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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Health	HRs 444 & 480, and a Privilege Speech	Reps. Tan (A.), Suansing (E.), and Leachon	Inquiry into the legality of the procurement process and use of public funds relative to the school-based dengue immunization program of the Department of Health (DOH) as well the efficacy and safety of the vaccine procured	<p>The Joint Committee, co-presided by Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur), Chair of the Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability, and Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan M.D. (4th District, Quezon), Chair of the Committee on Health, terminated its inquiry in connection with the three measures. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>During the meeting, several House Members including the authors of the three measures, Reps. Tan, Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), and Doy Leachon (1st District, Oriental Mindoro), grilled concerned government agencies on several issues related to the procurement of the dengue vaccine called Dengvaxia and the implementation of the dengue immunization program which targeted Grade 4 students in pilot areas.</p> <p>Among the questions thrown at the resource persons present in the meeting were about the seemingly all too hasty approval of the procurement of the dengue vaccine, the huge amount involved for a pilot implementation, the priority given to the dengue immunization program over other immunization programs of the government, and the efficacy and safety of the vaccine.</p> <p>Denying that the procurement of dengue vaccines was given priority over other vaccines included in the list submitted by the Department of Health (DOH) to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for funding, former Health Secretary Janette Garin explained that only those programs that have complied with all the requirements were allocated a budget by the DBM. Besides, Garin stressed that no such list exists.</p> <p>DBM Assistant Director Jane Abella likewise said that she is not aware that there is such a list. She also mentioned that the DBM received a memorandum from the DOH justifying the purchase of the dengue vaccine.</p> <p>Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Director General Nela Charade Puno explained the quick</p>

<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Health</p>				<p>issuance of the Certificate of Product Registration (CPR) to Zuellig Pharmaceutical Company, distributor of the dengue vaccine in the country. Puno said that while the average processing time for CPRs is about 254 days, the FDA had to act swiftly in the case of the dengue vaccine due to the urgency of the requirement at that time when the disease was already declared an epidemic. Puno added that the FDA allowed the staggered submission of documents while the processing of the application for CPR for the dengue vaccine was underway.</p> <p>As to the status of implementation of the dengue immunization program, DOH Disease Prevention and Control Bureau OIC-Director Ma. Joyce Ducusin said that the program is ready for its third and final stage. Ducusin reported that of the one million pupils targeted under the program, about 493,000 were already given the first dose while about 416,000 pupils were given the second dose. Region VII was also included in the program coverage, aside from the initial pilot areas: National Capital Region, Calabarzon, and Central Luzon.</p> <p>Dr. May Montillano of the Pediatric Infectious Disease Society of the Philippines (PIDSP) emphasized that the pupils have to be given three doses of the vaccine to obtain its optimum efficacy.</p> <p>Asked on the role of the Formulary Executive Council (FEC) in the government's procurement of medicines, FEC member Dr. Cleotilde How said that FEC acts as a recommendatory body to the DOH on the kind of drugs or medicines to purchase and to include in the Philippine National Drug Formulary, based on Executive Order No. 49, issued in 1993.</p> <p>Meanwhile, SAGIP Party-List Rep. Rodante Marcoleta sought clarification on the two resolutions issued by two different groups convened by the DOH. Ducusin replied that the first resolution, submitted by a group of doctors, recommends the completion of the dengue vaccination of those who have been given the initial dose, and that no new beneficiary will be added and no program expansion will be implemented. On the other hand, the second resolution, submitted by experts in the field of pediatric infectious diseases, recommends that the program be expanded to Region VII where dengue was also prevalent.</p> <p>DOH Undersecretary Mario Villaverde said that Secretary Paulyn Jean Rosell-Ubial already asked the DOH Integrity Management Committee to look into the alleged irregularities in the procurement of dengue vaccines and review the documents, especially those that have been presented and discussed in Congress, and come up with a report on the matter. He promised to provide the Joint Committee with a copy of the report as soon as completed.</p>
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Labor and Employment	Substitute Bill to HBs 269 & 500	Reps. Roman and Nograles (K.A.)	Instituting policies for the protection and welfare of caregivers in the practice of their profession	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Randolph Ting (3rd District, Cagayan), approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 269 and 500 with amendments and also approved the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan), author of HB 269 and chair of the technical working group (TWG) that thoroughly discussed the bill, presented the output of the TWG.</p>
	HBs 55, 76, 170, 341, 556, 563, 709, 712, 895, 916, 1045, 1208, 1351, 1563, 1837, 1857, 1910, 2389, 3556, 3769, 3802, 4443, 4444, 5130 & 5264	Reps. Bag-ao, Aglipay-Villar, Nograles (K.A.), Villarin, Casilao, Castelo, Angara-Castillo, Tan (A.), Roque (H.), De Jesus, Zarate, Bertiz, Herrera-Dy, Aragones, Villarica, Paduano, Go (M.), Yap (A.), Zubiri, Nieto, Mendoza, Tugna, and Bravo (A.)	Strengthening the security of tenure of workers in the private sector	<p>The Committee decided to create a TWG to consolidate the 25 bills.</p> <p>Rep. Ting mentioned that the Committee conducted five public hearings in certain parts of the country to hear the views and comments of private sector employees.</p> <p>Majority of the Members present in the meeting pushed for the passage of the proposed law.</p> <p>Representatives from various labor groups expressed the need to prohibit all forms of contractualization. Most of them proposed the repeal of Articles 106 to 109 of the Labor Code which legalize contractualization.</p> <p>Luis Corral, vice president of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), was requested to submit to the Committee a copy of the draft executive order that will prohibit contractualization which was crafted by the Associated Labor Unions (ALU) - TUCP together with several labor groups and submitted to President Rodrigo Duterte.</p>
Muslim Affairs	Substitute Bill to HB 2953	Rep. Papandayan	Requiring hospitals, medical clinics, and other facilities for deceased bodies to release the cadaver in their possession within 24 hours from time of death to the family or relatives, amending for the purpose RA 9439 or the law prohibiting the detention of patients in hospital and medical clinic on grounds of nonpayment of hospital bills or medical expenses	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Mauyag "Jun" Papandayan Jr. (2nd District, Lanao del Sur), approved the Substitute Bill to HB 2953.
	HB 5740	Rep. Dimaporo (M.K.)	Establishing a field office of the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) to be located in the Municipality of Tubod, Lanao del Norte and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved HB 5740.
	HB 4784	Rep. Dimaporo (M.K.)	Strengthening the NCMF, amending certain sections of RA 9997, otherwise known as the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos Act of 2009	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 4784 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte), author of HB 4784, explained the merits of his bill. The bill seeks to strengthen the NCMF to be able to afford full protection to Filipino Muslims against exploitation and human trafficking as they attend the annual Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Hajj program is a primary undertaking of the NCMF.</p>

Continuation... Muslim Affairs				<p>NCMF Director for Administrative Service Abdullah Macarimpas expressed his full support to HB 4784.</p> <p>The NCMF and the Department of Justice (DOJ) were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bill.</p> <p>For its next meeting, the Committee will invite representatives from the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) to comment on the proposed law.</p>
Natural Resources	Substitute Bill to HB 678	Rep. Eriguel	Fixing the limits of forest lands within five kilometers from either side of the Aspiras Highway (formerly known as Marcos Highway) from Agoo, La Union to Baguio City, repealing for the purpose Proclamation No. 1754	The Committee, chaired by LPGMA Party-List Rep. Arnel Ty, approved the Substitute Bill to HB 678 with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 143 & 3486	Reps. Acosta-Alba and Escudero	Providing for the delineation of specific forest limits of the public domain	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 143 and 3486 with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 133 & 177	Reps. Batocabe and Ramirez-Sato	Ensuring the preservation and management of protected areas, amending for the purpose RA 7586, otherwise known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 133 and 177 with amendments.
	HB 2165	Rep. Amante	Providing for the mandatory domestic processing of all mineral ores, amending for the purpose RA 7942, otherwise known as the Philippine Mining Act of 1995	<p>The Committee decided to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the three bills.</p> <p>Rep. Francisco Jose "Bingo" Matugas II (1st District, Surigao del Norte), author of HB 3229, believes that putting up a processing plant in the country is viable. He cited Somitomo Metal Mining Company Ltd.'s (SMM) mineral processing plant established in 2009 in his district with an investment of \$2 billion and creating 300,000 direct and indirect employment.</p>
	HB 2915	Rep. Paduano	Promoting the development of minerals processing and in the process banning the export of iron, nickel, chromite, manganese, black sand and other strategic metallic ores	<p>Mines and Geo-Sciences Bureau (MGB) Director Wilfredo Moncano recommended that the proposed banning of the exportation of unprocessed mineral ores should not be implemented all at once but rather should be done by phase until the country is capable of processing these raw materials domestically.</p> <p>Likewise, Chamber of Mines Vice President Ronald Recidoro said it is hard to convince prospective investors to put up processing plants if there is no assurance of continuous supply of minerals. Currently, Recidoro said there is a shortage of iron and nickel in the country because no mining permit for these minerals was issued in the last six years. Another problem is the high cost of electricity, he added.</p>
	HB 3229	Rep. Matugas	Promoting the development of minerals processing and in the process banning the export of unprocessed mineral ores	<p>University of the Philippines (UP) College of Economics Professor Cielo Magno also believes that there are several constraints in putting up processing plants, one of which is the huge investment involved.</p>

Continuation... Natural Resources				<p>Steel Asia Vice President Rafael Hidalgo said that since the country has a lot of scrap steel it is beneficial for the country to put up a recycling plant which his company intends to do in the next five years.</p> <p>The Board of Investments (BOI) was requested to submit to the Committee a road map for the iron and steel industry.</p>
	HB 4116	Rep. Rocamora	Providing for the creation of the Philippine extractive industries transparency initiative (EITI)	The Committee decided to create a TWG, to be chaired by Party-List Rep. Joseph Stephen Paduano, to study the bill further.
Ways and Means	Substitute Bill to HBs 5560, 225, 1975 & 5120	Reps. Tan (A.), Roque (H.), Santos-Recto, and Salo	Providing for a universal health coverage for Filipinos and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, approved with amendments the tax provision of the substitute bill.

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Ways and Means	Briefing by the Bureau of Customs (BOC) on the smuggling of high grade "Shabu" allegedly through the express lane of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) which was consequently seized by the Bureau's agents together with the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Dakila Carlo Cua, listened to the briefing of the BOC on the circumstances surrounding the smuggling of P6.4 billion worth of shabu by EMT Trading.</p> <p>The more than 600 kilos of smuggled shabu was seized by the BOC together with NBI agents in a warehouse in Valenzuela City last May 26. An intelligence report provided by the Chinese customs authority prompted the operation.</p> <p>BOC Commissioner Nicanor Faeldon reported that based on initial investigation, the Bureau's Risk Management Office (RMO) failed to input in its system key information – EMT being a new importer and a sole proprietor – that could have required the shipment to pass through the "red lane" for physical inspection or x-ray examination. Without such information, Faeldon said the BOC's system routed this particular shipment to the "green lane" allowing the immediate release of the shipment.</p> <p>Faeldon disclosed that RMO Chief Larriber Hilario as well as the importer's accreditation of EMT Trading and the customs broker's accreditation issued to a certain Teejay Marcellana have been suspended in connection with this smuggling case.</p> <p>Meanwhile, BOC Deputy Commissioner Gerardo Gambala apprised the Committee of the Bureau's operational procedures in classifying shipments for customs inspection for the purpose of collecting customs duties and detecting contrabands.</p> <p>According to Gambala, the BOC's "selectivity system" is a fully automated process of classifying shipments that will pass through either of the three processing channels: red lane, which involves physical or x-ray examination of shipments; yellow lane, which only involves documentary checking; and green lane, which involves immediate release of shipments. This system is being handled by the RMO, an office under the Intelligence Group of the BOC.</p> <p>Rep. Cua noted that BOC's presentation of the issue is "utterly</p>

<p>Continuation... Ways and Means</p>		<p>inadequate" to conclude that there was no negligence on the part of the BOC as a whole. Hence, the Committee agreed to conduct a full-blown inquiry into the issue.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Romero "Miro" Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City) commented that had it not been for the intelligence report shared by the Chinese customs authority, the huge drug shipment could not have been apprehended and seized to the detriment of the Filipino people.</p> <p>Aside from Hilario and Marcellana, the following will also be invited in the Committee's next meeting to shed light on the issue: Fidel Anoché Dee, consignee-on-record of the illegal shipment; and representatives from the Department of Finance (DOF) and the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).</p> <p>The BOC was requested to submit the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete list/description of the 648 separate shipments made by the EMT Trading since it started operation in March 2017; • Records relative to the shabu shipment, including the names of BOC employees involved in the processing of the transaction; • List of companies or importers which were granted "green lane" and "super green" privileges by the BOC for the past six years; and • List of accredited customs brokers and importers.
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OTHER MATTERS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>Accomplishment Report of the Committee during the First Regular Session of the 17th Congress</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, reported on the Committee's accomplishments during the First Regular Session of the 17th Congress.</p> <p>Rep. Sarmiento delivered what he referred to as his State of the Committee Address in order to inform the public of what the Committee has done in the past regular session and to recommend actions that can help its partner agencies achieve the much needed reforms in the transportation sector.</p> <p>Among the legislative accomplishments of the Committee in the past regular session were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated the approval by the House of Representatives of the bill extending the validity period of driver's license from 3-5 years to 5-10 years, which was already approved by the Senate and is now with the Office of the President; • Facilitated the adoption of HR 40 (originally HR 779) which expresses the full support of the House of Representatives to the Westminster Declaration, a formal agreement adopted by the Global Forum for Road Safety Legislators to pass comprehensive road safety laws; • Reported out the proposed Traffic Crisis Act of 2017 and the bill increasing the penalty for violations of the Anti-Drunk and Drugged Driving Act, which are up for plenary deliberations; • Conducted the first-ever House inspection of the eastern and western nautical highway and of the North and Central Luzon road network led by Speaker Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez (1st District, Davao del

<p>Continuation... Transportation</p>		<p>Norte) and Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas (1st District, Ilocos Norte); and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observed/studied the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System in Guangzhou, China. <p>Moving forward, Rep. Sarmiento urged the officials of the transport agencies to ride the public transport at least once a week to give them a better idea of the realities that Filipino commuters are confronted with on a daily basis. This, according to Rep. Sarmiento, will help them plan and craft effective transport programs and projects. He also urged them to focus on easily-implementable solutions to traffic congestion and problems on transport safety and convenience.</p> <p>The Committee plans to request the House leadership for a special budget to hire railway, aviation and maritime engineers and consultants to validate all reports on program implementation from the transport agencies. It will also push for the passage of the following priority measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendment of the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) Law; • Philippine Airport Development Corporation Bill; • Establishment of the National Transport Safety Board; • Sustainable Transport Act; and • Harbor Pilotage Act. <p>Department of Transportation (DOTr) Secretary Arthur Tugade admitted that the Department still requires more time to study, understand and address the country's traffic problems. He also promised to submit the DOTr's plans and accomplishments on easily-implementable solutions to the traffic problems.</p> <p>Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chairman Danilo Lim underscored the need to improve the Pasig River Ferry System, which has been operating intermittently due to the large amount of water lilies in the river, making it difficult to navigate the river. He added that there should be a discussion on whether or not it should be privatized.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn Garcia (3rd District, Cebu) said that certain schools and establishments should be invited in another meeting of the Committee to specifically discuss Lim's comment that these establishments without parking areas contribute to the traffic congestion in the metropolis.</p>
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