



Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 18th CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

House of Representatives

Vol. 4

Tuesday, March 10, 2020

No. 53

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Aurelio "Dong" D. Gonzales Jr. called the session to order.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.).
The session is called to order.

PRAYER

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

Everybody rose for the silent prayer.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.).
Everybody is requested to remain standing for the singing of the National Anthem.

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

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

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

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

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business and direct the Secretary General to read 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 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, Message from the Senate and Committee Report which were referred to the appropriate Committees hereunder indicated:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 6511, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE SCOPE AND PROCEDURE FOR PHILIPPINE SHIP REGISTRY, RECOGNITION AND ENFORCEMENT OF MARITIME CLAIMS, AND LIMITATION OF LIABILITY, AS WELL AS PROVIDING ESSENTIAL INCENTIVES, WHICH COLLECTIVELY WILL PROMOTE A COMPREHENSIVE AND ORDERLY PHILIPPINE SHIP REGISTRY SYSTEM FOR THE REGULATION OF VESSELS CARRYING THE FLAG STATE”

By Representative Olivarez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 6512, entitled:

“AN ACT EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE AND WELFARE SYSTEM AND STRENGTHENING THE SOCIAL REINTEGRATION PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9344, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘JUVENILE JUSTICE AND WELFARE ACT OF 2006’ ”

By Representative Olivarez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 6513, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING MARCH 22 OF EACH YEAR AS A REGULAR NATIONAL

HOLIDAY TO HONOR GENERAL AND FIRST PRESIDENT EMILIO AGUINALDO TO BE KNOWN AS AGUINALDO DAY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Fernandez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 6514, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF ADDITIONAL QUARANTINE STATIONS, GROUNDS AND ANCHORAGES IN ALL STRATEGIC AREAS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Tan (Angelina)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6515, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR STANDARDS FOR THE PRACTICE OF REHABILITATION MEDICINE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

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

House Bill No. 6516, entitled:

“AN ACT PENALIZING BULK CASH SMUGGLING INTO OR OUT OF THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Salceda, Suansing (Estrellita), Garin (Sharon), Suansing (Horacio), Biazon and Quimbo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

House Bill No. 6517, entitled:

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

By Representative Garcia (Jose Enrique)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 6518, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING ONE (1) ADDITIONAL BRANCH OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL

COURT IN THE SIXTH JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED IN SILAY CITY, PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980, AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Benitez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 6519, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (NBI), PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, EXPANDING ITS CAPABILITY AND EFFECTIVITY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Romero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 6520, entitled:

“AN ACT EXEMPTING FACE MASKS, ANTISEPTICS, SANITIZERS, AND OTHER SIMILAR GOODS FROM TAXES, DUTIES, FEES, AND OTHER CHARGES”

By Representative Castelo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 6521, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING ALL GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND ESTABLISHMENTS TO ADOPT POLICIES AND PLANS TO ADDRESS AND PREVENT WORKPLACE BULLYING AND VIOLENCE”

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

House Bill No. 6523, entitled:

“AN ACT TRANSFERRING THE SAMAL ISLAND CIRCUMFERENTIAL ROAD AND ALL TRIP ROADS UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM - TOURISM ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM TO THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS”

By Representative Dujali
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 6524, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NORTHERN TAGALOG REGIONAL HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF RODRIGUEZ (MONTALBAN), SECOND DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Nograles (Juan)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6525, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS IN THE ISLAND GARDEN CITY OF SAMAL (IGaCOS)”

By Representative Dujali
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 762, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE COMMITTEES ON HEALTH, YOUTH AND SPORTS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED INCREASING CASES OF DEPRESSION AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AMONG MINORS AND YOUTH IN THE COUNTRY WITH THE INTENTION OF SUBMITTING LEGISLATIVE APPROACHES TO CURB THIS ALARMING SOCIAL CONCERN AND TO PROMOTE THE WELL-BEING AND WELFARE OF YOUNG FILIPINOS”

By Representative Villar
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 763, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THROUGH THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE INDISCRIMINATE FIRING ON A LUMAD COMMUNITY BY SUSPECTED ELEMENTS OF THE 75TH IB, 36TH IB AND 9TH SFC PHILIPPINE ARMY IN DIATAGON, LIANGA, SURIGAO DEL SUR”

By Representatives Cullamat, Zarate and Gaité
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 764, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND

THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES CHAIRED BY MAJORITY LEADER REP. FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ TO CONSIDER CONVERTING THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SENIOR CITIZENS INTO A REGULAR STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES”

By Representatives Datol, Marcoleta, Rivera, Arroyo, Calixto, Cua, Vargas, Martinez, Dimaporo (Abdullah), Marquez, Robes, Silverio, Cabredo, Biron, Gullas, Salo, Lusotan, Amatong, Umali (Alfonso) and Pineda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 765, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES’ COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT TO INVESTIGATE IN AID OF LEGISLATION THE REPORTED NEFARIOUS PRACTICE OF AGE DISCRIMINATION IN THE RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND EMPLOYMENT OF FILIPINO SEAFARERS”

By Representative Gonzalez (Sandro)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 766, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING HEARTFELT APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE TO MANILA MAYOR FRANCISCO ‘ISKO MORENO’ DOMAGOSO’S INITIATIVE IN CONSTRUCTING THE FIRST MUSLIM CEMETERY IN MANILA”

By Representative Adiong
TO THE COMMITTEE ON MUSLIM AFFAIRS

House Resolution No. 767, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEES ON WAYS AND MEANS AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT A JOINT INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE UNABATED SMUGGLING OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS IN SUBIC AND OTHER ECONOMIC AND FREEPORT ZONES VIS-A-VIS THE FUEL-MARKING PROGRAM OF THE GOVERNMENT”

By Representative Violago
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 768, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE/S, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, CALLING TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INTERNET,

AND CABLE TELEVISION SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR LEGISLATIVE INQUIRY, RELATIVE TO MANDATING REBATES TO CONSUMERS FOR PERIODS OF SYSTEM FAILURE, OR NON-ACCESS TO SERVICES SUBSCRIBED”

By Representative Lacson
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 769, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO THE V-MALL HOSTAGE INCIDENT ON 02 MARCH 2020 IN ORDER TO ADOPT THE NECESSARY REFORMS IN EXISTING LAWS AND ENACT RELEVANT NEW LAWS TO SAFEGUARD THE RIGHT TO LIFE”

By Representative Barzaga
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 770, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THROUGH THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE MASSIVE SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION OF DRIVER’S LICENSES AFFECTING THOUSANDS OF PUBLIC UTILITY VEHICLE DRIVERS”

By Representatives Gaité and Zarate
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 771, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS TO USE THEIR LOCAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT FUND (LDRRMF) TO CONTROL THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN THEIR COMMUNITIES”

By Representative Crisologo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT

House Resolution No. 772, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEES ON ENERGY AND TRANSPORTATION, TO JOINTLY INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE DELAYED IMPLEMENTATION OF MARKET TRANSFORMATION THROUGH INTRODUCTION OF ENERGY EFFICIENT ELECTRIC VEHICLES PROJECT KNOWN AS THE E-TRIKES PROJECT”

By Representatives Zarate and Gaité
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 773, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE VILIFICATION, RED-TAGGING AND HARASSMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE GABRIELA WOMEN’S PARTY BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ELEMENTS OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE AND THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND RECOMMEND MEASURES TO ENSURE THE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN’S RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND ADVOCATES”

By Representative Brosas
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

Message dated March 4, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that on even date, the Senate designated Senators Win Gatchalian, Sonny Angara, Pia S. Cayetano, Christopher Lawrence T. Go, Francis “Tol” N. Tolentino and Francis “Kiko” N. Pangilinan as conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1086, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING AND ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE HIGH SCHOOL FOR SPORTS AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

and House Bill No. 6312, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SPORTS SYSTEM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 277), re H.B. No. 6522, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JANUARY 16 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY, TO BE KNOWN AS ‘NATIONAL BAPTIST DAY’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 6179

Sponsors: Representatives Deloso-Montalla and Abante

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Youth and Sports Development (Committee Report No. 278), re H.R. No. 776, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION FOR THEIR EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE IN THE THIRTIETH SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES, AND THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PHILIPPINE SOUTHEASTASIAN GAMES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (PHISGOC), SPEAKER ALAN PETER S. CAYETANO, AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE (POC), REPRESENTATIVE ABRAHAM “BAMBOL” N. TOLENTINO, FOR THE SUCCESSFUL HOSTING BY THE PHILIPPINES OF THE GAMES FROM 30 NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER 11, 2019”

recommending its adoption in substitution of House Resolutions Numbered 573, 596, 601, 605, 606, 608, 622, 629, 640, 679, 680 and 690

Sponsors: Representatives Martinez, Nieto, Sy-Alvarado, Fariñas (Ria), Albano, Bautista, Castelo, Arenas, Bagatsing, Guico, Chatto, Romualdez (Yedda) and Romualdez (Martin)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from the Third District of Cebu, our distinguished Deputy Speaker, Rep. Pablo John F. Garcia, who wishes to rise on a question of privilege.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.).
Deputy Speaker Pablo John Garcia is recognized.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. GARCIA (P.)

REP. GARCIA (P.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of personal and collective privilege.

In a series of memorandum circulars over the past few months, the Department of the Interior and Local Government charged LGUs nationwide, the provinces, cities and municipalities, with the task of clearing of roads—national, provincial, city, municipal and barangay roads—and the banning of tricycles and pedicabs from operating on national highways. These memorandum circulars have set April 30 as the

deadline and the DILG warned noncomplying LGUs with administrative cases under Section 60 of the Local Government Code.

On the surface, the task seems straightforward enough as the regulation of public roads, after all, is within the expressed powers of the LGUs, and the clearing of roads and the banning of tricycles and pedicabs would fall under these general powers of the LGUs. We all share in the objective sought to be achieved. Who does not want roads cleared of obstructions? Who does not want safer, smoother trips along national highways? The manner in which this stated national objective is sought to be implemented by supposedly autonomous—per the Constitution and by law—local government units is what we legislators, as the authors of the law on local autonomy, should be concerned about—increasingly concerned about. Not only are our local government units being compelled to exercise their power to regulate public roads, the DILG is also dictating on these LGUs how to exercise this power, complete with specific provisions to include in the ordinances ordered to be passed by supposedly autonomous sanggunians, even specific features of a tricycle or pedicab that may be allowed to ply national highways under specific conditions. Yes, Mr. Speaker, it specified that tricycles must have clean windshields and a functioning horn that does not emit exceptionally loud or startling sound.

Not only do the DILG memorandum circulars order cities and municipalities to create a tricycle task force, the DILG itself has also determined its composition and has enumerated its specific duties and functions. It would seem that sanggunians cannot be trusted to figure this out for themselves. What if the LGU has an existing tricycle regulatory board or unit already, will the cities and municipalities still have to create a tricycle regulatory task force separate and distinct from this existing unit? Why? Only the DILG knows why, although I can only surmise that it may be because they had no hand in the creation of the existing board or unit.

What is the DILG’s legal basis for ordering the LGUs to implement a national policy, supplanting the local legislative body’s will and preempting its wisdom, and requiring the sanggunian instead to mechanically copy-paste what the DILG deems good for everyone, dispensing its wisdom from up above for the officials below to blindly follow? Worse, what gives it the power to threaten these LGUs with administrative cases and penalties should the LGUs fail to follow its dictates to the letter? Since when has the DILG begun exercising power and control over LGUs? This certainly was not the intended relationship between the DILG and the LGUs when this Congress passed the Local Government Code as implementation of the constitutional grant of local autonomy to LGUs.

The Executive, with the DILG as alter ego, merely has general supervision over local government units to ensure that their acts are within the scope of their prescribed powers and functions, and certainly not the power of control, which is the power to revise or reverse the acts or decisions of a subordinate officer involving an exercise of discretion. In this case, worse than revising or reversing the decisions of the LGUs, the DILG is imposing its own will upon the LGUs in advance of or to supplant whatever decisions it may yet or may have already made. Consider for instance the following example: beyond ordering LGUs to clear the roads, the DILG mandates further that the LGUs ensure that the cleared roads are rehabilitated and restored for public use through efforts such as cleaning and flushing, installation of street lights, erection of appropriate signage, setting of appropriate speed limits and the like. What is the legal basis of the order to rehabilitate and restore cleared roads or to install street lights and street signs, failing which would subject the local chief executive to administrative liability? There is no law requiring this and certainly, a memorandum circular of the DILG does not have the force and effect of a law. What if a municipal mayor fails to rehabilitate and restore a national road, which is part of the memorandum circular, or erect a signage along this national road when it is properly a province of the DPWH and yet, a mayor courts danger if he does not do as the DILG says.

He may be charged administratively for failing to do something the law does not require him to do. The memorandum circular does not only expect a mayor to clear public roads of illegal vendors within 75 days, it also requires him to find and provide, magically within those 75 days, relocation sites and alternative sources of livelihood for those that the DILG forced him to evict. This is not required of him under the law and yet, the mayor stands in danger of being suspended not for violating a law, for there is none, but on the strength of the DILG memorandum circular.

From up above, these memorandum circulars descended upon our hapless unsuspecting mayors and governors and are now being enforced without the LGUs first being consulted. This violates Section 2(c) of the very Local Government Code the DILG is tasked to implement which provides:

c) It is likewise the policy of the State to require all national agencies and offices to conduct periodic consultations with appropriate local government units, nongovernmental and people's organizations, and other concerned sectors of the community before any project or program is implemented in their respective jurisdictions.

That is the statement of policy which we, in

Congress, have defined and it should define the relationship between the DILG and the LGUs where the LGUs are consulted and not ordered around. The LGUs are partners in implementing national policy, not miscreants one threatens with punishment at every turn. It is important that we in Congress raise this question and put this interplay of powers in its proper perspective, not only because it is we who are tasked by the Constitution to put flesh into the spirit of local autonomy it advocates but more importantly, it is because our mayors and governors are afraid to raise these questions themselves.

Who would not be afraid? When the governor of Cebu, for instance, questioned the DILG's rating system in the road clearing program and asked why certain LGUs were singled out as failures while others were not, you would think that the DILG, in accordance with their duty to consult under Section 2(c) of the Local Government Code, would offer clear answers but no, what she got instead was an assistant secretary, in a press conference, threatening that the DILG would sue the governor in court should she continue to, and I quote, "challenge" the DILG. How did it happen that an assistant secretary thinks that the DILG is so beyond criticism, that legitimate questions about its policies have become an actionable wrong? Granting that, as an undersecretary privately admitted to me, he was out of line, it may well be asked: what accounts for this kind of thinking that an unelected could think he can just bark orders at the elected and brook no questions or criticisms from those that the people chose to serve them?

The DILG seems to be operating under the premise that they have the power of control over LGUs when they do not. When the province of Cebu, for instance, through its Sangguniang Panlalawigan, and in its exercise of its general welfare power, banned the importation of meat products, pork products from areas affected by the African swine fever outbreak, the DILG issued a memorandum ordering the LGU to lift the ban on pork products from Luzon. This is a classic example of exercise of control, which power the DILG does not have for it seeks to reverse or revise, or even repeal an ordinance on the strength of a mere memorandum. Can a memorandum from the DILG repeal an ordinance? It is unfortunate to note that whenever the DILG makes a public announcement about a policy to be implemented by LGUs and our local chief executives, it is always with the overbearing words like "orders," "warns," or "threatens."

Is it too much work to "ask," "urge," or "encourage"? Words most certainly matter and how we use words is shaped by how we view the world.

I believe, Mr. Speaker and distinguished colleagues, that we need to put everything back in its place. Put everything in their proper perspective. As we say, when our tech devices hit a snag and freeze, we need a

drive restart so we, in Congress, in the exercise of our oversight powers, need to remind the DILG what its proper role is in a constitutional system that values local autonomy and in an administration seeking a transition to even greater autonomy through federalism. The DILG needs to be reminded that we have a President who became a legendary mayor because he lived and breathed local autonomy. When Davao's mining ban was threatened with Malacañang pressure in 2015 for instance, Davao rallied behind its mayor who stood his ground. He achieved much and Davao became a model city not in spite of, but because of Davao having been left largely on its own.

I believe there is a way forward, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that Secretary Año, with his dedication, leadership and professionalism, can correct some of his subordinate's missteps and walk us back to the path we in Congress intended when we passed the Local Government Code: local government units that are autonomous, not automatons; and local chief executives that are partners, not pariah viewed with condescension and suspicion. There is a reason our President is a staunch advocate of federalism: because we trust that those who have been chosen by the people to lead them will do well left largely on their own.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the question of privilege of Deputy Speaker Pablo John Garcia be referred to the Committee on Rules.

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

The privilege speech of Deputy Speaker Pablo Garcia is referred to the Committee on Rules for appropriate action.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that Rep. Argel Joseph T. Cabatbat of Party-List MAGSASAKA be recognized to raise a question of personal and collective privilege.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). What is the nature of the speech of the Gentleman, Honorable Cabatbat?

REP. CABATBAT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise on a matter of personal and collective privilege to urge my fellow Representatives to draw their special attention to our farmers, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Honorable Cabatbat is recognized.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. CABATBAT

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my fellow Representatives and guests, a productive afternoon to all of us. I rise on a matter of personal and collective privilege to urge my fellow Representatives and to give special attention to the plight of our hardworking rice farmers who are currently facing undue hardships due to the losses that they suffered after just a year of implementation of the Rice Tariffication Law.

A little less than a month ago during my birthday, I had foregone what I considered to be a lavish celebration and instead conducted a dialogue with a farming community in Siaton, Negros Occidental. Sa aking pagpunta sa kanilang lugar, isang matandang babae ang bumati sa akin at nagbigay ng P100. Ayaw kong tanggapin ang ibinibigay niya, kaya lang ito ay ipinilit niya sa akin bilang regalo. Wala silang kuryente at tubig at hindi rin umaabot ang suporta ng gobyerno sa pagsasaka sa kanilang lugar. Ang P100 na ito, bagamat aking tinanggihan, ay siya na sigurong pinakamabigat na regalang aking natanggap sa buong buhay ko. Opo, Mr. Speaker, bagamat lubhang kahirapan ang kanilang dinaranas dahil sa panggigipit ng ilang sektor at kakulangan ng ayuda mula sa gobyerno ay minabuti pa rin ng isang matandang babae na iabot sa akin ang natitira niyang pera para ipakita ang kaniyang galak at suporta sa katulad kong naglalayong magsilbi sa kanilang interes at kagalingan dito sa bulwagang ito.

Bilang pangako ko sa aming mga nakasama at sa sarili ko noong araw na iyon, I stand before you and call each and every one's attention to the great and heavy losses of our rice farmers from the continuous drop of palay prices in the market and the overall decline of agriculture due to the Rice Tariffication Law. Mr. Speaker, maraming naglalabas ng datos hinggil sa naging epekto ng Rice Tariffication Law sa industriya ng bigas. Nakakapanlumong isipin ang ulat na P68 bilyon ang lugi ng ating mga magsasaka mula nang sinimulan ang implementation ng Rice Tariffication Law. Kahit ito ay pinabulaanan ng ating mahal na Secretary William Dar na nagsasabing P8 bilyon lamang ang lugi, ang malinaw ay ang aktwal na nararanasan ng batayang miyembro ng sektor sa agrikultura, ang mga magsasaka.

Ayon sa pinakahuling datos na inilabas ng Philippine Statistics Authority, bumaba hanggang P8 kada kilo ang bilihan ng palay mula sa mga magsasaka, samantalang P7 hanggang P10 kada kilo naman ang naitala ng mismong mga magsasaka sa bayan ng Nueva Ecija, sa kabuuan ng Central Luzon at ilang

karatig na lalawigan. Samantala, patuloy na dinadagsa ng imported na bigas ang mga pamilihing bayan. Ayon sa ulat ng PSA, nitong ikapito ng Marso, ang prevailing retail price per kilo ng mga sumusunod na commercial rice ay P35 para regular milled, P40 para sa well milled, P46 sa premium at P50-52 sa special—mga presyong halos walang ipinag-iba sa mga nakalipas na taon. Tinatayang higit sa tatlong milyong tonelada ng imported na bigas ang pumasok sa bansa makalipas ang isang taon nang simulan ang implementasyon ng Rice Tariffication Law. Mr. Speaker, tayo na po ang pinakamalaking importer ng bigas sa buong mundo, ngunit hindi ko maiwasang mapakamot sa aking ulo dahil sa kabila ng pagbaha ng imported na bigas ay hindi pa rin nito nagawang ibaba ang presyuhan sa merkado. Kung babalikan po natin, just a year ago when Congress passed the law, we promised our people that we will remove the “artificially high” price of rice by removing the quantitative restriction on rice imports that will provide us with more supply, thereby lowering the prices of rice in the market and we will cushion the effect of removing the trade barrier on our rice farmers by providing technical support and services through the Rice Competitiveness Enhancement Fund. These two were our magic bullets to achieve a win-win solution.

Mr. Speaker, that was a year ago. We promised a lot to our farmers but until now, we have yet to see the fulfillment of these promises. It is easy to say that we are just at the start of the implementation of the law; yes, Mr. Speaker, we are just at the start and so far, we started at the wrong foot. Mr. Speaker, the law provides that within 180 days from its effectivity, the Department of Agriculture and other related agencies and concerned rice farmers organizations were mandated to formulate the Philippine Rice Industry Roadmap that will serve as a road map in the delivery of support services for the agricultural rice sector, subalit ipinatupad na ang walang humpay na importasyon nang wala ito at nagkakagulo na sa industriya ng bigas ay wala pa ring programa. We must be vigilant. Kailan makukumpleto ang road map na ito? Importante po sa atin ito dahil ito ang magsisilbing gabay sa paggamit ng pondo mula sa nakolektang taripa sa imported rice. Nararapat din subaybayan ang datos ng mga pumapasok na imported products upang malaman kung ano ang tamang interbensiyon na dapat gawin ng pamahalaan. Dagdag pa dito, dapat din tingnan kung magkano ang maibibigay ng RCEF sa bawat magsasaka at kung sasapat ba ito para maiangat ang kanilang ani at kita.

Nitong nakaraan lamang ay nabanggit sa isang Committee hearing na hindi sapat ang P10 bilyon na pondo ng RCEF, at bagamat ako ay sumasang-ayon

dito, dapat ay may kaukulang datos at guidelines po tayo para matukoy kung magkano nga ba ang kulang. Ang mga magsasaka ay nananawagan na itaas ang pondo ng RCEF at magkaroon ng magsasakang kinatawan sa Program Steering Committee, ang mangangasiwa at maglalatatag ng mga patakaran sa implementasyon ng RCEF. Kasabay nito ay dapat din itaas ang pondo ng Department of Agriculture at ng mga kakabit nitong ahensiya na nakaranas ng matinding budget cut from 4.3 percent in 2014 to a measly 1.5 percent in 2020 of our total national budget.

Sa huli, marapatin ninyo pong balikan natin ang mismong polisiyang nakasaad sa Rice Tariffication Law o RA 11203:

It is the policy of the State to ensure food security and to make the country’s agricultural sector viable, efficient and globally competitive. The State adopts the use of tariffs in lieu of non-tariff import restrictions to protect local producers of agricultural products.

Mr. Speaker, sa aking maikling pagbisita sa Siaton, Negros Occidental, nakita at naramdaman ko na umaasa po ang ating mga magsasaka sa bulwagang ito. Huwag po nating biguin ang kanilang pagpupunyagi at pag-asa.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the question of privilege of Representative Cabatbat be referred to the Committee on Rules.

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

The question of privilege of Congressman Cabatbat is referred to the Committee on Rules for appropriate action.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ROLL CALL

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

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 Secretary General is directed to call the roll.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Mr. Speaker, the roll call shows that 230 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). There being 230 Members present, including those who are deemed present in accordance with Section 71, Rule XI of our Rules: specifically those attending Committee meetings as authorized by the Committee on Rules – 16, attending Commission on Appointments meeting – 11; attending the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal meeting – one; attending bicameral conference committee meetings – zero; and on official business – four, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum. The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 78
ON THIRD READING

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 78 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on February 20 and 24, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 78, entitled: AN ACT MODERNIZING THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 146, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “PUBLIC SERVICE ACT”, AS AMENDED.

The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.*

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No,” and may I kindly be allowed to explain my vote later.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Gentleman may explain his vote later.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No,” and may I explain my vote later.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Lady may explain her vote later.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No,” and may I reserve my right to explain my vote later. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Lady may explain her vote later.

REP. FORTUN. Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No,” and I would like to explain my vote later.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Gentleman may explain his vote later.

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No,” and I will explain my negative vote at the appropriate time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Gentleman may explain his vote later.

REP. RIVERA. Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No,” and I will explain my vote later.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can explain your vote later.

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, may I find out how my vote was registered? Mr. Speaker, I want to register that I am for the negative on this Bill and I would like to explain my reservations after the voting.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can explain your vote later.

REP. SUNTAY. Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No,” and I reserve my right to explain my vote.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can explain your vote later.

REP. VERGARA. Mr. Speaker, I vote “No,” and I would like to explain my vote later.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can explain your vote later.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

REP. ZARATE. Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No,” and I will explain my vote later. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can explain your vote later.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ABANTE. I do not know if my name was called. How was my vote registered?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can make your vote on second call.

REP. ABANTE. I am voting “No,” Mr. Speaker. May I have the right to explain my vote later.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can explain your vote later, Mr. Minority Leader.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). What is the pleasure of Honorable Gaité?

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, I too would like to know how my vote was registered?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). There will be a second call and you can vote after.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CABATBAT. My vote is “No,” and I would like to reserve my right to explain my vote later.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can explain your vote later.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No,” and I will explain my vote later.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can explain your vote later.

REP. GAITE. “No” ang vote ng Kinatawag ito at ipapaliwanag ko po ang dahilan ng aking pagboto sa tamang panahon, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can explain your vote later.

REP. REMULLA. Mr. Speaker, may I know how my vote was recorded?

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Negative.

REP. REMULLA. I reserve my right to explain my vote after the voting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You can explain your vote later, Mr. Sr. Majority Leader.

REP. BIAZON. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Congressman Biazon, what is your pleasure?

REP. BIAZON. Mr. Speaker, may I reserve the opportunity to explain my vote at the appropriate time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Okay. You have time later to explain your vote.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, may I be allowed to explain my vote after.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Okay. You have time to explain your vote later.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The result shows 136 affirmative votes, 43 negative votes and one abstention.

House Bill No. 78 is approved on Third Reading.

REP. REMULLA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Secretary General will now call on the Members who want to explain their votes. *(Applause)*

EXPLANATION OF VOTES

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Abante.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Minority Leader Bienvenido M. Abante Jr. is recognized. You have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, how many minutes do I have? I have three minutes? Or five minutes, Mr. Speaker?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). You have three minutes, Minority Leader.

REP. ABANTE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. ABANTE. Three minutes? So, does the Secretary General now has the right to dictate to me how many minutes do I have to speak? Or is it in the rules? Okay.

I would like to submit the full text of the explanation of my negative vote to the Secretariat, Mr. Speaker, but I just would like to say very clearly and very emphatically that this House Bill No. 78 is unconstitutional, Mr. Speaker.

Can Congress overturn a Supreme Court decision interpreting the Constitution? “Public use” means the same is used by the public. The essential feature of public use is that it is not confined to privileged individuals, but is open to the indefinite public. It is this indefinite or unrestricted quality that gives it its public character. In determining whether a use is public, we must look not only at the character of the business to be done, but also on the proposed mode of doing it. If the use is merely optional with the owners or the public benefit is merely incidental, it is not public use authorizing the exercise of jurisdiction of the Public Utility Commission. There must be, Mr. Speaker, in general, a right which the law compels the owner to give to the general public. It is not enough that the general prosperity of the public is promoted. Public use is not synonymous with public interest. The true criterion by which to judge the character of the use is whether the public may enjoy it by right or only by permission.

Mr. Speaker, looking at all the amendments given, what the Supreme Court interpreted is a specific provision of the Constitution and we cannot overturn the Supreme Court by simply changing the law. We need to change the Constitution itself. Not only is House Bill No. 78 unconstitutional, it is also anti-Filipino, Mr. Speaker. The last sentence of Article XII, Section 11 of the 1987 Constitution provides:

The participation of foreign investors in the governing body of any public utility enterprise shall be limited to their proportionate share in its capital, and all the executive and managing officers of such corporation or association must be citizens of the Republic of the Philippines.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, House Bill No. 78 is a great disservice to the Filipino people. Again, may I say that we cannot overturn the Supreme Court ruling by simply changing the law; we need to change the Constitution itself, Mr. Speaker.

For the reasons I have just stated, I vote “No” on House Bill No. 78.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, my dear colleagues.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Remulla.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Sr. Dep. Majority Leader Jesus Crispin C. Remulla has three minutes to explain his vote.

REP. REMULLA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. REMULLA. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

Hindi ko ho kayang bumoto o hindi ko kayang sumang-ayon dito sa House Bill No. 78 sapagkat, unang-una, ito po ay hindi naaayon sa mga probisyon ng ating Saligang Batas. Ang public utility ay ginawa po para sa mga Pilipino sapagkat marami pong karanasan ang nakasaad sa likod ng mga probisyon ng Saligang Batas at ng Public Service Act, mga karanasan na kung saan alam natin na Pilipino lang ang maaaring gumana nang maayos sa katungkulan natin na maglingkod sa pangangailangan ng taong-bayan.

Bakit ba tinawag na public utility? Sabi nga ay “public use,” ginagamit natin lahat mula sa ating paggising o sa ating pagbangon, hanggang tayo ay makagalaw sa ating mga papel sa lipunan. Paggising natin, nariyan ang tubig, nariyan ang kuryente. Pagdating po natin sa labas ng bahay, nariyan po ang sasakyan para tayo ay makarating sa ating pupuntahan. Nakareserba po ang transportasyon, ang industriyang iyan dati sa mga Pilipino ngunit ngayon, binubuksan natin ang pinto upang ang dayuhan ay maghari sa ating mga kalye, sa ating karagatan at sa atin pong himpapawid. Hindi po ito naaayon sa nais mangyari ng ating mga ninuno.

Bakit ba may mga bagay tayong ginawa na nakareserba sa Pilipino at Pilipino lamang? Bakit mayroon tayong ganoong patakaran na hindi maaaring kunin ng dayuhan ang ganitong gawain? Marami hong dahilan iyan ngunit sa karanasan po natin lahat bilang isang bansa mula nang tayo ay sinakop ng mga mananakop—ang Kastila, ang Amerikano, ang Hapon—nakita natin kung ano ang kanilang gustong kunin sa ating bansa at iyan ang naging basehan kung bakit mayroon ho tayong pro-Filipino provisions sa atin pong Saligang Batas at sa Public Service Act. Sa Saligang Batas pa nga mismo inilagay ang pangangailangan na ito, ang alituntunin na may mga bagay na dapat Pilipino lang ang gumaganap ngunit ngayon, binabalewala natin ito. Gumawa tayo ng listahan, ang sabi natin, hindi na public utility ang talagang ginagamit natin sa araw-araw. Isang ehemplo—ang telepono at internet. Hindi ba’t ang telepono at internet ang siyang umuukupa sa buhay natin mula sa ating paggising, kung tayo ay nagbabasa, kung tayo ay tumitingin ng ating research, kung tayo ay tumitingin sa mga balita? Anong nangyari? Ngayon, gusto nating ibigay ang bagay na ito sa mga dayuhan.

Sana po ay mag-isip-isip tayo dahil hindi po ito ang solusyon sa ating problemang pang-ekonomiya. Sa totoo lang, maganda naman ang ating ekonomiya kahit wala ang batas na ito ngunit bakit pa natin ito ginagawa?

Isang-isa na lang po. Ako naman ay magbibigay ng nakasulat na aking written explanation sa aking pagboto ng “No.” Ang Anti-Dummy Law ay ginawa ng mga Mambabatas sapagkat may mga bagay na hindi dapat pinalulusot kung babalewalain natin ang mga probisyon ng Saligang Batas at Public Service Act, ngunit ngayon ay binabalewala natin ang mga bayolasyon sa Anti-Dummy Law. Iyong mga taong nandaya sa atin ngayon ay bibigyan natin ng premyo. Inyo na at tama kayo, dinaya ninyo ang mga Pilipino sa bawat pagkakataon na ibinigay sa inyo at ngayon, mayroon kayong reward sapagkat binalewala ninyo ang aming pagmamahal sa aming bansa. Ngayon, bibigyan natin sila ng pabuya at pabor na aalisin natin sa saklaw ng mga dapat parusahan na gawain ang pagbalewala sa ating Anti-Dummy Law.*

Iyon na lang po sapagkat maiksi ang panahon ngunit isusulat ko ho nang maayos ang sa aking tingin ay maling-maling pagpasa ng House Bill No. 78.

Maraming salamat po.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Zubiri.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. Manuel F. Zubiri, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. ZUBIRI EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. ZUBIRI. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

After much thought and deliberation in the Committee, and the Chairwoman knows this very well, going back and forth for the longest time since day one, haggling for some provisions to be inserted to protect our country and its citizenry, I have decided—What for? I decided to say “No.” Why? Simply because my country is not for sale. I repeat, my country is not for sale.

There is no value for the sovereignty of our nation as it is simply priceless, Mr. Speaker. That is all. I will not give details, but this is my simple explanation: Mahal kita, Pilipinas.

Thank you.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Biazon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. Rozzano Rufino B. Biazon, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. BIAZON EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. BIAZON. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

National security has always been one of the core issues that this Representation consistently takes a firm stand on. I believe that as one who has taken an oath to support and defend the Constitution and the principles that make up its foundation, it is my duty to take a position on what I believe serves the national security interest of the country when needed. The Constitution repeatedly stated that national interest shall be given priority in its policies. It is this paramount consideration that the government adopted its National Security Strategy which is seen to enable the country to meet the challenges to the way of life and well-being of Filipinos.

The administration of President Duterte, in its National Security Strategy, defines national security as “the state or condition wherein the nation’s sovereignty and territorial integrity; the people’s well-being, core values, and way of life; and the State and its institutions; are protected and enhanced.” In that document, aside from drug trafficking and climate change, the Philippine National Security Strategy recognizes cybersecurity as one of the nontraditional threats that the country faces due to globalization and rapid advances in modern technology. In fact, one of the 12 National Security Goals stated in the National Security Strategy is to “Provide strong cyber infrastructure and cybersecurity.” The DND acknowledges that modern warfare and external threats to our sovereignty are no longer limited to the traditional threats of invasion or armed attack. We are now in an era where attacks to our country’s interest may be conducted through cyberspace. Along with cybercrime and cyberterrorism, cyberwarfare can overwhelm our defenses and disrupt our way of life, for a foreign entity imposing their will on us are real threats that we have to deal with because of modern-day technology.

A policy brief at the National Defense College of the Philippines, published in 2013, noted that at the height of conflicting territorial claims between the Philippines and China over the Scarborough Shoal in the West Philippine Sea, hackers were reportedly engaged in a raging battle online. It further said that:

Vital military, commercial and public institutions are vulnerable to cyberterrorism. They can be targeted to disrupt the free world’s defense and communication systems. Computer bugs can bring down military email systems, destroy refineries, derail metro trains, scramble financial data, and damage electronic grids, among others.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

The threat is so real that the government, through the Department of Information and Communications Technology, has formulated a National Cybersecurity Plan which has four primary goals:

1. Assuring the continuous operation of our nation's critical infrastructures, public and military networks;
2. Implementing cyberresiliency measures to enhance our ability to respond to threats before, during and after attacks;
3. Effective coordination with law enforcement agencies; and
4. A cybersecurity educated society.

In our present world, communication has evolved with the merger of communication with information. It has evolved in its nature and in its purpose. No longer is it just a means for people to talk to one another, but it is now a means for the transmission of data, for the operation of systems and inter-operation of multiple systems, practically the operating system of our lives.

It is for this reason that I disagree with the proposition of House Bill No. 78 to open ownership of telecommunications entities to non-Filipinos. I believe such a move will compromise national security by letting go of safeguards that ensure Philippine interests are in control of a critical public utility. I believe that telecommunications should be categorized, along with air transportation, ports and airports, as a public utility and fall under the restriction on foreign ownership provided by the Constitution.

In view of this, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my coauthorship of the Bill and vote "No" on this measure.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Bordado.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Representative of the Third District of Camarines Sur, Cong. Gabriel H. Bordado Jr., is recognized. You have three minutes.

REP. BORDADO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. BORDADO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, opening up our public utilities and enterprises to full foreign ownership may eventually prove to be deleterious not only to our economy but also to our sovereignty.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, such a provision brazenly defies our 1987 Philippine Constitution.

I am therefore voting "No" on House Bill No. 78.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Brosas.

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

Rep. Arlene D. Brosas, you have two minutes to explain your vote.

REP. BROSAS EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, walang pag-iimbot na bumoboto ng "No" ang GABRIELA Women's Party sa isang panukalang batas na magsasagad ng dayuhang pagmamay-ari sa mga kritikal na pampublikong serbisyo kabilang ang telekomunikasyon, transportasyon at maging extractive industries.

House Bill No. 78, more or less, fulfills the goal of economic Charter change without tinkering with the 1987 Constitution. Sa ilalim ng panukalang ito hinanapan ng butas ang Konstitusyon para palusutin ang 100 porsiyentong dayuhang pag-aari ng public services, habang pakunsuwelóng pinananatili ang 40 percent foreign ownership cap sa sektor ng pagsuplay ng tubig at kuryente. This exposes the Duterte administration's duplicity in its rants against foreign ownership and meddling while at the same time, accentuating Duterte's green light to China's very alarming creep into our power transmission and telecommunication sectors.

In their defense of this measure, the Sponsors of the Bill recycled the outdated free market argument that competition from foreign players will supposedly improve the quality of public services. While most countries, including the US and EU members, have instituted protectionist measures on their public services and utilities, the current administration auctions whatever is left of our patrimony to full-scale liberalization and denationalization of key sectors. Foreign ownership of our mobile communication services, mass transit and oil extraction will not improve the quality of services. Rather, it will leave us vulnerable to all external shocks and risks at the expense, of course, of ordinary consumers in the form of higher fares and fees. Kapag nalugi ang isang US o Chinese investor, halimbawa, dayuhan ang sasakloloohan ng gobyernong ito habang ang ordinaryong Pilipino ang maiipit.

We are seeing the pitfalls of this overdependence on foreign capital amid the COVID-19 outbreak. Ngayon, sadsad ang turismo habang naka-tengga ang dose-dosenang BBB projects. Why do we insist on a failed neoliberal experiment? Why do we gamble the welfare of our countrymen all in the name of welcoming foreign players with open arms? Sa halip na sagad na dayuhang pagmamay-ari ay subsidiyo, pagsasabansa at direktang regulasyon ng gobyerno ang solusyon sa sinasabing mga problema sa pampublikong serbisyo.

Malinaw ang inilalatag na tanong sa Kapulungang ito: Inang Bayan o dayuhan?

It is a shame that this Chamber opted to choose foreign interests over our motherland and national patrimony. Filipino women and the people will remember this day as the day when the national

patrimony thrust of the Constitution was traitorously subverted by the House to satiate foreign interests.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Cabatbat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. Argel Joseph T. Cabatbat, you have two minutes to explain your vote.

REP. CABATBAT EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. CABATBAT. Mr. Speaker, the intention of this Representation when we filed House Bill No. 540 was to ensure that the proposed amendments to the Public Service Act are explicit on their adherence to the provisions of the 1987 Constitution with regard to the 60-40 policy on capital ownership of public utilities. However, this is not aligned with the current version of the Bill, specifically on the provisions regarding transportation and telecommunications that could be a constitutional violation and a threat to national security. Still, the Public Service Act needs to be updated to conform to the changing times, given that there are many kinds of public services that were not envisioned by the lawmakers in the 1930s and there are also peculiarities in their implementation.

Therefore, this Representation votes for a qualified “No”—“No” to full foreign ownership of public utilities and “Yes” to more accountability in the public service sector. With this, I would like to manifest my withdrawal of authorship of this measure.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Hon. France Castro.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Rep. France L. Castro is recognized to explain her vote. She has three minutes.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.) EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Salamat, G. Ispiker.

G. Ispiker, ang Kinatawan pong ito ay bumoto ng “No” sa panukalang batas na nag-aamyenda sa Public Service Act. Una, babaguhin at lilimitahan ang napakakitid na depinisyon ng public utility sa apat na lamang: distribution of electricity, transmission of electricity, water pipeline distribution and transportation dahil lang sa sinasabi natin ngayon, at kahit kontra sa mismong nature ng mga industriya at business, hindi na maituturing na public service ang kalakhan na mga serbisyong inaasahan ng mga mamamayan. Paano na ang ibang public utilities na nagseserbisyo para sa basic needs at services?

Maaapektuhan ang media. Bakit? Ang media ay mayroon na ring ibang mga platform at nag-evolve na rin ito sa internet and other forms of telecommunications. Kailangan pa ng subsequent na batas para masabing ito ay isang public utility kahit na ang serbisyong ito ay hayagang nagseserbisyo para sa publiko.

Sa panukalang inaprubahan natin ngayon, tahasang mawawalan ng proteksiyon ang publiko dahil tinatanggal ang safeguards ng Konstitusyon sa ating ekonomiya na nagtatakda ng 60 percent ang Filipino ownership ng public utilities. Alam naman natin ang tutunguhin nito—mas malalang deregularisasyon, mas hindi mapigilang pagtaas ng mga presyo ng mga produkto at serbisyo, at mas malalang kalidad ng serbisyo dahil hindi naman kaya ng gobyerno natin kontrolin ang multinational corporations. Ang pagtanggap ng 60 percent Filipino ownership ay direktang paglabag sa ating Konstitusyon, lalo na ang mandatong siguruhin at itaguyod ang isang “pambansang ekonomiyang nakakatayo sa sarili at malaya at epektibong kinokontrol ng mga Pilipino.”

Huwag nating linlangin ang taong-bayan na sila ang makikinabang sa “more choices, better services, and lower prices” at ang katotohanan ay ang taong-bayan ang dehado sa mga amyendang ito dahil sila ang final consumer at siguradong ipapasa sa kanila ang tax burden, other charges, at kung ano-ano pang mga expenses. Hawak ang mga ito ng pribadong sektor kaya mas kita ang layunin nila kaysa sa pampublikong serbisyo.

Mr. Speaker, sa panghuli, I say “No” because the Philippines is not for sale.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Elago.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. Sarah Jane I. Elago, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. ELAGO EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. ELAGO. House Bill No. 78 significantly narrows the definition of public utilities to only cover the distribution of electricity, transmission of electricity, water distribution and sewerage pipeline systems. Mr. Speaker, this narrow definition seeks to bypass the current constitutional limits on foreign ownership of public utilities and open up significant parts of the economy to foreign investors. Foreign control over important critical services must be limited as required by the Constitution.

The relaxation of nationality restrictions means excessive foreign control over critical telecommunications, power and transport utilities. This will greatly undermine national security, consumer privacy and welfare. The significant risks to national

security and civil defense include digital surveillance and misinformation, denial and sabotage of vital services, among others. The guarantee of profit under House Bill No. 78 institutionalizes excessive profit-making at the expense of consumers. Utilities tend to be natural monopolies and the amendments, unfortunately, distort the so-called regulation towards guaranteeing investor profits rather than consumer well-being. This reinforces profitability as a condition for delivering public services, notwithstanding their nature as very basic necessities.

Natural monopolies should, if anything, be more tightly regulated. As it is, privatized utilities have already resulted in expensive water and power that are burdensome especially to millions of low-income consumers.

Mr. Speaker, ito po ang mga dahilan kung bakit ang Representasyon ng KABATAAN ay tutol sa House Bill No. 78. Pinasa po natin ito sa gitna ng isang public health emergency at pagkatapos ng sunod-sunod na mga kalamidad.

Sobra na ang pahirap sa ating mamamayan. Tama na ang pagsunod sa dikta ng dayuhan. Mariing tumututol ang KABATAAN Party-List na ipaubaya sa kamay ng mga dayuhan ang mga kritikal na serbisyo para sa Pilipino dahil ang interes ng ating bayan ang nakasalalay. Hindi puwede ang Charter change shortcut. Serbisyo sa tao, huwag gawing negosyo.

Mr. Speaker, huwag po nating isugal ang kinabukasan ng ating mga kabataan. The Philippines is not for sale.

Maraming salamat po.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Fortun.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. Lawrence “Law” H. Fortun, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. FORTUN EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. FORTUN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, just this afternoon, the Committee on Legislative Franchises adopted the Resolution supporting the letter of the Committee, noted by Speaker, to enjoin the National Telecommunications Commission to give ABS-CBN a provisional authority. This issue about the renewal of ABS-CBN franchise became all the more controversial when the Solicitor General filed a quo warranto petition seeking the revocation of its franchise alleging, among others, that the network has allowed foreign entities to own shares of the corporation, the same being a violation of the Constitution. Yet, here we are opening up telecommunications to 100 percent foreign ownership, effectively allowing media to be

owned 100 percent by a foreign entity. This is without doubt not in keeping with the 1987 Constitution.

Telecommunications is such a critical and sensitive industry. It has far-reaching implications on a country’s political and sociocultural life that it cannot be placed in the absolute ownership and control of foreign entities. The same is essentially true and even far more crucial in the case of water supply, power and petroleum. We can always allow part ownership by foreign entities under more favorable arrangements for them if we are to encourage more investments and improvements on the important services and utilities. But allowing, much less facilitating, 100 percent foreign ownership and control of industries such as telecommunications, water supply and power will have very, very serious implications on our sovereignty as a nation and our national security. Just imagine a situation where Filipinos no longer control telecommunications, water supply, power generation and petroleum right in our very own country. Di po ba nakakakilabot iyon? Di po ba nakakatakot iyon? I shudder to think of the rape of our sovereignty and our national security. This we cannot in conscience allow.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that we are departing from a clear constitutional policy not by introducing constitutional amendments but by simply approving this measure because effectively, we are amending the Constitution by a mere vote of a simple majority, instead of the constitutional requirement of a constitutional convention or a constituent assembly. Puwede na pala tayong mag-amyenda ng Konstitusyon sa pamamagitan ng 50 percent plus one of the Members present constituting a quorum. Ito po ay nakakabahala at sana ay ito ay naiintindihan ng ating mga kasamahan sa Kongreso.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No.”

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Gaite.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Rep. Ferdinand R. Gaite, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. GAITE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

“No” ang boto ng Kinatawan ito sa House Bill No. 78 na nag-a-amyenda ng Public Service Act. Malinaw ang layunin ng panukalang batas na ito na buksan ang larangan ng serbisyong publiko sa dayuhang kapital. Lulusawin ng panukalang batas na ito ang proteksiyong itinakda mismo ng ating Konstitusyon na bahagi ng pangangalaga sa patrimonya ng bayang ito.

Ipinagtatangol ng panukalang batas na ito, sa ngalan ng mga konsyumer na nagdurusa, ang bulok

pero mahal na serbisyo—serbisyonang monopolyo na sa ngayon ay hawak ng iilang oligarko. Ang inihahain na solusyon ay ang paglilimita sa kontrol ng pamahalaan sa mga serbisyonang napakahalaga para sa mamamayan. Ang inihahain na solusyon ay ang pang-engganyo sa mga dayuhang oligarko na mamuhunan sa mga serbisyonang sa ngayon ay limitado lamang ang espasyo para sa kanila.

Hindi po tayo naniniwala na ito ang tamang solusyon.

Ang bulok at mahal na serbisyo ay ibinunga ng pagluluwag sa kapangyarihan at obligasyon ng pamahalaan na bantayan ang mga negosyonang humahawak sa mga serbisyonang publiko. Ang bulok at mahal na serbisyo ay bunsod ng LAPIDA, ngunit hindi ito po iyong lapida na makikita sa sementeryo ngunit maaaring maihalintulad na rin dito dahil ang ibig sabihin po ng LAPIDA ay mga inisyal para sa liberalisasyon, pribatisasyon at deregulasyon. Iyan po ang inihain na solusyon noon. Sinabi noon na sa pamamagitan ng LAPIDA ay magkakaroon tayo ng episyente at murang serbisyo, ngunit kabaligtaran ang naging resulta, kaya nga katawa-tawa na kung ano ang naging dahilan ng bulok at mahal na serbisyonang publiko ang siya na namang solusyon na inihahain ngayon.

Sa balangkas ng House Bill No. 78, ibayo pang pakakawalan ang ilan sa mga itinuturing ngayong public utility mula sa pagbabantay ng pamahalaan at sa tungkulin nating pangalagaan ang interes ng mamamayan. Lubhang lilimitahan ng panukalang ito ang saklaw ng kapangyarihan ng pamahalaan, at para kanino? Para sa dayuhan, para sa negosyo at para sa mga oligarko.

Ang nararapat na solusyon ay ang pagpapatibay ng kapangyarihan ng pamahalaan na bantayan ang interes ng negosyo sa ngalan ng interes ng publiko at ng taong-bayan. Sa katunayan, dapat ang ating direksiyon ay ang muling pagsasapubliko ng serbisyo at pagtatanggal nito sa kamay ng negosyo. Pinatunayan ng ating karanasan na hindi LAPIDA ang solusyon ng palyadong serbisyonang publiko, kundi ang matapat at makabayang pagsasaalang-alang ng kapakanan ng taong-bayan at ang paggalang sa mga probisyon nito sa pangunahing layunin na protektahan ang dignidad at soberaniya ng ating bayan. Kaya muli, ang boto po ng Kinatawang ito sa House Bill No. 78 ay “No,” at sumasaludo po ako sa lahat ng ating kagalang-galang na Kinatawan na bumoto rin ng “No.”

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Lagman.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Rep. Edcel C. Lagman, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. LAGMAN EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I vote against House Bill No. 78 or the New Public Service Act which is fatally violative of the Constitution as it allows traditional and sensitive public utilities like transportation and telecommunications companies to be owned and operated by foreigners to the extent of 100 percent. This is contrary to Section 11, Article XII of the Constitution which reserves the ownership, operation, control and management of public utilities to Filipino citizens or to corporations or associations with at least 60 per centum of whose capital is owned by Filipinos. The nationality requirement for public utilities in Section 11 of Article XII is essentially a restatement of identical provisions in the 1935 and 1973 Constitutions.

The subterfuge offensive to the Constitution is foisted by making a distinction between “public utility” and “public service,” where enterprises categorized under the latter are unconstitutionally exempt from the nationality or citizenship requirement of the Constitution.

There is no distinction between “public utility” and “public service” because no less than the Supreme Court, in a number of cases, had ruled that “public service” is an indispensable element of a “public utility.” It is then well-settled that public service is an indispensable attribute or element of a public utility, and the two are synonymous and interchangeable, so much so that there is no sound reason for making a distinction to justify defiance of the Constitution by allowing the noncompliance of “public service” enterprises with the requirement of Filipino citizenship.

No statute can amend the Constitution, and the fundamental law can only be amended through a constitutional amendment proposed by a constituent assembly, constitutional convention or by a people’s initiative. The proposed New Public Service Act, if enacted into law, is a mere statute which cannot amend the fundamental law. It is a fallacy to assert that what House Bill No. 78 is amending is the Public Service Act. What it is transgressing is no less than the pertinent provisions of the Constitution as copied in the Public Service Act.

In fact, there are many pending resolutions seeking to amend the economic provisions of the Constitution, including Section 11 of Article XII, through a constituent assembly. These resolutions manifest the clear intention of amending the Constitution through a constituent assembly, not through an act of the Congress as a legislative assembly. However, even by a constitutional amendment, I am still opposed to the unpatriotic erosion of the ascendant citizenship requirement in some sensitive enterprises.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Rivera.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. Domingo C. Rivera, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. RIVERA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. RIVERA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Constitution says that we should protect and promote the interest of our citizens or nationals from any foreign advantage and domination. Mr. Speaker, this Representation believes that the right timing for liberal policies, like this Bill, is a crucial key in order to reap its intended effects; otherwise, it will be the financially aggressive foreign businesses which will take advantage of our economic potential and national patrimony.

Sa aking pananaw, G. Ispiker, hindi pa po handa ang ating bayan, lalo na ang mga kababayan nating negosyante at mamumuhunan, na makipagsabayan sa pagdagsa ng mayayamang dayuhang negosyo na papayagan ng batas na ito. With all the economic, social, security and even health problems that we are troubleshooting in the current proliferation of the Philippine Offshore Gaming Operations or POGOs in the country, and in our experience with the recent liberalization of our rice sector, I think that our government, our economy and our country is not yet ready, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, CIBAC Party-List believes that there are other means that we can adopt to achieve the purposes of this Bill, but not to the extent of liberally opening this country to the mercy of foreign capitalists and investors at the expense of our local players. On this note, Mr. Speaker, this Representation, together with my co-Representative of CIBAC Party-List, Deputy Speaker Bro. Eddie Villanueva, cast a “No” vote on House Bill No. 78.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Suarez, David.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. David “Jay-Jay” C. Suarez is recognized. You have three minutes.

MALE VOICE. Parang wala.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzalez, A.). The Secretary General, please continue.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Suntay.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzalez, A.). Cong. Jesus “Bong” C. Suntay, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. SUNTAY EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. SUNTAY. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, honorable Members of this Congress.

House Bill No. 78, which is amending the Public Service Act, primarily aims to provide the definition of public utilities. Through the passage of this House measure, it will essentially constrict public utilities to the distribution of electricity, transmission of electricity, water pipeline distribution system and sewerage pipeline system. All other services will then fall under public services, essentially exempting them from the restrictions of the 1987 Constitution when Article XII, Section 11 thereof mandates all public utilities to at least have a 60 percent Filipino ownership.

This redefinition of public utilities goes against the Supreme Court rulings in *NPC vs. Court of Appeals*. Public utility is defined as a business or service engaged in regularly supplying the public with some commodity or service of public consequence such as electricity, gas, water, transportation, telephone or telegraph service. Additionally, in the case of *Albano vs. Reyes*, public utility is defined the same way. Under these services, Filipino citizenship is required. The services offered are of such importance that these must be in the hands of our own citizens, considering that the ultimate purpose of a public utility is to serve the national interest. The basis of this is that a Filipino is deemed to have patriotism and consideration of national interest.

More importantly, through the amended Public Service Act and definition of public utility, foreign entities will be enabled to have full ownership of other public services that will not fall under the new definition of public utility. This will go against the main intention of the drafters, not only of the 1973 but also of the 1987 Constitution, to reserve public utilities exclusively to Filipinos, emphasizing implicit concern for national defense and security. They fear that foreign control of important sectors such as transportation, media, electricity, telecommunications and gas, once foreign entities get hold of these major sectors, these could be used and weaponized to undermine the country’s defenses. Think of illicit intelligence gathering and misinformation if the telecommunications system is sabotaged, or the withholding of services that might be at stake. This is exactly my concern in the passage of this New Public Service Act. Not only are we making the entry of foreigners permeable, but we are also putting the country’s national defense and security at risk. With this in mind, I firmly believe that, to the ultimate best of each and every Filipino and of national

interest, we must maintain the operation of public utilities in the hands of the Filipino people.

The intention of the framers of the Constitution to protect certain industries and to keep them in the hands of the Filipino people is very clear, thus, they deemed it necessary to enshrine the same not only in the 1973 but also in the 1987 Constitution. Congress should not and cannot amend this by simple legislation.

For this, I vote “No,” Mr. Speaker.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Vergara.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzalez, A.). Cong. Rossana “Ria” V. Vergara, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. VERGARA EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. VERGARA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

With House Bill No. 78 effectively limiting public utility to just the distribution of electricity and water systems, other public services in our country such as transportation, communications and broadcasting are at high risk of no longer being subjected to the constitutional prohibition of 60-40 percent equity ownership of Filipinos and foreigners and effectively, these public services can now be 100 percent foreign-owned. Furthermore, the proposed amendments run contradictory to Section 19 of our Constitution which provides that “the State shall develop a self-reliant and independent national economy effectively controlled by Filipinos.”

While the objectives of House Bill No. 78, which are to improve the delivery of public services to generate more competition and thereby lower prices, and to increase foreign direct investments, are truly noteworthy, I am afraid that they are not strictly balanced with adequate safeguards to ensure that national interest and national security are not compromised.

I believe that the key success factor in a liberalized economy is the presence of strong regulatory bodies that will properly and fairly balance the interest of investors and the welfare of Filipino consumers. To allow the influx of foreign investments in strategic businesses that provide vital services in our country like transportation, telecommunications and broadcasting when the regulatory bodies for these industries are not fully independent, objective and transparent, is irresponsible and dangerous.

Moreover, our country has the worst rich-poor divide in Asia. As of 2017, only 0.1 percent of our population have wealth of more than P50.6 million, while an overwhelming 86.6 percent have wealth of less than P506,000. Legislative proposals like House Bill No. 78 will further widen this gap. The anticipated

competition between Filipino businesses and their foreign counterparts may leave our countrymen at a huge disadvantage.

Noong ako po ay nag-aaral, pagkatapos nating awitin ang Lupang Hinirang, binibigkas po namin ang Panatang Makabayan na nagsisimula sa mga salitang ito:

Iniibig ko ang Pilipinas,
Ito ang aking lupang sinilangan,
Ito ang tahanan ng aking lahi.

Kagalang-galang na Ispiker, sa aking tahanan, kapwa kong mga Pilipino ang namamahala. Walang banyaga na siyang makikinabang sa likas na kayamanan ng aking tahanan. Hindi po ako sang-ayon na mga banyaga ang mangunguna sa pagpapatakbo ng mga serbisyong pampubliko na tumutugon sa mga pangunahing pangangailangan ng ating mga kababayan. Ito po ang paniniwala na aking pinaglalaman.

Kagalang-galang na Ispiker, hindi po ako sang-ayon sa House Bill No. 78.

Maraming salamat po.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, before we proceed to the next Member who will explain his or her vote, we move to acknowledge the presence of some guests in the gallery.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Representative Bautista is recognized.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, we move to acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Aleta C. Suarez, Congresswoman from the Third District, Quezon Province. They are Mr. Gerald Anderson, Philippine Youth-KASAMA Ambassador of Goodwill, Nhila Mallari, Ali Claus, Jalal Laidan, Fred Payawan, Aki Pantaleon, Vangie Anderson and Gerald Ortiz. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Mr. Gerald Anderson, kasama ko po iyan sa MPBL as a player of Imus. With your group and party, welcome to the House of Representatives. Palakpakan po natin sila. *(Applause)*

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Anderson and his mother, Ms. Evangeline Opsima, are also the guests of Rep. Shirley L. Bañas-Nogales, just for the record, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). That is duly noted.

Mr. Gerald Anderson and Ms. Evangeline “Vangie” Opsima are all welcome to the House of the People.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we continue with the explanation of votes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Secretary General, you may proceed.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Zarate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Honorable Zarate, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. ZARATE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Negosyo o kalayaan, bayan o sarili—pumili ka. Iyan po, G. Ispiker, ang tinuran ng magiting na si Hen. Antonio Luna sa kabila ng kataksilan ng ilang mga Pilipino noong kapanahunang iyon.

“No” po ang boto ng BAYAN MUNA Party-List at ng Kinatawang ito sa House Bill No. 78, entitled: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DEFINITION OF PUBLIC UTILITY, FURTHER AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 146, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “PUBLIC SERVICE ACT.”

Ang tuluyang pagkabulok ng neoliberalismo sa buong mundo ay sinusubukang isalba ng mga pakana na katulad ng House Bill No. 78. Habang naglalalag ito ng kritisismo sa mga nagsusulputang oligarkiya, monopolyo at hindi maangat na presyo ng mga batayang serbisyo at kalakal dahil sa pananalasa ng neoliberal na mga patakaran sa ating lokal na ekonomiya, itinutulak pa rin ng neoliberal economic managers ng administrasyong Duterte ang mas malawak pang pribatisasyon, deregulasyon at liberalisasyon.

Ang pag-amyenda sa Public Service Act upang alisin ang mga negosyo o serbisyo bilang public utilities ay ang pag-alis din sa proteksiyon ng publiko sa makatuwirang singil para sa mga ito at ang tuluyang pag-alis ng kontrol ng gobyerno sa mga ito. Samakatuwid, G. Ispiker, mahaharap ang mga konsumer sa walang kontrol na pagtaas ng presyo at bayarin kung buong-buo na itong kontrolado ng mga dayuhan ang mga negosyong ito.

Sa paglilimita sa mga serbisyong kabilang sa public utilities, tinatangang ikutan ng House Bill No. 78 ang pag-amyenda sa ating Saligang Batas upang makapagpasok ng mga dayuhang pamumuhunan sa public utilities. Kabilang na rito ang dayuhang pagmamay-ari, kontrol at operasyon ng public utilities katulad ng transportation, telecommunications, power generation and supply, at maging sa broadcast. Ito ay ilan lamang sa public utilities na maaari nang pasukin at kontrolin ng mga dayuhan kung ating papayagang maisabatas ito. Hindi ito ang gusto ng ating mga mamamayan, G. Ispiker.

Humaling na humaling ang economic managers sa dayuhang pamumuhunan na tila ba ito ang liligtas sa ating pagbubulusok at atrasadong ekonomiya ng ating bansa, ngunit, G. Ispiker, sa ilang dekada nating pagbubukas sa ating merkado, pagbubukas sa ating ekonomiya at pagbubukas sa ating lokal na ekonomiya, nananatiling lugmok sa kahirapan ang mas marami pa nating mga kababayan at ang ating bayan. Hindi ito ang sagot sa kahirapan at pagiging atrasado ng ating bansa.

Kaya muli, G. Ispiker, bilang panghuli, atin pong isinisigaw—Isabansa ang public utilities! Serbisyo sa tao, huwag gawing negosyo!

Maraming salamat po, G. Ispiker.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Bañas-Nogales.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Cong. Bañas-Nogales, you have three minutes to explain your vote.

REP. BAÑAS-NOGRALES EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. BAÑAS-NOGRALES. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to manifest that I will be submitting a written explanation later of my “No” vote because this Representation believes that the said measure is violative of our Constitution.*

Second, this Representation is a firm believer of the “Filipino First” policy. I believe in strengthening our muscles and growing our wings. It may be a one step at a time, but believing in it and continuously doing so, will eventually make us stronger as a nation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 78 ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The result shows 136 affirmative votes, 43 negative votes and one abstention.

House Bill No. 78 is approved on Third Reading. The Majority Leader is recognized.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Secretary General be directed to immediately transmit to the Senate House Bill No. 78.

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 immediately transmit to the Senate House Bill No. 78.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that Rep. Amihilda J. Sangcopan be recognized for her manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Congresswoman Sangcopan is recognized for her manifestation.

REP. SANGCOPAN. Mr. Speaker, if I were around a while ago when House Bill No. 78 was voted upon, I would have voted “No.” I will just submit my written explanation of my vote.*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 5832 for approval on Third Reading and that the Secretary General be directed to read the title of the measure and thereafter call the roll for nominal voting.

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

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). What is the pleasure of the Gentleman from Albay?

REP. LAGMAN. May I move for a short suspension so that I could confer with the Majority Leader.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). 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 5:40 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:45 p.m., the session was resumed.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6134 ON THIRD READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my motion with regard to House Bill No. 5832, and I move instead that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6134 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on March 5, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

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 Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.*

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Pablo John F. Garcia.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6134 ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). With 240 affirmative votes, five negative votes and no abstention, House Bill No. 6134 is approved on Third Reading. The Majority Leader is recognized.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

AMENDMENT OF SECTION 30
OF THE HOUSE RULES

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move for the amendment of Section 30 of our Rules to add a provision that shall read as follows: SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE, 20 MEMBERS. – ALL MATTERS DIRECTLY AND PRINCIPALLY RELATING TO STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE INITIATIVES, ACTIVITIES, AND PROGRAMS OF THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE, COUNTER-TERRORISM, FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE, AND ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, I move for the election of the following Members:

Rep. Xavier Jesus D. Romualdo, read the names of the House Members elected to the various Committees, per Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE

As Chairman:
Rep. Fredenil “Fred” H. Castro

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
BASES CONVERSION

As member:
Rep. Francisco G. Datol Jr.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 5912
ON THIRD READING

REP. DE VENECIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 5912 and

direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on February 27, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

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 Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.*

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 5912
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). With 238 affirmative votes, no negative vote and five abstentions, House Bill No. 5912 is approved on Third Reading. The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6136
ON THIRD READING

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6136 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on March 5, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6136, entitled: AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8794, ENTITLED “AN ACT IMPOSING A MOTOR VEHICLE USER’S CHARGE ON OWNERS OF ALL TYPES OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11239.

The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.*

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mr. Speaker, how was my vote registered?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). Will the Secretary General please respond.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). My vote is “No” and I will explain my vote later.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). With 214 affirmative votes, five negative votes and no abstention, House Bill No. 6136 is approved on Third Reading.

Secretary General, will you please call the roll for the explanation of votes?

EXPLANATION OF VOTES

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Brosas.

REP. BROSAS EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Gabriela Women’s Party votes “No” on House Bill No. 6136, which seeks to repackage the old corruption-laden Motor Vehicles User’s Charge or MVUC collected by the now-defunct Road Board. Binago ang katawagan at ginawang buwis ang porma ng koleksiyon pero sa aktwal ay bulnerable pa rin ang pondong ito sa korapsyon at abuso.

The Sponsors of the measure argue that this measure is a very progressive form of taxation, but they cannot deny the fact that this will result in additional cuts in the incomes of our jeepney, bus and tricycle operators and drivers. Dagdag buwis ito sa modes of public transport na sa ngayon ay maaaring humarap sa krisis dahil apektado rin sila ng pagtumal ng mga pasahero dahil sa COVID-19 outbreak. Dagdag buwis na naman gayong hindi nga maramdaman sa ngayon ang ipinangakong

serbisyo na ihahatid daw ng dagdag buwis sa ilalim ng TRAIN Law.

Worse, this Bill ingeniously incorporates the botched PUV Modernization Program under the guise of subsidies for the procurement of Euro-4 compliant public utility vehicles. Under the measure, 45 percent of the tax revenues would be allocated to such subsidies but even with such assistance, most of the operators will still struggle to pay for the new imported units costing over a million pesos. Sa huli, pinapadulas ng panukalang ito ang pagbili at pagtatambak ng mga modernong PUVs mula sa ibang bansa sa ganansiya ng iilang negosyo at distributor habang minamasaker ang kabuhayan ng ating mga jeepney drivers. Ang malala pa rito, ang ordinaryong commuter ang papasan ng pagbabayad ng bagong buwis at bagong unit sa porma ng mas mataas na singil sa pamasaha, gayong mahigit isang taon nang walang dagdag sahod ang ating mga manggagawa.

For these reasons, “No” ang boto ng Gabriela Women’s Party sa kontra-mahirap na panukalang batas na ito, Mr. Speaker.

Salamat po.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Honorable Castro, France.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.) EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Salamat, Mr. Speaker.

Bumoboto ang ACT TEACHERS Party-List ng “No” sa mas mataas na road user’s tax na ibabangga sa mga mamamayan. Mr. Speaker, sa unang taon pa lamang ay itataas ng Bill na ito by 30 percent ang buwis sa mga cars and light vehicles, and by 90 percent pagdating ng 2023. Pabibigatin din nito ang buwis ng public utility vehicles—P1.40 per kilogram of gross vehicle weight o iyong GVW, hanggang P3.40 per kilogram sa 2023, at hindi pa matatapos sa 2023 ang pagsirit pataas ng pasanang road user’s tax dahil taunang itataas ito by five percent para sa lahat ng sasakyan.

Hindi makakapagkunwari ang panukalang ito bilang “progressive.” Paanong magiging “progressive” kung pareho lang ang babayaran ng mayayaman, ang mga may-ari ng sports vehicles, at ang mga may kaunting kaya na namamasada lamang gaya ng mga owners at operators ng pampasaherong jeep? Hindi matatanggihan ang posibilidad na may epekto ang dagdag-buwis na ito sa pasahe at mga presyo ng mga batayang bilingin at serbisyo na di hamak na mas matindi ang salpok sa mahihirap at mayoryang Pilipino kaysa sa mayayaman.

Hindi rin makakapagkunwaring para sa mamamayan ang mas pinabigat na road user’s tax, para diumano sa so-called universal health care, samantalang taunan naman ang pagba-budget cut natin sa mga programa

ng DOH at sa mga pampublikong ospital, RHUs, at iba pang health institutions, at magbubuhos ng incremental proceeds sa PhilHealth samantalang hindi pa nga ginagamot ang mga scams, mga anomalya at iba pang mga sakit nito bilang tagahigop ng pondo para sana sa direktang health services para sa mga mamamayan?

Popondohan din nito ang PUV Modernization Program kuno na nahubaran naman na bilang isang engrandeng balakin para madominahan ng mga malalaking transportation operators ang pamamasada sa daan habang isinasantabi ang panawagan para sa mura at maaasahang mass transportation system.

Sa ibang salita, kukunan na naman ang bulsa ng mga mahihirap para patabain ang bulsa ng mayayaman. Isa pa, ang pagkain na sana ng mga mahihirap at mayorya ng sambayanan ay ipapangsemento ng kita at tubo ng mga higanteng kontratista at makakabenepisyo sa Build, Build, Build Program.

Bilang panghuli, Mr. Speaker, nirerehistro ng Representasyong ito ang mariing oposisyon sa walang katapusang pagpataw ng gobyernong ito ng mga dagdag buwis na sa kadulu-duluhan ay papasanin ng mga mamamayan. Ang sinimulan na TRAIN 1 na niratsada habang natutulog ang mga Pilipino, hanggang sa TRABAHO-CITIRA na nirepake upang itago ang tanggalan ng trabaho na idudulot nito, ay ipinagpapatuloy natin ngayon sa House Bill No. 6136.

Dahil sa mga nabanggit, bumoboto kami ng “No” sa House Bill No. 6136.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6136 ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). With 214 affirmative votes, five negative votes and no abstention, House Bill No. 6136 is approved on Third Reading.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garcia, P.). The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6123 ON THIRD READING

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6123 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on February 27, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

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.”

The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.*

At this juncture Deputy Speaker Garcia (P.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aurelio “Dong” D. Gonzales Jr.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Before announcing the result of House Bill No. 6123, there is a correction in the result of the voting on House Bill No. 6136. The affirmative votes were 2-4-0, the negative votes were five, and a while ago, there was no abstention. Now, the corrected tally is: affirmative votes are 2-3-9; negative votes are five, and the abstention is one. So, that is the correct result.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6123 ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). With 246 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 6123 is now approved on Third Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 5975 ON THIRD READING

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 5975 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on February 27, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

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

The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.*

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 5975
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). With 246 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 5975 is now approved on Third Reading. The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6192
ON THIRD READING

REP. FARIÑAS, RIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6192 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on February 27, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6192, entitled: AN ACT PRESERVING THE INDIGENOUS GAMES OF THE PHILIPPINES.

The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid*

measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.

APPROVAL OF H. B. NO. 6192
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). With 246 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 6192 is approved on Third Reading. The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6254
ON THIRD READING

REP. FARIÑAS, RIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6254 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on March 3, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6254, entitled: AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO FBS RADIO NETWORK, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8114, ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING FBS RADIO NETWORK, INC., A FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH, CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE COMMERCIAL RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.*

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6254
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). With 248 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 6254 is approved on Third Reading. The Majority Leader is recognized.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6256
ON THIRD READING

FARIÑAS, RIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6256 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on March 3, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6256, entitled: AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO CENTURY COMMUNICATIONS MARKETING CENTER, INC., DOING BUSINESS UNDER THE NAME AND STYLE OF CENTURY BROADCASTING NETWORK, UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8133, ENTITLED “AN ACT GRANTING CENTURY COMMUNICATIONS MARKETING CENTER, INC., A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

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

The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.*

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6256
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). With 248 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 6256 is approved on Third Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6371
ON THIRD READING

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6371 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on March 3, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL, House Bill No. 6371, entitled: AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION, PRESENTLY KNOWN AS BAYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC., UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3259, ENTITLED “AN ACT GRANTING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH RADIO STATIONS FOR DOMESTIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS, RADIOPHONE, BROADCASTING AND TELECASTING”, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NOS. 4905 AND 7633.

The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.*

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6371
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). With 248 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 6371 is approved on Third Reading. The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6091
ON THIRD READING

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6091 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

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

Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on March 5, 2020, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6091, entitled: AN ACT PROVIDING PROTECTION FROM LIABILITY TO VOLUNTEERS FOR ACTS OR OMISSIONS COMMITTED IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES DURING EMERGENCY SITUATION.

The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is reflected in Journal No. 53, dated March 10, 2020.*

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6091 ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). With 248 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 6091 is approved on Third Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Secretary General be directed to immediately transmit to the Senate all the bills that the House approved on Third Reading.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 159 ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 159, contained in Committee Report No. 260, as reported out by the Committee on Housing and Urban Development. For this purpose, I move that the Secretary General be directed to read the title of the measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Is

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 159, entitled: AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE RIGHT OF GOVERNMENT TO EXPROPRIATE LANDS FOR SOCIALIZED HOUSING, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 9, 10, AND 11 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7279, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING ACT OF 1992.”

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). 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 recognize the Chairman of the Committee on Housing and Urban Development, Rep. Strike B. Revilla, to sponsor the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Hon. Strike Revilla is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. REVILLA

REP. REVILLA. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, I humbly stand before you with the singular honor to report back to this august Body House Bill No. 159, in consolidation with House Bill No. 5986, which seeks to strengthen the right of the government to expropriate lands for socialized housing and to amend for the purpose Sections 9, 10, and 11 of Republic Act No. 7279, otherwise known as the “Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992.” The ultimate purpose of this measure is to help solve the prevailing housing and urbanization problems. Ang kakayanan po ng ating mga siyudad na harapin ang napakabilis na pagsulong ng urbanisasyon at ang mga kaakibat na mga problemang dala-dala nito ay nagtutulak sa hangganan.

Sa ilalim ng Republic Act No. 7279 o ang Urban Development and Housing Act ay naatasan ang mga lokal na pamahalaan na magsagawa ng imbentaryo ng mga lupa para sa socialized housing. May mga paraan o modes ng pag-acquire ng lupa na isinaad ang batas katulad ng community mortgage, land swapping, land assembly or consolidation, land banking, donation sa gobyerno, joint venture agreement, negotiated purchase at expropriation, subalit isinasaad din ng batas na

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

** 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.”

gagamitin lang ang expropriation bilang pinakahuling hakbang sa pagkuha ng lupa para sa socialized housing. May mga pagkakataon kung saan ang isang lokal na pamahalaan ay nagnanais matugunan ang suliraning pabahay sa kaniyang nasasakupan, at dahil mayroon silang sapat na kakayanan ay mas ninanais na makakuha ng lupa sa pamamagitan ng expropriation, subalit ito ay tinutulan lamang ng mga korte sa kadahilanang ang expropriation ay ang pinakahuling opsyon sa ilalim ng batas.

Ang House Bill No. 159 ay nagbibigay ng solusyon sa problemang ito ng ating pamahalaan. Ipinanukala nito na ang iba't-ibang paraan ng pagkuha ng lupa para sa socialized housing ay pantay-pantay na at ang expropriation, ang isang kapangyarihan ng lokal na pamahalaan na itinatadhana ng Local Government Code, ay hindi na last option. Mr. Speaker, ang panukalang batas na ito ay hindi cure-all solution sa kabuuang problema ng pabahay pero sa pamamagitan nito ay mapapabilis ang pagtatalaga at pagkuha ng lupa upang makapagpatayo ng mga pampublikong pabahay at maibsan ang mahigit na anim na milyong kakulangan sa pabahay kung saan itinatayang mahigit isang milyon ay nakatira sa mga danger zones at mga lupain ng pamahalaan na may nakatalagang imprastraktura.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, we take pride and honor in bringing this measure to the Plenary for your support and approval.

Thank you and good day.

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 159

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 159.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6497 ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 6497, contained in Committee Report No. 271, as reported out by the Committees on Health and Appropriations.

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

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6497, entitled: AN ACT MODERNIZING THE REGULATION OF HEALTH FACILITIES AND SERVICES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4226, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "HOSPITAL LICENSURE ACT".

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). 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 recognize the distinguished Chairman of the Committee on Housing and Urban Development, Rep. Strike B. Revilla, to begin sponsorship of the measure.

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

Hon. Strike Revilla is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. REVILLA

REP. REVILLA. Good evening, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues.

On behalf of Chairperson Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, MD who is attending another meeting related to COVID-19, I am a member of the Committee on Health and a coauthor, so I am taking up the cudgels in sponsoring House Bill No. 6497 in Committee Report No. 271.

The Bill is intended to strengthen the regulation of health facilities in the Philippines. To do so is to repeal Republic Act No. 4226, otherwise known as the Hospital Licensure Act, which was enacted in June of 1965. The proposed measure mandates the Bureau of Health Facilities and Services (BHFS) of the DOH to be the regulatory agency for health facilities and services in the country which include hospitals, clinics and other types of health facilities that provide diagnostic, rehabilitative, palliative and therapeutic services. The Bill also defines the powers and functions of the BHFS in establishing and prescribing the rules, regulations, standards and specifications in the issuance of permits to construct or licenses to operate facilities, and to administer and enforce the rules thereof.

* 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 BHFS is also empowered to inspect and monitor all health facilities, approve plans and issue permits or authority to construct, renovate or expand health facilities, and collect or determine appropriate permits fees. Furthermore, the BHFS is vested with quasi-judicial power to investigate, hear and decide administrative cases against health service facilities and establishments in violation of this Act. The BHFS is also authorized to work closely with the FDA for the licensing of hospital-based and stand-alone pharmacies.

The provisions, as reflected in the proposed measure, will update the current set-up and allow the efficient flow of regulating health facilities and services in the country.

On this note, I seek the approval of House Bill No. 6497 under Committee Report No. 271 by the Members of this august Chamber.

Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). 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 terminate the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 6497 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 6497 on Second Reading.

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

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6497 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 6497 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6496 ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 6496, contained in Committee Report No. 270, as reported out by the Committees on Health, Appropriations and Ways and Means. For this purpose, I move that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6496, entitled: AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE ELIMINATION OF TUBERCULOSIS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10767 OR THE "COMPREHENSIVE TUBERCULOSIS ELIMINATION PLAN ACT."

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). 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 Rep. Strike B. Revilla to begin sponsorship of the measure.

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

Hon. Strike Revilla 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. REVILLA

REP. REVILLA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again, good evening. On behalf of Chairperson Angelina “Helen” D.L. Tan, MD who is attending another meeting related to COVID-19, I just want to take up the cudgels in sponsoring House Bill No. 6496 in Committee Report No. 270.

The Bill is aimed to provide support and expand efforts to eliminate tuberculosis through the comprehensive monitoring of TB patients, the implementation of a wider public awareness program and the harnessing of support of the private sector. The measure proposes the inclusion in the module of the basic education curriculum the principles and practices of preventing, detecting, managing and controlling TB. It provides for a massive, nationwide, consistent and sustained multimedia campaign on TB control, treatment and management. The Bill further:

1. Classifies TB as a notifiable disease and must be reported to the DOH. For this purpose, a TB Notification Committee is created in all public and private health centers, hospitals and facilities.

2. Establishes a DOH TB Registry and Monitoring System which shall contain data on all new cases of TB according to geographical regions and provide a framework in assessing and controlling the impact of the disease.

3. Enumerates the rights and responsibilities of TB patients which shall include, among others, the right to be treated humanely, to a free and equitable access to TB care from diagnosis to complete treatment, to information on the availability of health care and the right to confidentiality.

4. Encourages private sector participation in the national TB Elimination Program through its corporate social responsibility programs.

5. Establishes convergence of TB services in the local government unit by providing a TB Strategic Plan through DSWD, to cover indirect cost of accessing TB treatment, including transportation, meals, accommodation and other assistance available; through the DOLE, to develop policies on TB prevention and improve occupational safety; through the Civil Service Commission, to develop policies for government workers on TB prevention and occupational safety and health condition in the work place; through the TESDA, to implement a nondiscriminatory approach in dealing with clients affected with TB; and through the DepEd, CHED, DILG and other government agencies, to develop a comprehensive program of support services for TB victims and their affected families.

The proposed measure, once approved, will greatly help in the elimination of TB in the Philippines. Approval is, thus, earnestly sought by this Representation as a member and coauthor of the measure under the Committee on Health.

May I also include, Mr. Speaker, the Minority Floor Leader, as a coauthor of this measure.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). 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 terminate the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

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

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 6496 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 6496.

As many as are in favor of House Bill No. 6496, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6496
ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 6496 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6456
ON SECOND READING

REP. DE VENECIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 6456, contained in Committee Report No. 262, as reported out by the Committee on Youth and Sports Development. For this purpose, I move that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6456, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING AUGUST 12 OF EVERY YEAR AS NATIONAL YOUTH DAY.

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. DE VENECIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate and recognize Hon. Eric M. Martinez for his sponsorship speech.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Hon. Eric Martinez is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. MARTINEZ

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

On December 17 of 1999, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution No. 54/120 which declared August 12 as International Youth Day. Henceforth, August 12 marks the annual celebration of International Youth Day. It is an awareness day designated by the United Nations for the purpose of recognizing the youth across the globe and empowering young people to make positive contributions to their communities and nations as well as to draw attention to a given set of cultural and legal issues surrounding the youth globally.

It is in this spirit that the Committee on Youth and Sports Development approved House Bill No. 6456, under Committee Report No. 262, which seeks to honor the youth in the annual celebration of the National Youth

Day every August 12, the same day that the International Youth Day is celebrated. The annual celebration aims for a decentralized celebration of the internationally-recognized event in schools, colleges and universities, and in all provincial and local youth development offices, and mandates them to launch activities such as leadership training, youth empowerment workshops, basic mass integration, community activities, among others. The overriding objective of this proposal is to recognize the role of the youth in nation-building and to promote social change by declaring a National Youth Day.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, I am hopeful that the proposed declaration of the National Youth Day will encourage our youth to be more inspired, more productive and more dynamic citizens of this Republic. Let the National Youth Day be a day of triumph and celebration for our young people. Let the National Youth Day be a day of recognition of the important role of the youth in nation-building. Let the National Youth Day be a day of hope and inspiration for our young people. Mabuhay ang kabataang Pilipino.

Thank you.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

REP. DE VENECIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 6456 on Second Reading.

* 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.”

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel.). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 6456 on Second Reading.

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

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6456
ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 6456 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6505
ON SECOND READING

REP. DE VENECIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 6505, contained in Committee Report No. 275, as reported out by the Committees on Agrarian Reform and Appropriations. For this purpose, I move that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the said measure.

I so move.

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6505, entitled: AN ACT GRANTING FULL INSURANCE COVERAGE TO ALL QUALIFIED AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9700, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM EXTENSION WITH REFORMS."

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. DE VENECIA. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate and recognize the distinguished Chairman of the Committee on Agrarian Reform, Hon. Solomon R. Chungalao, to begin sponsorship of the said measure.

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

Representative Chungalao is recognized.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. CHUNGALAO

REP. CHUNGALAO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker and dear colleagues of this august Chamber.

I wish to express my appreciation for the House leadership and its entire membership for the inclusion of our measure in today's Plenary agenda. Finally, I stand before you this afternoon to sponsor a very significant piece of legislation that would provide immediate financial assistance to affected agrarian reform beneficiaries or ARBs in the event of natural calamities in order to make losses more bearable and to mitigate their effects by granting insurance to qualified farmers.

The measure that I am referring to is the substitute measure to House Bills Nos. 1045 and 3451, entitled: AN ACT GRANTING FULL INSURANCE COVERAGE TO ALL QUALIFIED AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9700, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM EXTENSION WITH REFORMS," which were principally authored by Reps. Kristine Singson-Meehan and Vilma Santos-Recto.

Mr. Speaker, this will provide the agrarian reform beneficiaries with the much-needed insurance protection against compensable losses arising from natural calamities, plant diseases and pest infestations of their crops. This mandates full insurance coverage to farmer beneficiaries whose losses occur from natural calamities such as typhoons, floods, droughts, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, plant diseases caused by pathogens, bacteria, fungi, viruses, virus-like pathogens and other similar foreign bodies, and pest infestations caused by nematodes, insects, mites and spiders, millipedes and centipedes, et cetera.

It will also promote a positive impact on the lives of the farmer beneficiaries and will ensure the efficiency of support services accorded by the

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Department of Agrarian Reform for the sector of the ARBs. In this manner, it will take the pressure off the ARBs in managing risks arising from the production of commodities and price variability and rise up against poverty. Further, the concerns of the ARBs in situations beyond their control like the increasingly unpredictable weather patterns and adverse weather conditions brought about by the intensifying climate change, where weather uncertainties will be addressed accordingly. It will also provide the ARBs a safety net against crop pests and diseases.

Similarly, it will also serve as a credit reduction mechanism and a surrogate capital for actual capital, and will facilitate credit access especially in formal lending institutions like the Land Bank of the Philippines which require agricultural insurance from ARB borrowers. Since the agricultural insurance program of the government shall be administered by the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation, created through PD 1467, as amended by PD 8175, the best interest of the CARP beneficiaries and national economy shall be afforded the highest consideration.

This Bill will strongly complement the agricultural insurance for agrarian reform beneficiaries participating in the Agrarian Production Credit Program and Credit Assistance Program for Program Beneficiaries Development in the financing programs implemented by the DA, DAR and LBP which cover all the regular insurance products implemented by the PCIC. More importantly, this will provide for a choice of insurance windows for the ARBs and address the various issues that impede the availment of insurance in agriculture. In contrast to some on-farm strategies that contribute to financial loss, this substitute Bill also allows mitigation from severe correlated risks. Lastly, its passage will enable the DAR to support the ARBs in its biggest and broadest enterprise to date as a mechanism in managing risks which the ARBs can avail and utilize cost-free. To this end, the risk-averse ARBs will be encouraged to engage in riskier but more profitable activities such as the adoption of higher yielding varieties.

Mr. Speaker, esteemed colleagues, we are compelled to abide by our primary function as enshrined in our Preamble which states that we should fulfill the constitutional duty to make laws that respond to the needs of the Filipino people and fulfill the aspirations for a just and humane society, where every Filipino can enjoy the blessings of freedom and democracy under a government strengthened by the rule of law, social justice and people empowerment.

I earnestly implore your support for the passage of this Bill.

Maraming salamat po.

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

REP. DE VENECIA. 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.

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

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

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

REP. DE VENECIA. Mr. Speaker, there being no Committee or individual amendments, I move that we terminate the period of amendments.

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

REP. DE VENECIA. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we approve House Bill No. 6505 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 6505.

As many as are in favor of House Bill No. 6505, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6505 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 6505 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we take up the Additional Reference of Business and for this purpose, I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read the same.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the following Committee Report which was referred to the appropriate Committee hereunder indicated:

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report of the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 279), re H.B. No. 6553, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 23 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY TO BE KNOWN AS THE ‘NATIONAL ROTARY DAY’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 3727

Sponsors: Representatives Deloso-Montalla, Tambunting, Savellano and Herrera-Dy
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

AMENDMENT OF HOUSE RULES

REP. SUAREZ (D.). Mr. Speaker, I move that the Special Committee on Sustainable Development Goals be converted to a Standing Committee, thereby amending Section 28 of the House Rules to read as follows: COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, 20 MEMBERS. – ALL MATTERS DIRECTLY AND PRINCIPALLY RELATING TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE COUNTRY’S COMMITMENT TO THE UNITED NATIONS 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO ERADICATING EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER, PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, OBTAINING QUALITY EDUCATION, ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERING WOMEN, ENSURING ACCESS TO WATERS, SANITATION FOR ALL, ENSURING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY, PROMOTING INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DECENT WORK.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6522 ON SECOND READING

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, I move for the consideration of House Bill No. 6522, as contained in Committee Report No. 277, as reported out by the Committee on Revision of Laws. For this purpose, I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6522, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING JANUARY 16 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY, TO BE KNOWN AS “NATIONAL BAPTIST DAY.”

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate, and recognize the Chairperson of the Committee on Revision of Laws, Rep. Cheryl P. Deloso-Montalla, to sponsor the measure.

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

Representative Deloso-Montalla is recognized.

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

As the Chairperson of the Committee on Revision of Laws, I rise here to sponsor House Bill No. 6522, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING JANUARY 16 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY, TO BE KNOWN AS “NATIONAL BAPTIST DAY.”

Mr. Speaker, may we request that the Explanatory Note of the measure be considered as the sponsorship speech thereon.

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

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

REP. ZUBIRI. I move to approve House Bill No. 6522 on Second Reading, Mr. Speaker.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 6522 on Second Reading.

As many as are in favor of House Bill No. 6522, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6522 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 6522 is approved on Second Reading. The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6553 ON SECOND READING

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 6553, contained in Committee Report No. 279, as reported out by the Committee on Revision of Laws. For this purpose, I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6553, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 23 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY TO BE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL ROTARY DAY."

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

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, I move to open the period of sponsorship and debate and recognize Rep. Cheryl P. Deloso-Montalla to sponsor the measure.

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

Honorable Deloso-Montalla is recognized.

REP. DELOSO-MONTALLA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are here to sponsor House Bill No. 6553, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 23 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY TO BE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL ROTARY DAY."

We move, Mr. Speaker, that the Explanatory Note of the measure be considered as the sponsorship speech thereon.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, no Member has registered to interpellate on or speak against the

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measure, I move that we terminate the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

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

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

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

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

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 6553 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 6553 on Second Reading.

As many as are in favor of House Bill No. 6553, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6553 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 6553 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 776

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 776, contained in Committee Report No. 278, as reported out by the

Committee on Youth and Sports Development. For this purpose, I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 776, entitled: RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION FOR THEIR EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE IN THE THIRTIETH SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES, AND THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PHILIPPINE SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (PHISGOC), SPEAKER ALAN PETER S. CAYETANO, AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE (POC), REPRESENTATIVE ABRAHAM "BAMBOL" N. TOLENTINO, FOR THE SUCCESSFUL HOSTING BY THE PHILIPPINES OF THE GAMES FROM 30 NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER 11, 2019.

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

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 776

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 776.

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

House Resolution No. 776 is hereby adopted.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 159 *Continuation*

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 159, contained in Committee Report 260, as reported out by the Committee on Housing and Urban Development. For this purpose, I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Is

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

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

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 159, entitled: AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE RIGHT OF GOVERNMENT TO EXPROPRIATE LANDS FOR SOCIALIZED HOUSING, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 9, 10, AND 11 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7279, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING ACT OF 1992."

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status is that we are in the period of sponsorship and debate. Since no Member wishes to interpellate on or speak against the measure, I move that we close t the period of sponsorship and debate.

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

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

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

REP. ROMUALDO. There being no Committee or individual amendments, I move that we close the same.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bill No. 159 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). There is a motion for the approval of House Bill No. 159 on Second Reading.

As many as are in favor of House Bill No. 159, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 159 ON SECOND READING

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

House Bill No. 159 is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider bills under the Calendar of Business for Thursday and Friday, and pursuant to our rules, allow me to put forth...

REP. SANGCOPAN. Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, may we know the pleasure of the Lady from ANAK MINDANAO Party-List?

REP. SANGCOPAN. I just want to make a manifestation. Considering that we have already approved House Bill No. 159 on Second Reading, I would like to manifest that I be considered as one of the coauthors of the said Bill, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, we move that the Lady be made a coauthor of the said Bill.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

OMNIBUS CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILLS ON SECOND READING

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

1. House Bill No. 6413, contained in Committee Report No. 249;
2. House Bill No. 6441, contained in Committee Report No. 252;

3. House Bill No. 6442, contained in Committee Report No. 253;

4. House Bill No. 6443, contained in Committee Report No. 254;

5. House Bill No. 6445, contained in Committee Report No. 256;

6. House Bill No. 6446, contained in Committee Report No. 257;

7. House Bill No. 6447, contained in Committee Report No. 258;

8. House Bill No. 6448, contained in Committee Report No. 259;

9. House Bill No. 6467, contained in Committee Report No. 263;

10. House Bill No. 5027, contained in Committee Report No. 264;

11. House Bill No. 4939, contained in Committee Report No. 265;

12. House Bill No. 6491, contained in Committee Report No. 268;

13. House Bill No. 6492, contained in Committee Report No. 269;

14. House Bill No. 6498, contained in Committee Report No. 272;

15. House Bill No. 6499, contained in Committee Report No. 273; and

16. House Bill No. 2397, contained in Committee Report No. 274.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we open the period of sponsorship and debate, and consider the respective Explanatory Notes of the bills as the sponsorship speeches thereon.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve House Bills Nos. 6413, 6441, 6442, 6443, 6445, 6446, 6447, 6448, 6467, 5027, 4939, 6491, 6492, 6498, 6499 and 2397 on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

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

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

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

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

OMNIBUS APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILLS ON SECOND READING

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

House Bills Nos. 6413, 6441, 6442, 6443, 6445, 6446, 6447, 6448, 6467, 5027, 4939, 6491, 6492, 6498, 6499 and 2397 are approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

CHANGE OF REFERRAL OF CERTAIN MEASURES

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

1. House Bill No. 4764, from the Committee on Social Services to the Committee on Poverty Alleviation;

2. House Bill No. 2474, from the Committee on Basic Education and Culture to the Committee on Appropriations;

3. House Bills Nos. 1769, 1924, 2012, 4135, 4727 and 6225, from the Committee on Health to the Committee on Public Works and Highways;

4. House Joint Resolution No. 25, from the

Committee on Agriculture and Food to the Committees on Agriculture and Food, and Local Government;

5. House Resolutions Nos. 192, 193, 336, 383, 506 and 705, from the Committee on Agriculture and Food to the Committees on Agriculture and Food, and Local Government;

6. House Bill No. 3329, from the Committee on Population and Family Relations to the Committee on Welfare of Children;

7. House Bill No. 2619, from the Committee on Ways and Means to the Committee on Local Government; and

8. House Bill No. 3056, from the Committee on Appropriations to the Committee on Science and Technology.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve Journal No. 52, dated March 9, 2020.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until tomorrow, March 11, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The session is adjourned until tomorrow, March 11, at 3:00 p.m.

It was 7:21 p.m.