



# Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 18<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

## House of Representatives

Vol. 4

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

No. 54

### CALL TO ORDER

*At 3:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Raneo “Ranie” E. Abu called the session to order.*

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

Please rise for the Invocation to be delivered by the Hon. Florida “Rida” P. Robes, Representative from the Lone District of San Jose Del Monte City.

*Everybody rose for the Invocation.*

### INVOCATION

REP. ROBES. Thank you, honorable Speaker. Let us all bow our heads for a prayer.

*Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank You for giving us the opportunity to be of service to others.*

*As we end our session today and go on recess, allow us to thank You for the ideas and wisdom You have imparted to all of us that have helped us make valuable contributions to the lives of our constituents and the nation.*

*Thank You, O Lord, for gifting us with the courage to fight for what we think is right for our people and to make tough but necessary decisions.*

*Bless us in our session today that we may perform our duties for the good of the Filipino people. Guide us as we continue our duty to pass meaningful legislations that will bring progress, peace and justice to our countrymen. We bow our heads and lift up our plans to the Lord. We pray that You continue to bless our hearts and minds as we pray for Your assurance that we are acting within Your will.*

*Impart to us Your wisdom to make beautiful decisions. Give us character so that we will do our duty selflessly, not for personal ambition or conceit. Help us to work in humility and remove any selfish desires.*

*O, Lord, with the threat of the coronavirus-19, we pray that You bestow Your protection over us, our family, friends and communities. Keep us safe in Your loving arms. As the great physician, grant us strength and good health so that nothing will prevent Your plan*

*for our lives. Protect us from the COVID-19 and other contagions and diseases that can riddle our body and bring danger to our lives.*

*We pray for those battling the disease. Heal them, O Lord, with Your loving hand. We also pray for our healthcare workers who are standing at the frontlines risking their own lives to save others. We likewise seek Your infinite guidance for those working to discover the treatment and the vaccine for COVID-19.*

*Our lives and our health are in Your hands, Lord, and our trust and faith are in You. For these and all blessings, we give You thanks, eternal loving God.*

*Before I end, I would like to offer a silent prayer for our beloved Dory Esquivel Villanueva who happens to be my aunt and the wife of our Brother Eddie Villanueva who just passed away yesterday at 5:55 in the afternoon.*

*Our Father in Heaven, holy be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.*

*Thank you, Lord. Amen.*

### NATIONAL ANTHEM

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

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

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

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to defer the approval of the Journal of the previous session.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we now proceed with the Reference of Business and request that the Secretary General be directed to read the titles of Bills and Resolutions on First Reading as well as the Communications and Committee Reports.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the Secretary General is hereby directed to read the titles of the Bills and Resolutions on First Reading for referral to the appropriate Committees.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 6526, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROGRAM FOR ALL DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS, OFFICES, AND AGENCIES OF THE GOVERNMENT”

By Representative Villafuerte  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

House Bill No. 6527, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE IMPROVEMENT, REHABILITATION, AND MODERNIZATION OF THE SANGALI FISH PORT COMPLEX (SFPC) IN ZAMBOANGA CITY”

By Representative Dalipe  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES RESOURCES

House Bill No. 6528, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A NATIONAL POLICY IN PREVENTING ADOLESCENT PREGNANCIES, INSTITUTIONALIZING SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR TEENAGE

PARENTS, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representatives Acosta-Alba, Zubiri and Garin (Janette)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 6529, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING HAZARD PAY TO ALL COURT SHERIFFS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Garin (Janette)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 6530, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE ILI – GUINAMGAMMAN – RIZAL PROVINCIAL ROAD, CONNECTING THE PROVINCE OF APAYAO AND PROVINCE OF CAGAYAN, INTO A NATIONAL ROAD AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representatives Bulut and Vargas Alfonso  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 6531, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE BULUAN – BANBAN – PAGUIN – SACPII PROVINCIAL ROAD IN THE PROVINCE OF APAYAO, INTO A NATIONAL ROAD AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Bulut  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 6532, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE LIFETIME MONTHLY GRATUITY OF MEDAL OF VALOR AWARDEES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9049, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘AN ACT GRANTING MONTHLY GRATUITY AND PRIVILEGES TO AN AWARDEE OF THE MEDAL OF VALOR, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’”

By Representative Palma  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

House Bill No. 6533, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR MANDATORY DRUG TESTING OF PUBLIC UTILITY VEHICLE DRIVER’S LICENSE APPLICANTS”

By Representative Sarmiento  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 6534, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ELDERLY CARE AND NURSING COMPLEX IN EVERY CITY AND PROVINCE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Marquez  
TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SENIOR CITIZENS

House Bill No. 6535, entitled:

“AN ACT RENAMING BARANGAY STA. MARIA IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PRESENTACION, PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR AS BARANGAY PARUBCAN”

By Representative Fuentebella  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 6536, entitled:

“AN ACT EXPANDING THE MANDATE AND SERVICE CAPABILITY OF THE DON JOSE S. MONFORT MEDICAL CENTER EXTENSION HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BAROTAC NUEVO, ILOILO, RENAMING THE SAME AS DON JOSE S. MONFORT MEDICAL CENTER AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Biron  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6537, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO SATELLITE BROADCASTING INCORPORATED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7965 ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE SATELLITE BROADCASTING INCORPORATED A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL RADIO AND TELEVISION STATIONS WITHIN REGIONS I, II, THE CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION AND THE WHOLE OF LUZON’ ”

By Representative Ortega  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

House Bill No. 6538, entitled:

“AN ACT PROTECTING THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN THE PHILIPPINES GUARANTEED UNDER SECTION 5, ARTICLE III OF THE 1987 CONSTITUTION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Villanueva (Eduardo) and Rivera  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

House Bill No. 6539, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF GOV. FAUSTINO DY, SR. MEMORIAL HOSPITAL FROM ONE HUNDRED (100) TO THREE HUNDRED (300) BEDS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Albano  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6540, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE LAST WEEK OF AUGUST AS NATIONAL YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH WEEK AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Robes  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6541, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING ELECTRIC VEHICLES FROM BEING PARKED IN ENCLOSED PARKING SPACES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Robes  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 6542, entitled:

“AN ACT PRESCRIBING A JUST AND HUMANE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE RESETTLEMENT OF UNDERPRIVILEGED AND HOMELESS CITIZENS, PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representatives Nieto, Maceda, Malapitan, Martinez and Valeriano  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 6543, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING SUPPORT AND WELFARE PROTECTION TO PARENTS, AND OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Suarez (Aleta)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON POPULATION AND FAMILY RELATIONS

House Bill No. 6544, entitled:

“AN ACT CODIFYING THE ALTERNATIVE CHILD CARE LAWS, REORGANIZING THE INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION BOARD INTO THE NATIONAL AUTHORITY FOR

## CHILD CARE, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Suarez (Aleta)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 6545, entitled:

“AN ACT FURTHER AMENDING PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1869, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE PAGCOR FRANCHISE, PROVIDING AUTHORITY FOR THE REGULATION OF OFF-COCKPIT, ELECTRONIC, AND ONLINE GAMES BASED ON COCKFIGHTING, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Alvarez (Franz), Gonzales (Aurelio) and Padiernos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

House Bill No. 6546, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF QUARANTINE FACILITIES IN ALL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) HOSPITALS IN THE COUNTRY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Campos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 6547, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING AND REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED NINE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED NINETY-SEVEN (R.A. NO. 9297), OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE CHEMICAL ENGINEERING ACT OF 2004’ ”

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

House Bill No. 6548, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE FULL TRANSPARENCY AND DISCLOSURE OF RELEVANT FACTS AND ALL REQUIREMENTS BY THE OWNERS AND/OR DEVELOPERS OF CONDOMINIUM PROJECTS TO THE BUYERS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PD 957 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Cuaresma  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 6549, entitled:

“AN ACT SETTING THE STANDARD WORKING

CONDITIONS AND CREATING AN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH (OSH) STANDARDS OF WORKERS IN FILM, TELEVISION, THEATER AND SIMILAR INDUSTRIES OF THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representatives Gaité, Zarate, Brosas, Castro (France) and Elago

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 6550, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY (NHA) HOUSING BENEFICIARIES BY WAIVING AND CONDONING ALL PENALTIES AND DELINQUENCY CHARGES TO THE ACCOUNT OF EVERY HOUSING BENEFICIARIES”

By Representatives Sy-Alvarado, Yap (Eric) and Revilla

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 6551, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE MARINDUQUE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SANTA CRUZ, PROVINCE OF MARINDUQUE, CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE THE MARINDUQUE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Velasco  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

House Bill No. 6552, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 21 OF EVERY YEAR AS ‘ARAW NG MARINDUQUE,’ A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF MARINDUQUE”

By Representative Velasco  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 6556, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY GABIHAN, MUNICIPALITY OF SAN ILDEFONSO, PROVINCE OF BULACAN TO BE KNOWN AS THE GABIHAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Silverio  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

## RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 774, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT AND THE OTHER RELEVANT COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE EFFECT OF COVID-19 ON EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIES, AND ON THE MEASURES BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE CONCERNED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WITH THE END VIEW OF ENSURING A COMPREHENSIVE AND COHERENT MITIGATION AND PREVENTION NATIONAL ACTION PLAN TO SAVE LIVES AND JOBS”

By Representative Mendoza  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 775, entitled:

“RESOLUTION ORGANIZING THE PHILIPPINES - BRAZIL PARLIAMENTARIANS' FRIENDSHIP GROUP”

By Representative Yu  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON INTER-PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY

House Resolution No. 777, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A REVIEW, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, OF THE GUIDELINES SET BY THE COMMISSION ON AUDIT IN ITS CONDUCT OF AUDIT ON THE UTILIZATION OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION FUND (SEF) BY THE PROVINCIAL, CITY AND MUNICIPAL LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS (LSBs)”

By Representative Robes  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 778, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE VARIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND FORCED SURRENDER OF FARMERS AND MEMBERS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES GROUP KALINGA TRIBE PERPETRATED BY ELEMENTS OF THE 17<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY BATTALION PHILIPPINE ARMY AND THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE-CAGAYAN IN SITIO LAGUM, BRGY. LIPATAN, STO.

NIÑO, CAGAYAN VALLEY, CAGAYAN PROVINCE”

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

House Resolution No. 779, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE ALLEGED HARASSMENT AGAINST RURAL MISSIONARIES OF THE PHILIPPINES (RMP) BY THE ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING COUNCIL (AMLC)”

By Representatives Gaité and Zarate  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 780, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND THE MAJOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANIES TO COME UP WITH A TASK FORCE WHICH WILL RECOMMEND A MECHANISM FOR A HOME BASED/VIRTUAL EDUCATION SYSTEM FOR K-12 STUDENTS DURING THE STATE OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY”

By Representative Bañas-Nogralés  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Resolution No. 781, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11364, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY CHARTER OF 2019’ ”

By Representative Canama  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 782, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STATUS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OIL PALM FINANCING PROGRAM OF THE LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representatives Canama, Ong (Jose), Lacson,  
Padiernos and Ebcas  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Letter dated February 18, 2020 of Arnold P. Dinunon, CE, Municipal Mayor, Municipality of Ambaguio, Province of Nueva Vizcaya, submitting to the House of Representatives their Report on Fund Utilization and Status of Program/Project Implementation on the Local Government Support Fund – Financial Assistance as of December 31, 2019.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated February 20, 2020 of Eleanor O. Mena, State Auditor V, Supervising Auditor, Audit Group CGS – Water District I, II and Other CGS Stand Alone Agencies, Regional Office No. VI, Commission on Audit, furnishing the House of Representatives a copy of the Annual Report on the Malinao Water District, Malinao, Aklan for the year ended December 31, 2018.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Agency Action Plan and Status of Implementation (AAPSI) for the FY 2018 and FY 2017 Annual Audit Reports of the Presidential Communications Operations Office.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letters dated 4 March 2020 of Janice G. Ayson-Zales, Deputy Director, Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), furnishing the House of Representatives with duly certified and authenticated BSP issuances, to wit:

1. Circular No. 1077 dated 26 February 2020;
2. Circular Letter No. CL-2020-010 dated 21 February 2020;
3. Circular Letter No. CL-2020-011 dated 26 February 2020; and
4. Circular Letter No. CL-2020-012 dated 27 February 2020.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Letter dated March 9, 2020 of Salvador C. Medialdea, Executive Secretary, Office of the President, Malacañan, to the Honorable Senate President Vicente C. Sotto III, transmitting the letter of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, copy furnished the Honorable Speaker Alan Peter S. Cayetano, certifying to the necessity of the immediate enactment of Senate Bill No. 1357, entitled:

“AN ACT REFORMING THE CORPORATE INCOME TAX AND INCENTIVES SYSTEM,

AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 4, 20, 27, 28, 34 AND 290 OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED, AND CREATING THEREIN NEW TITLE XIII, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 280), re H.B. No. 6554, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JANUARY 22 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY TO BE KNOWN AS ‘NATIONAL FARMER’S DAY’ ” recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 5244

Sponsors: Representatives Deloso-Montalla, Cullamat and Zarate

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on People’s Participation (Committee Report No. 281), re H.B. No. 6555, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING VOLUNTEERISM AS A STRATEGY FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND DECLARING DECEMBER AS NATIONAL VOLUNTEER MONTH, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 12 AND 13 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9418, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘VOLUNTEER ACT OF 2007’ ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 3134 and 3475

Sponsors: Representatives Robes, Acosta-Alba, Bustos and Vergara

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Youth and Sports Development (Committee Report No. 282), re H.R. No. 783, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING ALEXANDRA ‘ALEX’ M. EALA FOR WINNING THE AUSTRALIAN OPEN JUNIORS’ TENNIS COMPETITION DOUBLES CATEGORY HELD IN MELBOURNE PARK, AUSTRALIA ON JANUARY 31, 2020”

recommending its adoption in substitution of House Resolutions Numbered 701, 708 and 740

Sponsors: Representatives Martinez, Tiangco and Olivarez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Youth and Sports Development (Committee Report No. 283), re H.R. No. 784, entitled:

“RESOLUTION COMMENDING FILIPINO SURFER ROGER CASUGAY FOR EXHIBITING AN ACT OF HEROISM IN RESCUING A FELLOW COMPETITOR DURING THE SURFING COMPETITION OF THE 2019 SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES (SEA GAMES) IN SAN JUAN, LA UNION, AND FOR WINNING THE GOLD MEDAL IN THE MEN’S LONGBOARD SURFING COMPETITION”

recommending its adoption in substitution of House Resolutions Numbered 585, 596, 601 and 605

Sponsors: Representatives Martinez, Ortega, Sy-Alvarado, Fariñas (Ria) and Albano  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Agriculture and Food and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 284), re H.B. No. 6558, entitled:

“AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE RICE SUBSIDY PROVIDED UNDER THE PANTAWID PAMILYANG PILIPINO PROGRAM (4PS) IN THE 2019 GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF PALAY FROM LOCAL FARMERS, MANDATING FOR THE PURPOSE THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD), IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (DA) AND THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA), TO BUY PALAY FROM LOCAL FARMERS AND DISTRIBUTE RICE INSTEAD OF CASH TO QUALIFIED BENEFICIARIES”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 5583

Sponsors: Representatives Enverga, Villafuerte, Ungab and Yap (Eric)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Natural Resources (Committee Report No. 285), re H.B. No. 6563, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING DAVAO ORIENTAL A MINING-FREE ZONE AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1124

Sponsors: Representatives Barzaga and Almario  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

## ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of the Committee on Transportation and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 286), re H.B. No. 4786, entitled:

“ANACTESTABLISHINGADISTRICTBRANCH OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LILOAN, PROVINCE OF CEBU AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Sarmiento, Yap (Eric) and Frasco

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Transportation and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 287), re H.B. No. 6568, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN EXTENSION OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CALAMBA, PROVINCE OF MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 5314

Sponsors: Representatives Sarmiento and Yap (Eric)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Transportation and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 288), re H.B. No. 6569, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A REGULAR DISTRICT OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BANTAY, PROVINCE OF ILOCOS SUR AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 4921

Sponsors: Representatives Sarmiento and Yap (Eric)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 289), re H.B. No. 6570, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE CHINESE NEW YEAR’S DAY A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PHILIPPINES”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2778

Sponsors: Representatives Deloso-Montalla and Rodriguez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session for a few minutes.

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

*It was 3:15 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 3:18 p.m., the session was resumed.*

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE HOUR

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move that we open the Privilege Hour.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; with leave of the House, the motion to open the Privilege Hour is approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Lady from KABATAAN Party-List be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour, Representative Sarah Jane I. Elago.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Honorable Sarah Jane I. Elago of KABATAAN Party-List is recognized to deliver her privilege speech.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ELAGO

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker.

I rise on a matter of personal and collective privilege concerning policies on student handbooks which may curtail fundamental freedoms and human rights in schools. No permit, no exam policy; no promissory note policy; no hair color policy; no piercing, no earring policy; no deviation from the dress code policy. Mr. Speaker, ito ay puro na lang tungkol sa mga bawal, ngunit sa mga student handbook ay nagtatanong po ang mga estudyante kung paano naman makakapag

“yes” o makapagbibigay ng suporta kung paano nila matutulungan ang kanilang mga sarili ng magkaroon ng isang mayabong na experience sa kanilang mga eskuwelahan. Kaya ang Representasyon na ito mula sa KABATAAN at bilang isa na rin sa mga party-list na binubuo at binuo ng hanay ng mga konseho ng mag-aaral, ng publikasyon ng mga campus, at ng iba’t ibang school-based organizations ay naninindigan sa pagkamit ng demokratikong mga karapatan sa loob ng mga eskuwelahan.

The UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education prohibits discrimination in education and also insists that education should be directed at the “strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” and that it should “promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups.”

A human rights-based approach is a conceptual framework based on widely established human rights standards and is directed at creating a society that respects, protects and fulfills human rights for all. Using a human rights education framework includes education about human rights, through human rights and for human rights, as follows:

Education about human rights which teaches students about their rights, including the right to information from a diversity of national and international sources.

Education through human rights that ensures that educational settings protect the human rights of learners.

Education for human rights that empowers students to exercise their rights and defend the rights of others.

Mr. Speaker, policies to achieve this kind of sustainable learning environments that stimulate critical and reflexive thinking and which employ media and information literacy, on top of human rights education, to enable mutual respect and dialogue cannot be developed in a vacuum. The UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Policy and Strategy Guidelines recommend partnerships among government ministries and policies that connect media and information literacy to related public policies, such as education, information and communication technologies, access to information and the media.

Hindi lang po sasapat ang isang education system na mayroong nakadikit na age-appropriate at development-appropriate na human rights education kung hindi kinakailangan din ng isang programa para sa isang media and information literacy na tinatratong ang mga learners, ang mga estudyante, gayon din ang mga guro, bilang mga critical na actors sa ating lipunan. Paano ba nila gagamitin iyong impormasyon na kanilang nakukuha o kung paano nila gagamitin ang kanilang pag-aaralan o napag-aaralan para umambag ng mga solusyon sa mga nakikita nilang mga isyu at mga hamon sa ating lipunan?



One holistic method of creating such a school wherein human rights values permeate the ethos of the institutions is to adopt a whole-school approach. The UNESCO International Bureau of Education defines this as an activity that “involves addressing the needs of learners, staff, and the wider community, not only within the curriculum but across the whole school and learning environment.”

Kumbaga, Ginoong Speaker, kung ano po iyong napag-aaralan sa mga libro o kung ano po iyong pinag-uusapan sa loob ng classroom, iyon po ay naisasabuhay ng mga guro gayon din ng kanilang mga estudyante.

A whole-school approach is cohesive, collective, and collaborative action in and by a school community to strategically improve student learning, behavior and well-being, as well as the conditions that support them. Halimbawa na lang, Ginoong Speaker, kanina po sa ating Komite ng Metro Manila Development, napag-usapan kung anu-ano ba iyong mga polisiya na ipinapatupad sa mga eskuwelahan na nakakaapekto sa pag-aaral at pagkatuto ng mga estudyante. Mahalaga pong, bukod doon sa mga patakaran at mga guidelines ng Department of Education at ng Commission on Higher Education, pag-aralan din po natin kung ano ba iyong nilalaman ng mga student handbook: ito ba ay nag-aambag doon sa pagkatuto ng mga bata bilang parte ng kaniyang lipunan?

Gender equity and equality aims should have a central place within such an approach. Such approaches can be recommended in all contexts but may prove particularly relevant in areas where intolerance and discrimination have come to affect the lives of learners in a profound way.

Isa po sa mga pinagdedebatihan ngayon sa mga youth fora iyong tungkol sa pagkakaroon ng mga uniform dress codes sa ating mga eskuwelahan. Mahalaga po na makapagbukas din tayo ng mga espasyo dito sa loob ng Kongreso. Tinatawagan natin ang Committee on Higher and Technical Education, gayundin ang Committee on Basic Education and Culture, kung puwede ba nating pag-usapan kung paano natin mae-explore, kung papanatilihin ba natin itong mga dress codes o katulad ng nangyayari ngayon na hinahayaan po natin iyong mga eskuwelahan na siyang magpasya kung ano ba iyong dress codes sa kanilang mga eskuwelahan.

A school that chooses such approaches no longer teaches human rights simply as a classroom topic but, instead, creates an environment where everyone understands, values, respects and lives human rights, in which students apply critical thinking skills and civic engagement in real-life experiences at the level of the school and its environment, and where the acceptable norms of behavior are clear and respected.

Mr. Speaker, there are four key areas to consider in developing such action plan for a whole-school approach to human rights education. And, iyong mga

contents po nito, Ginoong Speaker, ninanais na gawing panukalang resolusyon ng Representasyon na ito ng KABATAAN: unang-una po diyan ang tungkol sa paggogobyerno, pamamahala at partisipasyon sa loob ng mga eskuwelahan; pangalawa, school at ang relasyon nito sa kaniyang komunidad; pangatlo, ang tungkol sa kurikulum; at ang pang-apat ay tungkol naman sa extracurricular and co-curricular activities at iyong mismong school environment.

This Youth Representation, further, would like to advance the following calls in combating discrimination and in promoting human rights and media and information literacy in our campuses.

First, is to urge schools to establish easy, effective, and accessible reporting mechanisms. Ginoong Speaker, sa ngayon, sa social media po lumalabas iyong mga hinaing; karaniwan po sa social media ay napapaskil iyong mga hinaing ng mga estudyante sa kanilang mga guro o sa kanilang mga school officials. Nandiyan po iyong mga secret files, mga secret pages. Imbes po na iyong kanilang mga tanong ay naipaparating po nila sa loob ng institusyon, karaniwan po ay nagbubunga pa ng intriga, ng takot, o kaya naman confusion kung ito po ay napapaskil sa social media at hindi po agad-agad napaparating doon sa mga policymakers at iyong mga magdedesisyon sa loob ng kanilang mga eskuwelahan.

Second, Mr. Speaker, is to support the mechanisms of education institutions in responding promptly to grievances of members of the academic community.

Third is to defend academic freedom and uphold institutional autonomy in higher education whose administrators may consider taking the following recommendations: take active steps in precluding discrimination; many universities’ students’ codes of conduct already prohibit discrimination to a greater extent than is required by law, while also respecting the freedom of expression and academic freedom; one other way is to exercise leadership by responding to speech with more speech. It is important for university and school leaders to serve as examples, to exercise leadership and articulate freely their opinion on human rights values and subjects. Bilang lugar ng pag-aaral, ito po ay nararapat na maging ligtas, malayo sa kung anumang pressure at takot na nagmumula hindi lang sa hanay ng mga estudyante kung hindi maski na ng mga guro at mga opisyaes nito.

Pang-apat, Ginoong Speaker, tinatawagan ko po ang ating mga kapwa Mambabatas, our fellow Legislators. We play three key roles in ensuring proper human rights education: first, is to develop sound legislation and also to reject discriminatory bills; second, is to oversee executive enforcement; and lastly, to participate in inter-parliamentary collaboration.

Sa susunod po na linggo, magkakaroon ng isang inclusion and diversity conference ang mga

estudyante at ang mga kabataan dito sa ASEAN, at ito po ay magaganap sa pamamagitan na lang ng isang online teleconference dahil nga sa gitna ng COVID-19 outbreak. At dito po mapag-uusapan kung paano ba makakatulong ang iba't ibang parliamento para ang mga eskuwelahan ay hindi nahihwalay doon sa mga pangangailangan at mga pangarap na din ng lipunan para sa isang tunay na malaya na mundo na hindi lang sa iisang bayan kung hindi iyong mga good practices ng isang bansa na ibabahagi din po sa iba na nangangailangan pa ng lalong pag-unlad.

Ginoong Speaker, we can also pass legislative measures to guarantee learners' rights and welfare and to provide human rights education and critical media and information literacy in schools. Tayo po ay nagsasagawa ng mga konsultasyon ngayon hindi lang sa mga eskuwelahan kung hindi sa mga komunidad kung paano natin matatawagan ang mga sangguniang kabataan at iba pang mga community-based youth organizations sa pakikipagtulungan ng kanilang mga barangay officials at ng mga LGU officials sa pagpapatupad nito sa level ng mga barangay.

Panghuli, Ginoong Speaker, nais ko pong manawagan sa mga schools at sa ating mga sangguniang kabataan na buong-buong sumuporta sa pag-i-step up o level up ng ating mga sanitation drive sa ating mga public places, gayundin sa mga schools. May report po tayo na ang mga teachers ang mga nangunguna diyan, ngunit maaari din po silang matulungan ng ating mga estudyante at ng mga magulang nila kung sa kanilang assessment ay safe pa naman po na magkaroon ng isang partikular na drive na ganoong tipo sa kanilang mga lugar.

Ginoong Speaker, naiparating din sa Representasyon na ito ng deaf community na nananawagan po sila na sa mga press conference po ng Department of Health, mayroong Filipino sign language at mayroong interpreter. Iyan po ay kasama doon sa public information campaign na kinakailangan bilang tugon sa public health emergency na kinakaharap natin ngayon.

Iyon lamang, Ginoong Speaker, at nagpapasalamat po ang Representasyon ng KABATAAN sa pagkakataon na isulong ang human rights education, critical media and information literacy at sa panahon po ngayon, ang malinaw na public information campaign bilang pagtugon sa coronavirus threat sa ating bansa.

Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker, at sa ating mga kapwa Mambabatas, Mabuhay po tayong lahat.

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

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the honorable Rep. Sarah Jane Elago of KABATAAN Party-List to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, again, I move that we suspend the session for a few minutes.

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

*It was 3:34 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 3:50 p.m., the session was resumed with Deputy Speaker Neptali M. Gonzales II presiding.*

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

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, before we proceed, may we acknowledge the presence of the guest of Hon. Princess Rihan M. Sakaluran, Representative of the First District of Sultan Kudarat Province, Mr. Mac Taug, an Inaul fashion designer from Maguindanao.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Kindly rise as your names are mentioned.

Majority Leader, please proceed.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence also of the guests of Deputy Speaker Bro. Eduardo C. Villanueva and Hon. Domingo C. Rivera, Representatives of CIBAC Party-List. They are CIBAC coordinators: Ms. Daisy Quilates, Mrs. Gladys Galang and Ms. Ma. Cristina Calixtro from the Province of Isabela. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

## ROLL CALL

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we call the roll of Members.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Secretary General will please call the roll.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is reflected in Journal No. 54, dated March 11, 2020.\**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Mr. Speaker, the roll call shows that 269 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). With 269 Members responding to the call, the Chair hereby declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING OF H.B. NO. 5832  
ON THIRD READING

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 5832 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, N.). 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. 5832, entitled: AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF FILIPINOS OVERSEAS AND FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT, DEFINING ITS MANDATE, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

*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. 54, dated March 11, 2020.*

REP. ATIENZA. I vote “No” and I would like to request that I be given a chance to explain my vote.

MALE VOICE. After the roll call.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, I am voting “No” and kindly allow me to explain my vote later. Thank you.

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

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

REP. ELAGO. My vote is “No” and I will explain my vote later. Thank you.

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

## RESULT OF THE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The result shows 173 affirmative votes, 11 negative votes and no abstention.

House Bill No. 5832 is hereby approved on Third Reading. (*Applause*)

## EXPLANATION OF VOTES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Can we now go on the explanation of votes for those who have made reservation?

The Honorable Atienza has three minutes.

## REP. ATIENZA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, dear colleagues, we voted “No” on this measure simply because it is not the solution to the problems of our overseas workers.

Ang ating mga kababayang nagtatrabaho sa labas ng bansa ay maraming problema, subalit ang solusyon na hindi bumuo na naman ng isang burukrasya na malalagyan ng mga taong hindi naman dapat mailagay doon, kaya lalo lamang lalaki ang problema ng ating mga manggagawang nasa labas ng bansa kapagka ito’y naging batas.

Ang pagbuo ng anumang kagawaran, bagong tanggapan, ay para bagang ginagamit na lamang ngayon natin at ng gobyerno sa pagharap ng mga problema ng ating mga mamamayan. The solution that we did to provide housing for our poor was to pass a bill creating a Department of Housing. Ang

\* See ANNEX (printed separately)

tanong ko po ay, nabigyan po ba ng mga bahay ang mga mahihirap? Ang sagot ay, hindi. Hindi nga sila gumagawa ng bahay hanggang ngayon, tumigil ang produksyon, sapagkat bumuo na naman tayo ng bagong tanggapan na inaasahan nating haharap sa problema. Ang Leyte po ba ay nabigyan na ng pabahay? Iyon pong nasira ng bagyong Yolanda ay nakumpleto na po ba ang programa ng pabahay doon? Ang sagot ay, hindi sapagkat may inaasahan tayong hindi naman ginaganap ang kanilang tungkulin.

So, therefore, because the organization of a new Department that will supposedly be handling the problems of our overseas workers will not happen. It will create false hopes on our people. Aasa ang ating mga kababayang malungkot sa kanilang buhay sa labas ng bansa, subalit walang pagbabagong mangyayari diyan. Lalo lang madadagdagan ang kanilang problema sapagkat iyong simpleng paraan ay lalo pang malalagyan ng mga ibang komplikadong sistema. Ang pagbuo ng isang tanggapan, kagawaran ay hindi biro-biro. Ang mga binuo noong mga nakaraan administrasyon hanggang ngayon, alam nating walang epekto, subalit hindi natin mabuwag sapagkat tumatangi ang mga nakapuwesto.

Andiyan po ang example. Bumuo tayo ng Metro Manila Commission as an experiment. Up to now, it is a monstrosity in the Metro area that is not rendering service for our Metro Manilans. Bumuo tayo ng mga tanggapan noong Batas Militar ang naghahari sa atin pero hanggang ngayon hindi natin maalis sa ating burukrasya sapagkat iyan ay permanente na. So, that is the reason, Mr. Speaker, that I have in my heart. I want to help our overseas workers. We should support them all. The funding that will be given to these newly appointed officials should be given to the agencies now handling their concern, pero kung bubuo na naman tayo ng isang level of governance that will only mean more corruption, more red tape, and more problems to all our miserable people outside of the country, that's the reason that prompted me to say that this Department should not see fruition; instead we should help the DOLE, the POEA, the OWWA. If we would like to create another commission, another office to help them out, we should do so; but to create a full department would, again be falling into the same trap of committing a very serious offense in public trust. People will be hoping that this new department will solve the problems of our people abroad. It will not, because they will define, first of all, their powers, their terms, their benefits and all here in the Philippines and not abroad.

Palakasin natin ang tulong, palakihin natin ang tulong sa mga OFWs, yes. But to the creation of a new department, a loud, resounding "No!"

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). Honorable Bordado is recognized.

REP. BORDADO. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). You may proceed.

#### REP. BORDADO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, the government recognizes the contribution and sacrifices made by the countless Filipinos working overseas. It has always been one of our topmost priorities to ensure that their rights and interests, as well as those of their families, are protected and upheld; that avenues to further their skills and education are abundantly made available through government programs and projects; and, that there are channels open for them to raise their concerns through the different government agencies and organizations.

House Bill No. 5832 proposes the creation of the Department of Filipinos Overseas which will "protect the rights and promote the welfare and interests of Filipinos overseas." However, Mr. Speaker, the creation of such a department replicates some of the functions and programs of existing agencies mandated to uphold OFW welfare and rights such as the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, the Department of Labor and Employment, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Philippine Overseas Labor Office, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and even the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, while recognizing the importance of the contribution of our overseas Filipino workers is pertinent, focusing our efforts into creating localized long-term employment opportunities for our citizens will ultimately be more beneficial to the economy and to the citizens who have no choice other than to look to other countries for better job opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, I am therefore, voting "No" on House Bill No. 5832.

Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The Honorable Brosas is recognized.

#### REP. BROSAS EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Gabriela Women's Party votes "No" on the Bill creating the Department of Overseas Filipino Workers. Under the intention of supposedly protecting our OFWs lies the fact that this Bill will actually institutionalize the export of Filipino workers, especially women workers, and make them prone to violence and abuse.

Nakakalungkot na sa ilalim ng panukalang ito, pagtitibayin ang pagbugaw ng mga kababaihan at mamamayan natin sa ibang bayan sa halip na pagtuunan ng paglikha ng disenteng trabaho dito sa ating bansa. Hindi matutuldukan ng paglikha ng isang bagong departamento ang mga kwento ng karahasan at abuso sa ating mga OFWs.

Nakakabahala, Mr. Speaker, dahil madadagdagan pa ang listahan ng mga buhay na tinuldukan ng bitay o di kaya ng pagmamalupit ng kanilang employer tulad ni Flor Contemplacion, Jakatia Pawa, Jeanelyn Villavende. Ilan pa ba ang dapat mamatay para gawing prayoridad ang paglikha ng disenteng trabaho sa Pinas?

It also is alarming, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill pushes for the delegation of the government's accountability over our OFWs to private recruitment agencies. Tiyak na gagamitin ito para maghugas-kamay ang gobyerno sa mga kaso ng abuso at pagmaltrato sa ating OFWs.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, hindi po labor export ang sagot. Ang sagot po natin ay dapat magkaroon talaga ng job generation sa ating bayan.

For these reasons, I vote "No" on the Bill creating the Department of Overseas Filipino Workers.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The Honorable Castro is recognized.

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

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, bumoto po ang ACT TEACHERS Party-List ng "No" sa House Bill No. 5832 na naglalayong itayo ang Department of Filipinos Overseas and Foreign Employment.

Hindi tutugunan ng House Bill No. 5832 ang underlying problems ukol sa pangangibang-bansa ng ating mga mamamayan. Sa totoo lang, isinasantabi ng panukalang ito ang puna o critique sa labor export policy. Sa pagpasa natin nito, mas sinusupportahan pa nga ng pamahalaan at ilalagay sa katitikan ng batas ang labor export policy. Dumaan na sa ilang beses na repackaging ang OCWs at OFWs at ilang ahensiya na ang ginawa gaya ng POEA, OWWA, etcetera, ngunit hindi naman bumaba ang bilang ng mga kababayan nating napipilitang lumayo sa kanilang pamilya para makapagtrabaho. Hindi nawalan, sa halip ay nadagdagan pa nga ang mga Flor Contemplacion at Mary Jane Veloso na nawalay sa pamilya, inabuso at ikinulong, pinatay sa ibang bansa, at kinalimutan ng mga awtoridad sa Pilipinas.

Ang puno't dulo, tikom ang bibig ng pamahalaan at nagkikibit-balikat lamang ito sa problema ng kawalan ng disente at nakabubuhay na suweldo, underemployment, at lack of employment dito sa Pilipinas kaya napipilitan ang mga Pilipino na hanapin ang solusyon sa labas

ng bansa. Dahil din sa kumbinasyon ng budget cuts sa DOLE at iba pang mga responsableng ahensiya at kawalan ng mga programa para sa job creation, worker protection, at labor relations, pati na rin ang talamak na kontraktwalisasyon at kawalan ng kasiguruhan sa trabaho.

Ginoong Speaker, we are adding thicker layers of bureaucracy instead of decisively addressing and finally resolving these problems. We are again duplicating the functions of existing agencies and providing for possibilities of contradiction between them instead of ensuring that these authorities are fulfilling their respective mandates. Again, we are presenting to our people superficial solutions by creating a new agency—one without teeth to truly protect our OFWs—instead of committing to them that their problems will be over.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, we vote an emphatic "No" on House Bill No. 5832.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.). The Honorable Elago is recognized.

#### REP. ELAGO EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. ELAGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This Youth Representation firmly believes that we must exhaust all efforts to promptly and substantially address the needs and concerns of Filipinos overseas. Indeed, there is a need to ensure that support and response mechanisms are working most especially for distressed OFWs.

But, Mr. Speaker, will creating a new department solve the problem?

Nababahala po ang mga kabataan na ito ay magbibigay lamang ng dagdag pang lebel ng burukrasya, na imbis na makabilis ay makabagal pa sa pag-abot ng kinakailangan na tulong. We already have a system in place. We just have to ensure that it is working.

Nababahala rin po tayo sa direksyon na tinatahak ng pagbubuo ng bagong departamento na nakaasa sa labor export. Hanggang kailan tayo aasa sa OFW remittances para isalba ang ating ekonomiya? Hanggang kailan tayo magpapakasasa sa pagkakawalay sa pamilya at mga sakripisyo ng ating mga kababayan? Ilan pang mga bata at kabataan ang lalaki na malayo sa kanilang mga magulang, at mga ate at kuya na nagtatrabaho sa ibang bansa?

Imbis na bagong departamento, bakit hindi natin bigyan ng pansin at buhusan ng resources ang paglilikha ng trabaho dito sa Pilipinas at hindi po sa ibang bansa? Disenteng trabaho, Ginoong Speaker, pagtataas ng sahod, pagtigil sa kontraktwalisasyon at ng laganap na endo, paglilikha ng kalidad at abot-kaya at abot-kamay na serbisyong panlipunan.

Mr. Speaker, not only should we give our Filipinos overseas reasons to come back and work here but we

should create opportunities for them to stay in the Philippines. Stop labor export.

This Representation votes “No” on House Bill No. 5832.

Trabaho sa Pilipinas hindi sa labas!  
Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, N.).  
The Honorable Lagman is recognized.

#### REP. LAGMAN EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, House Bill No. 5832 will uselessly balloon the bureaucracy even as it will accelerate via a purported “one-stop shop”, the deployment of overseas Filipino workers without addressing the enormous and escalating social costs of labor migration.

The establishment of the projected department directly contravenes the long-standing national policy as mandated in Republic Act 8042 or the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 which provides that “the State does not promote overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development. The State therefore shall continuously create local employment opportunities.”

This Bill merely gives lip service to this national policy by echoing it almost verbatim in its declaration of policy. However, the essence and purpose of this Bill are manifestly to convert a hitherto stop-gap strategy to a permanent policy encouraging and promoting the export of Filipino manpower, notwithstanding a proffered sunset provision which was included to mitigate opposition to the measure even as the so-called “sunset” provision envisions a “sunrise” perpetuation of the department.

Without even a performance audit on the accomplishments of the DOLE, the POEA, the OWWA, the CFO and the POLO and other agencies, this Bill appears to debase the record performance of these government agencies in the protection of OFWs. The creation of this new department does not frontally address the following well-documented social costs of labor migration: breakdown of relationships between spouses and between parents and children; loneliness, anxiety and emotional aches and longings from long-term separation, including psychiatric problems; children of migrants experiencing more issues and problems with coping in school due to the lack of parental supervision and guidance resulting in serious behavioral consequences such as substance abuse and early entry into sexual relations; children of migrants being prone to sexual abuse; the cycle of economic dependence of members of OFW families continues until the migrants can no longer work and must confront the reality of their own survival and

quality of life after retirement; and 70 percent of OFWs have been unable to save enough to attain their financial goals.

The creation of the new department does not even attempt to reverse the feminization of workers’ migration with women accounting for 55.8 percent of OFWs. This phenomenon further aggravates the social costs of labor migration because as more and more women workers are deployed abroad, their children become destitute of motherly love, care and guidance.

*At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Gonzales (N.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Raneos “Ranie” E. Abu.*

The projected department does not also address the overriding reasons as to why Filipinos work overseas. This department does not add any protection to OFWs aside from expediting their exodus to foreign employment. As candidly admitted by Labor Secretary Bello, although his initial reaction was that of neutrality because his Department is involved, he finally acceded because as a Cabinet member he cannot defy the wishes of the President. We must remember that we do not legislate to fulfill the President’s campaign promises which are mere propaganda and basically errant.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please wind up.

REP. LAGMAN. We legislate to promote the general welfare as we achieve the fulfillment of national policies. The protection of OFWs can be fully achieved without creating a new and untested bureaucracy.

I vote “No.”

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Honorable Gaité is recognized.

#### REP. GAITE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. GAITE. Salamat, Mr. Speaker.

Ginoong Speaker, mga kapwa ko Kinatawan, matibay ang paninindigan ng BAYAN MUNA laban sa puwersahang migrasyon at sa labor export policy. Dahil dito ang boto ng Kinatawang ito sa House Bill No. 5832 o ang panukalang batas na bubuo sa Department of Filipinos Overseas and Foreign Employment ay “No.”

Habang ako po ang pinakahuling tututol sa mga hakbanging magpapaunlad ng pagtugon sa pangangailangan ng ating mga kababayang OFWs, naniniwala po ako na ang tamang solusyon sa mga pangangailangan nila ay hindi nakabalangkas sa

ibayong pagpapatindi at pagiinstitusyonalisa sa polisiya ng pamahalaan na ilako sa ibang bansa ang ating mga kababayan. Sang-ayon po ako sa kritisismo na ang kasalukuyang mga serbisyo sa ating mga OFWs ay malubhang kinukulang, na ang kasalukuyang mga mekanismo upang tulungan sila sa panahon ng kanilang pangangailangan ay salat na salat. Sa akin pong paningin, ang pagkukulang na ito ay maiuugat sa pagtingin na ang ating mga kababayan na ang kanilang lakas-paggawa ay isa lamang “kalakal na pang-export.”

Ang pagtugon sa kanilang mga pangangailangan ay dapat nakabalangkas sa isang buong programa upang lumikha ng oportunidad sa ating sariling bansa. Magagawa ito sa pamamagitan ng pagtataguyod ng sustenableng agrikultura na nakatuon sa lokal na pangangailangan, sa pagtatag ng industriyang lokal na tumutugon sa pambansang pag-unlad, sa pagsulong ng mga polisiyang nagtataguyod ng kalayaang pang-ekonomiya ng ating bansa.

Kung wala po nito, Mr. Speaker, kung patuloy na nalulugi ang mga magsasaka dahil sa mababang presyo at pagbaha ng export products, kung patuloy ang tanggapan ng mga manggagawa sa mga empresa dito ng mga dayuhang kumpanya, kung patuloy na maliit ang sahod at walang kasiguruhan sa regular na pangmatagalang empleyo, tuluy-tuloy po ang forced migration at labor export, tuluy-tuloy po nating itutulak palabas sa bansa ang ating mga kababayan para lang magkaroon ng kabuhayan.

Mr. Speaker, ang pagtatayo ng isang hiwalay na kagawaran ay maaaring kauna-unahan sa buong daigdig ngunit hindi dapat natin itong ipagmalaki. Bakit? Dahil sa esensya ay sinasabi natin na ang mga Pilipino ay panghabang-buhay na lang magiging OFWs, na ang ating mga manggagawa ay lagi na lamang mapipilitang magtrabaho sa ibang bansa, na ang Pilipinas ay mananatili na lamang exporter ng kaniyang mga manggagawa. Taliwas po ito sa sinabi ni Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte noong 2017, na sabi niya ay paglagpas ng 10 taon, ang pangako niya’y gagawin natin ang lahat upang makalikha ng sapat na lokal na trabaho upang hindi na kailangan mapilitang magtrabaho ang mga Pilipino sa ibang bansa.

Ito po sana ang gusto nating tanawin, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please wind up.

REP. GAITE. ... ito po ang dapat nating abutin.

Kung gayon, naniniwala ang Kinatawan na ito na ito ay hindi na kailangan ng pagtatayo ng Kagawaran ng OFWs.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Honorable Zarate is recognized.

## REP. ZARATE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. ZARATE. Ginoong Speaker, “No” ang boto ng Kinatawan ito ng BAYAN MUNA sa panukalang pagsasagawa ng bagong ahensiya para sa mga overseas Filipino workers.

Habang napakahigpit ng pangangailangan na ating protektahan ang ating mga OFWs na nasasadlak sa iba’t ibang porma ng pagsasamantala at pagpapahirap upang maghanap ng kabuhayan sa ibang bansa, hindi ang pagpapalawak pa sa burukrasya ang kasagutan sa kanilang mga hinaing.

Ginoong Speaker, mga kapwa ko Mambabatas, ang totoong dapat tugunan ng Lehislatura at ng ating pamahalaan ay ang kalagayang kailangang iiwan na ng maraming Pilipino ang kanilang pamilya para makipagsapalaran sa ibang bansa. Nilalagay sa pedestal ang ating mga bagong bayani na nagpapapasok ng remittances sa ating bansa. Ngunit ang totoo, napakalaki ng kanilang isinasakripisyo para sa napakapayak na pangarap para sa kanilang pamilya. Ito ang kalagayang dapat nating matugunan.

Sa loob ng higit na 40 taon, samu’t saring mga programa at polisiya na ang ipinatutupad ng ating pamahalaan upang ilako ang ating mga kababayan sa ibang bansa. Maging globally competitive, ang sabi nga nila, magsalita ng Ingles at iba pang wika, maging mga manggagawa ng small parts, technical at vocational studies, at iba pa, ang isinusubo natin sa ating mga kabataan at mga manggagawa. Tila ang primaryang export ng ating bayan sa kasalukuyan at maging noong mga nakaraang panahon ay ang ating mga mamamayan.

Ang batas na ito, ang panukalang batas na ito ay lalo lang pinapatigas ang ganitong iskema ng pamahalaan sa labor export. Habang pinapagarbohan umano ang mga karapatan ng mga migrante, ito ay nasa bingit ng komodipikasyon ng paggawa.

Bilang panghuli, Ginoong Speaker, uulitin ko po, hindi ang Department of OFWs ang kahilingan ng ating mga migranteng Pilipino kundi ang pagtatapos na ng Labor Export Policy, at ang makasama nila ang kanilang mga pamilya, at ang sapat na trabaho at nakabubuhay na sahod dito sa ating bansa.

Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker.

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

## APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 5832 ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With 173 affirmative votes, 11 negative votes and no abstention, House Bill No. 5832 is hereby approved on Third Reading.



NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 59  
ON THIRD READING

REP. DE VENECIA. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 59 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. Abu). 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. 59, entitled: AN ACT SETTING THE MINIMUM PAID-UP CAPITAL AND LOCALLY PRODUCED STOCK INVENTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR FOREIGN RETAIL BUSINESS ENTERPRISES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8762, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “RETAIL TRADE LIBERALIZATION ACT OF 2000.”

*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. 54, dated March 11, 2020.*

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). What is the pleasure of the Gentleman?

REP. ABANTE. I vote “No” on the Bill, Mr. Speaker, House Bill No. 59. May I be allowed to give my explanation? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). At the proper time.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, we vote with an emphatic “No” on this measure, at sana ay pahintulutan ninyo kaming magpaliwanag ng aming boto pagkatapos ng bilangan upang maipaliwanag namin ang kabuktutan nitong panukalang batas na ito, pinakamasama sa kasaysayan ng Kongreso sa Pilipinas.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, I am voting “No” on House Bill No. 59, and kindly allow me to explain

my vote later. Moreover, Mr. Speaker, I am moving that my name be deleted as a coauthor of the Bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, my vote is “No” and let me explain my vote later. Thank you.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, isang galit na “No” ang boto ng Kinatawang ito at ipapaliwanag ko ang aking boto sa angkop na panahon.

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

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

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

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, may I explain my abstention. I abstain and I have an explanation for my abstention.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The result shows 156 affirmative votes, 30 negative votes and three abstentions.

House Bill No. 59 is approved on Third Reading.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). What is the pleasure of the Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List?

REP. ATIENZA. May we again hear the votes for the affirmative, those who supported the Bill.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). One-hundred fifty-six affirmative votes, 13 negative votes and three abstentions.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Now, for the explanation of votes, may we call the Minority Leader.

\* See ANNEX (printed separately)



## EXPLANATION OF VOTES

## REP. ABANTE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. ABANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My dear colleagues, the objective of House Bill No. 59 which seeks to amend Republic Act No. 8762 is to remove the barriers to foreign investment in the local retail sector and open the Philippine retail industry by: 1.) lowering the paid-up capital from USD 2.5 million to USD 200,000; and 2.) reduction of required locally manufactured products carried by foreign retailers from 30 percent to 10 percent.

This is, Mr. Speaker, a drastic approach whichever way you put it, and any drastic approach will have unintended consequences. The slide from US\$2.5 million to a measly US\$200,000 or a reduction equivalent to a staggering 92 percent, a very big number, is not a mere cause for concern. It's not a cut above the knee, it is cutting the head off. Why would we want to do this? Coupled with the 20 percent reduction on required locally-manufactured products, and whatever Filipino retailers we have, will fall to the ground.

Ang masakit pa po dito, bukod dito, sinabayan pa ito ng pagtanggap ng iba't-ibang aspeto ng Retail Trade Liberalization Act katulad po ng: removal of requirements for foreign investors to acquire shares of stocks of local retailers; removal of requirements for public offering of shares of stocks by foreign-owned retail enterprises; and elimination of required net worth, number of retailing branches and retail track record conditions for foreign retailers to engage in retail trade in the Philippines.

Sobrang-sobra na po ito. Why are we favoring the foreigners so much? Why are we giving them so much? Hindi ba natin nakita ang kasalukuyang nangyayari ngayon? Sa POGO pa lamang po, sangkatutak na problema na ang pinapasan ng bayan mula sa hindi pagbayad ng buwis, sa pagtaas ng kriminalidad, hanggang sa pagbabastos mismo sa kapwa nating mga Pilipino. At bibigyan natin ang iba pang—iba pa na magpunta dito sa halip na Pilipino muna ang protektahan natin?

The “Filipino-First” policy has been here since we became independent as a nation, supposedly. It was designed to regain economic independence, not only political independence, but it was never to ease out foreign capital. It was collaboration and establishment of special foreign relations, all the while promoting Filipino participation in our own national economy. House Bill No. 59 will not do that.

Instead, whatever Filipino participation we have, will most likely be marginalized and left unprotected. Instead of passing House Bill No. 59, we should pass a law that will protect our own, one that will help our Filipinos. This Representation is not asking for something new ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With due respect to the Minority Leader.

REP. ABANTE. ... it is something all nations must do. Just one minute, Mr. Speaker. Protect our own. Protect Filipinos. At the end of the day, do we, as legislators, really want this? To be a Member of the 18<sup>th</sup> Congress who single-handedly passed a sweeping amendment that killed the local industry?

We have failed the Philippine Constitution by the mere proliferation of Chinese citizens who have taken jobs in the POGO industry which a Filipino can also do. By passing House Bill No. 59, we will violate the very essence of the “Filipino-First” policy that is enshrined in our Constitution but failed the Filipino people.

With all due respect to my colleagues, itigil na po natin ito. Tulungan muna natin ang mga Pilipino.

Mr. Speaker, for the reasons I have just stated, I vote “No” on House Bill No. 59.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). May I remind the Members to please observe our Rules, Section 118, you have only three minutes to explain the votes.

## REP. REMULLA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. REMULLA. Mr. Speaker, I abstain from this, from voting on House Bill No. 59.

Mali ho na nakakalimutan na natin ang ating kapwa Pilipino pagdating po sa mga batas na ating ipinapasa. Parang lagi na lang nauuna ang dayuhan, lalong-lalo na sa pagkakataong ito, na kung saan ang tingin ng ating mga kababayan na hanapbuhay o negosyo ay nagsisimula po sa retail trade, sa mga tindahan.

Kung iikutan po natin ang mga malalakas na ekonomiya sa buong mundo, sabihin natin ang Hapones, ang Hapon, ang bansang Espanya, ang bansang Pranses, kanila pong pinoprotektahan ang kanilang mga manggagawa, mga gumagawa ng iba't ibang mga produkto gamit ang kanilang mga kamay, gamit ang mga natutunan nila mula pa sa kanilang mga ninuno, mga artisano, artisans. Iyan po ang essence ng isang malakas na ekonomiya—na hindi po nawawala ang mga skills sa taumbayan.

Ngunit sa ginagawa po natin, ang mahalaga na lang sa atin ay mall, ang mahalaga sa atin ay malalaking negosyo, ang mahalaga na lang sa atin ay ang dalhin ang buhay. Nguni't paano natin susuportahan ang ating ekonomiya kung hindi natin susuportahan ang masang Pilipino? Diyan po nanggagaling ang aking pagdududa kung ito pong House Bill No. 59 ay makakabuti sa ating mga kapwa Pilipino.

Kaya po, tingnan natin sa Pranses, ikutan natin ang bansang Pranses, kaunting-kaunti ang mall nila. Ang

kanila pong gusto ay palakihin o paramihin ang iba't ibang mga maliliit na negosyo na itinatayo ng kanilang mga kababayan. Nguni't sa atin, pinapatay po natin ang ating mga Pilipinong naghahanapbuhay nang marangal sa pagnenegosyo sapagkat pinapapasok na natin ang mga dayuhan, kahit maliit lamang ang kapital, na makipaglaban po sa ating mga nagnenegosyong mga Pilipino.

Sana po, huwag ho nating gawing solusyon lagi ang kapital na nanggagaling sa ibang bansa para umunlad ang ating bansa. Hindi po iyon lagi ang solusyon. Ang solusyon siguro, marahil ay tingnan po natin ang lakas ng ating ekonomiya at galing ng ating mga taumbayan, at iyon po ang ating paigtingin at palakasin. Sila po ang ating mga bayani.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please wind up.

REP. REMULLA. Sila po dapat ang ating tinutulungan. Iyon lang po.

Kaya po, ako ay nag-a-abstain sa isyu ng House Bill No. 59.

Maraming salamat po.

#### REP. ATIENZA EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

Kagaya ng sinabi ko, ang aking boto at ng BUHAY Party-List ay isang madiin na "Hindi."

Hindi puwede itong batas na ito. Itong batas na ito ang magbibigay ng permanence sa paghihirap ng ating mga kababayang Pilipino. Itong batas na ito ay magbibigay ng pagkakataon sa mga banyaga, na sila ang makinabang sa mga kalikasan, likas na yaman at produkto ng Pilipinas. Ang mga dayuhan ang mapagbibigyan ng batas na ito at hindi ang mahihirap na Pilipino.

Naaalala ko noong panahon ng batas militar, na ang mga mahihirap ay kumakain na lamang nang minsan sa isang araw. Ang sabi nga nila, ang aming kinakain ay "altanghap," almusal, tanghalian at hapunan. Itong batas na ito'y mas masahol pa sa batas militar sapagkat ito'y mag-aalis ng pagkakataon sa kanilang hanapbuhay. Na ang mga may akda ay mananagot sa ating bayan sa darating na mga panahon. Hindi ito makalulusot. Sa aking pananaw, ang ating Pangulo ay magigising sa katotohanan at hindi niya palulusutin ang batas na ito sapagkat ito ay walang ibibigay kung hindi permanent poverty for our people.

Bibigyan pa ninyo ng pagkakataon ang mga banyaga na makipagkumpetensiya sa ating mga mahihirap na nagnenegosyo. Darating ang araw pati ang nagtitinda ng sigarilyo sa kalye galing sa Tsina, iyan po ang magiging katotohanan sapagkat ibinigay na natin ang ating katubigan, ibinigay na natin ang ating kalikasan,

ibinigay na natin ang ating pati libangan, ngayon ay ibinigay na natin ang paghahanap-buhay sa kanila.

Kaya inuulit ko po, nakakahiya na aminin na ito'y galing sa Kongresong ito. Mataas ang pagtingin ng ating mga kababayan dito sa ating 18<sup>th</sup> Congress na hindi bagay itong batas na ito manggaling sa ating hanay. Ako'y nakikiusap sa inyong lahat, kung may paraan, himukin natin ang ating mga Senador na ito'y hindi angkinin at ito'y tanggihan.

Ako po'y makikiusap sa ating Pangulong Duterte. Kung kinakailangan, pupunta ako sa Malacañang, ipaliliwanag ko sa kaniya ang magiging bunga nitong batas na ito, wala pong kabutihan para sa mahihirap, kundi sa mga banyaga na mayroong salapi at may puhunan.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress will always be remembered for many things, primary of which is tonight, the passage of this Bill on Third Reading that will give the Filipinos permanent poverty in our own land. Nakakahiya na aminin na nagmula ito sa hanay ng 18<sup>th</sup> Congress. Inuulit-ulit ko po iyan sapagkat iyan ay pananagutan ng mga bumoto upang ito'y maging isa sa batas.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please wind up.

REP. ATIENZA. Iyan ay pananagutan ng mga may akda, walang inisip kung hindi itulak ang adyenda ng mga mayayamang banyaga na ngayon ay magkakaroon na ng kontrol pati roon sa pinakamaliit na negosyo na ibinibigay ng ating kalikasan.

Mr. Speaker, we should all be ashamed. Mr. Speaker, we should now start to pray more fervently. Are they doing the right thing for our people?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Time expired.

REP. ATIENZA. Or are we selling them down the drain? My vote is a proud "No" to defend our country, to defend the words that we sing in our national anthem. Kanta tayo nang kanta, dasal tayo nang dasal dito sa Kongresong ito, subalit hindi natin isinasama sa ating paggawa ng batas, itong batas na ito ay pagsuway sa lahat ng ating panunumpa sa ating minamahal na watawat ng Pilipinas.

Maraming salamat po.

#### REP. ZUBIRI EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. ZUBIRI. Dear Mr. Speaker, I abstained and not said a direct "No," why? Simply because my idea of trade is fair trade. What is fair trade? Is that our citizenry, our people would be given a fighting chance in the event that we liberalize our trade laws with other nations.

With this current Bill, you only would need \$200,000 to come in, and that is not correct. My idea is simple, from 2.5, okay, bring it down but bring it down to a minimum of \$500,000 paid up capital for our SMEs, our small businessmen will have a good fighting chance to survive.

With this current Bill, our SMEs will definitely have a difficult time surviving if we keep the minimum at \$200,000. I am not against liberalization or free trade but it has to be fair, equal, protect the small, protect those who don't have the capacity to compete to the big boys out there. Papayag ba tayo na dehado ang ating mga kababayan? Yes or no? Definitely, it's a no. But there is still hope, hoping that the Bicam or the Senate will do its job to bring up the \$200,000 to a bare-minimum of \$500,000, Mr. Speaker. So, at least, mabubuhay po iyong ating maliliit na mga negosyante. Kung \$500,000.00 pataas, iyong competitor, iyong kakumpetensya po ng mga ito ang malalaking mga negosyante na. So, itong \$200,000.00 is really going to hit our small businessmen, and this, I do not agree.

So, Mr. Speaker, dito na lang po ako. Hopefully, we will get the right figure during the Bicam.

Marami pong salamat.

Mabuhay po tayong lahat.

Mahal kita, Pilipinas.

#### REP. BORDADO EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, no less than the 1987 Philippine Constitution declared the development of a self-reliant and independent national economy effectively controlled by Filipinos as a State policy (Section 19, Article II). Thus, Mr. Speaker, due regard must be accorded to the welfare and promotion of the full potential of our citizenry in formulating economic measures. While foreign participation in retail trade has been authorized by virtue of Republic Act No. 8762 or the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, amending R.A. No. 1180 or the Retail Trade Nationalization Act of 1954, and such development paved the way for a more competitive retail industry where micro, small and medium enterprises were given wider business opportunities, the entry of foreign players in the Philippine market was, however, made subject to stringent conditions to protect local retail enterprises. Mr. Speaker, these conditions are being sought to be relaxed under House Bill No. 59, to the detriment of local retailers. More particularly, Mr. Speaker, the substantial lowering of the foreign equity capitalization requirement from \$2.5 million to \$200,000 under Section 1 of House Bill No. 59 might open the floodgates for foreign participation that will eventually drown our local players.

Mr. Speaker, a sound economic policy must take into consideration the entry of foreign retailers vis-à-vis its impact to local retail industries. Government policies,

especially those involving economy, must be attuned with the present business and socioeconomic demands. However, Mr. Speaker, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please wind up.

REP. BORDADO. ... we must be wary of the threats and effects that it may create to our local industries, most importantly, on the micro, small and medium enterprises.

In times of socioeconomic uncertainties and inflationary pressures, where loyalty and nationalism are ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Time expired.

REP. BORDADO. ... being put to the test, Mr. Speaker, we must protect first and foremost our very own. It is for this reason that I am voting "No" on House Bill No. 59.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

#### REP. BROSAS EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Gabriela Women's Party resoundingly rejects the further relaxation of limits to foreign ownership in the local retail industry under House Bill No. 59. Through this measure, foreign SMEs, which have cheaper and well-established sourcing of production inputs, will take over and edge out small local businesses in the retail sector. This would deny our entrepreneurs their chances of scaling up and staying in the game. Babansutin ng panukalang ito ang kakayahan ng mga lokal na maliliit na negosyo, kabilang ang mga nasa pampublikong pamilihan at maliliit na grocery stores, na umunlad dahil tatalunin sila sa kompetisyon. Tiyak na mapupuruhan din ang mga manggagawa sa retail trade, na kalakhan ay kababaihan, dahil magreresulta ang pagkalugi ng mga maliliit na negosyo sa kaliwa't kanang tanggalan.

Sinasabi ng mga Sponsor na matitibag daw ang monopolyo ng malalaking malls kapag ipinasa ang panukalang batas na ito. Sa aktwal, hindi naman ito mangyayari dahil ang lokal na SMEs ang direktang maaapektuhan sa pagpasok ng mas maraming foreign retail businesses. At kung seryoso tayong baguhin ang kalakaran sa retail sector, kailangang pigilan ang pagkopo ng shopping malls sa prime assets at lupain at higitan ang mapagsamantalang iskema na consignment.

House Bill No. 59 forms part of the new wave of neoliberal and pro-market reforms under the Duterte administration that seek to further open up the economy for foreign profiteering and plunder. Alongside the

amendments to Foreign Investment Act and Public Service Act, this will disturbingly put our national patrimony for sale.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The ACT TEACHERS Party-List votes “No” on the further liberalization of retail trade because this is anti-Pinoy entrepreneur and anti-Filipino consumer.

Mr. Speaker, House Bill No. 59 is yet another neoliberal attack on the Filipino economy, one that will prejudice Pinoy micro, small, and medium entrepreneurs as well as Pinoy consumers. The ACT TEACHERS Party-List maintains that small and medium retailing should remain reserved exclusively for Filipinos.

Through its efforts to ram through Charter change that will erase economic protectionism in the Constitution, the Duterte administration aims to lay our country wide open for giant foreign corporations to fully exploit Philippine workers and resources. But not only that. With House Bill No. 59, the administration also seeks to entice the entry even of small and medium foreign retailers which will directly compete with and thus crowd out small and medium Pinoy entrepreneurs which have at least P3 million and P15 million capital, respectively.

A drastically lower capitalization requirement of P10.2 million will lead to an influx of foreign players even in small and medium retailing. This is far from the demands of the Pinoy entrepreneurs, especially MSMEs and those not formally organized, who have long cried out for greater state support in the form of policies, subsidies, and programs geared towards MSME development and for the implementation of current laws protecting them against unfair competition.

Laying Pinoy retailers vulnerable to competition by foreigners also jeopardizes the jobs and livelihood of over two million workers who rely on Filipino retail businesses. And, as shown in the proliferation of “endo” and violations of labor laws, foreign companies and the Philippine government have never proven themselves trustworthy to be on the side of the workers.

Also, Filipino consumers will not benefit with lower prices and more choices. With this Bill, the Philippine market will instead be flooded with foreign products which will, of course, be more expensive than local ones. And the repeal of mandatory domestic sourcing of inventory will cut Pinoy manufacturers off from the supply chain and discourage Filipinos MSMEs ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please wind up.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Fifteen seconds, Mr. Speaker.

... which thrive in this supply chain. Consequently, this will hinder the creation and growth of the new existing Pinoy retailers.

House Bill No. 59 is now being cooked in the context of worsening neoliberal reforms such as amendments to the PSA which open utilities to foreign ownership, amendments to the Foreign Investments Act and the like. All of which have been killing the lives and the livelihood of the Filipino people, Mr. Speaker. For this reason, we vote “No” to House Bill No. 59.

#### REP. ELAGO EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, this youth Representation votes against further retail trade liberalization. Young people are now at the forefront of innovation, start-ups and entrepreneurial endeavors, and further liberalizing trade would grab them of opportunities to propel their businesses upward.

Malayung-malayo po ito sa panawagan ng ating mga MSMEs para sa ibayong suporta at pagpapatupad ng mga batas para sa pantay na kalakalan. Ito po ay kataksilan sa lahat ng mga Pilipinong nagsisikap maghanap-buhay sa retail trade.

It is a shame, Mr. Speaker, that we are putting the interest of foreign retailers before our own. Ganito po ba ang pagiging makabayan na nais nating ituro sa mga kabataan. Kahapon nilako na natin sa dayuhan ang public utilities, ngayon retail trade naman. This is grossly unfair and unjust especially to our Philippine MSMEs.

Ang boto ng KABATAAN ay para sa proteksyon ng ating mga malilikhain na lokal na produkto, para ito sa ating mga magsasaka at manggagawa na lumilikha ng mga lokal na produkto, para ito sa mga sari-sari stores at mobile vendors. Pilipino muna! Pilipinas muna! KABATAAN Party-List votes “No” to House Bill No. 59.

#### REP. GAITE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. GAITE. Ginoong Speaker, nangangalit na “No” ang aking boto sa panukalang amyenda sa Retail Trade Act of 2000. Ang amin pong tindig sa amyendang ito ay ang pangalan rin ng aming Party-List, BAYAN MUNA.

Ang laman ng mga panukalang amyenda ay lalong makakasira, hindi po pala makakasira, papatay sa ating lokal na ekonomiya, lalong-lalo na sa ating mga micro, small at medium scale enterprises.

Malaon na pong pinahina ng mga patakarang neoliberal ang ating ekonomiya, ang ating mga lokal at katutubong negosyo, empresa at agrikultura. Sa

ilang dekada ng pagbubukas ng ating ekonomiya, di na mabilang ang mga lokal na negosyo ang nalugi at nagsara. Sa katunayan, epektibong trinansporma ang patakarang ito ang ating bansa patungo sa pagiging isang import-dependent na ekonomiya, isang export-oriented na ekonomiya.

Nakakaasa tayo sa imported na produkto mula bigas hanggang damit, imported na lahat. Talo na ang gawang Pilipino dahil mababa ang kalidad ng ating mga produkto, kundi dahil na rin hindi na kayang labanan ang mga malalaking dayuhang negosyante na kayang magpabaha ng kanilang produkto sa ating bansa.

Talo na rin—talo rin po sa panukalang amyenda ang mga manggagawang Pilipino. Sinasabi na lilikha ng trabaho ang pagbubukas ng ating ekonomiya, subalit possible pong kabaligtaran ang maganap. Humigit-kumulang dalawang milyong manggagawa ang nagtatrabaho sa Philippine trade business, mga negosyong posibleng magsara sa gitna ng mabigat na kumpetisyon laban sa malalaki at mayayamang kumpanya.

Malaking posibilidad din na ang mga trabahong malilikha sa amyendang ito ay mga trabahong walang katiyakan. Nasaksihan natin kamakailan lamang ang biglaang pagsasara ng ilang malalaking dayuhang kumpanya na nagresulta sa pagkatanggal ng libo-libong mga manggagawa. Nag-anunsyo din ang ilang mga kumpanya sa kanilang napipintong pag-alis sa Pilipinas at paglipat sa ibang bansa.

Ang ura-uradang paglayas ng mga kumpanya at pagtanggap sa kanilang mga empleyado ay isa sa mga masasamang posibilidad na haharapin natin kapag naipatupad ang amyendang ito. Posibilidad na maaari rin sana nating iwasan kung tayo ay hindi nakaasa sa dayuhang negosyo, mga posibilidad na ating maiwasan kung uunahin natin ang pag-aalaga at pagpapalakas sa ating mga lokal na industriya, industriyang lilikha ng lokal na produkto at lokal na trabaho. Panghuli, noong taong 2000 na unang inaprubahan ang Retail Trade Liberalization Act, sinabi noon na mali ang “protectionism” na patakarang at sa halip yakapin natin ang patakarang globalisasyon. Tanong ko...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Time expired.

REP. GAITE. Fifteen seconds, Mr. Speaker.

Tanong ko, kailan naging mali na protektahan mo ang iyong pamilya? Kailan naging mali na protektahan ang iyong trabaho? Kailan naging mali na protektahan ang ating ekonomiya? Kailan naging mali na protektahan ang ating inang bayan? Kailanman ay hindi ito mali. Hindi ang dayuhan, hindi ang iilan, bayan muna.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

## REP. LAGMAN EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, I vote “No” on House Bill No. 59 which further inordinately allows foreigners to own and operate retail stores in the Philippines.

Our economic leaders’ excessive predisposition to attracting foreign investments is grossly unpatriotic, even as the thesis that abandoning the nationality barriers will lead to the rapid entry of foreign capital is purely theoretical.

Verily, the renewal or liberalization of nationality or citizenship requirements in some vital industries, like in the retail trade, is not a major factor in attracting foreign investments.

In 2000, the proponents of the liberalization of the retail trade propagandized that the proposal would enhance competition, increase employment, facilitate transfer of technology and improve the national economy. Despite the enactment of Republic Act No. 8762 or the Retail Trade Liberalization Act, these objectives were never realized.

Now comes House Bill No. 59 which further liberalizes the retail trade by lowering the required minimum paid up capital for foreign retail investors from US dollars \$2.5 million to US dollars \$200,000 or approximately only P10 million. Even if an additional 100 foreign retailers will come in, only a minimum of \$20 million will be generated in foreign investments. This is a paltry foreign investment which should not warrant the further marginalization of Filipino retailers.

Moreover, the Bill assures that foreign investments in retail trade could be repatriated with ease by mere prior notice to the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Department of Trade and Industry.

The aggregate cost of stock inventory of foreign retailers of products made in the Philippines is reduced from 30 percent to only 10 percent, curiously and ironically under the section captioned “Promotion of locally manufactured products.” This is counterproductive and would discourage the production of local products.

The alienization of vital public utilities like capital intensive telecommunications enterprises as well as of medium and small retail businesses is utterly anti-Filipino and violative of the Constitution which mandates for the development of “a self-reliant independent national economy effectively controlled by Filipinos.”

House Bill No. 59 promises the Holy Grail of foreign investments. This is empty braggadocio destitute of empirical anchorage.

For all the foregoing, I vote “No.”

## REP. SUNTAY EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. SUNTAY. Mr. Speaker, while Republic Act No. 8762 otherwise known as the “Retail Trade Liberalization Act of 2000” allowed foreigners to invest and join in the retail trade in the Philippines, it did not lose sight of the need to put protections in place in order to preserve the Filipino retailers’ competitive advantage.

While I would have been more than happy to support a Bill amending some of the various restrictive provisions of R.A. 8762, House Bill No. 59 is simply too much. It does not only do away with the protection for the Filipino retailers, it went farther to reducing the capitalization requirement for 100 percent foreign ownership of retail business to \$200,000 which is simply too low. It will effectively provide almost free access to our local retail industry posing a threat to our Filipino retailers.

This adjustment will cause a complete paradigm shift in our country’s retail industry. House Bill No. 59 will undermine the competitive advantage of our micro, small and medium enterprises adversely affecting them due to their limited capital capacity. The proposed legislation would lower the minimum paid-up capital to approximately P10 million, almost equivalent to the asset requirement for small enterprises. This is problematic for 99.3 percent of the business sector are micro and small enterprises. More importantly, as cited by the Asian Development Bank, micro and small establishments are one of our country’s largest employer.

Fly-by-night foreign investors will increase given that the minimum paid-up capital is only set at \$200,000. It will be easy for foreigners to come and go to the country. The provision only requires a notification to the SEC and DTI for its intention to repatriate its capital and cease operation in the country. There is no required minimum years of investment for them.

As foreigners stay in the country, they can apply as alien residents or even...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please wind up.

REP. SUNTAY. ... Filipino citizen and enjoy the perks and benefits given. Less opportunity to our original local players similar to the case of POGOs. They might even bring in foreign employees for their further pulling down local employment.

On a more important note, the proposed measure runs counter to the provisions of the Constitution specifically Article XII on National Economy and Patrimony, particularly on Sections 1 and 10. Additionally on Article II, in the . . .

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Time expired.

REP. SUNTAY. ... Declaration of Principles and State Policy emphasized on Section 19. It is rather clear in our Constitution that we must protect the economic interest of the Filipino and the entire country. As the House of Representatives, we are supposedly the House of the Filipino People. It is only imperative for us, Congressmen from the various legislative districts to stick to the spirit of the Constitution and to legislate measures which will safeguard the interest of our very own citizen—the Filipino people.

The House Bill under deliberation, in my belief, contradicts this principle, so I vote “No.”

## REP. ZARATE EXPLAINS HIS VOTE

REP. ZARATE. Salamat, Ginoong Speaker.

Muli, “No” ang boto ng Kinatawang ito ng BAYAN MUNA sa House Bill No. 59 o ang Retail Trade Liberalization Act.

Ito ay ang huling kabanata sa listahan ng mga panukalang bumubuyangyang sa ating lokal na ekonomiya sa dayuhang kapital. Sa pagkakataong ito, ang mga small and medium scale enterprises naman ang ating ibabangga sa higitang kapital ng mga dayuhan. Matagal nang dumadaing ang mga maliliit na negosyong Pilipino sa kawalan ng lokal na suporta sa kanila, pati na rin ang pagdagsa ng mga produkto mula sa ibang bansa.

Ginoong Speaker, ang ating bansa ay nananatiling atrasado sa lahat ng larangan ng industriya. Katunayan, ito ay isa sa malubhang kakulangan ng ating pamahalaan sa ating mga mamamayan. Ito ay nagpapalala sa kawalan ng disente at sapat na kabuhayan, sa abanteng gamit at mga pamamaraan sa produksyon, at sa lubos at sustainable na paggamit sa ating likas na yaman. Sa mundo sa kasalukuyan, Ginoong Speaker, ay ilang siglo ang layo ng produksyon ng mga mauunlad na bayan sa mga bansang katulad ng Pilipinas. Halimbawa, habang ang ibang bansa ay automated na ang kanilang agrikultura at nakakapag-produce na ng hanggang lampas sa kanilang kinakailangang ikonsumo, dito sa Pilipinas ay humihila pa rin ng kalabaw para mag-araro ang marami sa ating magsasaka tulad ng ginagawa ng mga ninuno nila ilang siglo na ang nakakalipas.

Kaya naman, Ginoong Speaker, ang pagtrato sa lokal at dayuhang mga negosyo na tila may kumpetisyon daw sa pagitan nila ay isang malaking kabalintunaan. Sa katotohanan, tuluyan nang kinikitil at papatayin ang mga lokal na mga negosyo kapalit ng mga higitang kumpanya mula sa ibang bansa. Mas mura, maaaring mas maunlad, ngunit kapalit nito ay ang trabaho ng dalawang milyong manggagawang Pilipino na nakaasa sa mga negosyong retail sa ating bansa. Katunayan, Ginoong Speaker, marami sa mga Pilipinong MSMEs ay dumaraing na sa pagdagsa ng mga dayuhang small and medium enterprise retailers lalo na sa larangan ng pagkain.

Nilalabag nito ang mandato ng Konstitusyon na paunlarin ang umaasa sa sarili at nagsasariling pambansang ekonomiya na pinamumunuan ng mga Pilipino. Nilalabag din ng panukalang batas na ito ang nakasaad sa Konstitusyon na dapat inuuna ang kapakanan ng mga Pilipino kaysa sa mga dayuhan.

Interes ng mga dayuhang retail companies ang pinagsisilbihan ng panukalang ito. Habang tinutulak ng mga foreign chambers of commerce ang House Bill No. 59, mariin itong tinututulan ng Philippine Retailers Association at iba pang organisasyon ng mga retailers sa ating bansa. Malinaw na ayaw ng mga Pilipino ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Time has expired.

REP. ZARATE. ... ang batas na ito, at sana, bilang mga Kinatawan ng mamamayan Pilipino, ay ang boses nila ang ating tindigan at hindi ang dayuhang namumuhunan.

Katulad po, Ginoong Speaker, ng pagpasa natin ng amyenda sa Public Service Act kahapon, malaking kataksilan sa sambayanan ang panukalang batas na ito.

Kaya muli, Ginoong Speaker, isang dumadagundong na "No" ang boto ng Kinatawang ito.

Salamat po, Ginoong Speaker.

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

#### APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 59 ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With 156 affirmative votes, 30 negative votes and three abstentions, House Bill No. 59 is approved on Third Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the two bills that the House has approved on Third Reading today, namely: House Bill No. 5832 and House Bill No. 59, be immediately transmitted to the Senate.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 6194 ON SECOND READING

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Bill No. 6194, contained in Committee

Report No. 220, as reported out by the Committees on Natural Resources and Appropriations.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). 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. 6194, entitled: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DELINEATION OF THE SPECIFIC FOREST LIMITS OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). 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 Natural Resources, Rep. Elpidio F. Barzaga Jr., to sponsor the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; Rep. Elpidio Barzaga is recognized to sponsor House Bill No. 6194.

#### SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. BARZAGA

REP. BARZAGA. Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, as Chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources, it is my distinct honor and privilege to present for consideration and approval of this august Body House Bill No. 6194, entitled: AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DELINEATION OF THE SPECIFIC FOREST LIMITS OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

House Bill No. 6194 is actually the product of substitution of two House bills, namely: House Bill No. 98 and House Bill No. 4540.

As part of my sponsorship speech, let me quote the provision of Article XII, Section 4 of the Philippine Constitution. Section 4 provides that:

The Congress shall, as soon as possible, determine by law the specific limits of forest lands and national parks, marking clearly their boundaries on the ground. Thereafter, such forest lands and national parks shall be conserved and may not be increased nor diminished, except by law.

\* 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 Congress shall provide, for such period as it may determine, measures to prohibit logging in endangered forest and watershed areas.

Well in this connection, after 33 years from the date of the effectivity of the 1987 Constitution, and in spite of the fact that in previous Congresses—15<sup>th</sup> Congress, 16<sup>th</sup> Congress and 17<sup>th</sup> Congress, similar bills were passed on Third Reading by the House of Representatives, unfortunately no final action has been made, making this Bill a law pursuant to the requirement of the Constitution.

Admittedly, Mr. Speaker, this is a Bill of national importance. Because under this Bill, if it will become a law, there will be the specific delineation of specific forest limits. And therefore, all lands which are outside of the forest specific limits will be alienable and disposable, whereas, those in the boundaries would not be the subject of alienation or disposition. Because of the importance of this Bill and considering further the constitutional mandate, I most respectfully move for the approval of House Bill No. 6194.

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

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, to propose individual amendments, again, we recognize Cong. XJ Romualdo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Cong. XJ Romualdo is recognized for his amendments.

## INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS

REP. ROMUALDO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we would like to propose an amendment on page 5, line 14, that the phrase “Immediately after the passage” be deleted and replaced with the phrase UPON THE EFFECTIVITY.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). What is the pleasure of the proponent—of the Sponsor?

REP. BARZAGA. Well, I accept the proposed amendment without any objection.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). What is the pleasure of the Majority?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The amendment is approved.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, our next proposed individual amendment is on the same page 5, this time on line 17, after the word “permanent”, we propose to insert the following proviso: PROVIDED THAT THE PROTECTED AREAS ESTABLISHED AS SUCH UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11038 OR THE EXPANDED NATIONAL INTEGRATED PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM ACT OF 2018 SHALL BE EXCLUDED FROM THE COVERAGE OF THE SAID FOREST LANDS.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). What is the comment of the Sponsor?

REP. BARZAGA. I accept. No objection.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). For the part of the Majority?

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, the Majority accepts the proposed amendment.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The amendment is accepted.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). 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. 6194, as amended, on Second Reading.

VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Those who are in favor to approve House Bill No. 6194, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Those who are against, please say *Nay*. (*Silence*)

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6194, AS AMENDED,  
ON SECOND READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The *ayes* have it; House Bill No. 6194, as amended, is approved on Second Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we take up Additional References of Business and direct the Secretary General to read the same.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; 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 House Resolution on First Reading, Messages from the Senate and Committee Reports which were referred to the appropriate Committees hereunder indicated:*

RESOLUTION

House Resolution No. 787, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF THE LATE ADORACION J. VILLANUEVA, WIFE OF DEPUTY SPEAKER EDUARDO BRO. ‘EDDIE’ C. VILLANUEVA, REPRESENTATIVE OF CIBAC PARTY-LIST”  
By Representatives Cayetano (Alan Peter), Romualdez (Ferdinand) and Abante  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date

passed without amendment House Bill No. 4961, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY H-2 IN THE CITY OF DASMARIÑAS, PROVINCE OF CAVITE”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed without amendment House Bill No. 2998, entitled:

“AN ACT TRANSFERRING THE CAPITAL AND SEAT OF GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL FROM THE CITY OF PASIG, METRO MANILA TO THE CITY OF ANTIPOLLO, PROVINCE OF RIZAL”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 640, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF THE BICOL MEDICAL CENTER FROM FIVE HUNDRED (500) BEDS TO ONE THOUSAND (1,000) BEDS, UPGRADING ITS SERVICE FACILITIES AND PROFESSIONAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES, AUTHORIZING THE INCREASE OF ITS MEDICAL WORKFORCE COMPLEMENT, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8053, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR” in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed with amendments House Bill No. 1477, entitled:

“AN ACT UPGRADING THE CARAGA REGIONAL HOSPITAL IN BARANGAY WASHINGTON, SURIGAO CITY, SURIGAO DEL NORTE INTO A TERTIARY LEVEL HOSPITAL, INCREASING ITS BED CAPACITY FROM ONE HUNDRED FIFTY (150) TO FIVE HUNDRED (500) BEDS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed with amendments House Bill No. 1799, entitled:

“AN ACT RENAMING THE TALISAY DISTRICT

HOSPITAL IN TALISAY CITY, PROVINCE OF CEBU, INTO CEBU SOUTH MEDICAL CENTER, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7799, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT ESTABLISHING A DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TALISAY, PROVINCE OF CEBU, TO BE KNOWN AS THE TALISAY DISTRICT HOSPITAL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR’ ”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed with amendments House Bill No. 4463, entitled:

“AN ACT EXTENDING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO FIRST UNITED BROADCASTING CORPORATION, PRESENTLY KNOWN AS GLOBAL SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES, INC., AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8079, AS AMENDED, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE FIRST UNITED BROADCASTING CORPORATION (FUBC) A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS ANYWHERE IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ ”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed with amendments House Bill No. 4581, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO GOLDEN BROADCAST PROFESSIONAL, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8025, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE GOLDEN BROADCAST PROFESSIONAL INC., A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE A STATION FOR FM RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING IN THE ISLAND OF MINDANAO’, AND EXPANDING ITS COVERAGE TO THE ENTIRE PHILIPPINES”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed

with amendments House Bill No. 4582, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO GOLD LABEL BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8087, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING TO THE GOLD LABEL BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC., A FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH, MAINTAIN, AND OPERATE RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN DUMAGUETE CITY AND OTHER AREAS IN THE VISAYAS AND MINDANAO WHERE FREQUENCIES AND/OR CHANNELS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING’ ”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed with amendments House Bill No. 4583, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO BROADCAST ENTERPRISES AND AFFILIATED MEDIA, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8098 TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed with amendments House Bill No. 4584, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO CRUSADERS BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC., UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8091, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE CRUSADERS BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS WITHIN THE PHILIPPINES’ ”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed with amendments House Bill No. 5490, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO BICOL BROADCASTING

SYSTEMS, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8092, ENTITLED: 'AN ACT GRANTING THE BICOL BROADCASTING SYSTEMS, INC. (BBSI), A FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN REGION V'".  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

Message dated March 9, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed with amendments House Bill No. 5871, entitled:  
"AN ACT UPGRADING THE MARIA L. ELEAZAR DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TAGKAWAYAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON INTO A LEVEL III GENERAL HOSPITAL TO BE KNOWN AS THE MARIA L. ELEAZAR GENERAL HOSPITAL, UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION AND CONTROL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR".  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of the Committee on Public Works and Highways and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 290), re H.B. No. 6585, entitled:  
"AN ACT CLASSIFYING THE SAN FERNANDO BYPASS ROAD AND SAN FERNANDO BYPASS EXTENSION ROAD IN THE PROVINCE OF LA UNION, INTO NATIONAL ROADS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"  
recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 4291  
Sponsors: Representatives Madrona, Yap (Eric) and Ortega  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Justice (Committee Report No. 291), re H.B. No. 6589, entitled:  
"AN ACT FURTHER EXPANDING THE JURISDICTION OF METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURTS, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS IN CITIES, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS, AND MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURTS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE 'JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980', AS AMENDED"

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 5527, 5584 and 5867  
Sponsors: Representatives Veloso, Villafuerte, Leachon and Nograles (Jericho)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Justice (Committee Report No. 292), re H.B. No. 6590, entitled:  
"AN ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO STANLEY LEE"  
recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 5006  
Sponsors: Representatives Veloso, Aragonés and Nieto  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Justice (Committee Report No. 293), re H.B. No. 6591, entitled:  
"AN ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO CHEN TIAN MAN"  
recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 5063  
Sponsors: Representatives Veloso and Paduano  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

#### CONCURRENCE WITH SENATE AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1477

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, we are in receipt of a message from the Senate informing the House that the Senate passed with amendments House Bill No. 1477 upgrading the CARAGA Regional Hospital in Barangay Washington, Surigao City, Surigao del Norte into a tertiary level hospital.

We have been advised that the author of the said House Bill has no objection to the amendments introduced thereto by the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, in accordance with our rules, I move that we concur with the Senate amendments to House Bill No. 1477.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TADURAN. Once again, Mr. Speaker, we are in receipt of a message from the Senate informing the House that the Senate passed with amendments House Bill No. 1799, entitled: AN ACT RENAMING THE TALISAY DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN TALISAY CITY, PROVINCE OF CEBU, INTO CEBU SOUTH

MEDICAL CENTER, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7799, ENTITLED "AN ACT ESTABLISHING A DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TALISAY, PROVINCE OF CEBU, TO BE KNOWN AS THE TALISAY DISTRICT HOSPITAL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR."

We have been advised that the author of the said House Bill has no objection to the amendments introduced thereto by the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, in accordance with our rules, I move that we concur with the Senate amendments to House Bill No. 1799.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, we are in receipt of a message from the Senate informing the House that the Senate passed with amendments House Bill No. 5871, entitled: AN ACT UPGRADING THE MARIAL ELEAZAR DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TAGKAWAYAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON INTO A LEVEL III GENERAL HOSPITAL TO BE KNOWN AS THE MARIA L. ELEAZAR GENERAL HOSPITAL, UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION AND CONTROL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

We have been advised that the author of the said House Bill has no objection to the amendments introduced thereto by the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, in accordance with our rules, I move that we concur with the Senate amendments to House Bill No. 5871.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### ADOPTION OF SENATE BILL NO. 640 AS AN AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL NO. 831

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, the House and the Senate have approved on Third Reading House Bill No. 831 and Senate Bill No. 640, respectively.

We have been informed that the Committee on Health, sponsor of House Bill No. 831, as well as the author thereof, is in concurrence with the provisions of Senate Bill No. 640.

Mr. Speaker, in accordance with our rules, I move that we adopt Senate Bill No. 640 as an amendment to House Bill No. 831.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

REP. CASTELO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Majority, I move to nominate and elect the following House Members to the respective Committees:

*The Majority Leader, Rep. Precious Hipolito Castelo, read the names of the House Members elected to the various Committees, per Journal No. 54, dated March 11, 2020.*

#### SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE

As Sr. Vice Chairperson:

Rep. Alfred D. Vargas

As Vice Chairpersons:

Rep. "Kuya" Jose Antonio R. Sy-Alvarado

Rep. Michael T. Defensor

As members:

Rep. Narciso R. Bravo Jr.

Rep. Joseph Sto. Niño B. Bernos

Rep. Raul "Boboy" C. Tupas

Rep. Jose "Pingping" I. Tejada

Rep. Presley C. De Jesus

Rep. Jorge "PATROL" Bustos

Rep. Lorenz R. Defensor

#### COMMITTEE ON GOOD GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

As member:

Rep. Vicente "Ching" S.E. Veloso III

#### COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

As member:

Rep. Vicente "Ching" S.E. Veloso III

#### COMMITTEE ON RULES

As Assistant Majority Leader:

Rep. John Marvin "Yul Servo" C. Nieto

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 787

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 787.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). 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. 787, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF THE LATE ADORACION J. VILLANUEVA, WIFE OF DEPUTY SPEAKER EDUARDO “BRO. EDDIE” C. VILLANUEVA, REPRESENTATIVE OF CIBAC PARTY-LIST.

#### VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Those who are in favor, please say *Aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Those who are against, please say *Nay*. (*Silence*)

#### ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 787

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The *ayes* have it; House Resolution No. 787 is adopted.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

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

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

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

*Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the following House Bill on First Reading which were referred to the appropriate Committee hereunder indicated:*

#### BILL ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 6567, entitled:

“AN ACT TO PROHIBIT THE KEEPING OF ANY ANIMAL FOR HEALTH AND GENERAL ORDER IN HIGH DENSITY SETTLEMENT AREAS”

By Representative Fernando  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

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

*It was 7:00 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 7:02 p.m., the session was resumed with Speaker Alan Peter "Compañero" S. Cayetano presiding.*

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

REP. MACAPAGALARROYO. My dear colleagues, the Speaker of the House will address us. (*Applause*)

#### REMARKS OF THE SPEAKER

THE SPEAKER. Thank you very much, dear colleagues.

There is a biblical principle wherein we are asked to be the salt and light, and regardless of our religion, sa mga kapatid nating Muslim na nandito, those who are very spiritual, not spiritual, I think the symbolism of salt and light is very clear to all of us.

If we were to turn off all the lights in this august Hall, the smallest piece of light or the smallest inkling of light, whether it be a ballpen, your cellphone, a lighter will light up the whole Session Hall. Doon tayo

\* 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.”

mapapatingin sa light. So, the light shows the way. In the same manner that salt is used to season but also to preserve. So, when we say “be the salt and light”, I think now is the best time to absorb that.

During the SEA Games in late November, early December, the athletes, the family of the athletes, the coaches, they all inspired us. They gave us hope. They gave us faith. They gave us pride.

Now, that we are facing many challenges, it is now the House of the People who should give us hope, who should inspire us, who should show the people that we have faith and not fear. Yes, if you spell House of the People it will go to the word HOPE. So, I hope that during these next few weeks, we will actually be giving hope and faith to our kababayans.

I would like to thank from the bottom of my heart, all Members of Congress, Opposition, Administration, Minority, Majority, Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao; those of you who provided the quorum; those of you who questioned the quorum; maraming-maraming salamat sa inyo. (*Applause*) Without you, we wouldn't have been able to achieve what we've achieved in the past few months.

In any matrix that you look at, and while you look at the screens: approved on Third Reading - 417 percent more or better performance than at the same period of the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress; (*Applause*) 300 percent on Second Reading; total measures: 178 percent; and 120 percent measures processed.

And siguro po, kung mayroon din tayong puwedeng palakpakan aside from ourselves, Majority Leader Martin Romualdez, (*Applause*) the teams of the Rules Committee, and of course, our Deputy Speakers. (*Applause*) We'd also like to thank the Minority sapagkat hindi naman namin ito magagawa kapag wala kayo and, to be fair, minsan mahaba lang pero you make legislation better. The interpellations, the suggestions, you know, forced us to think and forced us to come up with better legislation.

And this is reflected and acknowledged by our people. The 63 percent Public Satisfaction Rating by the Social Weather Station and the 66 percent Pulse Asia Survey, which is the highest the Congress ever got, is an acknowledgment (*Applause*) of the hard work that all of you have been doing.

So now, may I ask you in the coming weeks as you visit your districts, as the party-list representatives go to the sectors that they serve, let us articulate together the vision. We are lost, kapag walang vision hindi ba? Kapag walang direksyon, mahirap magplano or almost imposible magplano kapag walang vision. And to simplify the vision, on whether or not we are for this Administration, President Duterte has simplified it by saying, “A safe and comfortable life for all Filipinos.”

This is quite difficult to ponder in the next few

days because in our minds is the problem of COVID-19. So, hindi ka na safe, hindi ka pa comfortable. Iyan po ang mindset ng marami right now. Not only in the Philippines, but in the whole world.

If you look at the various news outlets, traditional media-radio, listen to the radio, watch TV, read the papers, napakaraming issues. At sa mga taga-Marawit dito, you're still waiting for the rehabilitation. Sa mga taga lugar na tinamaan ng Yolanda, sa lugar ni Martin; sa mga taga-Samar dito kay Lucy, head natin noong Committee that deals with disaster, marami pa ring kulang. Sa mga taga-Mindanao dito na tinamaan noong earthquake and of course, the most recent sa Batangas. There's so much to do.

What are we going to do to be able to solve these problems? In the last few months, we have showed that we cared, we have called the different Secretaries, Undersecretaries, the private sector, we have passed resolutions, we have had round table discussions. Many of us went to Batangas, went to different places. Deputy Speaker Polong, for example, spent a lot of time in Mindanao to help those hit by the earthquake. But I think it was really special that for the first time in history we did not have our sessions here but we went to Batangas to tell them, “Not only that we are with you but we are with you.” Not only to tell them we are with you, again, but to tell them we are you.” Because, ang sakit ng kalingkingan ay sakit ng buong katawan. And whether you're in Metro Manila, you are in Ilocos, you are in BaSulTa, you are a Filipino. So, I hope we will be given a chance to visit, as a Congress, other regions in the country whether or not there are calamities in the area. (*Applause*) Let's not wait for them to go to Congress. Let's allow Congress to go to the different regions of our country.

The COVID-19 gives us two choices: fear or hope. Siguro iyong fear po mahirap i-control iyan, pumapasok na lang iyan but we can fight it. But hope, we have to work on it.

Bakit po tayo nagse-session ngayon? Kasi gusto nating ipakita na may pag-asa. Bakit po kanina nag-cut tayo ng ribbon sa bridge way? Because, yes, we didn't have a thousand people or 10,000 people, many events are canceled but, I think, if we take the right precautions and listen to the health professionals, we can see, we can show people na kailangan may level of normalcy. Hindi ba? Kasi, hindi naman puwedeng, because of fear, lahat tayo nasa bahay na lang, wala ng magta-trabaho, walang magpo-provide ng pagkain, mas maraming Pilipino ang magsa-suffer.

Kagabi, si Congressman Lopez, ipinakita sa akin ang isang meme ng mga bata na panay mga dumi ang nasa katawan tapos nakalagay: “Kami sa Tondo, hindi kami tinatamaan ng COVID.”

And it was, you know, just such a powerful way of communicating that the rich and poor deal with COVID-19 in so different ways: ang mayaman umaangal dahil

wala nang mabili na alcohol sa grocery; ang mahirap walang pambiling pagkain; ang mayaman nagdisinfect ng bawat portion ng kaniyang bahay, pero ang mahirap walang bahay. Ang mga taga-Taal na hindi na puwedeng bumalik, nandoon pa rin sa evacuation centers. Hindi ba?

So, the problem is quite complex. That is why, I urge my colleagues, together as an institution, in the next seven weeks, let's continue working, let's have committee hearings, let's have round tables, let's take the precautions, let's include the Executive Department, let's come up with Executive-Legislative solutions, let's meet with the private sectors and businesses, how we can help, and let's meet with our constituents, and let's ask the government to release the funds that are needed ngayon na ang problema ay kaya pa. Huwag na nating hintayin na sabihin noong mga tourist guides na namamatay na sila. Alam naman natin ngayon na matumal na ang kanilang negosyo. Sa transportation, kapag walang pasok, ang tricycle driver na isang kahig-isang tuka, alam na natin na kulang ang kikitain nila.

So, why wait? Let's be proactive and let's work with the Executive to get to the people what they need immediately. So, I would like to address the Office of the President and the Senate—the House of Representatives is willing to work. So if you want to change the Legislative Calendar, and in the next few weeks gusto ninyo magkaroon tayo ng sesyon at ibahin natin iyong calendar, payag po.

And let me ask you today, my dear colleagues, payag po ba kayong mag-session kung kinakailangan?

SEVERAL MEMBERS. Yes. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER. Thank you very much.

Lastly, I would like to speak for the more than 10 million OFWs—and I know many of you here, Cong. Eric Pineda, Cong. Raymond, iyong mga nasa labor sector, OFWs, iyong mga party-list natin that have OFW constituents, maybe you can speak better than I for the OFWs. But, just because I'm here, allow me to thank everyone of you for passing the law that will give our OFWs and those seeking foreign employment their voice in the Cabinet by having their own department. I was in the DFA and I believe that I was one of the more progressive Secretaries that really spent time with the OFWs, but still kulang pa rin.

Let me assure my kababayans here, including my colleagues in the Makabayan bloc, this will not set a precedent to have a policy of exporting our kababayans. This is simply a mechanism where at the highest level mayroong nag-aasikaso sa OFW na walang ibang trabaho. Hindi katulad ng DOLE na trabaho din niya ang employment dito. Hindi katulad ng DFA na diplomacy is also their job.

So, let me thank you for that and I am looking forward

to the Senate passing the bill for this department and I am looking forward to a great team being appointed. A team that will not look at making money from the OFWs and not abusing them, but protecting them. *(Applause)*

Sa lahat po ng pinag-uusapan po natin may gastos. So, you've heard the President talk about closing a cigarette company that wasn't paying the right taxes. You've heard about airlines that paid. You've heard about water companies that have won an arbitration award, yet waived it; and now you're hearing about power producers and the PSALM and what's odd. Tingin ko 'pag naghalungkat tayo marami pang may utang sa gobyerno.

I know some of these are complex issues and we will give everyone due process. But, may the Congress of the Philippines make an appeal, lalo po doon sa mga malalaking korporasyon, kung may utang kayo, magbayad naman kayo. Kasi 'pag nagbayad kayo, dito n'yo matutulungan talaga ang ating bayan.

Kung titingnan niyo po parang pinapasan na natin, pinapasan na ng Kongreso. It's like we are being crushed by all the problems, natural disasters including the virus, poverty, unemployment, underemployment, 'di ba, disease. So, it's time to lift Filipinos out of the darkness. It's time to lift Filipinos from hunger and poverty. It's time to lift Filipinos from hopelessness.

You know, the more I think about all of the problems we've gone through in the last few months and in my 28 years in public service, magaling na tayong mag-react at madaling sabihin, hindi, dapat proactive tayo. Pero, madaling maging proactive 'pag tapos na iyong problema eh, 'di ba? Like ngayon sa COVID 19, ang dami nang expert talaga eh. At iyong iba mean well, but iyong iba nakaka-cause pa ng problema rather than nakaka-solve.

So, may I propose that during the break, aside from working for Congress to go paperless, aside from working that Congress will be the model pagdating sa zero waste, aside from making it gender sensitive, sa mga lahat ng kailangan nating ayusin sa Kongreso, I would like to propose that we open a new center, and the proposal is to name it "Life Innovation and Future Thinking Center" or the LIFT Center ng Kongreso. *(Applause)* Because it is only, it is only in having future thinking that we can look at all these problems and find solutions even before the problems hits us.

So, hindi po ako magpapakahaba, alam ko pong hinihintay kayo ng inyong pamilya. Iyong iba't ibang mga bloke, alam ko may pagpupulong pa. Iyong ilang mga grupo dito, some are thinking whether they would stay and talk to the secretaries. Some will take you to go home, but let me tell you that same schedule, as is, may sessions tayo. The staff of Congress will be here, we will be ready to assist and we will be working to try to solve many of these problems.

So again, nagawa natin itong lahat, hindi dahil sa isang tao, hindi sa dalawang tao, hindi sa isang team, kung hindi dahil sa lahat ng Kongresista ay nanampalataya sa Diyos at nagtrabaho para sa tao.

Magandang gabi at maraming, maraming salamat. God bless you and your constituents. *(Applause)*  
The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. REMULLA. Mr. Speaker, in accordance with our rules, I move that we authorize all Committees to conduct meetings or public hearings, if deemed necessary, during the adjournment of the House from March 12, 2020 to May 3, 2020.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

May I just remind all of the Chairpersons and ComSecs to give advance notice so that if some will be in their constituencies but want to attend, they'll have more time to come back.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. REMULLA. Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn the session until May 4, 2020, Monday, at 3:00 p.m. *(Applause)*

THE SPEAKER. Is there any objection? *(Silence)*  
Hearing none, the session is adjourned until May 4, 2020, at 3:00 p.m.

*It was 7:21 p.m., Wednesday, March 11, 2020.*