagitan ng turismo.

Sana po makita din natin na sa Tagaytay po ang kinabubuhay namin ay turismo. So, kung hindi po patuloy na magbubukas kami—kami po ay nagpapasalamat kay Secretary Año kasi kami po din ay may tinutulungang mga evacuees na more or less nasa 6,000 po na nasa Tagaytay City.

Kami po ay nakikiusap na sana po magkaisa ang ating ahensiya—ang DILG, ang PHIVOLCS at ang local government—po na magkaroon ng isang impormasyon na ilalahad para nang sa ganoon po kami ay magkaroon ng kapanatagan ng loob at maiwasan po ang pagpapanic ng mga mamamayan sa Tagaytay City.

Maraming salamat po.

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, the next guest resource person is Pastor Adiel De Torres from Carpenter's House Baptist Church.

PASTOR DE TORRES. Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, to the Members of Congress, especially to the Minority Leader, Cong. Ben Abante, thank you for allowing us to be invited to inform you of the situation on the ground.

I am Pastor Adiel De Torres. I am a pastor of this region although I come from the city of Sta. Rosa and at the same time I am the Vice Chairman of the Regional Advisory Council of Region IV-A.

First thing, I would like to say that what is not recorded and what is not known is there are about 5,000 evacuees that are not hosted in our evacuation areas but are in our churches all throughout the affected cities and the municipalities of this region. Most of those are in churches that are under the Bible Mode Organization at the same time not only Baptist but Evangelical that are hosting about 5,000 families.

In Cavite alone, I have a record that we have about 76 churches affected there, 11 of those churches are evacuation areas that have about 60 average evacuees in their areas. In Batangas, with Pastor Caesar Hernandez, there are about 18 churches affected here, 11 of those churches are evacuation sites also. But what I would say is not really tragic, but what is the need now is that these evacuation areas not registered with the DSWD do not have relief goods. These people under these churches are being fed by the churches from their own funds. Many of our kababayan in this region fear that there will be a bigger eruption that is why we are also thinking about the supplies that we have on our own and must be able to do that.

In fact, in our city alone in Sta. Rosa, former Cong. Arlene Arcillas, now our mayor, also opened our city for evacuees. Most of them from Agoncillo are now in our city, Sta. Rosa. But, again, our fear is that there is going to be a bigger eruption and we think about how to access all those relief goods for the people who are in the churches now being hosted in this region. And, we thank again Congressman Abante, the Minority Leader, for allowing us to be heard on this matter.

Most of the pastors are at the back, especially in Batangas. In fact, particularly, Mr. Speaker, one

pastor of ours from Cuenca, Batangas, hosted about 180 evacuees in his church, but now they are also forced to get out, and now they are going as far as Taysan, Batangas, and again, bringing with them all the evacuees. So, we would like to be able to ask Congress to look into that also.

Let me air also, as Vice Chair of the Regional Advisory Council, with Congressman Umali, one of the things that the first responders in this region would like also to relay is that I think many people forget that most of our first responders in this region are also victims themselves, and they have lost their houses and they are also thinking about their families. And so, maybe, Congress could think about their welfare also, as when this comes, that the first responders will be thought about, because as they are willing to do their jobs in law enforcement and in the DSWD, they have the emotional and the psychological trauma of thinking about their babies, their kids, who are also affected—without houses and also in evacuation areas.

And so, that is what I would like to say and let me add finally, Mr. Speaker, and Majority Leader, that most of our churches would really want to be of help in the rehabilitation and all of these, and so we are also providing counseling to many of the evacuees that have trauma, especially children that now are being hosted in many of the churches in this region.

Thank you very much and good afternoon. *(Applause)*

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, our last guest resource person is Mr. Ramil Alcazar, an evacuee from Molinete, Laurel, Batangas.

MR. ALCAZAR. Magandang tanghali po sa inyong lahat.

Ako po ay Barangay Kagawad ng Molinete, Laurel, Batangas. Nagmula sa Laurel po ng Batangas. Ako po iyong victim ng evacuation center po sa Tagaytay. Ngayon po, nagpapasalamat po kami doon sa nag-aruga po sa amin sa pangunguna po ng mayor po doon at saka ng barangay captain. Sila po iyong sumuporta sa amin. Nagbigay po sila sa amin ng gamot, tubig at saka pagkain, at saka po iyong ginagawa po namin doon, hindi po talaga kami umaalis doon. Sabi po ng mga tao doon, kailan daw po kami uuwi. Paano naman po kami uuwi, wala naman kaming titirahan. Kailangan po ang tulong ninyo.

At saka po iyong mga tao doon, nag-iiyakan. Paano daw po iyong hanapbuhay nila? Ipinararating po sa akin, sinabi po sa akin ng mga tao doon, iparating ko daw po sa inyo iyong hinihiling po ng mga tao doon, iyong hanapbuhay nila tulad ng palaisdaan, hayop at saka iyon pong mga tubigan, naapektuhan po sa Laurel.

Iyong mga tao po doon sa Tagaytay City ay nag-iiyakan po iyong mga bata sa umaga. Wala po namang pang-suporta ng pang-ayuda, pagkain. Sana po naman ay tulongan ninyo ang taga-Tagaytay at mabigyan po ninyo ng tulong. At saka po iyong mga pinansiyal, hindi po sila makakilos doon sa Tagaytay dahil wala po silang hanapbuhay. At ipinararating din po sa inyong lahat, tulongan din po ninyo ang mga taga-Laurel.

Iyon pong sa Gulod at saka Buso-Buso, kung makikita lang po ninyo, punong-puno po ng putik iyong bahay nila. Sabi ko po sa friend ko po sa Gulod at saka sa Buso-Buso, naiyak po ako sa mga message nila sa akin, dahil ako po ay Barangay Kagawad doon sa Molinete at ipinararating ko po sa inyong lahat, maraming- marami pong salamat. *(Applause)*

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, those were the messages and the feedback from our local stakeholders. We thank them for sharing. At this point, I would like to acknowledge the presence of our hosts—some of our hosts and honored guests starting with Governor Hermilando Mandanas of the province of Batangas. *(Applause)* Please rise.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please rise. Governor Mandanas, our former colleague, your former colleague. *(Applause)*

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Undersecretary Cesar Yano of the Department of National Defense.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please rise. *(Applause)*

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Asec. Casiano Monilla, Office of Civil Defense. *(Applause)*; Brigadier General Teofilo, Joint Task Group Taal *(Applause)*; Usec. Fel Bodingan, Disaster Group; Asec. Anton Hernandez, Disaster Group; and Asec. Rodolfo Mejila Encabo, Disaster Response Management Group.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Pakitayo lang po kung nasa likuran ho kayo. Pakitayo lang po. Nandoon po sina Asec ho.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Our hosts and local stakeholders, the following mayors: Mayor Daniel Reyes, municipality of Agoncillo *(Applause)*; Mayor Edilberto Ponggos, municipality of Alitagtag *(Applause)*; Mayor Wilson Maralit, municipality of Balete *(Applause)*; Mayor Faye Endaya Baretto, municipality of Cuenca *(Applause)*; Mayor Joan Amo, municipality of Laurel *(Applause)*; Mayor Cristeta

Reyes, municipality of Malvar (*Applause*); Mayor Janet Ilagan, municipality of Mataas na Kahoy (*Applause*); Mayor Lester De Sagun, municipality of San Nicolas (*Applause*); Mayor Norberto Segunial, municipality of Sta. Teresita (*Applause*); Mayor Edna Sanchez, municipality of Sto. Tomas (*Applause*); Mayor Gerry Natanauan, municipality of Talisay (*Applause*); Mayor Angeline Halili, city of Tanauan (*Applause*); and Mayor Ben Patron, municipality of San Jose, Mayors' League President. (*Applause*)

Island Barangay Chairpersons (Captains): Kapitan Benigno Mendoza, Sitio Tabla Pulo, Talisay; Kapitan Wilfredo Mendoza, San Isidro Pulo, Talisay; Kapitan Jimmy Tenorio, Calawit, Balete; Kapitan Ramon Gamu, Pulang-Bato, San Nicolas; and Kapitan Jocelyn Bayanay, Alas-as, San Nicolas. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Sa lahat po ng tinawag ni Majority Leader, mula po sa House of Representatives, sa pangunguna po ni Speaker Alan Cayetano, maraming-marami pong salamat sa inyo sa inyong pagdalo. At sa lahat po ng naririto na bisita po natin, maraming-maraming salamat po sa inyong pagdalo. Kinalulugod po ng buong Miyembro ng Kongresong ito ang kanilang pakikiramay at pakikisama sa nangyayari po sa lalawigan ng Batangas.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Yes. Mr. Speaker, at this point, we would like us to hear the messages of the local executives of the province. We shall have short video presentations. So, we shall first hear the message of Mayor Beverley Rose Dimacuha-Mariño, the mayor of Batangas City and our host. (*Applause*)

May we direct the Secretariat to play the video message of Mayor Dimacuha-Mariño.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Secretariat is so directed.

(*Video message*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Before I recognize the Majority Leader, may we acknowledge the presence of the ABC Presidents from the Liga ng mga Barangays sa Lalawigan ng Batangas. Pakitindig po iyong mga ABC Presidents, nariyan po sila sa likuran, para po ng ma-recognize ng mga Members of the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

Also, iyon pong ating mga Vice Mayors, narito rin po sila. Pakitindig rin po ang ating mga miyembro ng Vice Mayors League, iyong mga vice mayors po ng iba't ibang bayan po ng ating Lalawigan ng Batangas. Nandito rin po ang mga miyembro ng Sangguniang Bayan at Sangguniang Panlungsod ng Batangas City sa pangunguna ng kanilang Vice Mayor Jun Berberabe. Pakitindig din po. (*Applause*)

Nandito rin po ang ilang barangay captains ng Bayan ng San Luis. Pakitindig po ng mga barangay captains ng Bayan ng San Luis. Narito rin po ang ilan po nating mga opisyaales ng provincial government of Batangas. Pakitindig po, nandiyan po sila.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Yes, Mr. Speaker. Narito rin si Mayor Pong Mercado ng Taal. (*Applause*)

Mr. Speaker, the next message is from Gov. Hermilando Mandanas of Batangas province. May we direct the Secretary to play the video message of Governor Mandanas.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Secretary is so directed.

(*Video message*)

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Majority Leader, before that, nais ko ring i-recognize iyong ating Panlalawigang Pangulo ng Pederasyon ng Liga ng mga Barangay, Board Member Willie Maliksi, na pinangungunahan niya ang kaniyang mga ABC presidents at saka iyong nakita ko kanina na isang Provincial Board Member ng City of Batangas, Hon. Claudette Ambida.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, the next video message is yours, the honorable Deputy Speaker and Representative of the Second District of Batangas, Raneo E. Abu.

May we direct the Secretariat to play your video message.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Secretariat is so directed.

(*Video message*) (*Applause*)

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, the resource speakers from the various sectors of affected residents reported their firsthand accounts of total devastation and destruction of residential houses, school buildings and local government infrastructures. They appeal for assistance to restore their livelihood and rebuild or reconstruct their residential houses which were totally destroyed. They also appeal for medical or psychological intervention. The resource speakers also appeal to the national government to allow affected residents to return to their residences in order to feed or retrieve their livestock.

An official from Barangay Pulang-Bato asked that they be allowed to continue fishing for tilapia and tawilis and the operation of fish cages. A DepEd superintendent appealed to local executives to utilize first sports complexes or gymnasiums before resorting to the use of classrooms as evacuation centers to avoid the disruption of classes. Officials also expressed their gratitude to the outpouring of help from our kababayans who opened their houses to total strangers. They pointed out, however, that residents are likewise affected because their livelihood are in the lockdown areas, but at the same time, they are helping our evacuees.

Mr. Speaker, this historic first of a kind, a momentous gathering of the Members of the House of Representatives, has yielded a number of outputs today, the feedback from the local stakeholders, for which later on we shall pass the appropriate resolutions.

At this juncture, Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer all speeches delivered this afternoon—rather, yes, this afternoon, including the accompanying audiovisual presentations, to the Committee on Rules.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ROLL CALL

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we call the roll of House of Representatives Members present today.

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

The Secretary General is directed to call the roll of Members.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is reflected in Journal No. 34, dated January 22, 2020.**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. The Speaker is present.

Mr. Speaker, the roll call shows that 204 Members responded to the call. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With 204 Members responding to the call, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abu relinquished the Chair to Speaker Alan Peter “Compañero” S. Cayetano.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, we would like to call on and recognize Gov. Hermilando “Dodo” Mandanas, a former colleague of ours in the House of Representatives, to give his response and short message, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. The Eighteenth Congress would really like to hear from our dear Governor. Please accept iyong aming pakikiramay, but iyong amin ding commitment na tuloy-tuloy po kaming makikipagtulungan sa inyo hanggang makabangon ang buong Batangas.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Governor Mandanas. (*Applause*)

You can use the podium, Sir.

RESPONSE OF GOVERNOR MANDANAS

HON. MANDANAS. Aking pinilit na talagang makapagsalita bilang ama ng Lalawigan ng Batangas at ganoon din bilang Chairman ng CALABARZON. Ako ang Chairman din ng Regional Development Council ng CALABARZON kung nasaan ang mga governors, mayors, regional directors at iyong ating mga nongovernment leaders, at kami ay taos-pusong nagpapasalamat sa ating mga Congressmen at Congresswomen, sa lahat ng mga Representatives, Mr. Speaker, na inyong kinakatawan o pinamumunuan, kasama ang ating mga Deputy Speakers na dalawa ay galing dito sa amin sa Lalawigan ng Batangas, ang ating Deputy Speaker Congresswoman, dati ring Governor ng Lalawigan ng Batangas at ngayon ay Representative ng aming Sixth District, ng City of Lipa. Ganoon din ang padalawa namin, ang aming Deputy Speaker na galing sa Second District, Hon. Raneo “Ranie” E. Abu.

Ganoon din, at nakita natin talaga, na hindi lamang malasakit kundi talagang pagmamahal ng aming ibang mga Congressmen ng First District, Congresswoman Ermita-Buhain; Second District, si Congressman Abu, nabanggit ko na; at ganoon din sa Third District, ang ating si Cong. Maitet Collantes; at ganoon din ang ating Fourth District, Cong. Lianda Bolilia; at ang amin ding sa Fifth District na kung saan tayo naroroon, ang aking kamag-anak pa, Cong. Marvey Mariño; at mula sa Sixth District, nabanggit ko na, ang ating kagalang-galang, napakasipag at maganda pang Deputy Speaker, Cong. Vilma Santos-Recto.

Ang lahat nating mga Congressman, nakita ko na halos kalahati ng Eighteenth Congress ay puro kasamahan ko pa noon, kasama na ang ating Speaker, hindi lamang sa mga deliberations kundi pati sa paglalaro ng basketball.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

Kaya't taos-puso po ang aming pasasalamat. Iyon po ang dahilan, at alam ko na kaagaran na ito ay haharapin at babalikatin ng ating mga Representatives of the people, na kaagaran na bibigyan nila ng pansin at pasiya ang inilalagay ng ating Pangulo, Pres. Rodrigo Roa Duterte, na noong Lunes sa padalawa niyang pagdalaw sa Lalawigan ng Batangas, kasama ang Members of Cabinet, na hindi lamang nangako tungkol sa quick response ngayon tungkol sa mga evacuation centers, tungkol sa livelihood, kundi pati na rin sa mga susunod pang pangangailangan sa kalusugan. Nangako na bukod sa mga naka-budget na ngayon, siya ay magsa-submit pa ng additional na P30 billion para sa atin dahil talagang nakita niya na ngayon ay isang milyon na, Mr. Speaker, ang nag-evacuate at kung iyon lang pagkain na kailangang-kailangan sa pang-araw-araw, iyon ay umaabot na sa ngayon, ang pagkain at mga kasamahang pagkaing ito ay umaabot na sa P150 milyon araw-araw. Ang pangkabuhayang nasira, kung titingnan natin ang dami ng ating mga pamilya diyan, umabot na sa limang bilyon.

Sa pagpapabahay, ang mga nasirang bahay ngayon, kailangan tulungan natin dahil iyong iba ay hindi na makakabalik. Mabuti na lamang ang lalawigan ay mayroong handa na paglalagyan na sa ngayon ay kailangan ng development pero ang atin munang iniisip ay iyong for the next three days, kaya't gagamitin naman namin ang aming budget. Magre-realign din kami ng aming budget.

Ang Lalawigan ng Batangas, ang aming budget sa calamity, P200 million, at ang quick response fund, alam natin, ay 30 percent lamang noon so, ito ay gagamitin natin sa pagkain, sa kanilang mga evacuation center. Ang gusto kong bigyang diin ay kakaiba ito sa ibang calamity sapagkat nakikita natin iyong isang milyon na lumikas, nakita natin na 20 porsiyento o around 200,000 individuals ang ngayon ay naririto sa mga evacuation centers, kasama na ang mga nasa eskuwelahan. Ang mga nasa eskuwelahan, there are 55,000 families sa mga eskuwelahan pa lamang.

Kaya ang aming programa in the next three days, maglilipat naman tayo pasimula sa mga evacuation center na tapos na. Ang isa pang ginawa namin, Mr. Speaker, immediate response for these next three days, kasi state of calamity, iyong mga properties ng national government na hindi ginagamit ay amin na ring kinuha. Ito ang aming ginagawa dahil gusto rin naman ng Lalawigan ng Batangas na tumindig sa sarili naming kakayahan, subalit, tungkulin din, at nakita natin, ang malasakit ng national government kung nasaan ang power of the purse ay naririto sa atin, sa House of Representatives at Senate, sa Congress, ay alam ko at nakausap ko na nauunawaan nila ito. Hindi lang nauunawaan pero nadadama talaga, lalo na iyong mga nakakakilala sa mga namumuno dito sa lalawigan.

Ganoon din sa iba kaya't pasalamat kami sa House of Representatives na dito ginawa dahil ipinakikita lamang na gusto talaga nilang malaman ang kalagayan at gusto talaga na ipakita na ito ay haharapin agad. Kailangan mabigyan natin ang ating mga kababayan na inyo nang narinig ang mga kinatawan. Hindi lamang ngayon, kailangan bigyan natin, itaas natin ang kanilang pag-asa na makikita naman natin dito na ito ay sustainable. Walang problema. Kami ay naghanda, makikita na walang kahit isang namatay, Mr. Speaker, walang kahit isa na na-hospital, Mr. Speaker. *(Applause)* Kaya nga lamang, hindi namin o walang nakakaalam na ito ay mangyayari kaagad.

Sa totoong buhay, naka-budget na, approved na, katulong ang ating Sanggunian, na mayroon kaming rescue vehicle sa bawat isa, mayroon kaming dalawang bilyong piso sa pagpapagawa ng mga firetruck, ng mga evacuation centers. Mayroon kaming livelihood na dalawang bilyong piso rin. Nakautang na kami, approved na ng ating Development Bank of the Philippines, apat na bilyong piso, kaya ang budget ng lalawigan, gusto ko lang ipaalam, dahil gusto nating masabi na ang mga taga-Batangas, ang mga taga-CALABARZON, kasama na ang Cavite, Laguna, Quezon at Rizal, ay talagang nagtutulong-tulong, hindi lamang ang mga ito, Mr. Speaker, kaya kami ngayon ay nakakaganap.

Katulong din natin ang iba pang mga local governments. Masasabi natin talagang from Ilocos, Quirino, hanggang Zamboanga, ang mga first responders—ang Pampanga, nandidito ang governor na kung ilang araw ay hindi natutulog, may dalang 10 dump trucks. Mayroon pang payloader at 20 engineers dahil malaki ang kanilang karanasan, kaya't nakikita natin na local government, at ngayon nga ang ating Congress. Pagpasok ko pa laang dito, may mga nag-abot na ng tulong dahil alam naman nila na kailangan namin, alam naman nila na ito ay ginagamit ng ating mga namumuno dito sa matuwid at malinis at tunay na marunong na pangangalaga.

Bihirang-bihira na masasabi natin ang hindi nakakaunawa. Bihirang-bihira iyong mga hindi na nakakatulong ay nakakasira pa. Ito ang ipinakikita ngayon ng Congress, kaya't kami po ay nagpapasalamat sa ating House of Representatives, sa Speaker, at sa lahat ng mga dati kong kasamahan na hindi nakakalimot at alam kong hindi pa rin makakalimot. Kaya't maraming-maraming salamat po. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER. Governor, on behalf po ng Eighteenth Congress, kami po ang magpapasalamat sa inyo because you are giving us the opportunity to show that this is a Congress of the People at mahal kayo ng buong Kongreso, so, asahan ninyo po ang tuloy-tuloy po naming coordination.

On Monday po, Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda and Chairperson Lucy Torres-Gomez, together with the different Chairs of the different committees led by Mark Enverga and Helen Tan, Sandra sa Social Services, will be meeting para i-converge o ipagsama-sama ang suggestions ng lahat ng Kongresista ng CALABARZON, lalo na ng Batangas, para mas maging effective po ang aming pagtutulong-tulong.

So, the Majority Leader will take note of this and will also be the chief implementor of the individual and collective efforts of the Philippine Congress in helping the province of Batangas, sa mga kababayan natin sa Cavite, Laguna—and Congressman Suarez also reminded me mayroon na rin na more than 8,000 evacuees na nasa Quezon.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Yes, Mr. Speaker. Having heard firsthand the concerns of our people here in Batangas, as our immediate response, I move that we now proceed to consider House resolutions that aim to address these grave concerns.

Governor Mandanas, our fellow Congressmen from the region, particularly Batangas and Cavite which have been severely affected, at the instance of our Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, we have come here to personally witness and to see and make contact with the stakeholders here, particularly the evacuees and the victims. For the first responders, the LGUs, it is our fervent hope that the spirit of the Batangueños, Caviteños and those in the affected areas will not diminish, rather, that it will rise through the show of support of the Representatives of the House that represent the people of the Republic of the Philippines.

Lahat po ng mga hinaing ninyo po, iyong sinasabi ninyo na kilala ninyo ang mga evacuation centers, livelihood programs, psychological testing at support, lahat ng mga imprastruktura na kinalalagyan din—lahat po iyan ang pinapakinggan natin po. Lahat ng mga Miyembro ng ating Kongreso po, ito rin po ang gusto ng ating mahal na Presidente, na ipakita at suklian po natin ang ipinamalas nating malasakit po sa Batangas at Cavite na matagal na sumusuporta sa lahat ng ibang mga probinsiya kagaya na po ng Leyte, kapag naranasan po natin ang mga kalamidad.

Kaya po nandito po tayo lahat ng Eighteenth Congress led by no less than our Speaker of the House of Representatives Alan Peter Cayetano, ang mga Deputy Speakers, the House leadership, at lahat po ng nandito. Kaya po, huwag po kayong mawalan ng pag-asa dahil andito po kaming lahat para sa inyo.

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 655

REP. ROMUALDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 655.

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

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). The Majority Floor Leader, Martin Romualdez—as the Majority Floor Leader, I shall read the authors and the title of the Resolution *en toto*.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 655

Introduced by Batangas Representatives: Representative Vilma Santos-Recto, Representative Elenita Milagros Ermita-Buhain, Representative Raneo E. Abu, Representative Ma. Theresa Collantes, Representative Lianda Bolilia and Representative Mario Vittorio A. Mariño.

House Resolution No. 655, entitled: RESOLUTION URGING THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF FUNDS FOR THE AID, RELIEF, RESETTLEMENT, REHABILITATION, LIVELIHOOD, DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO COMMUNITIES ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION, AND DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE TO IMMEDIATELY CALL THE NATIONAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (NDRRMC) FOR A HOUSE COMMITTEE BRIEFING TO ASSESS THE SITUATION AND DETERMINE THE NEEDS OF THE AFFECTED LOCALITIES AND THE TOTAL BUDGET REQUIREMENTS TO ADDRESS THE CALAMITY.

Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 665.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? Sorry.
The Majority Leader moved for the adoption of House Resolution No. 655, correct?

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 655

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Yes, the adoption. Mr. Speaker, I move for the adoption of House Resolution No. 655.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)*
The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.
House Resolution No. 655 is hereby adopted by the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 662

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I shall read the text and the title of House Resolution No. 662 for consideration.

House Resolution No. 662, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO WORK WITH ALL THE CONCERNED AGENCIES TO PASS THE PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET TO EXPEDITE EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIVE ASSISTANCE TO THOSE AFFECTED BY THE TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 662

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move for the adoption of House Resolution No. 662.

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

House Resolution No. 662 is hereby adopted.

May I make a personal note that not only are we supporting the P30-billion additional funding this year, it was a supplemental budget, but we are asking our Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Chairman Sid Ungab, to make representations with the DBM to include all rehabilitation funds in the 2021 budget not only for the Taal eruption but also for the areas in Mindanao affected by earthquakes, Ursula and all others affected by disasters that are still waiting for rehabilitation funds. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Deputy Speaker Eduardo “Bro. Eddie” C. Villanueva to lead us in prayer.

THE SPEAKER. We started with a beautiful and sincere prayer and so, we will also end this historic session by lifting up, regardless of what our religion is, a prayer to our Lord.

So, may we all rise and may we request Deputy Speaker Bro. Eddie Villanueva to lead us in prayer.

Everybody rose for the Invocation.

INVOCATION

REP. VILLANUEVA (E.). Isang mapagpala po at makasaysayang araw sa lahat ng mga narito, sa mata ng kasaysayan, sa mata ng Diyos. Bago po tayo manalangin, nais ko hong ipaabot ang pakiusap ng national leadership ng Philippines for Jesus Movement, ang Presidente po ay narito sa ating kalagitnaan, ang National President, si Bishop Leo Alconga, na kasama-sama po natin at nandoon siya, at ganoon din ang Batangas for Jesus Movement, at nakausap ko kanina ang ilang mga leaders. Ipaabot lang daw po ang pagbati sa inter-leadership ng Eighteenth Congress of the Republic of the Philippines House of Representatives,

sa pangunguna ng ating ginagalang at minamahal na Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, sapagkat sila po ang mga kumakatawan dito sa Batangas, ay nagkaroon ng kagalakan, unusual joy, na ipinakita ng House of Representatives under the leadership of Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, ang tunay na pagmamahal sa mga naging biktima ng Taal Volcano eruptions.

Gusto ko rin pong ipahabol ang pasasalamat sa Body of Christ dito sa Batangas sapagkat ang Laguna at Cavite po at ganoon din po ang Bocaue rescue team na unang-una pong nagpunta rito at nailigtas po iyong mga taga-Canada—Ontario, British Columbia at Alberta—nang nagkaroon ng malaking kasalan sa Tagaytay noong sumabog ang Taal Volcano. Inabot po nang madaling-araw ang rescue operations at nakiisa po ang Body of Christ ng Laguna, Cavite at Batangas. Marami pong salamat.

Tayo po ngayon ay dumako sa pananalangin at bago po tayo manalangin, ito po ay para sa mga biktima ng kalamidad, disasters, lalong-lalo na dito sa Taal Volcano eruption at maging sa ka-Mindanaoan at sa lahat ng panig ng daigdig.

Bago po tayo manalangin, para magkaroon ng significance ang ating dasal at pananalangin, maunawaan po natin na ang lahat ng kalamidad na ito, disasters, ay bunga ng sinasabi ng Banal na Kasulatan, the curses of sins. Ang lahat po ng bansa sa buong mundo ay dumadanas nito, maging ang bansang Israel, subalit may magandang balita po ang Banal na Kasulatan na ang lahat ng kalamidad, disasters, ay may kasagutan ng pagmamahal ng Diyos kung susundin natin ang sinabi niya sa Second Chronicles, Chapter 7, Verse 14, and I quote:

If my people who are called by My name shall humble themselves and pray and seek My face, and turn away from their wicked ways, then I will hear them from heaven, I will forgive your sins and I will heal your land.

Ang sangkatutak pong disasters, calamities na dumarating sa iba’t ibang mga bansa katulad ng lindol, katulad ng floods, katulad ng tsunami at lahat-lahat na po, bagamat ito ay bahagi ng signs of the Second Coming of Jesus sa Matthew, Chapter 24, ito po ay bunga ng curses of sins. Ito po ang katotohanan.

Ang solusyon po ng Diyos ay simple. Kung tayong mga tinawag ng Panginoon na sa Kaniyang pangalan ay magpapakumbaba, manalangin, hahanapin ang Kaniyang mukha at tatalikod sa kanilang mga kasalanan, ang sabi po ng Diyos, Ako, mula sa langit, pakikinggan Ko ang inyong mga daing at pananalangin, patatawarin Ko ang inyong mga kasalanan at pagagalangin Ko ang inyong bayan.

Pagagalangin ng Diyos ang mahal nating bayan. Makiisa po tayo sa panalangin ito. Yumuko lang po tayong lahat sandali at sumang-ayon sa inyong puso sa dasal na ito.

Dakilang Diyos, Amang sumasalangit, na may gawa ng langit at lupa, nakatingin at nakatunghay sa lugar na ito, lantad sa Iyong mga mata ang bilyong-bilyong tao sa balat ng lupa. Karamihan ay walang panahon sa Iyo, ang iba ay lasing sa mga bagay sa sanlibutan. Subalit sa lugar na ito ng Batangas Convention Center, naidadaos, Panginoon, ang isang makasaysayang event. Initiated by the House of Representatives of Eighteenth Congress of the Philippines, headed by our beloved Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, naisagawa rito ang isang makasaysayang sesyon ng Eighteenth Congress upang mabigyan ng immediate katugunan, immediate, mabilis na aksiyon agad, ang pangangailangan ng mahigit isang milyong biktima dito mismo sa Taal Volcano eruption ushered by our beloved Batangas Governor Dodo Mandanas.

Panginoon, kaming lahat ay humihingi ng kapatawaran sa lahat ng kasalanan ng lahi, ng lahing Pilipino. Mga kasalananang namana sa mga ninuno, magulang at maging o including the sins of omission as Edmund Burke said, "For what is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing." Supported by James, Chapter 4, Verse 17, "If you know the good things to do and you don't do, you sin."

Dakilang Diyos, ibigay Mo po ang kapatawaran sa buhay ng bawat isa sa amin. Linisin kami sa anumang uri ng kasalanan. Hugasan ng makapangyarihan at banal Mong dugong dumaloy sa krus ng kalbaryo. Bigyan kami ng bagong puso. Pumasok Ka sa aming puso, Panginoong Hesus. Tinatanggap Ka naming tunay bilang tagapagligtas.

Panginoon at Diyos ng aming buhay, salamat sa kapahayagang hindi relihiyon ang kailangan ng tao, kung hindi relasyon sa buhay na Diyos. Tulungan Mo kaming lahat na magkaroon ng tamang relasyon sa Iyo at simulan Mong pagalingin ang minamahal naming bayan.

Diyos na buhay, buksan Mo ang mga bintana ng kalangitan, ibuhos Mo ang karunungan at kakayahan sa lahat ng mga mamamayan dito sa Batangas, maging sa mga naapektuhan sa Cavite at Laguna at sa aming buong bansang Pilipinas, kaming lahat, para ang lahing ito ay makaahon sa tanikala ng kalamidad at disasters.

Panginoon, pakibalutan Mo ng banal na dugo ang bawat isa sa amin, anuman ang sakunang plano ng kaaway upang idating sa aming bansa, pigilin Mo po, O Diyos. Ikaw ang may sabi sa Job 26:7, "You hangeth the earth upon nothing." Itinala Mo lamang ang mundo sa kawalan kaya kayang-kaya Mong alisin ang anumang panganib na nakaamba na maaaring dumating pa sa aming minamahal na bayan, minamahal na bansa.

At patuloy, Panginoon, basbasan at pagpalain Mo ang buong Kongreso ng Pilipinas, lalo na ang House of Representatives being led by our beloved Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, ang Majority Leader Martin Romualdez at lahat na ng mga bumubuo,

Panginoon, ng Eighteenth Congress na ito. Ibihos Mo sa kanila ang kalusugang pangkatawan, kalusugang pangkaisipan, kalusugang pang-espiritu't kaluluwa, maging kalusugang pangkabuhayan, at magkaroon ng lahat sa amin ng longevity of life with maximum productivity, at maipatupad namin ng matagumpay ang mga tungkulin na iniatang Mo sa balikat ng bawat isa, sa ikabubuti ng sambayanang Pilipino, lalo na sa mga naging biktima ng Taal Volcano eruption.

Patuloy na basbasan Mo ang pamunuan ng Batangas, pamunuan ng Cavite at Laguna, na siyang bahagi ng naging biktima, directly and indirectly, ng Taal eruption.

Higit sa lahat, continue to bind the Members of this Eighteenth Congress of the Republic of the Philippines with the love of Christ that can never be broken. Let the humility and servanthood of Jesus prevail in our earthly existence.

Tanging sa Iyo lamang namin ibinabalik, O Diyos, ang lahat ng papuri, kaluwalhatian at karangalan. Ikaw lamang ang tunay na dapat sambahin at luwalhatiin ng sangkatauhan.

*Tanging sa pangalan ni Kristo Hesus.
Ang lahat po ay magsabi ng Amen.*

ALL: Amen.

THE SPEAKER. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ. Mr. Speaker, we would like to recognize Deputy Speaker Conrad M. Estrella III of the ABONO Party-List.

THE SPEAKER. Deputy Speaker Estrella is recognized.

REP. ESTRELLA. Mr. Speaker, thank you. Thank you, Majority Floor Leader and distinguished colleagues.

Mahigit 200 po ang naririto ngayon in spite of the threat, the risk, the danger, and not to mention, the criticisms. Mahigit po sa 200 Mambabatas ang pumunta rito at ito po ay nagpapakita at napakalinaw na nagkakaisa ang mamamayang Pilipino upang tulungan ang Lalawigan ng Batangas na bumangon dahil dito sa kalamidad na hinaharap natin, at dahil po sa leadership ng ating Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano, at ganoon din po sa pagmamahal sa ating bayan ng ating mga kapwa Mambabatas, Mr. Speaker, payagan ninyo po, I hope you will allow me to make two motions this very moment.

The first one, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, is that I move that all Members present be made coauthors of House Resolution No. 655, entitled: RESOLUTION URGING THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF FUNDS

FOR THE AID, RELIEF, RESETTLEMENT, REHABILITATION, LIVELIHOOD, DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO COMMUNITIES ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION, AND DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE TO IMMEDIATELY CALL THE NATIONAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (NDRRMC) FOR A HOUSE COMMITTEE BRIEFING TO ASSESS THE SITUATION AND DETERMINE THE NEEDS OF THE AFFECTED LOCALITIES AND THE TOTAL BUDGET REQUIREMENTS TO ADDRESS THE CALAMITY.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join Deputy Speaker Conrado M. Estrella III of the ABONO Party-list in his motion.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ESTRELLA. Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. There is a second motion, I think.

REP. ESTRELLA. Allow me, Mr. Speaker, to make my second motion, and I further move, Mr. Speaker, that all Members present today be made coauthors, likewise, of House Resolution No. 662, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO WORK WITH ALL THE CONCERNED AGENCIES TO PASS THE PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET TO EXPEDITE EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIVE ASSISTANCE TO THOSE AFFECTED BY THE TAAL VOLCANO ERUPTION.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join in the motion of Deputy Speaker Conrado M. Estrella III of the ABONO Party-list.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

May I also take note that in asking the NDRRMC to give us a full briefing, we would like to thank General Yano, who is here today, and Usec or Secretary Jalad, who was also in the Batasan the whole afternoon yesterday, to give us a preliminary briefing. *Salamat po. (Applause)*

Lastly, to the Members of the Eighteenth Congress, Congressmen and Congresswomen from rural and urban areas, Christian, Muslims, and from different religions, Majority Members, Minority Members led by Bishop Benny Abante, members of the administration, members of the opposition, Congressmen representing specific districts and Congressmen and women representing the party-lists, *salamat po na nagkaisa tayo at pinakita natin na sa panahon ng kalamidad, kapag kailangan tayo, we are one voice. Truly, the slogan of the SEA Games, "We Win As One", is alive here today sa Batangas City. (Applause)*

Thank you very much.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ESTRELLA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Majority Floor Leader, and thank you, my distinguished colleagues. *(Applause)*

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until Monday, January 27, 2020, 3:00 p.m., at the House of Representatives.

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the session is adjourned until Monday, January 27, 2020, 3:00 p.m., at the House of Representatives, Batasang Pambansa, Quezon City.

It was 4:18 p.m.

