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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Ecology	HB 4922	Rep. Rocamora	Requiring the implementation by brand owners of management plans that provide refund values for certain beverage containers	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to study and fine-tune the bill.</p> <p>Rep. Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-PACMAN) was designated as the TWG Chair.</p> <p>Rep. Pineda sponsored HB 4922 in behalf of the author, Siquijor Rep. Ramon V.A. "Rav" Rocamora, and manifested that the explanatory note attached to the bill be considered as the author's sponsorship speech.</p> <p>Beverage Industry Association of the Philippines (BIAP) Executive Director Roman Romulo expressed the need to further review the bill particularly on its potential impact to the consumers.</p> <p>Under the bill, the buyer of a beverage shall pay a deposit for the beverage container which will be refunded upon its return to the seller or to any designated "return site."</p> <p>National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC) Vice Chair Crispian Lao informed the Committee of the Commission's plan to develop a national comprehensive waste recovery program.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers for the TWG's reference in its deliberations on the bill.</p>
	HB 5915	Rep. Antonio	Mandating the local government units (LGUs) to institutionalize rewards for compliance with Section 32 of RA 9003, otherwise known as the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 5915 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Katrina Isabel Trillana, political affairs officer II at the office of Rep. Michelle Antonio (Party-List, AGBIAG), explained that the bill intends to grant incentives and awards to barangays which put up materials recovery facilities (MRFs) and are compliant with the law, as opposed to penalizing non-compliant barangays.</p> <p>Senior Environmental Management Specialist Juvinia Serafin of the Environmental</p>

Continuation... Ecology				<p>Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (EMB-DENR), agreed with the suggestion of Rep. Suansing that barangays should receive recognition and monetary rewards from their respective cities or municipalities for complying with Section 32 of RA 9003.</p> <p>Replying to the query of Rep. Pineda, Mother Earth Foundation (MEF) Chairperson Sonia Mendoza explained that waste material sorting, segregation, composting and recycling provides additional source of income for both the workers and the barangays, aside from its benefits to the environment.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bill.</p> <p>The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Office of the Ombudsman will be among those that will be invited to attend the next meeting to answer some of the queries of the Committee.</p>
Housing and Urban Development	HR 1709	Rep. Sarmiento (E.M.)	Inquiry into the collapse of a housing unit which is part of the housing project intended for the victims of the September 2013 Zamboanga siege	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Alfredo "Albee" Benitez (3rd District, Negros Occidental), will continue its deliberation on the issues raised relative to HR 1709 in its next meeting.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento (1st District, Samar), author of HR 1709, said that after the collapse of a housing unit in Barangay Tulungatung, Zamboanga City last February 15, he was compelled to file a resolution calling for an investigation into the standard of housing units adopted and the living conditions of the beneficiaries of the Zamboanga City Roadmap to Recovery and Reconstruction (Z3R) project.</p> <p>The beneficiaries of the Z3R housing project are the people who were displaced due to the September 2013 Zamboanga siege caused by a faction of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).</p> <p>Zamboanga City Mayor Maria Isabelle "Beng" Climaco-Salazar clarified that the role of the city government in the Z3R housing projects is limited to regulatory and coordinative functions through its Local Inter-Agency Committee (LIAC) on Permanent Housing. The National Housing Authority (NHA) is the agency mainly responsible for the project, she added.</p> <p>The Mayor admitted that the LIAC allowed the beneficiaries to move in to the housing units even without occupancy permit because of safety and security issues as well as the increasing death toll resulting from poor and unhealthy conditions in temporary shelters.</p> <p>Former NHA General Manager Chito Cruz explained that in the original plan, the stilt</p>

<p>Continuation... Housing and Urban Development</p>				<p>houses will be constructed using concrete. But due to the urgency of the situation and NHA's limited budget, wood was used instead, he added.</p> <p>Nevertheless, Cruz claimed that the housing plan, with housing units that could withstand storms with the strength of up to 100 kilometers per hour, was approved by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and the consultants of the University of the Philippines Planning and Development Research Foundation, Inc. (UP PLANADES). The UP PLANADES was commissioned by the DPWH as consultant for the Z3R projects.</p> <p>On the bridge that collapsed in Sitio Hong Kong, Rio Hondo, Zamboanga City, Cruz argued that the wooden footbridge was properly designed and constructed. With proper management and load capacity, the footbridge could last until five years, he added. However, Cruz cited reports that the wooden cross braces that were installed underneath the bridge to strengthen and to stabilize it, were removed by the beneficiaries themselves because the braces reportedly hinder the boats from passing through the river.</p> <p>A portion of the footbridge collapsed last April 26 just when Reps. Benitez and Celso Lobregat (1st District, Zamboanga City) and local government officials of Zamboanga City were walking on it while inspecting the Z3R housing projects.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel Jose "Mannix" Dalipe (2nd District, Zamboanga City) informed the body that he recently filed HR 1868, calling for an inquiry into the collapse of the wooden footbridge.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rio Hondo Barangay Captain Rozdy Mukaram reported that a person, whom he could not identify, is allegedly deducting P6,500 from the P10,000 worth of financial assistance being given by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to each of the beneficiaries. The deduction was said to be used for the installation of electric and water facilities in the housing project. However, Mukaram lamented that there are no electric and water facilities yet in the resettlement areas up to this time.</p> <p>Rep. Benitez said that the issue raised by Mukaram will be part of the Committee's investigation. The Zamboanga City Mayor also gave an assurance that the city government will also conduct its own investigation regarding the alleged deduction.</p> <p>Commission on Audit (COA) Director Lydia de Joya said that COA has already started its investigation into the disbursement of funds for the Z3R housing projects.</p>
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Legislative Franchises	HB 7300	Rep. Romualdo	Extending for another 25 years the franchise granted to Insular Broadcasting System, Inc. to install, operate and maintain broadcasting stations in the Philippines	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Franz "Chicoy" Alvarez (1st District, Palawan), approved HB 7300.
	HB 4118	Rep. Jalosjos	Renewing the franchise granted to First Love Broadcasting Network, Inc. to construct, establish, operate and maintain commercial FM and AM radio stations and television stations in the Visayas and Mindanao	The Committee approved HB 4118 subject to the submission of the franchisee's tax clearance.
	HBs 7173 & 7398	Reps. Robes and Dalipe	Extending for another 25 years the franchise granted to the Iglesia ni Cristo to establish radio stations for private telecommunication	The Committee agreed to consolidate HBs 7173 and 7398, and approved the same subject to the submission of the franchisee's tax clearance.
Population and Family Relations	HBs 46, 586, 3112, 3474, 4216 & 6657	Reps. Fortun, Bataoil, Uy, Escudero, Baguilat, and Aragon	Providing for a comprehensive civil registration system	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Sol Aragon (3rd District, Laguna), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the bills.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Lawrence "Law" Fortun (1st District, Agusan del Norte), author of HB 46.</p> <p>In explaining the rationale for filing their respective bills, the authors were one in saying that the current civil registration system should be improved to make it more efficient and responsive to the needs of the Filipinos. One of the common provisions in the bills is the establishment of a barangay-based civil registration system to reach out to people in remote areas of the country, thereby achieve a higher, if not 100%, record of civil registration.</p> <p>Rep. Aragon, author of HB 6657, cited the flaws and deficiencies of the antiquated Act No. 3753 (Law on Registry of Civil Status), depriving individuals of their inherent right to identity and recognition. She explained that about 7.5 million Filipinos, mostly living in far-flung or poverty-stricken areas in the country, are not yet registered with the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the agency responsible for administering the civil registration system. (Act No. 3753 was enacted in November 1930.)</p> <p>Rep. Juliette Uy (2nd District, Misamis Oriental), author of HB 3112, stressed that her bill aims to provide a more efficient and locally-responsive system for recording vital events in an individual's life through a simplified procedure of civil registration and the application of modern technology.</p> <p>On her part, Rep. Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon) said that her bill, HB 3474, aims to promote and sustain a reactive and comprehensive civil registration system which includes stringent accountability against persons responsible for errors in civil</p>

Continuation... Population and Family Relations				<p>registration documents. Because of these errors, the registrants are compelled to undergo tedious and costly court proceedings to make the necessary corrections.</p> <p>Likewise, Rep. Ma. Lourdes Aggabao (4th District, Isabela) pointed out the need to make the civil registration system in the country more comprehensive and to establish a civil registration system at the grassroots level. She recently filed a bill (HB 7695) with similar subject matter, which is pending for first reading at the plenary.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit their official position papers on the proposed law for the TWG's consideration.</p>
Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development	HR 1771	Rep. Unabia	Requesting His Excellency, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, to allocate P6 billion for FY 2019 for the <i>Pondo sa Pagbabago at Pag-asenso</i> (P3) Program being implemented by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), through the Small Business Corporation (SB Corp.)	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Peter "Sr. Pedro" Unabia (1 st District, Misamis Oriental), adopted HR 1771 and approved the corresponding Committee Report.
	HR 1772	Rep. Unabia	Requesting His Excellency, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, to increase the budget for FY 2019 for the programs/projects for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), specifically the <i>Kapatid</i> Mentor ME Program, Shared Service Facilities (SSF) Project, and the trade fairs of the Bureau of Domestic Trade Promotion (BDTP)	The Committee adopted HR 1772 and approved the corresponding Committee Report.
Women and Gender Equality	Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 2592, 1471, 2664, 2850 & 5153	Deputy Speaker Villarica, Reps. Abayon, De Jesus, Cuaresma, and Tambunting	Defining electronic violence against women (eVAW) and their children, providing protective measures, and prescribing penalties, amending for the purpose RA 9262, otherwise known as the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act of 2004	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy (Party-List, BAGONG HENERASYON), will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to the proposal of Deputy Speaker Linabelle Ruth Villarica (4th District, Bulacan), author of HB 2592, to change the term "woman," as used in the bill, to "women and their children" in order to be consistent with RA 9262. It also agreed to expand the definition of "electronic violence or ICT-related violence" to include the fabrication of fake information or news through text messaging or other cyber, electronic, or multimedia means.</p> <p>On the other hand, majority of the Members of the Committee present during the meeting disagreed on the inclusion in the bill of a provision mandating the National Privacy Commission (NPC) to ensure the protection of sensitive information regarding women since it is already part of the existing mandate of the Commission.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the authors of the bills were amenable to discuss further the provision amending Section 43 of RA 9262 that grants a</p>

Continuation... Women and Gender Equality				<p>10-day leave with pay to a woman-employee who is a victim of violence in addition to other leave benefits granted under existing laws, which may be extended when necessity arises as specified in the protection order. They recognize that this provision might hinder the employment of women as this will entail additional costs on the part of the employer.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bill.</p>
	Draft Substitute Bill to HB 6595	Speaker Alvarez	Recognizing the civil partnership of couples, providing for their rights and obligations	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Representatives from the government, namely, Department of Justice (DOJ), Philippine National Police (PNP), Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and Land Registration Authority (LRA); the Coalition of Christian for Change; and the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) expressed their support for the bill and promised to submit their respective position papers.</p>

JOINT CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Congressional Oversight Committee on the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program Law (COCCTRP)	Briefing by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) on the impact of the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law on revenue collection	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, listened to the briefing conducted by the BIR on the impact of the TRAIN Law on revenue collection.</p> <p>The TRAIN Law is a landmark piece of legislation under President Duterte's administration, which seeks to correct a number of deficiencies in the tax system to make it simpler, fairer, and more efficient.</p> <p>BIR Assistant Commissioner Alfredo Misajon reported an increasing trend in revenue collection from 2015 to 2017. He said that as compared to 2015, the total tax collection for 2016 increased by 9.31% or P134.21 billion; while the 2017 collection increased by 13.01% or P205.02 billion.</p> <p>With the implementation of the TRAIN Law this year, the BIR already noted a significant increase in excise tax collection for the first quarter of 2018, particularly from tobacco products, petroleum products, and sugar-sweetened beverages. However, Misajon reported that in terms of revenues from personal income tax, the BIR did not meet its collection target of P83.53 billion, citing its actual collection for the first quarter of 2018 of only P60.18 billion, with a variance of P23.34 billion.</p> <p>Misajon also apprised the Committee of the various revenue regulations issued by the Bureau to facilitate the implementation of the TRAIN Law.</p> <p>Reps. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) and Manuel Zubiri (3rd District, Bukidnon) said that with the increase in the excise tax on petroleum products under the TRAIN Law, the price of almost all basic commodities increased, which had a significant impact on the majority of Filipinos, most of whom belong to the low-income group.</p>

<p>Continuation... Congressional Oversight Committee on the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program Law (COCCTRP)</p>		<p>Department of Finance (DOF) Assistant Secretary Ma. Teresa Habitan explained that the increase in the price of basic commodities may also be due to the seasonality of harvest of agricultural products and disasters or calamities. She further explained that the inflation rate can be affected as well by global oil prices and peso depreciation.</p> <p>Several Committee Members, however, remarked that the general consumers believe that the increase in prices is the result of the implementation of the TRAIN Law.</p> <p>When asked by Rep. Cua on the government's program to help cushion the negative impact of the TRAIN Law, Habitan replied that a total of P12.3 billion was released for the conditional cash transfer program under the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) from January to April this year.</p> <p>The BIR was requested to submit a per region report on its collection performance from 2016 to the first quarter of 2018 including the aggregate collections from the personal income tax.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
<p>Dangerous Drugs (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>Substitute Bill to HBs 289, 587, 1868, 3406, 3616, 3627, 3733 & 4151</p>	<p>Reps. Romero, Bataoil, Deputy Speaker Hernandez, Reps. Barbers, Acop, Pineda, Bagatsing, and Alejano</p>	<p>Amending RA 4200 or the law prohibiting and penalizing wiretapping and other related violations of the privacy of communication (authorizing wiretapping in cases involving violations of RA 9165, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002)</p>	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), will deliberate further on the Substitute Bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>The TWG focused its discussion on Section 3 of RA 4200 and came up with several amendments which include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All recordings of private communications made under court authorization shall, within 10 days (instead of 48 hours as originally proposed) after the expiration of the period fixed in the order, be deposited with the court in a sealed envelope or sealed package; • A fourth paragraph in Section 3 shall be added as follows: "Any recording authorized by written order of the Court shall not be admissible in evidence against any person who is a party to the communication, conversation, discussion, or spoken word which are overheard, intercepted, or recorded, if his/her identity is not specified in such written order as required in the second paragraph of this Section. The name and personal circumstances of such person, or any other information tending to establish his/her identity shall not be disclosed to the public". <p>The Public Attorney's Office (PAO) of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) will submit their recommendations to firm up some of the provisions of the bill.</p>

<p>Natural Resources jt. w/ Legislative Franchises (Technical Working Group)</p>	<p>Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 6259, 2165, 2915, 3229 & 5674</p>	<p>Speaker Alvarez, Reps. Amante, Paduano, Matugas, and Cuaresma</p>	<p>Requiring a legislative franchise for mining operations and providing incentives to minerals processing, amending RA 7942, otherwise known as the Philippine Mining Act of 1995</p>	<p>The joint technical working group (TWG), co-pressed by Rep. Francisco Jose “Bingo” Matugas II (1st District, Surigao del Norte), Vice Chair of the Committee on Natural Resources, and Rep. Rodante Marcoleta (Party-List, SAGIP), for the Committee on Legislative Franchises, will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>The TWG focused its discussion on the grant of incentives to mineral processing.</p> <p>Board of Investments (BOI) Director for Legal and Compliance Service Elyjean DC Portoza explained that under the BOI Investment Priorities Plan (IPP) for 2017-2019, mineral processing is not included in the list of Inclusive Business Models that may qualify for “pioneer status” which has an entitlement of up to five years of income tax holiday.</p> <p>However, Portoza said that there are special laws that mandate the inclusion of certain activities in the IPP for purposes of incentives, such as RA 7942 or the Mining Act of 1995 which provides for fiscal and non-fiscal incentives for mining contractors.</p> <p>Inclusive Business Models cover business activities of medium and large enterprises in the agribusiness and tourism sectors that provide business opportunities to micro and small enterprises as part of their value chains.</p> <p>Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) Legal Counsel Francis Brillantes said that PEZA grants income tax holiday to developers and locators registered with PEZA. These include the following: five percent special tax on gross income; exemption from all national and local taxes; duty and tax free in importing raw materials and capital equipment, machineries and spare parts; and zero-rated value-added tax (VAT) on local purchases subject to the compliance with the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and PEZA requirements.</p> <p>President of Marcventures Holdings, Inc. (MHI) and representative of the Philippine Nickel Association Isidro Alcantara Jr. supports the passage of a law granting incentives to mineral processing companies and granting additional incentives to such entities which generate their own power source.</p> <p>Rep. Matugas requested Alcantara to submit his proposed incentive program for mineral processing companies.</p> <p>Chamber of Mines Vice President Ronald Recidoro proposed that only mining operators using “green technology” be accorded incentives. This, he said, would be in compliance with existing environmental laws. He also suggested that coal importation be granted tax incentives, citing coal’s importance in the operation of power plants.</p>
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Continuation... Natural Resources jt. w/ Legislative Franchises (Technical Working Group)				<p>Department of Finance (DOF) Director Elsa Agustin manifested that providing additional incentives to mineral processing is not in accordance with the proposed Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law II that aims to reduce corporate income tax rates and modernize fiscal incentives to investors. The DOF submitted this second tax reform package to the House of Representatives last January.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bill as well as their recommendations and comments on the issues discussed in today's meeting.</p>
Transportation (Technical Working Group)	HB 279	Rep. Escudero	Prohibiting tricycles to ply along the national highways and providing penalties for violation thereof	The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento (1 st District, Samar), agreed to consolidate the five bills.
	HBs 1577 & 3623	Reps. Vargas and Espino	Establishing tricycle driver training and motorist awareness programs	Expressing support for the bills were resource persons from the Philippine National Police Highway Patrol Group (PNP-HPG), Land Transportation Office (LTO), Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), and the Motorcycle Development Program Participants Association, Inc (MDPPA).
	HB 2799	Rep. Vergara	Providing for a Magna Carta of Tricycle Drivers and Operators, institutionalizing mechanisms for its implementation	
	HB 7232	Rep. Tambunting	Prescribing uniform guidelines for the regulation and operation of tricycles in the country	The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bills for consideration by the TWG.

AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	Briefing on the issues relative to the Dengvaxia vaccine and the proposal to provide assistance to the Dengvaxia vaccinees	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), listened to the briefing conducted by the Department of Health (DOH) on the issues relative to the Dengvaxia vaccine and the proposal to provide assistance to students who received this anti-dengue vaccine, which was later found to have ill effects on the health of the vaccinees.</p> <p>Rep. Nograles informed the body of the referral to the Committee of HB 7449, which seeks to provide a supplemental appropriation of P1.16 billion for FY 2018 to provide the necessary health and medical assistance to the Dengvaxia vaccinees. The said amount represents the refund from the manufacturer, Sanofi Pasteur, for the unused Dengvaxia vaccines.</p> <p>HB 7449 is authored by Speaker Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez (1st District, Davao del Norte), Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas (1st District, Ilocos Norte), and Rep. Nograles.</p> <p>The Committee decided to hold this briefing first and to conduct its initial deliberation on the bill on May 22, to comply with the five-day lead time for sending notices of meeting to Committee Members before the initial deliberation of a bill, as required under the House Rules.</p> <p>Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Benjamin Diokno expressed full support for the bill, adding that funds are available for the purpose.</p> <p>Director Myrna Cabotaje of the DOH's Disease Prevention and</p>

<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>		<p>Control Bureau, stated that the proposed P1.16 billion supplemental budget shall be utilized for the following programs: medical assistance program for Dengvaxia patients; outpatient care package; deployment of nurses; active case finding and profiling of vaccinated children; and procurement and distribution of medical kits to Dengvaxia vaccinees.</p> <p>Rep. Nograles recommended to the DOH to scrap the purchase of medical kits, which merely contain a thermometer, two bottles of multivitamins and a mosquito repellent, and to instead channel the funds to the medical profiling of children vaccinated with Dengvaxia.</p> <p>Parents of children affected by the Dengvaxia vaccine, who were present during the meeting, agreed with the suggestion, claiming that more children injected with Dengvaxia are still unaccounted for by the DOH.</p> <p>In response, the DOH urged the immediate approval of the supplemental budget to allow the swift deployment of nurses who will be tasked to do the profiling, navigation and monitoring of the Dengvaxia vaccinees.</p> <p>The Committee advised the DOH to review its proposed Dengvaxia fund expenditure and submit a revised version.</p> <p>In another light, Public Attorney's Office (PAO) Chief Persida Rueda-Acosta said that her office has already initiated criminal and civil actions against Sanofi officers and other individuals.</p> <p>However, Acosta disclosed that DOH Secretary Francisco Duque refuses to provide her office with a master list of names of children who received the Dengvaxia vaccines without a court subpoena in line with the Data Privacy Act.</p>
<p>North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)</p>	<p>Briefing by the Department of Education (DepEd) on its budget, and plans and programs for North Luzon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region I 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (1st District, Ilocos Sur), listened to the briefing conducted by the DepEd regional directors on their accomplishments, and plans and programs for North Luzon.</p> <p>DepEd Region I Director Alma Ruby Torio discussed the current education situation in the region based on social, ecological and technological aspects, as well as some of the accomplishments of DepEd Region I for CY 2017.</p> <p>On the query raised by some Members of the Committee relative to the implementation of the Senior High School (SHS) Voucher Program of the DepEd, Torio explained that the program is intended for Grade 10 (Junior High School) graduates who wish to pursue SHS education in non-DepEd schools, such as private high schools, universities and colleges, and technical and vocational (tech-voc) schools.</p> <p>Furthermore, Torio clarified that the amount of the voucher depends on the location of the school where the student will enrol and the category of the school based on the guidelines issued by the DepEd. For Region I, Torio said the voucher subsidy is pegged at P17,500 per student.</p> <p>Rep. Christopher V.P. de Venecia (4th District, Pangasinan) asked how the School-based Feeding Program (SBFP) is being implemented by the DepEd in Region 1. Torio said the SBFP is administered to kindergarten to grade 3 pupils in public schools for a period of 120 school days to address undernutrition among them.</p> <p>Rep. De Venecia asked the DepEd to expand the scope of the SBFP to cover the entire duration of the school year.</p>

<p><i>Continuation...</i> North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)</p>		<p>Rep. Go said that the DepEd should encourage students to enrol in schools nearest their residence and not to flock to main campuses to avoid congestion.</p> <p>Eclar said that the problem lies in the perception that centrally-located schools are better than peripherally-located schools. Eclar claimed that these schools have the same curriculum, development programs, training for teachers, and facilities. Eclar added that the challenge lies in the school principals' ability to develop plans that will entice students to study in their schools.</p> <p>The resource persons were asked to submit the data and other reports requested by the Members of the Committee.</p>
<p>Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development</p>	<p>Report on the status of implementation of RA 9178 or the Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBEs) Act of 2002</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Peter "Sr. Pedro" Unabia (1st District, Misamis Oriental), listened to the report of concerned government agencies on the status of implementation of RA 9178 or the Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBEs) Act of 2002.</p> <p>Director Jerry Clavesillas of the Bureau of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (BMSMED) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) informed the Committee that the number of registered BMBEs has significantly increased to 28,531 from only 6,598 prior to 2013.</p> <p>Clavesillas attributes this increase to the passage of RA 10644 or the Go Negosyo Act. RA 10644 transferred the issuance of Certificate of Authority (CA) to BMBEs to the DTI through its Negosyo Centers nationwide. Prior to the enactment of RA 10644 in 2013, the CA was being issued by the city or municipal treasurer's office under the supervision of the Department of Finance (DOF) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).</p> <p>Based on RA 9178, the CA grants the authority to the BMBE to operate and be entitled to the benefits and privileges accorded by the law.</p> <p>Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Assistant Revenue District Officer Cynthia Lobo apprised the Committee of the requirements that a BMBE needs to comply in order to be registered. She also expressed the Bureau's concern on whether or not it is automatic for the BIR to grant income tax exemption to BMBEs if they are already issued the Certificate of Authority by the DTI.</p> <p>RA 9178 defines BMBE as "any business entity or enterprise engaged in the production, processing or manufacturing of products or commodities, including agro-processing, trading and services, whose total assets including those arising from loans but exclusive of the land on which the particular business entity's office, plant and equipment are situated, shall not be more than P3 million."</p> <p>Meanwhile, Belinda Castro of the Bureau of Local Government Development (BLGD) of the DILG proposed to adopt the policy of the city government of Makati which exempts "super" micro enterprises with capitalization of only P60,000 and below from applying for the usual permits to engage in business.</p>