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No. 46

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Roberto V. Pun0 called the session to order.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pun0). The session is called to order.

PRAYER

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pun0). All please rise for a moment of silent prayer.

Everybody rose for the silent prayer.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pun0). Please remain standing for the Philippine National Anthem.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pun0). The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pun0). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. ATIENZA. Objection, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pun0). Honorable Atienza is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. The Order of Business is very clear: number one, that we should do the calling of the roll. This Representation is wary that if we dispense with this, we may proceed to voting on Second Reading, Third Reading and be passing a legislation which could

be questioned later on. Remember, there are watchdog organizations now—watching what Congress is doing and the procedures being followed here. We do not want to be answerable later on if they will question the proceedings. So, I am objecting to the suspension of the calling of the roll unless the Majority Leader assures us that no voting will be done after we dispense with the calling of the roll.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pun0). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, the sentiments of Honorable Atienza are very well-placed and let me assure him that there will be no voting on controversial matters. If there will be voting, Mr. Speaker, after the roll call, we will make sure that those who are not here will not be counted.

REP. ATIENZA. We thank the Majority Leader for that position and that clarification as we are coming from what happened last Monday where, after we agreed on the floor that those who were not present would not be allowed to vote, we proceeded to vote on Third Reading on a measure—which is very important and critical to the welfare of children—under a questionable condition because the Secretariat announced a total vote of 220 when those present only numbered 146.

So, with that assurance of the Majority Leader today, we withdraw any objection for the moment as long as no voting is done.

Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pun0). The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pun0). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General will please read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the following House Bills and Resolutions on First Reading, Communications and Committee Reports which were referred to the appropriate Committees hereunder indicated:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 6283, entitled:
“AN ACT DECLARING BARANGAY OFFICIALS AS REGULAR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, GRANTING THEM FIXED SALARIES AND OTHER BENEFITS AND ALLOWANCES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”
By Representative Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

House Bill No. 6284, entitled:
“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MAGNACARTA OF PRIVATE HEALTH WORKERS”
By Representative Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 6285, entitled:
“AN ACT CREATING THE BORACAY ISLAND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY”
By Representative Bautista
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION

House Bill No. 6286, entitled:
“AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ADDITIONAL SCHOOLS DIVISION OFFICE IN THE CITY OF ZAMBOANGA, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”
By Representative Dalipe
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 6287, entitled:
“AN ACT CREATING A NETWORK OF MEISTER SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”
By Representative Salceda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 6288, entitled:
“AN ACT DECLARING THE 24TH OF JANUARY

OF EVERY YEAR AS ‘INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION’ IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY AND MANDATING ITS OBSERVANCE”

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

House Bill No. 6289, entitled:
“AN ACT CODIFYING THE ALTERNATIVE CHILD CARE LAWS, REORGANIZING THE INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION BOARD INTO THE NATIONAL AUTHORITY FOR CHILD CARE, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”
By Representative Yu
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 6290, entitled:
“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF RAMON MAGSAYSAY, 1ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR TO BE KNOWN AS RAMON MAGSAYSAY DISTRICT HOSPITAL”
By Representative Yu
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6291, entitled:
“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 3, 8, AND 9 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9856, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST (REIT) ACT OF 2009’ ”
By Representative Rodriguez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

House Bill No. 6292, entitled:
“AN ACT REORGANIZING AND CONVERTING THE INSURANCE COMMISSION INTO A COLLEGIAL BODY, AMENDING SECTIONS 437, 438, AND 439 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10607, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE INSURANCE CODE’, AS AMENDED”
By Representative Rodriguez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

House Bill No. 6293, entitled:
“AN ACT RENEWING THE FRANCHISE

GRANTED TO ABS-CBN CORPORATION (FORMERLY ABS-CBN BROADCASTING CORPORATION) UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7966 OR 'AN ACT GRANTING ABS-CBN BROADCASTING CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES' FOR TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS FROM THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT"

By Representative Legarda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

House Bill No. 6294, entitled:

"AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION (SOGIE) AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR"

By Representatives Brosas, Castro (France) and Elago
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

House Bill No. 6295, entitled:

"AN ACT PROMOTING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE SCHOOL MEALS FOR PUBLIC KINDERGARTEN AND ELEMENTARY PUPILS, ESTABLISHING FOR THE PURPOSE THE UNIVERSAL FREE SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS"

By Representative Salceda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 6296, entitled:

"AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TESDA) TRAINING AND ACCREDITATION CENTER IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOLANA, PROVINCE OF CAGAYAN, TO BE KNOWN AS THE CAGAYAN TESDA TRAINING AND ACCREDITATION CENTER, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

By Representative Lara
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 6297, entitled:

"AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO FREE EXPRESSION,

TO PEACEABLY ASSEMBLE AND TO PETITION THE GOVERNMENT FOR REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 880 OR THE 'PUBLIC ASSEMBLY ACT OF 1985' "

By Representatives Zarate, Gaité and Cullamat
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION

House Bill No. 6298, entitled:

"AN ACT INCREASING THE MONTHLY SOCIAL PENSION OF SENIOR CITIZENS AND EXPANDING THE COVERAGE THEREOF"

By Representative Peña
TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SENIOR CITIZENS

House Bill No. 6299, entitled:

"AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE PROTECTION OF FINANCIAL CONSUMERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

By Representative Hernandez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

House Bill No. 6300, entitled:

"AN ACT MANDATING BANKING INSTITUTIONS TO STRENGTHEN THE FINANCING SYSTEM FOR AGRICULTURAL, FISHERIES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES"

By Representative Hernandez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

House Bill No. 6301, entitled:

"AN ACT PROVIDING PROTECTION TO COOPERATIVE DEPOSITORS AND ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE COOPERATIVE INSURANCE CORPORATION, DEFINING ITS POWER AND FUNCTION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

By Representative Gatchalian
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

House Bill No. 6302, entitled:

"AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO ODIONGAN TELEPHONE CORPORATION, UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8956 ENTITLED

‘AN ACT GRANTING THE ODIONGAN TELEPHONE CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN LOCAL EXCHANGE NETWORK IN THE PROVINCE OF ROMBLON’ ”

By Representative Madrona
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

House Bill No. 6303, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TRANSCENDENT UNIFIED GOVERNMENT MOBILE APPLICATION FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES, SETTING A FRAMEWORK AND COMMON STANDARDS FOR GOVERNMENT MOBILE APPLICATIONS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Garcia (Pablo John)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

House Bill No. 6304, entitled:

“AN ACT CODIFYING THE ALTERNATIVE CHILD CARE LAWS, REORGANIZING THE INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION BOARD INTO THE NATIONAL AUTHORITY FOR CHILD CARE, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Ferrer (Juliet)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 6305, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE CHILDREN’S MEDICAL CENTER FOR VISAYAS AND PHILIPPINE CHILDREN’S MEDICAL CENTER FOR MINDANAO AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Rodriguez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6306, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING NATIONAL KIDNEY AND TRANSPLANT INSTITUTES IN ILOILO CITY FOR VISAYAS AND IN CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY FOR MINDANAO, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Rodriguez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6307, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A LUNG CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES IN BOHOL FOR

THE VISAYAS AND IN CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY FOR MINDANAO, AMENDING SECTION 1 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1823, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT CREATING THE LUNG CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR’, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Rodriguez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6308, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING PHILIPPINE HEART CENTERS IN CEBU FOR VISAYAS AND IN CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY FOR MINDANAO, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Rodriguez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6309, entitled:

“AN ACT PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS, PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Rodriguez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

House Bill No. 6310, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE CHEMICAL ENGINEERING LAW AND REPEALING FOR THAT PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9297, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE CHEMICAL ENGINEERING ACT OF 2004’ ”

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

House Bill No. 6311, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION THE PLANTILLA POSITIONS OF GUIDANCE COUNSELORS IN EVERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND ADDITIONAL PLANTILLA POSITIONS OF GUIDANCE COUNSELOR FOR HIGH SCHOOL, INCREASING THE SALARIES OF GUIDANCE COUNSELORS AND GUIDANCE-RELATED POSITIONS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

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

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 719, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION, AND COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE ACT AND THE CIVIL SERVICE LAW AND THE GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION PLANS FOR 1986 AND 1972”

By Representative Lopez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 720, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING DR. POTENCIANO ‘YONG’ S. LARRAZABAL III FOR BEING THE FIRST FILIPINO TO CONQUER THE WORLD MARATHON CHALLENGE HELD LAST FEBRUARY 06 TO 12, 2020 (7 MARATHONS ON 7 CONTINENTS IN 7 DAYS)”

By Representative Frasco
TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 721, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION STRONGLY URGING THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (NEDA) AND THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS (DPWH) TO CONSIDER THE MUNICIPALITY OF VALLADOLID OR THE CITY OF BAGO, BOTH IN THE PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, AS THE ENTRY AND EXIT POINTS OF THE PROPOSED BRIDGE CONNECTING THE PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL TO THE ISLAND PROVINCE OF GUIMARAS”

By Representative Ferrer (Juliet)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Resolution No. 722, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE NATIONAL HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE PHILIPPINES, COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION, AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO REPORT TO CONGRESS REGARDING THEIR PROGRAMS AND

ACTIVITIES IN COMPLIANCE WITH THEIR MANDATES UNDER REPUBLIC ACT 11304 OR THE ‘PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN WAR MEMORIAL DAY ACT’ ”

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

House Resolution No. 723, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) TO FULLY UTILIZE ITS POWERS AND AUTHORITY AS LEAD AGENCY IN MOBILIZING THE INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE PHILIPPINES (ITFMEIDP)”

By Representatives Biazon, Lopez, Lim, Dato, Singson, Gonzales (Aurelio), Reyes, Campos, Romulo, Nieto, Lacson, Peña, Lacson-Noel and Revilla
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Resolution No. 724, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DECLARING A CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY AND CALLING FOR THE MOBILIZATION OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND INSTRUMENTALITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS TOWARDS THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL, CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION, AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT LAWS IN LIGHT OF THE GLOBAL CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY”

By Representative Legarda
TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE COMMITTEE ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter dated January 31, 2020 of Maria Gleda E. Lim, State Auditor V, Supervising Auditor, Audit Groups CGS I and II-Water Districts and Other CGS Stand Alone Agencies, Regional Office No. VI, Commission on Audit, furnishing the House of Representatives with a copy of the Annual Audit Report on the San Rafael Water District, San Rafael, Iloilo for the years ended December 31, 2015 to 2018.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated February 7, 2020 of Eleanor O. Mena, State

Auditor V, Supervising Auditor, Audit Groups CGS I and II-Water Districts and Other CGS Stand Alone Agencies, Regional Office No. VI, Commission on Audit, furnishing the House of Representatives with copies of the Annual Audit Report on the following:

1. Dumalag Water District, Dumalag, Capiz (CYs 2015-2018); and
2. Panay Railways, Incorporated, Huervana Street, La Paz, Iloilo City (CY 2018).

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of the Committee on Justice and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 233), re H.B. No. 6323, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING ONE (1) ADDITIONAL BRANCH OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LA PAZ, PROVINCE OF ABRA, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14(A) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2655

Sponsors: Representatives Veloso, Ungab and Bernos

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Justice and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 234), re H.B. No. 6324, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING TWO (2) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE FIFTH JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF DAET AND LABO, PROVINCE OF CAMARINES NORTE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14(F) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2698

Sponsors: Representatives Veloso, Ungab and Panotes

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Justice and the Committee

on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 235), re H.B. No. 6325, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING EIGHT (8) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED IN THE CITY OF CALOOCAN AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14(D) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2884

Sponsors: Representatives Veloso, Ungab and Malapitan

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Justice and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 236), re H.B. No. 6326, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING ONE (1) ADDITIONAL BRANCH OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF MOALBOAL, PROVINCE OF CEBU, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14(H) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2954

Sponsors: Representatives Veloso, Ungab, Calderon and Savellano

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Justice and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 237), re H.B. No. 6327, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING TWO (2) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT AND FIVE (5) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT IN CITIES IN THE NINTH JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED IN THE PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14(J) AND 29 OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2423

Sponsors: Representatives Veloso, Ungab, Labadlabad and Garbin
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Justice and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 238), re H.B. No. 6328, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING ONE (1) ADDITIONAL BRANCH OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE SIXTH JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED IN THE CITY OF VICTORIAS, PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14(G) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2510

Sponsors: Representatives Veloso, Ungab and Benitez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Justice and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 239), re H.B. No. 6329, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING FOUR (4) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE FOURTH JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF ROSARIO AND SAN JUAN, PROVINCE OF BATANGAS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14(E) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2523

Sponsors: Representatives Veloso, Ungab and Bolilia
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Justice and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 240), re H.B. No. 6330, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING FIVE (5) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE SIXTH JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED IN THE CITY OF KABANKALAN, PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, AND APPROPRIATING

FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14(G) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2668

Sponsors: Representatives Veloso, Ungab, Alvarez (Genaro) and Garbin
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Local Government (Committee Report No. 241), re H.B. No. 6333, entitled:

“AN ACT COMMEMORATING THE CITYHOOD OF SAN JOSE DEL MONTE, PROVINCE OF BULACAN THROUGH THE ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF THE TANGLAWAN FESTIVAL ON THE OCCASION OF ITS FOUNDATION DAY ON SEPTEMBER 10, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9750”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2376

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

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session for a minute.

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

It was 3:15 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:16 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Irene Gay F. Saulog of KALINGA Party-List. They are the admin, principal, teachers and students of Maranatha Christian Academy of Manila, headed by Ms. Gladys Claire Quillao, school administrator; Ms. Resa Pestano,

school principal; Mrs. Annie Salcedo, department head; Mrs. Genevieve Giron, department head; Ms. Maria Joy Estabillo, department head; Ms. Miki Hiraoka, department head; and their students: Nick Callos, Edmir Guerrero, Jericho Mesolania, Marielle Jonson, Jan Micah Laragan, Philip Nadera, Julia Landicho, Kimberly Tamondong, Trixia Datu and Ms. Julia Baroja.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The House of Representatives welcomes the guests of Honorable Saulog. Thank you for your visit. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6134 ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 6134, contained in Committee Report No. 210, as reported out by the Committee on Banks and Financial Intermediaries.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). 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. 6134, entitled: AN ACT MANDATING BANKING INSTITUTIONS TO STRENGTHEN THE FINANCING SYSTEM FOR AGRICULTURAL, FISHERIES AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate and that the Chairman of the Committee on Banks and Financial Intermediaries, Rep. Junie E. Cua, be recognized for his sponsorship.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Hon. Junie Cua is recognized for his sponsorship speech.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. CUA

REP. CUA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, esteemed colleagues.

Today, I rise to address the decades-old problem of agriculture and fisheries affecting millions of marginalized farmers, fisherfolk and agrarian reform beneficiaries which is the lack of credit. In fact, I dare say that our agricultural sector is currently in a crisis. More and more farms are disappearing because they are deemed unprofitable. Although we have enacted policies to modernize and provide funding to this sector, it has failed miserably.

The more recent Agri-Agra Reform Credit Act of 2009 or Republic Act No. 10000 passed in the year 2009 was supposed to address the problem of financing for agriculture and fisheries as it mandated all banks to lend at least 25 percent of its loanable funds to the sector, broken down as 15 percent for agriculture and 10 percent for agrarian reform beneficiaries, but after more than a decade, the sector has yet to feel the benefits of the law. Farmers have not been able to access the billions, hundreds of billions in fact, of credit that was supposed to be earmarked for them. The banks, ironically, have chosen to shy away from lending to individual farmers who may or may not be agrarian reform beneficiaries and fisherfolk and instead, opt to pay hefty penalties imposed by the law.

So, the question that we ask is, why is this happening? This problem persists because of two things: First, there is the very high cost of lending to each individual small farm holder and fisherman. By way of illustration, a bank would rather lend P25 million to a cooperative, farmers organization or a corporation for that matter, rather than lend P25 million to 1,000 farmers. Needless to say, the administrative cost of lending to so many would be very unattractive to a bank. Some banks, such as the LandBank of the Philippines and the the Development Bank of the Philippines, have tried to address this high cost of lending to individual small farm holders or individual fishermen by lending only to their cooperatives that have shown viable operation. However, over many decades, unfortunately, there has only been a handful of cooperatives that have shown viability or that would merit accommodation. The effort of the Cooperative Development Authority or CDA to organize the farmers and fisherfolk has not borne acceptable results, expectedly, due to lack of funds as is always claimed. Oftentimes, many cooperatives have had a good start but only ended up quarreling over financial interests.

Secondly, it is an admitted fact that for these types of loans, the rate of default is very, very high. "Why would a farmer default on his loan obligation?" one may ask. The following scenario can probably explain this, and this is my personal observation over the decades that I have dealt with rural farmers, fisherfolk and agrarian reform beneficiaries: a hectare—and by the way, the

* 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."

national average is even less than a hectare—of rice farm, even with two croppings or harvests every year, can earn only, at best, P80,000. In the case of corn, it is even less and this is assuming that there is no damage brought about by a typhoon or climate change. Reduced to a monthly income, this would amount to less than P7,000. How can a farmer repay a bank loan if his earnings are not even enough to cover his living expenses? Naturally, a farmer-borrower would, most probably, very likely default on his loan obligations. It is worthwhile to note that this is the way of life in the countryside. The monocropping of rice and corn is the norm nationwide.

We can plainly see, therefore, that it has become a chicken-and-egg situation at this point. On one hand, agriculture is unprofitable for small farmers because the only way for them to earn more is to have more capital. On the other hand, the banks that can provide capital have never done so, and mind you, even under threat of penalties mandated by our law, precisely because this sector is unprofitable and risky. So, unless, we do something innovative to address this problem of high cost of lending and the viability itself or the profitability itself of farming and fishing, this dire situation, and a vicious cycle at that, will continue to persist until probably all our farms would have disappeared. As one writer quipped, and I quote, “We are an agricultural country importing rice and an archipelagic country importing fish.” An irony.

From this scenario, this humble Representation, with the help of a team of competent men and women from the different agencies of government have formulated this Bill. We need innovative interventions to help the sector. How? First, we have to group them together to reduce the cost of lending. As mentioned earlier, individual farmer and fisherfolk loan applicants are unattractive and risky for banks, but they can be organized as cooperatives or associations which can then directly interface with the banks for their financing needs. The cooperative can then lend to their members who do not have to deal with the cumbersome application procedure of formal institutions. Second, this we must understand. It is not enough that we give them access to credit, as what we have done under Republic Act No. 10000. This is where these policy attempts fell very short. Other than credit access, we must ensure that we make the venture itself profitable and this can be done by a paradigm shift—from just monocropping to, probably, integrated farming, adding more value to our agricultural commodities. A small farm can be integrated where rice or corn can be supplemented by other high-value crops. Moreover, a portion of the farm can be dedicated to raising livestock, such as chicken, cattle and pigs, to supplement the farm’s income. This is integrated farming. All these programs are already being done by the Department of Agriculture (DA) for

the past years. What is the missing link? The only missing link is financing. The money is there, the programs of the DA are there, but they do not flow to where they should go.

My dear colleagues, over a nine-year period, I had the fortune to engage and interest the Korean government to help us pilot integrated farming and we have found it to have worked. This could be a solution. Now, if they are grouped together, it will allow them to borrow even bigger amounts since the risk is shared. Going further, access to credit can even allow them to engage in higher-value endeavors such as agricultural product processing which greatly improves profitability. Instead of just rice farming, they can go into palay-to-rice processing, rice milling, transporting and trading, thus making more money in the end. However, given the failure rate of agricultural cooperatives and associations, there is a clear need to first capacitate them by providing training for them to be managed professionally. This is where our programs have dismally failed.

This Bill addresses the problem by setting aside a special fund that is to be used only for capacity and institution-building for cooperatives and associations nationwide. Through our consultations with the banks, we have explained our concept and they have committed to not only contribute but also to help manage the fund so that it can capacitate the cooperatives or associations using the best practices available in the private sector. To achieve this, the Bill creates a private sector-dominated council to manage the special fund, similar to a concept that we have done decades ago to enhance and empower the Export Development Council. The council is tasked to take charge of capacitating agricultural and rural cooperatives nationwide so that they can be profitable, viable vehicles for the growth and development of farmers and fisherfolks.

The banks, by helping these cooperatives and associations, not only will build clients for their business, but they ultimately will contribute to the country as well. In this new concept, the banks can be active, rather than passive members, of our communities by helping build capacity for the agricultural sector through the cooperatives in their community. In turn, these cooperatives can be the clients of the banks when they become profitable and viable. Unlike previous attempts to help this sector, the public-private partnership is led or dominated by the private sector which is more adept at managing a business and will have more “malasakit,” so to speak, since it is motivated by profit. In the end, in helping these cooperatives and making them into lucrative businesses, it is also helping the business of the banks.

The proposed measure seeks to institutionalize a framework that will be more responsive to the needs of the agricultural sector while providing for ways for the

banking industry to take on a more expansive role in line with the policy approach that is coordinated, systematic, broad-based and inclusive. The concept that banks are not merely credit providers but stakeholders in rural development is an underlying, yet unrealized, principle in this law that we are proposing. By creating a special fund devoted exclusively to capacity building and related activities, and encouraging banks to contribute to such fund as a mode of alternative compliance with the mandatory credit allocation, the proposed measure is effectively cementing the role of the financial sector as stakeholder and a critical growth partner of the State in the countryside development.

It is also worthwhile to mention that this Bill is a product of a series of multi-sectoral, multi-agency consultations and workshops held over a period of several months with the active participation of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and other government agencies and government regulators. Furthermore, it is also the result of my personal discussions with Governor Ben Diokno of the BSP, Sec. William Dar of the DA and the heads of LandBank and the DBP, and finally, Sec. Sonny Dominguez who inspired me to take on this challenge to directly address the problem of credit financing to the marginalized farmers, fisherfolk and agrarian reform beneficiaries, and indirectly addressing a great burden of the banking industry.

I hope my dear colleagues that this will merit your support. Our farmers are the unsung heroes endlessly working, toiling and suffering to ensure that there is enough food for every Filipino. As legislators, it is our singular duty to protect their interest and look after their welfare.

Maraming, maraming salamat po.

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

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Jose L. Atienza Jr. of Party-List BUHAY to interpellate Hon. Junie E. Cua. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Honorable Atienza is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We would like to request the Gentleman whom I respect to the fullest, his heart being in the proper place, but some clarifications are needed so that his good intentions are carried out for the benefit of the farmer and the fisherman. Puwede po ba?

REP. CUA. Mr. Speaker, with the indulgence of my colleague, I did not hear very well the question. Pardon me.

REP. ATIENZA. Will you please—we are requesting that we be allowed to ask some questions.

REP. CUA. Oh, yes, with honor and pleasure, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Alam po ninyo, ang ating kaibigang Sponsor, bukod sa kamukhang-kamukha niya si Prime Minister Koizumi ng Japan, ay isang batikang Mambabatas na sabi ko kanina na ang puso niya ay nasa tamang lugar. This is a very timely measure.

Mr. Speaker, ang mga maliliit na magsasaka ay naghahirap ngayon, at ang maliliit na mga mangingisda ang pinakamahirap sa Pilipinas, kaya tama po ito. Ito po ay iyong aming inaasam-asam na mayroong katulad ni Congressman Cua na lilikha ng batas, kasama niya iyong mga co-Sponsors, upang matulungan natin ang mga magsasaka at mga mangingisda. Tama po ba iyong aming assumption na ang mangingisda ngayon ay ang pinakamahirap na Pilipino?

REP. CUA. Totoo.

REP. ATIENZA. In comparison with the other sectors, the fisherfolk are the poorest in the country?

REP. CUA. Totoo po iyan. Tama po ang sinabi ni Honorable Atienza. Ang mga mangingisda at mga magsasaka ay talaga naman pong naghihikahos kahit na ho sila ay magsipag at magtrabaho nang husto. At the end of the day, because of these structural problems, talagang hindi po sila gumiginhawa. Ako po ay nagpapasalamat kay G. Atienza sa kaniyang mga papuri na tunay na nakapagpapataba ng puso at sana po ay hindi ako maatake.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Prime Minister, este, Mr. Congressman (*laughing*), the problem of our farmers from the beginning up to now is actually or basically one of lack of funding. Ganoon din po ang problema ng mga mangingisda. Bukod sa wala na silang mapangisdaan ay wala pa silang salapi para gumawa ng mas malaking bangka o bumili ng mas modernong gamit. Tama po ba iyong ating mga assumptions?

REP. CUA. Totoo po iyan. Sa katotohanan po ay mayroon po tayong batas ngayon na pinapairal na at ang naka-set aside po ay bilyon-bilyong pera. Mayroon naman pong programa ang DA subalit hindi po makarating iyong pera sa mga maliliit na mangingisda at sa mga maliliit na magsasaka dahil po sa mga kadahilanan na aking nabanggit kanina.

REP. ATIENZA. Samakatuwid, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, ang pakay nitong panukala ay matulungan

silang pagbigay ng salapi sa mga magsasaka at ang mga mangingisda.

REP. CUA. Totoo po iyan. Exactly, Your Honor, this is the noble intention of this Bill—to capacitate the small farmers and the fisherfolk, whom the banks today refuse to lend money to, because lending to them is very expensive. What we are proposing is that we organize them so that we can reduce the cost of lending to them by organizing them and providing money so that they can be organized properly. At the same time, we will encourage them to go into value addition, go into new methods of catching fishes and of fish culture so that their venture of fishing or their venture of farming will become viable and profitable.

REP. ATIENZA. Maganda po ang naturan ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor pero hindi po ba mas epektibo at mas direkta ang magiging benepisyo kung ang salapi ay ididiretso roon sa magsasaka at sa mangingisda? Ang problema ngayon ay talagang hindi makapangutang ang isang mangingisda. Bibili lamang siya ng bagong lambat pero wala siyang salapi. Magpapaayos lamang siya ng bangka ay hindi rin niya magawa sapagkat wala siyang puhunan. Ganon din po ang magsasaka. Ang sabi ninyo, ang pera ay padadaanin sa mga organisasyon. Hindi ba magiging mapanganib iyon sapagkat iyong tinutulungan nating mga indibidwal na bahagi ng mga sektor, baka hindi po sila ang makinabang at ang makikinabang ay iyong namumuno at nagpapatakbo ng organisasyon. Tiningnan po ba ninyo ang anggulong iyon, na iyong inyong magandang intensiyon ay baka hindi umabot sa kinauukulan?

REP. CUA. Amin pong pinag-aralan ang bagay na iyan at napag-aralan namin na kinakailangan na maipababa natin ang cost of lending sa mga magsasaka at sa mga mangingisda in some way. The only way that we can think of is to organize them dahil po kung papautangin natin ng tingi-tingi ang mga maliliit na magsasaka o mangingisda ay napakataas po ng lending cost at napakahirap para sa mga magsasaka at mangingisda na makapag-comply sa mga documentary requirements na kinakailangan ding isumite sa regulators ng mga bangko. Nakita po natin na ito po ang isang missing link at ito ang isang paraan para maparating ang pera ng hindi napakal-expensive ang pagpapautang.

Pangalawa, kaya po nag-aalangang magpautang ang mga lending institutions ay sa kadahilanan na individually ang mga magsasaka, kung nagmonocropping lamang, ay talaga pong kinukulangang iyong kikitain. Kinakailangan po na sila ay maturuan ng integrated farming para nang sa ganon ay lumaki ang kanilang kinikita at sila ay maging viable, at kung ito ay gagawin natin ay mas makakautang sila

ng mas malaking halaga, lalo na kung ang utang ay isang organisasyon na mayroong tinatawag na equity counterpart. Ang mga bangko naman, sa aming pakikipag-usap sa kanila, ay willing na tumulong din na mag-set aside ng equity counterpart na ang puwedeng panggalingan din ay iyong kanilang ipapautang o hindi kaya ang panggagalingan ay iyong special fund na ating pinu-put up na siyang gagamitin sa pag-oorganisa ng ating mga kooperatiba.

Iyan po ang isang nakikita natin na pamamaraan dahil po kung tingi-tinging pagpapautang, from a lender's point of view, bukod sa maraming kakausapin ay nawawalan ng economy of scale sapagkat kung ang isang grupo ng mga magsasaka ay magtatanim, halimbawa, ng fruit-bearing trees, at ito po ay mayroong critical mass para ma-process ay magkakaroon sila ng value-added venture na hindi magagawa kung individual farmer lamang. Ganon din po sa mga mangingisda. Ito po ang isang nakita namin na maaaring maging solusyon doon sa dalawang problema na ibinigay sa amin ng mga bangko na mga kadahilanan kung bakit sila ay nahihirapang magpautang.

At the end of the day, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Kung ito po ay mai-set up natin ay puwede po naman nating ma-testing kung ano ang model na puwedeng maging successful. Wala naman po tayong pino-propose na one-size-fits-all na model kundi flexibility. Flexibility is given to the council so that they can come up with the right model, depending on the obtaining situation, Mr. Speaker.

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6134

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, with the permission of the distinguished Gentlemen, Honorable Cua and Atienza, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 6134.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The consideration of House Bill No. 6134 is hereby suspended.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ROLL CALL

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move to call the roll of the House Members.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Secretary General will please call the roll.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is reflected in Journal No.46, dated February 19, 2020.**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Mr. Speaker, the roll call shows that 218 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). With 218 Members present, including those who are deemed present in accordance with our rules—just like those attending the Commission on Appointments meeting, nine Members; those attending Committee meetings as authorized by the Committee on Rules, 10 Members; and those on official business, 13 Members—the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, just to clarify the record, what is the total of those outside of the hall today as compared to the 178 we have counted which is 218? Therefore, 40 Members, is that right, are outside of the Hall?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The number of Members who are currently not in the hall but are considered present is 32.

REP. ATIENZA. So, we have been overestimating the count ourselves. If we have 32 outside the Hall and if we add that to the 170 plus who are in the hall, we have 218. We just would like to remind the Secretariat, for purposes of consistency and integrity, that when a vote is called for by the Majority Leader, we do not count the 32 who are not inside the Hall.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we assure the Body that our intention is to have an upright, credible and legal procedure in the House so that nobody can question our decisions later on. If we are not accurate and the figures do not match the affidavits written by those tasked to guard the count, then we would be in a very serious predicament. Kaya ang hinihiling ko po, kapag magbobotohan, huwag ninyong bilangan ang wala sa Hall sapagkat hindi tayo dapat pumayag sa ganoong klaseng paraan. Kung tayo ay papayag dito, ibigay na lang natin sa Secretariat ang desisyon to approve and disapprove because they can always make up a figure that could remain unquestioned later on. So, the time to question any count or any number

of votes by the Secretariat should be immediately after they announce it. We do not intend to interrupt anyone, but we would do that as long as we do not see the counts being done in accordance with the Rules.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, we take note of the sentiment of Honorable Atienza and of course, we are in unison with him. We want to keep the credibility of the House, especially when we vote, Mr. Speaker, and that is why I am also confident that the Secretariat will not do their so-called “dagdag-bawas” and if they do, it will affect all of us.

Mr. Speaker, with that, we would like to proceed to the election of some Members to various committees.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Majority Leader will please proceed.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

REP. DE VENECIA. Mr. Speaker, in behalf of the Majority, I move for the election of the following Members to various Committees:

Rep. Christopher V.P. De Venecia read the names of the House Members elected to the various Committees, per Journal No. 46, dated February 19, 2020.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND UNITY

As Chairperson:

Rep. Esmael G. Mangudadatu

As Vice Chairpersons:

Rep. Maria Fe R. Abunda

Rep. Joseph Sto. Niño B. Bernos

Rep. Rashidin H. Matba

As members:

Rep. Solomon R. Chungalao

Rep. Ansaruddin Abdul Malik A. Adiong

Rep. Arnold “Noli” D. Celeste

Rep. Samier A. Tan

Rep. Munir M. Arbison

Rep. Geraldine B. Roman

Rep. Adriano A. Ebcas

Rep. Presley C. De Jesus

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SOUTHERN
TAGALOG DEVELOPMENT

As Chairperson:
Rep. Elenita Milagros “Eileen” Ermita-Buhain

As Vice Chairpersons:
Rep. Luis “Jon-Jon” A. Ferrer IV
Rep. Ruth Mariano-Hernandez
Rep. Mario Vittorio “Marvey” A. Mariño

As members:
Rep. Sol Aragones
Rep. Joaquin M. Chipeco Jr.
Rep. David “Jay-Jay” C. Suarez
Rep. Angelina “Helen” D.L. Tan, MD
Rep. Michael John R. Duavit
Rep. Dahlia A. Loyola
Rep. Aleta C. Suarez
Rep. Juan Fidel Felipe F. Nograles

COMMITTEE ON MUSLIM AFFAIRS

As Chairperson:
Rep. Ansaruddin Abdul Malik A. Adiong

As Vice Chairpersons:
Rep. Yasser Alonto Balindong
Rep. Datu Roonie Q. Sinsuat Sr.
Rep. Amihilda J. Sangcopan

As members:
Rep. Mohamad Khalid Q. Dimaporo
Rep. Esmael G. Mangudadatu
Rep. Munir M. Arbison
Rep. Abdullah D. Dimaporo
Rep. Princess Rihan M. Sakaluran
Rep. Rashidin H. Matba
Rep. Shernee A. Tan
I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The aforementioned Members are so elected to the various Committees.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6134

Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 6134 where we are still in the period of sponsorship

and debate. For this purpose, may we recognize Honorable Cua to continue the sponsorship of the measure, and Honorable Atienza for his interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

Honorable Atienza and Honorable Cua are recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, again, we are reiterating our admiration to the Gentleman Sponsor for his well-intentioned piece of legislation. We support it. I will vote for it. We know that the intention is very much needed by the sectors pinpointed—agriculture and fishery.

Mahirap po ang kalagayan nila pero hindi natin masasabi na ang mga malalaking korporasyon ng mga mangingisda ay naghihirap. Ang naghihirap po iyong mga mangingisda. Hindi po natin masasabi na iyong mga nagnenegosyo ng bigas ay naghihirap. Ang naghihirap po ay iyong mga magsasaka kaya ang tanong ko po kanina: Wala ba tayong puwedeng ilagay na mekanismo rito na ang salapi na ating inuutos na ilagay ng mga bangko, ang 25 porsiyento ng puhunan, ay para sa mga maliliit na mangingisda at mga magsasaka?

Kung sasabihin natin kailangan lahat sila ay dumaan sa malaking organisasyon, ang makikinabang na naman po ay ang malalaki, at ang maiipit ay ang maliliit. That worries me, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to ask the Sponsor if he is willing, in the period of amendments, to include certain provisions that would guarantee that the money will flow to the small farmer and the small fisherman, and not remain in the hands of the moneyed class.

Marami pong yumayaman sa agrikultura. Marami rin pong yumayaman sa pangingisda. Ang naiiwan po ay iyong mga pangkaraniwang Pilipino at iyon, sa palagay ko, ang dapat nating tingnan sa magandang batas na ito, na hindi naman natin puwedeng ulit-ulitin. Ang pinag-uusapan natin ngayon, and I would like to get the cooperation of the Gentleman Sponsor, that at the right time, we put a provision that will guarantee what we have said.

REP. CUA. Mr. Speaker, I fully appreciate the intent of the Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List. If I may bring to your attention the sad reality today, that even with the passage of Republic Act No. 10000, what is actually happening is exactly what the Gentleman is saying, that we have passed a law obliging the banks to lend to the agricultural sector but unfortunately, those who are benefitting from this legislation, in fact, are the big companies which really do not need this law. They are the ones benefitting from it.

In other words, this is exactly what we are trying to address in this Bill. We want to make sure that this time around, what the Gentleman feels will no longer happen. We have put in place certain provisions in this Bill that will help us achieve that. If you will note, one of the provisions that we have put in place here is that, as an alternative compliance, we included agribusiness companies. These are actually the big companies that the Gentleman must be talking about. They are the big ones that are benefitting from the law. We have put a colatilla here that when banks lend to big companies engaged in agribusiness, it must somehow be connected to a commodities supply arrangement that will benefit the small farmers and the small fisherfolk. That is one provision.

I think that the heart of the problem is, how do we ensure that this time around, these billions or, in fact, trillions of pesos set aside for agricultural sector will really trickle down to the small guys. We have laid down the formula and we sincerely believe that from our intensive study of the situation—I would like to impress upon our colleagues that this measure is a Bill that went through a long study.

It took us months of interviews and consultations to find out the sense of the small farmers on how they will be able to really access, and this is what gelled in our consultations—they strongly recommended that some kind of grouping, clustering or, organizing should be made so that they can be capacitated, and the cooperatives will not only be organized but also ensure that it is professionally managed. It is sad to note that over decades, despite the existence of the CDA, many coops have been organized only to find themselves quarrelling among each other when they achieved success already. In other words, there is a need to reorient the mindset of the leadership of the coops—to ensure that they are professionalized and properly motivated by incentives so that they become good vehicles to ensure the welfare of their members.

We always say that unless we have an economy of scale, it is difficult really to achieve profit. Napakahirap maging kapaki-pakinabang kung nag-iisa ang isang magsasaka o ang isang mangingisda. Kinakailangan niyang magkaroon ng isang samahan na talagang tunay na pangangalagaan ang kanilang common interest and we hope that this happens. Of course, we are not guaranteeing the success of this attempt, but I think we have laid down the framework of what can be done by providing the structure, the people and the money most especially. This organizational effort, professionalization effort, will require billions of pesos and we have to somehow come up with a way that this money is made available without taxing or introducing another tax measure.

So, that is my response, Mr. Speaker, to the very nice question of the Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, narinig po natin ang magandang paraan at layunin ng may-akda ng panukalang batas. Liliwanagin ko lang, for the record, sa inyong mga public hearings, narinig po ba ninyo ang mga tinig noong mga pangkaraniwang magsasaka at mga pangkaraniwang mangingisda—si Mang Pedro ng Calasiao, si Mang Juan ng Bulacan, individual fishermen who have a lot to address the government with regard to this measure? Wala silang puhunan, at kapag pumunta sila sa bangko, ang sasabihin sa kanila, “Hindi ka puwedeng pautangin dahil ikaw ay indibidwal.”

Kaya ako ay natutuwa sapagkat ang panukalang ito ay maaaring maging behikulo ng pagbabago. This may revolutionize the whole process of credit so that the individual fisherman can avail and is given the opportunity to borrow money needed for his livelihood. Ganoon rin po iyong magsasaka. Kung sila ay ating isasama na lamang sa organisasyon, napanood ko na po ito at alam ko na rin ang magiging hantungan nito sa pagdating ng panahon at ayaw kong masisi ako ni Congressman Cua, “Hindi mo pinaalala e.” Ang mga pera na binigay para sa mga organisasyon—the fertilizer fund was meant to be a good fund, but what happened to it? Because of corruption, ninakaw ng mga kooperatibang binuo lang ng mga magnanakaw. Natutuwa ako sapagkat patuloy ang pagbibigay ng kaso sa kanila ng Ombudsman. Iyong puhunan ng mga mangingisda noong araw, ang sinabi sa kanila, “Mayroon na kayong makukuha, magagamit na salapi, subalit dadaan kayo rito.” Ganoon din po ang nangyaring ending—nawala ang pera at hindi natulungan si mangingisda.

Ang akin pong hinihingi lamang ay lagyan natin ng probisyon so that the individual farmer or the individual fisherman is also given availment of credit by the private banking institutions at hindi iyong gagamiting paraan ng mga bangko itong batas natin, na sasabihing “Wala kang organisasyon, wala kaming ipautang.” Dapat na ma-entertain nila ang lahat na iyan dahil may mga individual farmer na maganda naman ang track record. Maaari naman maglagay tayo ng probisyon na hindi maaaring isa lang ang magga-guarantor. Marahil ay gawin natin na for every two or three of them, they can borrow money and they are kept liable jointly and individually para magkaroon sila ng policing system. Hindi po naman bago ito dahil ginamit na ito sa India, ginamit na ito sa ibang bansa, kaya gamitin natin ito dito sa ating bansa para ang mga maliliit ay maabot ng maganda ninyong layunin.

REP. CUA. May I respond to the Gentleman, Mr. Speaker? Yes, I could not agree more with the Gentleman. In fact, to be very honest with the Gentleman, we have readied some Committee amendments and one of the amendments—in fact, the first amendment really addresses your concern. Actually, our intention really is to include individual and for some reason, due to an inadvertence, mukhang nakalimutang isingit iyong individual. Pasensiya na po, pasensiya na, partner, but I can very well understand your point.

REP. ATIENZA. Naiintindihan ko po iyon, G. Isponsor.

REP. CUA. Opo. The only reason I am giving a long answer to a short question is that we also feel very strongly that, while lending or accessing the funds that we will create, a special fund to individuals is really possible, based on our studies, and it seems that we can go a longer way, so. I agree with the Gentleman. I accept his point and at the proper time, we will introduce it as an individual amendment and no longer as a Committee amendment.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, we will craft, in consultation with the Sponsor, a provision that will allow the ordinary fisherman and farmer to also benefit from this very well-intentioned measure...

REP. CUA. Yes.

REP. ATIENZA. ... and allow them to avail of funding for their sectoral, individual needs. Puwede silang organisasyon, puwede silang indibidwal, sapagkat ang sikhura po naman natin ay hiwa-hiwalay.

REP. CUA. Okay.

REP. ATIENZA. Mayroong mayaman, may mahirap.

REP. CUA. Okay.

REP. ATIENZA. Tulungan natin iyong mahihirap na magkaroon ng puhunan. Iyon lang po ang ating layunin.

REP. CUA. Okay. So, if the Gentleman would agree and he will have no vehement objection, baka puwedeng Committee amendment na lang para mabilis. Okay?

REP. ATIENZA. Maraming salamat po sa inyong pagtanggap ng mungkahi.

REP. CUA. Thank you.

REP. ATIENZA. Bubuo tayo ng paraan para po naman iyong ating pinag-usapan ay maaaring balik-balikan later on kapag kinukuwestiyon na ang batas na ito sa pagpapatupad.

REP. CUA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Babalikan nila ang ating pag-uusap na ito. We both agree that the individual farmer must be benefitted by the measure.

REP. CUA. Yes.

REP. ATIENZA. They are not excluded. They are part and parcel of whom we would like to help in this measure.

REP. CUA. Agree, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Another point, Mr. Speaker. I read the different projects that you consider vital and could be the basis in applying for a loan. Mayroon kayong farm-to-market roads. Tama po ba iyon?

REP. CUA. Farm-to-market roads.

REP. ATIENZA. Tama po ba iyon?

REP. CUA. Tama iyon po. There is a provision here on that.

REP. ATIENZA. Hindi po ba iyong farm-to-market roads ay adequately funded by the government, by the Department of Public Works and Highways? Kailangan bang ito ay tulungan pa ng pananalapi samantalang sobra-sobra ang pera ng DPWH para sa farm-to-market roads? Hindi po ba maaaring iwasan natin iyon at ilagay natin iyong mga ibang pangangailangan?

Ang isang magsasaka, hanggang ngayon, ay wala pong mapagtindahan noong kaniyang individual harvest. Panahon ng papaya, gusto niyang dalhin sa taumbayan iyong papaya na na-harvest niya pero saan siya pupunta? Sa palengke o kaya sa highway?

Noong ako ay maliit na bata pa, nakikita ko na po iyong mga magsasaka na nagtitinda sa highway pero hanggang ngayon, hindi nagbabago ang kanilang kalagayan. Nasa ilalim sila ng nipa hut at nagtitinda ng kanilang produkto, may pakwan, papaya, kaimito at kung anuman iyong kanilang ani, because agriculture involves products other than rice, corn and the basic staples. Panahon ng atis, marami pong atis, pero wala pong mapagtindahan ang mga magsasaka kaya sila ay napagsasamantalahan ng middlemen. Kapag pinakyaw sa kanila, ito ay limang piso para sa isang piraso pero

pagdating sa palengke ay P20 na, at pagdating sa consumer ay P35 na, samantalang iyong magsasaka, limang piso lang ang ibinayad sa kaniya.

Kung magagawan natin ng paraan na ang mga magsasaka ay matulungan natin sa marketing requirement ng agricultural product, malaking bagay po iyan. Ito na po ang pagkakataon at isama natin sa layunin ng batas. Malaking bagay po iyan sapagkat ito ay requirement ng isang maliit na naghahanapbuhay, kung saan niya dadalhin ang kaniyang ani. Kung hindi po natin babaguhin ang sistema—dalhin mo sa highway, pumuwesto ka sa ilalim ng nipa hut o sa ilalim ng puno, nakalagay ito sa isang mesa, pagsasamantalahan ka na lamang diyan ng mga paparadang mamimili. Kung may sistema tayo at itatayo natin sila ng isang maayos na tindahan na mayroong palikurang bayan, it will also encourage local tourism. It will encourage movement of people along the highways. It will give the farmers a direct relationship with the buyer, with the consumer without necessarily passing through a comprador, an agent who makes all the money while the farmer remains poor and miserable.

Puwede po ba nating isaalang-alang iyon sa ating mga nakikitang project na maaaring makinabang sila dito?

REP. CUA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the point of the Gentleman is really very well taken. In fact, his concern, if we analyze and look through the intent of this Bill, kasama po iyan. In fact, kung nag-iisa lang ang magsasaka, talagang babaratin iyong kaniyang produkto lalo na kung nagkasabay-sabay ang anihan. Kaya nga po may merit talaga na magkaroon sila ng association o kooperatiba para nang sa ganoon ay makapagbenta sila ng kanilang produkto sa mas magandang presyo, sa mas tamang presyo.

Tungkol naman po doon sa farm-to-market roads, ito po ay provision ng existing na batas. Ito po ay nasa Republic Act No. 10000 at iyon po ay aming itinutuloy lang dito sa ating amendment. Just to be able to explain and express the rationale of this, while we understand that this is supposed to be the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Public Works and Highways, when it comes to farm-to-market roads, we envision the day, Mr. Speaker, that when we succeed in organizing the farmers into groups, into viable cooperatives, they will grow to become very big, rich and viable, and they deal with clusters of farms. It is possible, Mr. Speaker. Whether we like it or not, talagang kulang na kulang din po naman ang naa-allocate na pondo para sa farm-to-market roads ng Department of Agriculture and so, if we allow the banking sector to lend to these organizations or corporations that will serve the interest of these small farmers and fisherfolk, we find no objection to it kaya itinuloy po namin iyon.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, at this point, I would like to thank the Gentleman for being open to interpellation, to some questions bordering on—some of them are sensitive matters like the illegal use of funds for the farmers and the fisherfolk. Iyong binanggit ko pong farm-to-market roads ay baka mapunta sa dating gawi, farm-to-pocket roads. Nagamit na naman ang magandang layunin ng inyong batas at masisisi tayo ng mga bangko, “Kayo ang nagsabing magpahiram kami. Hindi naman namin alam ang intensiyon ay hindi po tama.”

At this point in time, we will continue to try and contribute whatever we can to make the proposed law an all-encompassing support for the sector of the farmers and fishermen, the organizations, the cooperatives and the individuals who are involved in that profession or in that work, and makinabang sila rito sa magandang batas na ito.

As I mentioned earlier, I would like to request the Gentleman that I be made a Sponsor of the measure. Matagal ko na pong panaginip na bigyan ng malaking tulong ang mga magsasaka na marami nang salapi ang ninakaw sa kanila. Matulungan ang mga mangingisda na ginagamit na lamang ngayon paraan para magkamal pa ng mas maraming salapi ang malalaking dambuhalang mayayaman.

At this point in time, may I be a co-Sponsor of the measure?

REP. CUA. Of course, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity. Again, we congratulate Congressman Cua. Siya ay kinokopya, hindi po nagagaya. Kinokopya ni Prime Minister Koizumi ng Japan pero mas magandang lalaki po ang ating Congressman. Thank you.

Congratulations!

REP. CUA. Thank you so much, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, for your very kind words. On behalf of the Committee on Banks and Financial Intermediaries, I would also like to express our heartfelt thanks to the Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List for his inputs and insights. I believe that his interpellation has enriched this legislation.

Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the honorable Deputy Speaker Aurelio “Dong” D. Gonzales Jr. of the Third District of Pampanga to interpellate Honorable Cua.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The honorable Deputy Speaker, Hon. Dong Gonzales, is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader.

Mr. Speaker, I was listening to your privilege speech while I was in my office. Maganda po iyong mga sinasabi ninyo. I think before the recess last month, I also stood up in your place regarding the farmers.

So, I am very interested in your speech. So, you are filing a resolution, Mr. Speaker? Ano ang pinakaunang magandang gawin po sa ating mga farmers and the fisherfolk?

REP. CUA. Well, dito po sa ating panukalang batas, base sa ating pag-aaral, base sa katayuan ng mga maliliit na magsasaka at mangingisda at agrarian reform beneficiaries, kulang na kulang ang kanilang kapital, kulang na kulang ang puhunan. Wala po silang mautangan, kung hindi, sila po ay at the mercy of traders at a very usurious rate of lending.

Naipaliwanag na po natin kung ano ang mga naging kadahilanan kung bakit ito po ay nangyayari, na ang mga bangko na napakalaki naman ng perang puwedeng ipautang ay hindi nagpapautang at bagkus, mas gusto pa nilang maparusahan kaysa magpautang. Nahimay na po natin kung ano ang mga kadahilanan nito kaya ang una pong gagawin natin ay i-set up muna ang pondo na ito na ima-manage ng isang council which is called the AFFCC or Agricultural Fisheries Financing Credit Council. Ima-manage po nila ang pondo na ito para sa pag-oorganisa ng mga magsasaka, mga mangingisda at agrarian reform beneficiaries into viable—I would like to emphasize the word “viable”—and professionally-run, professionally-managed associations. It may not be a coop and any grouping will do as long as it is effective so that it can be a viable debtor, a viable borrower, na puwedeng pagtiwalaan ng bangko. Ito ang nagiging problema, natatakot sila magpautang kasi nga hindi viable, at magiging viable lamang ito kung maipakikita nila na ang kanilang operation by itself will be profitable.

Sa amin pong pag-aaral, ang monocropping ng palay o ng mais ay hindi po talaga or will never pull farmers and fisherfolks out of poverty, kung hindi ay patuloy po silang nandiyan, hindi umaahon at tuloy-tuloy po ang paglubog. Iyon po ang uunahin nating gawin—create the fund, organize the council, set up the mechanism so that they can start organizing and capacitating the farmers and the fisherfolk, as well as the agrarian reform beneficiaries.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Sponsor told us that you need a capital for the

farmers. In his mind, magkano po ang kapital na kailangan ng isang magsasaka? Halimbawa, ang sinasabi ninyo which is to be handled by the farmers and the fisherfolk, magkano po ang puhunan na kailangan, kasi nalulugi po iyan, kaya ang tanong tungkol sa puhunan na kailangang i-augment natin sa bawat magsasaka.

REP. CUA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, iyong kapital na kakailanganin ng isang magsasaka, we cannot really set a fixed figure kasi this will depend on the circumstances on the ground. If you are asking me, let us say, magkano ang puhunan ng magsasaka sa aking probinsiya kung ito ay irrigated o hindi irrigated, iyon siguro ay puwede kong ibigay ang figure base sa aking experience. If, as I understand, we will be setting a fixed amount of capital to be lent to a borrower, for example, when they are organized as a cooperative or when they borrow as individuals, that will depend po sa katayuan, kalagayan, iyong project na pino-propose noong umuutang kasi here, we are looking at a model of associations borrowing money. Although, as proposed by Honorable Atienza, it is also possible that a viable individual can access that fund, we will not discourage that because it is a viable loan. We will continue to allow that. We will never close the door to them, but kung magkano po ang magiging kapital, mahirap pong sagutin sapagkat depende po iyan sa kalagayan.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Salamat, Mr. Speaker. Kung halimbawa ay wala pa tayong figure on how much ang kailangan nila, kung ang gobyerno natin will augment their capital, how much interest will occur na i-charge natin sa mga farmers? Is this an interest-free long-term payment, mayroon po ba kayong ideya? You are a banker also, Mr. Speaker. Alam ninyo po kung magkano iyong return ng bawat magsasaka, so, do you have in your mind, kung halimbawa, ito ay low interest or without interest for the farmers, Mr. Speaker?

REP. CUA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, thank you for the question. Maganda pong tanong iyan, but let me clarify. There are actually two sets of funds we are talking about here. Ang isa pong set fund ay iyong tinatawag nating “Agricultural Fisheries Financing System.” Ito po iyong mandated credit o iyong credit quota na tinatawag natin which is now being proposed to be set at 25 percent. Iyon po ay isang set fund based on the total loanable funds of the whole banking industry. The total loanable funds of the banking industry really run into trillions and so, 25 percent of that will be set aside for agrifishery, agrarian reform, and mini fisheries. Malaki pong halaga iyon. That is one set of fund and that is the fund that the banks, whether it is a universal

bank, a commercial bank, a thrift bank, a rural bank, a coop bank, et cetera, all kinds of banks, it sets a price on its own loan. Hindi ko po masasagot kung ano ang presyo noon kasi depende po ito sa desisyon ng nagpapautang at sa policy ng Central Bank kung ano iyong interbank rate na nag-e-evolve sa market. So, that is difficult to tell. That is the first set.

The second set is what we call the special fund. This is the fund that will be contributed, the source of which will be the initial fund that we hope to be able to raise and the subsequent contributions to it arising out of penalties or arising out of contributions in compliance of the banks with the law. Ang initial fund po nito ay ini-expect po namin na P10 billion. Of this, two billion pesos will be contributed by the banking sector. Ito iyong ating ini-expect na mari-raise on the government side dahil dito po sa panukala na ito, ito iyong uncollected penalty po noong mga taon na nakaraan bago maaprubahan ang batas na ito, assuming this gets approved within the year, lahat po ng hindi nakokolekta ay isasama at sa aming estimate, aabutin ito ng eight billion pesos. Kapag dinagdag natin iyong contribution ng mga bangko, aabutin ng P10 billion iyan. So, ang P10 billion na ito ang magiging initial fund for capacity building o institution building ng programa na ito. Every year, the council will determine kung magkano ba ang kailangan nila na pera o pondo para ma-organize ang mga magsasaka at ma-professionalize iyong kanilang organization sa loob ng 10 taon sapagkat gusto natin bigyan ng deadline na dumating iyong araw na ating na-organisa ang buong bansa nang sa ganoon ay magkaroon ng pagkakataong makautang ang mga maliliit by way of this approach. So, that is the second fund and that fund will initially be P10 billion and the subsequent requirement will depend upon the assessment that will be made by the council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, maganda po itong initial P10 billion. Number one, ang P10 billion, in my experience as a farmer, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, P10 billion is equivalent to 667 hectares of land. In the real picture of farming, that is the real expenses of a farmer and so, assuming the expenses per hectare is 15,000, that is equivalent to that area.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sang-ayon ka ba doon sa ayuda na binigay ng ating gobyerno noong nalugi sa presyo ng bigas ang ating mga farmers? Sang-ayon ka ba sa pagbigay ng cash incentive sa ating mga farmers, Mr. Speaker?

REP. CUA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, gusto ko lang pong liwanagin na itong P10 billion na ating iri-raise na initial fund ng programa na ito, ito po ay hindi ipapautang at hindi rin po ito ibibigay, kung hindi ito po ay gagamitin para sa capacity building. Iyong

ipapautang sa mga magsasaka, either individually or through their association—whether coops, associations or cluster of groups et cetera—kung sila ay utang, hindi ito dito sa pondo na special fund. Doon sila papautangin sa naka-set aside ng banking industry na 25 percent. Iyong pautang sa kanila ay magiging compliance ng mga bangko.

So, ganoon po ang mekanismo noon, kagalang-galang na Deputy Speaker, para lang sa ating kaliwanagan at pag-unawa sa ating programa.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Salamat, Mr. Speaker. Maganda po iyon. Ako, bilang isang taong mahilig din sa farming at iyan ang hanapbuhay natin—mayroon na kasi akong plano, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Sponsor, my proposal is, hindi ko papautangin iyong farmers but we can think of this, Mr. Speaker—puwede ko bang maitanong sa kagalang-galang na naging gobernador ng Quirino kung ilan po iyong total agricultural lands ng Quirino so that we can make a pilot program in that area? How many square kilometers of agricultural land do you have, Mr. Speaker?

REP. CUA. Well, Mr. Speaker, as far as my knowledge is concerned, Quirino is a relatively small community but it is truly a farming community. Ang aming arable land ay maliit lamang po at kung hindi ako nagkakamali, it is between 50 to 60,000 hectares lang po.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Ilan po, 60?

REP. CUA. Fifty to 60,000 hectares. So, on the average, if a household tills about a hectare, then we are talking about 50 to 60,000 households.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Ano po ang cropping nito, palay at saka corn?

REP. CUA. Tayo po ay dominantly mais or corn.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Corn?

REP. CUA. Yes, dominantly corn.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Iyong rice po, iyong palay, wala po kayong itinatanim sa inyong probinsiya?

REP. CUA. Total po iyong aking sinabi and that could include rice and corn.

REP. GONZALES (A.). So, it has two croppings, Mr. Speaker?

REP. CUA. Ang rice ...

REP. GONZALES (A.). That is two croppings.

REP. CUA. Ang rice namin siguro, out of 60,000 hectares, about 35,000 would be corn.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Thirty-five thousand.

REP. CUA. So, it is not really big, it is not really a big community but it is essentially a farming community.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a proposal, Mr. Speaker. From number one, iyong pag-cultivate pa lang ng land, ano ang kailangan natin doon?

REP. CUA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, iyon pong detalye tungkol sa farming activities, iyan po ay hindi natin isinama dito sa batas sapagkat iyong mga detalye po nito will happen at the implementation stage, and the necessary details that need to be spelled out when the law gets to be enforced and implemented will be guided by the implementing rules and regulations. So, I seek the indulgence of my colleague that, at this point in time, it is difficult for us to come up with the figures. I also appreciate, however, that at the proper time, it is important and necessary.

REP. GONZALES (A.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I fully understand what your proposal is and I think, in my proposal—kasi po maganda po iyon kung makakapag-raise tayo ng P10 billion. Ako kasi, sa aking experience, sa aking pag-aaral, kailangan po iyong farmers natin. Mayroon naman tayong tinatawag na Cooperative Development Authority, iyong CDA, so they can manage the money. They can manage the harvest of each farmer para, at least, they are listed with the CDA, listed po iyong mga farmers natin doon. Puwede natin pong isama ito sa batas ninyo.

I also intend to file a proposed resolution or House bill para makatulong tayo sa ating mga farmers, na number one, tulungan po natin sila na madagdagan iyong kanilang mga heavy equipment like, for example, heavy tractor. In my district, sa Third District ng Pampanga po kasi iyan, we have almost 20,000 hectares of land being tilled by farmers and there are three kinds of them: the landowner, the farmer and tenants. Iyong tenants ay nagrenta po iyan sa landowner kaya pagdating po ng panahon, kapag magha-harvest na po sila, 50-50 po iyong laban. Halimbawa, sa isang ektarya, kumita ng P30,000, hati sila, tig-P15,000.

Number two, kung ikaw mismo ang may-ari ng lupa at ikaw pa rin iyong tinatawag na personal farmer, halimbawa, ikaw pa rin ang magti-till, ikaw pa rin ang gagawa ng lahat ng trabaho, diyan pumapasok—wala akong puhunan—una, saan ako kukuha ng pambayad

ng renta ng equipment? You have to cultivate the land first pero magkano po iyon? Mangangailangan ka ng P500 to P1,000 per hectare. Mangangailangan ka ng hand tractor, meaning to say, na-cultivate mo na iyon at gamit ang four-wheel tractor na iyon, kailangan mo pa ring baligtarin iyong lupa. Pangatlo, iyong pagbunot ng punla. Iyong punla, ito po iyong seedlings. Iyong pagbunot noon, iyon ang dadalhin natin kapag naka-ready na iyong rice field. Another expense po iyong seedlings dahil bibilhin po ng isang magsasaka iyon.

In my mind and in my experience, kailangan i-augment po natin talaga. Kung ako, halimbawa, ay isang magsasaka, talagang isang farmer naman po ako talaga, ang gagawin ko ay pupunta ako sa kapitalista at sasabihin ko, “Sir, puwede mo ba akong pahiramin ng P20,000 para mataniman ko ng palay iyong aking lupa?” E ang porsiyento po doon ay mataas. Alam ninyo po sa probinsiya, iyon ay napakataas, iyon po ang tinatawag na five-six kaya, at the end of the day, kapag bumunot ka ng punla dahil nagtanim ka, iyon pong dalawang kavan per hectare is equivalent to P2,400. So, iyong inutang mong P20,000, sa palagay ko po, ay hindi mo mababayaran iyong P20,000 plus interest ng five-six. Hindi mo mababayaran.

Ang suggestion ko po, Mr. Speaker, ay tulungan natin. Papaano natin tutulungan? Maganda po iyong P10 billion na proposal ninyo. Ako naman, iyong gumawa tayo ng rice center para andoon na lahat—nandoon na iyong mga heavy equipment, iyong four-wheel tractor, the proposed methods of modernized rice farming or the modern techniques of rice production—iyan ang sinasabi ko po.

Kaya po, Mr. Speaker, kagabi, sa fellowship natin with our fellow Congressmen and Congresswomen, nandoon po si Secretary Dar at nag-usap po kami sandali. Sinabi ko na naman po iyong aking proposal kay Secretary Dar, and he is very willing to cooperate with me and with our farmers. So, ang gagawin po namin ay ganito—the computation, we need only P240 million. Nandiyan na iyong heavy tractor, nandiyan na iyong hand tractor, at nandiyan na iyong nagtanim ng mano-mano, kasi po ay iba iyong harvest natin kapag nagmano-mano tayo ng pagtanim. Kapag ang pagtanim natin iyong tinatawag na “salbag,” iyong ibubuhos lang iyong palay at ikakalat iyong palay sa lupa, dito po ay maliit iyong harvest natin, unlike sa mano-mano talagang pagtanim. Pagkatapos, iyong pagtanim ay gagamit ng 18 persons per hectare. That is P470 bawat isang magtanim dahil sa isang ektarya, we need P8,460 para magbayad ka sa pagtanim lang.

Ngayon, nandito na tayo at nakatanim na iyong palay. You need fertilizer. Mangangailangan ka ng fertilizer, mga five bags per hectare. Magkano iyong five bags per hectare? That is P1,050 per bag, so, that

is P5,250 sa isang ektarya, Sir. Ngayon, sinabi ko P8,000 kanina—P8,000 ba iyon?—ngayon, ito ay P5,000, so, P13,000 na po iyong gastos noon. Magsecond apply ka ng fertilizer and again, you will need five bags of fertilizer hanggang sa magpapatubig na tayo. Iyong magpapatubig na tayo, iyan ang tinatawag nating communal irrigation system. Kaya nga kapag Budget hearing natin, ano ang gusto natin sa NIA? Ano ang gusto natin sa DA? Itong dalawa po—farm inputs at saka CIS, iyong communal irrigation system. Kung mayroon tayong magandang patubig, hindi na tayo bibili ng fuel, ng diesel, para kargahan iyong mga makina natin. Kaya nga ang sinasabi ko kay Administrator Ricardo R. Visaya ay palakasin at ayusin iyong mga communal irrigation system natin.

May patubig na tayo. Pagkatapos ng patubig natin, ito na ang papasok at dito po ang kailangan natin ay harvester. Ang harvester na iyon ay nakaka-harvest ng 12 kaban per hauling. Ang ibig sabihin, iyong 12 kaban na iyan ay nangangailangan tayo ng harvester. Kapag na-harvest na iyan, mayroon tayong combine harvester dahil, siyempre, basa pa iyong palay. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, para at least may ideya lang kayo, ang palay na iyon, iyong moisture content noon, assuming that it is 40 percent, hindi nila bibilhin, nasa buriki na iyan, nasa kaban na iyan, nasa sako na iyan. Kapag dumating iyong trader, “O sige, bibilhin ko iyan ng P11.” Magkano iyong kapital ng farmer? Ang kapital ng farmer ay, iyong sinabi ko sa inyo kanina, less than P15 na po. Papaano ka pa kikita? Kung ako ay isang farmer, hindi na talaga ako kikita. Papaano pa iyong interes para sa kinuha ko na P20,000 doon sa kapitalista? Iyon po ang sinasabi ko. Kung ibibigay natin sa farmer ang lahat ng ito, hindi po niya kailangan mangutang. May P10 billion ka at mayroon tayong modernization sa farming, kaya sa palagay ko po ay malaking tulong ito sa ating mga farmers.

Next po, gusto mong ibodega muna iyong palay mo dahil basa at gusto mong itaas iyong presyo, papaano? Bibilhin ng NFA na mataas iyong palay kung dry na dry na iyong palay. Ang NFA, alam niya iyan. Kapag dry na dry na iyong palay natin, anong gagawin natin? Ang ginagawa natin, mayroon hong bypass road diyan, mayroong farm-to-market road diyan—iyan ang gagawin nating solar dryer. Iyan ang sinasabi ko po na kailangan na kailangan natin sa Department of Agriculture iyong sinasabi ni Congressman Atienza na farm-to-market road. Iyong farm-to-market road, kailangan nating i-transport iyong palay para makarating doon sa kung saan mang bodega dadalhin iyong ating palay. So, iyan po.

Iyong farm-to-market road, kailangan po iyan. Ang susunod po ay iyong ating mechanical dryer. Kung wala pa po tayong farm-to-market road, kailangan po natin ng mechanical dryer. Ang mechanical dryer na iyon

ay with blower na po iyon. Kapag may mechanical dryer na po tayo, iyong moisture content ay bumababa, magiging 100 percent na iyong pagkatuyo ng ating palay. Iyong pagkatuyo ng ating palay, totally dry na iyan, so, ang NFA ngayon bibilhin ito ng P20 to P21 per kilo, so, doble po. Assuming P11 siya, sa experience ko po, P11.30 naibenta ko iyong akin, P11.30 kasi mayroon akong kasama—P11.30 pero kung bibilhin sa P20 ng NFA, doble po iyon. Isang piso bawat kilo, napakaimportante po niyan sa bawat magsasaka.

Mr. Speaker, my dear Congressman Cua, alam ko, mataas ang respeto ko sa aking kapwa Mambabatas, nakasama ko siya ng Fourteenth Congress, nakasama ko iyong anak niyang si Governor Cua ngayon, talagang masisipag na Kongresista. Sana po, pagtulungan natin ito. Maganda po ito, this modernization of rice farming techniques for our farmers. Nag-usap po kami kagabi ni Secretary Dar at gagawa po tayo ng pilot program. Sabi ko nga sa kaniya, may entitlement. Huwag mo akong bigyan ng kahit ano. Magpapatayo tayo ng isang maliit na rice center. Nandiyan na iyong low flatbed truck mo para panghakot ng bigas o palay. Nandiyan na iyong four-wheel tractor mo. Nandiyan na iyong mechanical dryer mo. Nandiyan na lahat po. So, iyon po. We need only P200 to P240 million to acquire all these equipments for our farmers.

Sana po, Mr. Speaker, Congressman Cua, Mr. Chairman, this is only a manifestation to your proposal. If we can combine this, maganda po iyan. May kapital na tayong P10 million at mayroon pa tayong modernization sa ating mga farmers.

On that note, Mr. Speaker, maraming salamat sa aking kapwa Mambabatas. Salamat, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CUA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, allow me to express my thanks to Deputy Speaker Aurelio “Dong” D. Gonzales Jr. All of the things that he said are really well-taken. His vision and plan for a modernized agriculture farming is really one thing that we should all aspire for and I think it is a very laudable aspiration. I think if we do this, and if we implement this Bill well enough, we might see the day when we will be able to achieve what he is envisioning because this Bill will finally provide the mechanism to finance his dreams and a mechanism to capacitate the organization that will implement his dreams.

So, on that note, Mr. Speaker, I would like to, once more on behalf of the Committee on Banks and Financial Intermediaries, express our deepest appreciation to Congressman Dong for his interpellation which is certainly very enriching and will help us in finalizing this legislation.

Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION
OF H. B. NO. 6134

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 6134.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The consideration of House Bill No. 6134 is hereby suspended.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Majority, I move for the election of the following Members to various Committees:

Rep. Castelo read the names of the House Members elected to the various Committees, per Journal No. 46, dated February 19, 2020.

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL
AMENDMENTS

As member:

Rep. Manuel T. Sagarbarria

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

As member:

Rep. Jorge Antonio P. Bustos of PATROL Party-List

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

As member:

Rep Angelo Marcos Barba

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The aforementioned Members are so elected.

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, before we continue, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of TUCP Representative, Cong. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza. We have with us Ms. Josephine J. Francisco, the Director of JMG and FAME or Filipino Association of Maritime Employment; Mr. Jose Albar Kato, the Director of JMG and Vice President for Internal Affairs

of FAME; Mr. Ericson Marquez, Vice Chairman External Affairs of JMG; Mr. Marlon R. Roño, Director of JMG and of FAME, and Executive Chairman of Magsaysay Maritime Corporation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The House of Representatives welcomes the guests of Honorable Mendoza. Thank you for your visit. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6123
ON SECOND READING

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 6123, contained in Committee Report No. 209, as reported out by the Committee on Public Order and Safety.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6123, entitled: AN ACT DEFINING THE OFFENSES OF DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS AND INDISCRIMINATE FIRING OF FIREARMS AND PROVIDING STIFFER PENALTIES THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 254 OF ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "REVISED PENAL CODE," AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10591, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE COMPREHENSIVE FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION REGULATION ACT".

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

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

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

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

* 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."

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Narciso R. Bravo Jr., Chairman of the Committee on Public Order and Safety, to deliver his sponsorship speech on House Bill No. 6123.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Congressman Bravo is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. BRAVO

REP. BRAVO. Mr. Speaker, my distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, a pleasant afternoon.

It is my honor and privilege to sponsor House Bill No. 6123, under Committee Report No. 209, entitled: AN ACT DEFINING THE OFFENSES OF DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS AND INDISCRIMINATE FIRING OF FIREARMS AND PROVIDING STIFFER PENALTIES THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 254 OF ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “REVISED PENAL CODE”, AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10591, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “THE COMPREHENSIVE FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION REGULATION ACT”. This Bill basically seeks to deter the irresponsible use of firearms.

The first offense, the discharge of firearms under Article 254 of the Revised Penal Code seeks to impose the stiffer penalty of *prision correccional* in its maximum period on any person who shall discharge a firearm at another person with no intention to kill or injure that person—if the offense is committed by a member of any law enforcement agency authorized to bear arms, the penalty to be imposed shall be one degree higher.

The second offense is the one often committed during New Year’s Eve celebrations where many people are hurt or killed from stray bullets. The Bill seeks to impose the penalty of *prision mayor* in its medium period on any person who shall discharge or shoot any firearm without lawful authority, or in random, aimless, purposeless, or indiscriminate manner.

If the indiscriminate firing of firearms results in injury to a person or damage to property, the resulting crime shall be considered as distinct and separate offenses. If the indiscriminate firing results in the death of the victim, then the penalty of *reclusion temporal* shall be imposed. Likewise, the penalty one degree higher shall be imposed upon the offender if he or she is a member of a law enforcement agency authorized by law to bear arms.

In addition to the penalties imposed, any firearm license or permit issued in favor of the offender shall be summarily cancelled and the offender perpetually disqualified from being granted any firearm license.

This proposed measure reiterates the call for the responsible use of firearms and sends the signal that it

is never acceptable to use firearms in this way or part of any celebration due to numerous deaths and injuries caused by stray bullets. In 2019, the PNP reported three stray bullets incidents during the Christmas and New Year holidays and arrested 21 persons for the illegal discharge of firearms. Of the 21 arrested, 14 were civilians, one from PNP, two from the AFP, one from a CAFGU militia man and three security guards.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill was approved by the House on Third Reading during the Seventeenth Congress, but unfortunately was not acted upon by the Senate. I now earnestly submit House Bill No. 6123 to this august Body for its consideration and approval.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Ferdinand R. Gaité to interpellate the Honorable Bravo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Hon. Ferdinand Gaité is recognized.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Pahintulutan ba ng ating Sponsor sa panukalang batas na inilabas sa ilalim ng Committee Report No. 209 para maglinaw sa ilang katanungan tungkol dito?

REP. BRAVO. Ikinagagalak po ng Kinatawang ito.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po. Totoo na nakakabahala iyong sitwasyon na may mga nagaganap na indiscriminate na discharge of firearms na nagdudulot ng kamatayan o ibang pinsala tulad ng nabanggit ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor. Gusto lang naming maglinaw hinggil sa binabanggit na discharge of firearms. Doon sa ikalawang pahina, Section 2, sa pag-define kung ano iyong sinasabing Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulation Act, binabanggit po sa line 10, Section 41-A, at pahintulutan po ninyo akong basahin:

INDISCRIMINATE FIRING OF FIREARM; DEFINITION; PENALTIES. – ANY PERSON WHO SHALL DISCHARGE OR SHOOT ANY FIREARM OR ANY DEVICE WITHOUT LAWFUL AUTHORITY, OR IN A RANDOM, AIMLESS, PURPOSELESS OR INDISCRIMINATE MANNER, SHALL SUFFER THE PENALTY OF *PRISION MAYOR* IN ITS MEDIUM PERIOD.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, puwede po bang ilinaw, kapag ipinapaliwanag natin ang “any person who shall

discharge or shoot any firearm or any device”—paano ba natin ipaliliwanag kung iyong sinasabing “firearm or any device” ay medyo vague ang pagpapaliwanag? Sa ngayon po, pumunta po kayo sa Divisoria at iba pang lugar, may makikita kayong mga mukhang baril na laruan ng mga bata that actually shoots projectiles. May mga iba’t ibang naglalaro noong paintball, isang sistemang pambabaril na hindi naman nakakamatay pero nakaka-damage din dahil mayroong nabubulag sa ganitong uri ng mga gamit. Saklaw po ba, Mr. Speaker, iyong ganitong uri ng mga binabanggit na “any device” dahil posible na baka kahit itong mga bata na naglalaro ng similar na gamit na mukhang baril ay mapatawan ng ganitong uri ng penalty? Puwede po bang ma-clarify ang Kinatawang ito sa section na ito, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. BRAVO. First of all, iyong term “any device” was suggested by the Department of Justice kasi marami na po talagang lumalabas na improvised items na iyong function ay parang firearm. Ngayon, delikado iyong mga improvised na ito, parang pareho din lang ng regular firearms na nabibili po natin sa gun stores na kung pumutok, puwedeng mag-cause ng injury or damage to property. Iyon po ang nasasaklaw ng definition ng “any device” na binabanggit sa probisyon na ito. Walang ma-identify sa ngayon kung ano talaga dahil hindi po natin puwedeng mapangalanan.

Sa amin lang po, doon po sa aming probinsiya, ang daming mga terms na ginagamit like sumpak at kung anu-ano pa, but I think this is the item or items or equipments that is being considered by the DOJ in suggesting that these should be included in this particular measure, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po sa kasagutan, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, dahil iyon lang ang isang concern na kapag sinabi nating “any device” ay baka masyadong broad na, sa iyong pagbanggit, ay maaaring mga gamit na homemade, mga gamit na ang objective ay lumikha ng harm sa ating mga mamamayan tulad ng nabanggit ninyo, iyong sumpak. Sa totoo lamang po, nabanggit ko na rin ang ibang parang similar weapons na laruan naman ang kategorya pero nagko-cause rin ng harm. Baka nga iyong sinasabi nating “any device” ay masyadong overbroad, na kahit iyong mga ordinaryong mamamayan na wala namang layunin para manakit ay baka mapatawan ng ganitong mabigat na penalty. Huwag po kayong magkakamali at kami ay sumasang-ayon na dapat talagang patawan ng mas mabigat na penalty, pero ang fear lang po ng Kinatawang ito, dapat siguro magkaroon tayo ng malinaw na definition para hindi naman mapatawan ng ganitong penalty iyong hindi naman ang totoong layunin ay para lumikha ng harm sa ating mga kapwa mamamayan. Ito lamang po ang aming nilililaw.

REP. BRAVO. Mr. Speaker, honorable colleague, mayroon po tayong probisyon sa page 2, Section 1, that states that, “For the purposes of this Act, the term ‘device’ refers to anything that may not have been designed as a firearm but can be functionally adapted and used as a firearm.” Parang maliwanag din po ito, kumbaga, pareho din lang. Nagkaiba lang ng hitsura, hindi lang kilala.

REP. GAITE. Okay. Maraming salamat po sa paglililaw. Totoo na sa kalagayan ngayon, naglipana ang mga iba’t ibang uri ng mga baril at gamit na tawag po natin ay “firearms.” Napakahalaga na maprotektahan natin ang ating mga mamamayan sa nagaganap na ito. Hindi lang po tulad sa mga nagaganap every New Year na may mga indiscriminate firing at marami ang nagiging biktima nito, kaya tama po na aralin na maigi kung paano natin maiiwasan o hindi kaya ay mapapahinto na ito sa pamamagitan ng pagtataas ng kaukulang penalties.

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

REP. BRAVO. Thank you, honorable colleague.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, there being no more Member who wishes to interpellate the Sponsor, I move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, may I ask for a suspension of the session.

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

It was 5:29 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:30 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION
OF H.B. NO. 6123

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 6123.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6312
ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker I move that we consider House Bill No. 6312, contained in Committee Report No. 232, as reported out by the Committees on Basic Education and Culture, Youth and Sports Development, Ways and Means, and Appropriations.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6312, entitled: AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SPORTS SYSTEM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate, and may we recognize the Chairman of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture, Hon. Roman T. Romulo, to deliver his sponsorship speech.

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

The Gentleman from Pasig, Cong. Roman Romulo, is recognized for his sponsorship speech.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. ROMULO

REP. ROMULO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Majority Leader, and distinguished Members of this august Chamber.

This afternoon, together with the Committee on Youth and Sports Development, we have the honor of presenting, for the consideration of the Members of this august Body, House Bill No. 6312 or the National Academy of Sports System Act. Under this substitute Bill, we aim to provide Filipino athletes, in particular our young Filipino athletes, the opportunity to enhance their athletic skills and talents in a specialized school that would serve as the premier training institution, where future world-class Filipino athletes and sports heroes may develop their full athletic potential as students in an institution which likewise will provide good quality education.

Mr. Speaker, honorable Members of this august Chamber, we hope that we have the full support of the Plenary. After the SEA Games' success, we have many of our young students who really wish to hone and enhance their talents in sports.

Before we proceed, Mr. Speaker, may we also recognize the Chairman of the Committee on Youth and Sports Development, Hon. Eric M. Martinez, to also sponsor this measure.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Majority Leader.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Kobe Byrant of Valenzuela, Hon. Eric Martinez is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. MARTINEZ

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

Good afternoon. Professor Charles Francis Xavier, more popularly known as Professor X, is a fictional character appearing in an American comic book

* 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."

published by Marvel Comics. Professor X is depicted as the founder and the leader of the X-Men. Professor X is an exceptionally powerful telepath who can read and control the minds of others. To both shelter and train mutants from around the world, he runs a private school in the X-Mansions in Salem Center, New York.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to stand before you today to sponsor what I fondly call The X-Men Act or The National Academy of Sports System Act under Committee Report No. 232. This was mentioned during the fourth SONA of President Duterte as one of his priority measures. The overriding objective of the said proposal is to provide young Filipino athletes the opportunity to enhance their skills and talents in a specialized school that would serve as the premier training institution of future world-class Filipino athletes and sports heroes. Likewise, the measure seeks to develop the full athletic potential of students in an institution which likewise provides good quality education. We need to produce the next Carlos Yulo, the next EJ Obiena and the next Hidilyn Diaz—all are Olympic qualifiers and future world-class athletes. With this Bill, with the X-Men, we gather all the best sporting talents all around our country and train them in one facility so that in the future, we would produce world-class and Olympic champions.

Mr. Speaker, and distinguished colleagues, I therefore call on our colleagues in this Chamber to approve House Bill No. 6312 under Committee Report No. 232, the X-Men Act, and hopefully, we will produce the next Kobe Bryant.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Thank you, Congressman Martinez.
The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 6312 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). There is a motion to approve House Bill No. 6312 on Second Reading.

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

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6312 ON SECOND READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The *ayes* have it; the motion is approved.
House Bill No. 6312 is hereby approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5912 ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker I move that we consider House Bill No. 5912, contained in Committee Report No. 187, as reported out by the Committee on Revision of Laws.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 5912, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING JULY 27 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NATIONAL NONWORKING

* 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.”

HOLIDAY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9645, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “COMMEMORATION OF THE FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF IGLESIA NI CRISTO ACT.”

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate, and may we recognize the Chairperson of the Committee on Revision of Laws, Rep. Cheryl P. Deloso-Montalla, to deliver her sponsorship speech.

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

Rep. Cheryl Deloso-Montalla is recognized for her sponsorship speech.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. DELOSO-MONTALLA

REP. DELOSO-MONTALLA. Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker, honorable Members of the House of Representatives.

It is my honor to sponsor House Bill No. 5912, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING JULY 27 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NATIONAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9645, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “COMMEMORATION OF THE FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF IGLESIA NI CRISTO ACT.” This measure proposes to declare July 27 of every year a special national nonworking holiday in the Philippines. Holidays like Christmas Day (December 25), Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Eid’l Fitr (Feast of Ramadan) are religious in nature and their significance our country recognizes and celebrates yearly. These holidays are celebrated not only for their religious meanings, but also in recognition of their contribution to our culture, national identity, values/norms and mores, as well as their socio-cultural development impact on the life of the Filipino.

Iglesia Ni Cristo or INC, with a membership of more than five percent of the country’s population, is considered to be the third largest religious organization in the country, having around 4,800 local congregations and with members in around 100 countries. Officially registered in 1914, the INC uses the Filipino language in preaching the word of God here and abroad, an initiative which provides a veritable environment for our language not only to be preserved, but also to further flourish. In recent years, its civic engagements have expanded through bigger relief operations and charity

dedicated to the poor and those affected by calamities. These endeavors are typically articulated in terms of unity, duty and obedience to God.

Despite its immeasurable contribution and participation in the social, historical and cultural development of the country, the commemoration of the INC’s founding anniversary through Republic Act No. 9645 remains to be a special national working holiday. As such, the law is lacking in providing the INC and its members the appropriate recognition and acknowledgement that they deserve—to have a better chance to significantly celebrate their founding anniversary.

This Bill intends to make the commemoration of the Iglesia ni Cristo Founding Anniversary on July 27 of every year a nonworking national holiday to allow its congregation nationwide to celebrate its founding anniversary with a deep sense of pride and for the nation to recognize the immense and significant contributions of the INC and its members to nation-building, national identity, culture, values and development. Approval of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is earnestly sought as this Bill has been approved on Third Reading and was transmitted to the Senate during the Seventeenth Congress.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5912

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 5912.

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

The consideration of House Bill No. 5912 is hereby suspended.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5912 *Continuation*

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 5912, and that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House takes note that the honorable Deputy Speaker Aurelio “Dong” Gonzales Jr. has signified his intention to be a principal coauthor of this measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, for the record, again, may I ask the Secretary General to read the title of the Bill.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Secretary General is hereby directed to read the title of the Bill.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 5912, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING JULY 27 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NATIONAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC

ACT NO. 9645, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “COMMEMORATION OF THE FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF IGLESIA NI CRISTO ACT.”

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5912

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 5912.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5975 ON SECOND READING

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 5975, contained in Committee Report No. 199, as reported out by the Committee on Revision of Laws.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 5975, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING THE FOURTH THURSDAY OF NOVEMBER OF EVERY YEAR AS NATIONAL THANKSGIVING DAY.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the honorable Cong. Cheryl P. Deloso-Montalla for her sponsorship speech.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Congresswoman Deloso-Montalla is recognized.

* 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.”

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. DELOSO-MONTALLA

REP. DELOSO-MONTALLA. Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

As Chairperson of the Committee on Revision of Laws, I rise this afternoon to sponsor House Bill No. 5975. This Bill seeks to declare the fourth Thursday of November each year as National Thanksgiving Day.

It is our duty as a nation, regardless of the different religions we practice, to offer our supplications to the God we believe in. We must give thanks for the blessings that are continuously bestowed upon our people—the economic growth, the safety of the country, the promising state of public affairs, the administration’s successful campaign for change, the infrastructure development, the lessening of national calamities and our unity as a country.

With the enactment of this Bill, it is hoped that we will nourish an attitude of gratefulness leading to a united and prosperous nation. A similar version of this Bill was filed during the Seventeenth Congress. Therefore, support for this Bill is earnestly sought.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member of the House who signified an intention to interpellate on or speak against the measure, I hereby move that we close the period of sponsorship and debate.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, again, there being no Member of the Lower House who signified an intention to introduce any amendment,

whether Committee or individual amendment, I move that we close the period of amendments.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5975

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 5975.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5912

Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 5912 and again, ask the Secretary General to read only the title of the Bill.

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

The Secretary General is now directed to read the title of the Bill.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL House Bill No. 5912, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING JULY 27 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NATIONAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9645, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “COMMEMORATION OF THE FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF IGLESIA NI CRISTO ACT.”

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

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the name of the distinguished Minority Leader Benny Abante be included as a coauthor, if not special—is there a special coauthor, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, is there a special coauthor?

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. I also move that we make Honorable Belmonte, Honorable Macapagal Arroyo and my partner here, Honorable Romualdo, as principal coauthors of the said measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session for a minute.

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

It was 5:49 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:50 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6228 ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 6228, contained in Committee Report No. 225, as reported out by the Committee on Labor and Employment.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6228, entitled: AN ACT MANDATING ALL BARANGAYS TO CREATE A REGISTRY OF SKILLED WORKERS.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate and that we recognize the Chairman of the Committee on Labor and Employment, Rep. Enrico A. Pineda, to sponsor the measure.

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

The Gentleman from 1-PACMAN, Cong. Enrico Pineda, Chairman of the Committee on Labor and Employment, is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. PINEDA

REP. PINEDA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

May I present for Plenary consideration and approval House Bill No. 6228, entitled: AN ACT MANDATING ALL BARANGAYS TO CREATE A REGISTRY OF SKILLED WORKERS, authored by Rep. Roman T. Romulo.

This Bill seeks to create a skilled workers registry in every barangay which shall serve as a repository of skilled workers information. Specifically, this Bill mandates every barangay to create a registry that will serve as a database for all skilled workers who voluntarily register and are willing to make their services available in their locality. Number two, it mandates the barangay to make the registry available to the public by posting a copy on the barangay's bulletin board or at a conspicuous place within the barangay hall. Number three, this will allow the barangay to get details about the skilled worker such as name, address, contact details, skills, nature of services offered by the worker, TESDA national certificate number and expiration date, if any, and any other details that the barangay deems necessary. Lastly, this will prohibit the barangay from collecting registration fees from workers who wish to be listed in the skills registry.

Mr. Speaker, our proposal to establish a skills registry in all barangays will provide more employment opportunities for our workers as well as contribute to the economic well-being of our nation.

I, therefore, pray for the approval of this Bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

* 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."

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, inasmuch as there is no House Member who wants to interpellate our Sponsor or speak against the measure,, may I move to close the period of sponsorship and debate on House Bill No. 6228.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to open the period of amendments.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, there being no committee or individual amendments, I move that we close the same.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 6228 on Second Reading.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 6228 on Second Reading.

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

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6228 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 6228 is approved on Second Reading. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 1338 ON SECOND READING

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 1338, contained in Committee Report No. 226, as reported out by the Committee on Labor and Employment.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 1338, entitled: AN ACT INCREASING THE SERVICE INCENTIVE LEAVE OF EMPLOYEES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 95 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate and that we recognize the honorable Cong. Enrico A. Pineda to deliver his sponsorship speech.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. Enrico Pineda is recognized again.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. PINEDA

REP. PINEDA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

May I present for Plenary consideration and approval House Bill No. 1338, entitled: AN ACT INCREASING THE SERVICE INCENTIVE LEAVE OF EMPLOYEES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 95 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, authored by Reps. Mark O. Go, Luis Raymund “Lray” F. Villafuerte Jr., et al.

This Bill seeks to grant an additional five days to the current five days service incentive leave with pay

* 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.”

already being enjoyed by workers and employees in the private sector, making the total yearly service incentive leave to 10 days. The main purpose of this proposal is to meet the need of employees for a balanced work life by providing them a longer period of mandatory leave benefit with pay. With the above proposal, the Committee believes that we can further promote the welfare of our workers especially those who may be affected by emergencies, fortuitous event, or are vulnerable to sickness which would cause them a day of paid work.

I, therefore, pray for the approval of this Bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Is there any objection?

REP. DAGOOC. Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my previous motion. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize Hon. Sergio C. Dagooc for his proposed amendment.

REP. DAGOOC. Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, may I request that I be included as coauthor of the said measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.).
Majority Leader, you have any objection on that request for coauthorship?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, the author has no violent objection to that.

REP. PINEDA. No objection, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we put the name of Honorable Dagooc as a coauthor of the said measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we close the period of amendments.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve on Second Reading House Bill No. 1338.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.).
There is a motion to approve House Bill No. 1338 on Second Reading.

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

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 1338 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 1338 is now approved on Second Reading. (*Applause*)

REP. PINEDA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move to approve the Journal of last Monday, February 17, 2020, Journal No. 44 to be specific.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, I move for the adoption of House Resolution No. 716.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 716

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw that motion and would like to make a new motion to consider House Resolution No. 716, contained in Committee Report No. 231, as reported out by the Committee on Youth and Sports Development.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 716, entitled: RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING CARLOS EDRIEL YULO FOR WINNING THE FIRST-EVER GOLD MEDAL IN THE 49TH FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DE GYMNASTIQUE (FIG) WORLD ARTISTIC MEN'S FINALS GYMNASTICS CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN HANNS-MARTIN-SCHLEYER-HALLE, STUTTGART, GERMANY ON OCTOBER 4 TO 13, 2019.

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

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 716

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 716.

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

House Resolution No. 716 is hereby adopted.

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. CASTELO. I move that we consider House Bill No. 697 and may we direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Secretary General is now directed to read the title of the bill.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

It was 6:02 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:03 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 697

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 697, contained in Committee Report No. 219, as reported out by the Committee on Youth and Sports Development.

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

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

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

* 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."

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 697, entitled: RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING FILIPINO BOXER NESTHY ALCAYDE PETECIO FOR WINNING THE GOLD MEDAL IN THE 2019 ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DE BOXE AMATEUR (AIBA) WOMEN'S WORLD BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN ULAN-UDE, RUSSIA ON OCTOBER 3 TO 13, 2019.

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

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 697

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 697.

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

House Resolution No. 697 is now adopted.
The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 5887 ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 5887, contained in Committee Report No. 179, as reported out by the Committee on Public Works and Highways and the Committee on Appropriations.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 5887, entitled: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN CEBU CITY AND CEBU PROVINCE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

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

the Explanatory Note be considered as the sponsorship speech on the said measure.

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

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

Majority Leader.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, to propose an amendment to the Bill, I move that we recognize Rep. Anthony Peter "Onyx" D. Crisologo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. Onyx Crisologo is recognized.

INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENT

REP. CRISOLOGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the Committee on Public Works meeting, it was discussed and proposed that on Section 1, to delete the entire provision and in lieu thereof, to substitute the following amendments: Section 1. THERE SHALL BE CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS (DPWH) AN UNDERSEA TUNNEL OR BRIDGE FROM CEBU CITY TO THE MUNICIPALITY OF CORDOVA, PROVINCE OF CEBU AND A COASTAL ROAD-EXPRESSWAY

* 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."

TO THE MACTAN-CEBU INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the Majority concurs with the proposed amendment and I move that we accept the amendment.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 5887, as amended, on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). There is a motion to approve House Bill No. 5887 as amended.

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

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 5887, AS AMENDED, ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 5887, as amended, is now approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we consider bills under the Calendar of Business for Thursday and Friday and pursuant to our rules, allow me to put forward an omnibus motion for the consideration of the following measures:

1. House Bill No. 6167 under Committee Report No. 216;
2. House Bill No. 6181 under Committee Report No. 217;
3. House Bill No. 6216 under Committee Report No. 221;
4. House Bill No. 6218 under Committee Report No. 222;
5. House Bill No. 6227 under Committee Report No. 224, and
6. House Bill No. 6255 under Committee Report No. 229.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). There is a motion for the omnibus consideration of the House bills as read by the Majority Leader.

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

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

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

The aforementioned House bills are now approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

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

It was 6:08 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:09 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we reconsider the approval of the earlier measures.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

OMNIBUS CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL BILLS
ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move for an omnibus motion to consider the measures we earlier mentioned under the Calendar of Business for Thursday and Friday.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider the respective Explanatory Notes as the sponsorship speeches on the aforementioned measures.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we approve the Committee amendments, if any, as contained in the respective committee reports of the aforementioned bills.

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

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

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

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we approve on Second Reading the following House bills: House Bills Nos. 6167, 6181, 6216, 6218, 6227, and 6255.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). There is a motion to approve the said bills on Second Reading. As many as are in favor, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

OMNIBUS APPROVAL OF LOCAL BILLS
ON SECOND READING

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

The said House bills are approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Rep. Sergio C. Dagooc of the APEC Party-List. They are linemen from the electric cooperatives of SIARELCO and DIELCO. We have Mr. Dennis Aredidon, Mr. John Mark Tan, Mr. Elmer Garcia and Mr. Charlito Antigro Jr. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). To the guests of Congressman Dagooc, welcome po kayo dito sa House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REFFERAL OF RESOLUTIONS
ON INQUIRIES IN AID OF LEGISLATION

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, in accordance with our Rules Governing Inquiries in Aid of Legislation, I move to refer the following House resolutions to the appropriate committees:

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Is there any objection?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, before that, I want to put it on record that these are the following:

1. House Resolution No. 670, to the Committee on Labor and Employment;
2. House Resolution No. 671, to the Committee on Public Order and Safety;
3. House Resolution No. 672, to the Committees on Agriculture and Food, and Energy;
4. House Resolution No. 673, to the Committee on Trade and Industry;
5. House Resolution No. 674, to the Committees on Transportation, and Health;
6. House Resolution No. 675, to the Committee on Justice;
7. House Resolution No. 681, to the Committee on Agrarian Reform;
8. House Resolution No. 684, to the Committee on Labor and Employment;
9. House Resolution No. 685, to the Committee on Ways and Means; and
10. House Resolution No. 686, to the Committees on Public Information, and Health.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The aforementioned House resolutions read by the Majority Leader are referred to the appropriate committees.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session for a minute.

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

It was 6:14 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:14 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we include as additional coauthors to House Bills Nos. 1338, 5083, 5887, 5912, 6167, 6181, 6192, 6194, 6216, 6218, 6222, 6227, 6228, 6252, 6254, 6255, 6256 and 6312 and House Resolutions Nos. 697 and 716 the Members as contained in the list to be submitted by the Committee on Rules.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn the session until February 24 at exactly 3:00 p.m.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Is there any objection?

REP. ABANTE. Objection. I object, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). There is an objection, Mr. Majority Leader.

The Minority Leader is recognized.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, before we adjourn, I would like to commend our Plenary Pages who stayed with us until the end of the session. (*Applause*)

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I join the distinguished Minority Leader in doing the same.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, a privilege motion to adjourn the session until February 24 at exactly 3:00 p.m., not 3:01 p.m., Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the session is adjourned until February 24 at three o'clock in the afternoon.

It was 6:17 p.m.