

Committee Daily Bulletin

17th Congress
Second Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. II No. 20
August 30, 2017

PRE-PLenary CONFERENCES ON THE FY 2018 BUDGET

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	<p>Pre-plenary conferences on the proposed FY 2018 budget, and plans and programs of the following government agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education (DepEd) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), held pre-plenary conferences with the Department of Education (DepEd), Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), National Library of the Philippines (NLP), National Archives of the Philippines (NAP), Commission on the Filipino Language (CFL), Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), and the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) to thresh out issues and concerns raised by House Members relative to their proposed FY 2018 budget prior to the deliberations on their budget in the plenary.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Maria Carmen Zamora (1st District, Compostela Valley) presided over the pre-plenary conference on the FY 2018 budget of the DepEd.</p> <p>Several House Members inquired how the Department will be able to fully implement its school building projects this year when the deadline for modifications of projects has already lapsed on June 30, 2017 pursuant to National Budget Circular (NBC) 567 issued by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).</p> <p>Education Secretary Leonor Briones explained that the deadline referred to in the Circular pertains to the modification of the program of work and the date when funds for 2017 shall have already been obligated. Briones assured the Members of the Committee that the extension of this deadline has been discussed with the Secretaries of the DBM and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Antonio Tinio (Party-List, ACT TEACHERS) when the performance-based bonus (PBB) for teachers will be released, DepEd Undersecretary Jess Mateo said that it will be within the year. Mateo explained that a new set of guidelines in the grant of PBB has been issued by the DepEd whereby factors that were not directly related to the teachers' performance were removed.</p> <p>Rep. Tinio also raised the need to hire additional guidance counselors. Briones agreed with Rep. Tinio, but she pointed out the difficulty of recruiting people for the job since the position requires somebody who has a master's degree and is a board passer. Briones suggested to Congress to revisit the law which provides for the qualification standards for the position. Rep. Tinio committed to work with DepEd on the matter.</p> <p>With regard to the new school building design prescribed by the DepEd, Briones said that the Department has considered several factors such the building's resiliency to climate change, the electrical load requirement, and the standard facilities the building should have.</p> <p>On the suggestion of Baguio City Rep. Mark Go that the use of public</p>

<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) • National Library of the Philippines (NLP) • National Archives of the Philippines (NAP) • Commission on the Filipino Language (CFL) or <i>Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino</i> (KWF) 	<p>mapping. Cultural mapping is the process of identifying natural and cultural heritage resources of a specific locality for the purpose of conservation and development. (<i>Source: NCCA</i>)</p> <p>The NCCA was requested to submit to the Committee a breakdown of funds allocated for its 2018 programs.</p> <p>NHCP Chair Rene Escalante said that under the FY 2018 NEP, the NHCP is set to receive P460.07 million, which is 33% lower than its 2017 budget of P691.04 million.</p> <p>Escalante explained that the decrease in the budget of the NHCP is due to the completion of the rehabilitation projects for the Provinces of Bohol and Cebu which were severely affected by a strong earthquake in 2013, thus received no more funding.</p> <p>For 2018, Escalante said that the NHCP will continue to pursue projects for the conservation of buildings, museums, churches, national monuments, and shrines which have significant historical and cultural value.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Zamora how the NHCP prioritizes its projects, Escalante explained that it selects the town or province which has the least financial resources to fund cultural projects.</p> <p>NLP Director Ceasar Gilbert Adriano said that under the FY 2018 NEP, the NLP will get P336.25 million. By expense class, the proposed budget is allocated to personnel services (PS), P68.75 million; maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE), P96.95 million; and capital outlay (CO), P170.55 million.</p> <p>The 2018 budget of the NLP shall be utilized for the national library program, library extension program, structural retrofitting of the NLP building, and acquisition of a new service vehicle.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. De Venecia how the funds for promotional, educational and cultural activities of the NLP are being utilized, NLP Budget Officer Marvin Vanguardia said that the NLP provides online services and coordinates with local communities and libraries for the development of a reading culture.</p> <p>The NLP was requested to submit to the Committee a breakdown of programs included in the 2018 budget and a list of NLP's affiliated public libraries.</p> <p>NAP Executive Director Victorino Mapa Manalo said that the NAP budget amounting to P437.95 million is 234% higher than this year's P131.19 million budget.</p> <p>Manalo explained that the huge increase in the budget of NAP is attributed to the increase in the budget for CO, specifically for the acquisition and refurbishment of lot and building for NAP's headquarters.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. De Venecia, Manalo said that the NAP takes care not only of government records but also private collections declared by NAP or recommended by the NHCP as national treasures. Manalo emphasized that NAP, being in charge of archival, administration, and records management of all branches of the government, does not allow the disposal of government records without its permission.</p> <p>KWF Director General Roberto Añonuevo said that under the FY 2018 NEP, the Commission will get P83.18 million. By expense class, the proposed budget is allocated to PS, P50.18 million; MOOE, P27.51 million; and CO, P8.5 million.</p>
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<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) 	<p>On the query of Rep. De Venecia, Añonuevo explained that the budget earmarked for policy advisory in Filipino and other Philippine languages is intended specifically for the making of lexicography (dictionary) of the country's different native languages especially those that are slowly dying or on the verge of being endangered.</p> <p>Both the NCCA Chair and the KWF Director General said that KWF promotes, through a system of incentives, grants and awards, the writing and publication in Filipino and other Philippine languages of original literary works.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Alfredo Vargas III (5th District, Quezon City) presided over the pre-plenary conference on the proposed budget of the MMDA and PRRC.</p> <p>Under the 2018 NEP, the MMDA is set to receive P3.56 billion, which is a huge 63.18% increase from its current year's budget of P2.18 billion.</p> <p>Rep. France Castro (Party-List, ACT TEACHERS) sought for a permanent solution to the obstruction of roads especially along side streets, which contributes to the worsening traffic in Metro Manila.</p> <p>Jose Arturo Garcia, officer-in-charge of MMDA's Office of the Assistant General Manager for Planning, said that the MMDA formed a new group that will clear all major roads of all forms of obstruction including illegally parked vehicles. However, the clearing of inner or side streets is the responsibility of local government units (LGUs). Garcia assured the Committee that MMDA will closely coordinate with concerned LGUs for the removal of illegally parked vehicles and other road obstructions.</p> <p>Rep. Vincent "Bingbong" Crisologo (1st District, Quezon City) suggested that an odd-even traffic scheme be implemented on EDSA to help reduce the number of private cars on the road by at least 50 percent. MMDA Chair Danilo Lim said that the proposal of Rep. Crisologo will be considered in the next Metro Manila Council (MMC) meeting.</p> <p>The Committee supports an increase in the budget of the MMDA for earthquake preparedness in line with scientists' warning that a "Big One" or an earthquake with at least a 7.2 magnitude caused by the movement of the West Valley Fault may occur any time, severely affecting Metro Manila and nearby provinces. However, the Committee asked the MMDA to submit an official request for an additional budget for this purpose.</p> <p>On the suggestion of Malabon Rep. Federico "Ricky" Sandoval II, the Committee also agreed to support an increase in the budget of MMDA for the purchase of drones for traffic management.</p> <p>With no issues raised pertaining to the budget of PRRC, the Committee proceeded to just request the agency to submit a formal request for an increase in its budget. The Committee agreed to support PRRC's request.</p>
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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Good Government and Public Accountability	HR 654	Rep. Gonzales (A.D.)	Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the sale of <i>Paskuhan</i> Village in Pampanga by the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) to SM	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2 nd District, Surigao del Sur), terminated its inquiry relative to HR 654.

<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability</p>			<p>Development Corporation (SMDC) reportedly under the former's Asset Privatization Program</p>	<p>Rep. Aurelio "Dong" Gonzales, Jr. (3rd District, Pampanga), author of HR 654, emphasized that Section 54 of RA 9593 or the Tourism Act of 2009 was not complied with prior to the sale of the <i>Paskuhan</i> Village. [Section 54 of RA 9593 provides that concerned local government units (LGUs) interested to manage and operate the assets of TIEZA shall have the right of first refusal before these assets are sold or leased.]</p> <p>Majority of the Members of the Committee were convinced that the contract between TIEZA and SMDC for the sale of the <i>Paskuhan</i> Village may be considered a "rescissible contract," meaning it can be revoked or nullified since it is not compliant with the law and with the guidelines set by the Commission on Audit (COA).</p> <p>COA Supervising Auditor Teresita Guevarra reported the findings of the COA on the sale of the <i>Paskuhan</i> Village, as follows :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TIEZA resorted to negotiation without adhering to COA Circular Nos. 89-296 and 2009-001 on the audit guidelines for the disposition of government assets, particularly on the requirement of public bidding; • There was improper charging of expenses against the proceeds from the sale; and • Proceeds from the sale were not remitted to the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB). <p>The COA was requested to furnish the Committee with a copy of its audit report.</p> <p>The Committee sought the opinion of the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) on the issue, including the need to nullify and rescind the contract between TIEZA and SMDC for the purpose of reacquiring the said property for the benefit and use of Pampanga, especially the City of San Fernando.</p> <p>Assistant Solicitor General Marissa Guillen opined that the said contract may be considered null and void.</p> <p>On the other hand, DOJ State Counsel Shaira Mangoba requested that she be allowed to discuss the DOJ's opinion in an executive session, but she promised to submit DOJ's official reply within the day.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Mark Lapid, who was the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of TIEZA when the sale of <i>Paskuhan</i> Village was made, explained that the sale of the property was approved by the TPB believing that it is no longer advantageous for the government to sustain its operation.</p>
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Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability				Lapid claimed that the Paskuhan Village is not in the list of properties or structures considered as cultural treasures and heritage sites.
Government Reorganization jt. w/ National Defense and Security	HB 108	Rep. Alejano	Establishing the Emergency Management Agency (EMA), amending for the purpose RA 10121 or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction Management Act of 2010	<p>The Committee, co-chaired by KABAYAN Party-List Rep. Ron Salo, member of the Committee on Government Reorganization, and Rep. Leopoldo Bataoil (2nd District, Pangasinan), Vice Chair of the Committee on National Defense and Security, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the measures.</p> <p>Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay), author of HBs 1648 and 6075, will chair the TWG.</p> <p>The authors present gave their respective sponsorship speeches highlighting the need to create a central agency with the sole purpose of instituting measures to prepare for and respond effectively to disasters.</p> <p>Assistant Secretary Kristoffer James Purisima of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) expressed support for the proposed law, adding that the OCD is also in the process of drafting its version of the bill. The OCD will submit the draft once it has been finalized.</p> <p>Also in support of the bills were representatives from the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), and Civil Service Commission (CSC).</p> <p>Civil society organizations (CSOs) such as the Disaster Risk Reduction Network (DRRNet), Center for Disaster Preparedness (CDP), and the World Vision Philippines likewise expressed support for the bills.</p> <p>They manifested that the passage of the proposed law would provide a comprehensive, integrated and holistic approach to disaster response and management.</p>
	HBs 344, 3093, 4203, 4648 & 6075	Reps. Romualdez, Castelo, Herrera-Dy, Leachon, and Salceda	Creating the Department of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management, defining its mandate, powers, and functions, and appropriating funds therefor	
	HBs 596 & 1648	Reps. Pichay and Salceda	Establishing the Philippine Emergency and Disaster Management Authority and providing funds therefor	
	HB 2638	Rep. Gatchalian	Instituting a National Disaster Rehabilitation Program and establishing the Philippine Disaster Rehabilitation Commission	
	HB 138	Rep. Noel	Providing for emergency warehouses in areas devastated by calamities to provide affected consumers access to basic necessities or prime commodities at discounted and tax-free prices	
	HB 805	Rep. Batocabe	Mandating all schools and universities to establish an area-specific disaster risk management and education program in their respective jurisdictions, amending for the purpose RA 10121	
	HBs 397 & 2661	Reps. Belmonte (J.C.) and Angara-Castillo	Strengthening the Disaster Risk Reduction-Climate Change Adaptation Linkages, amending RA 10121	
	HB 1132	Rep. Alejano	Granting disaster service volunteers a paid leave during period of disasters	
	HBs 1149 & 1379	Reps. Alejano and Vargas	Including responsive, empowered and service-centered youth in the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council in all levels, amending for the purpose RA 10121	
	HBs 1374, 1763, 1812, 2146 & 2608	Rep. Tan (A.), Zarate, Vargas, Pineda, and Santos-Recto	Providing for the establishment of evacuation centers in provinces/cities/municipalities or other strategic areas throughout the country during times of calamity or disaster	
	HB 1485	Rep. Abayon	Requiring local government units (LGUs) to prepare their disaster preparedness plans using up-to-date industry standards as the best technology available	
HBs 2555 & 3083	Rep. Castelo	Expanding the Philippine DRRM system thereby institutionalizing a comprehensive recovery and reconstruction plan through		

Continuation... Government Reorganization jt. w/ National Defense and Security			a whole-of-society approach with the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS), through the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), as lead agency	
	HBs 2804 & 5593	Reps. Castelo and Vargas	Mandating the conduct of fire, earthquake and other hazardous phenomena drills in educational establishments, school buses, workplaces and healthcare institutions	
	HBs 3094 & 3889	Reps. Castelo and Escudero	Institutionalizing a system of effective fund administration of cash donations or humanitarian aid from local or foreign donors and sponsors during natural or man-made disasters, crises, tragedies, or emergencies	
	HB 3509	Rep. Ortega	Providing for alternative source of livelihood for small-scale fishermen and subsistence fisherfolks in coastal communities in the Philippines by deputizing them as auxiliary response team in natural and man-made calamities and disasters	
	HB 4521	Rep. Yu	Establishing the Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards (NOAH) center to strengthen disaster prevention and mitigation program and appropriating funds therefor	
	HBs 454, 2784 & 2854	Reps. Gomez and Rodriguez (I.)	Establishing disaster and emergency centers in certain areas in Leyte and in the 2 nd District of Rizal, appropriating funds therefor	
	HR 439	Rep. Castelo	Directing the NDRRMC, PAGASA and PHIVOLCS to submit to the House of Representatives a joint comprehensive report on the nation's preparedness for natural calamities before and after their occurrences with the end in view of formulating an efficient and systematic national scheme of reducing risks to lives and properties	
	HR 721	Rep. Alejano	Inquiry into the strategy of the national government in preparing the whole citizenry to respond to national emergencies	
Public Order and Safety	Substitute Resolution of Both Houses (RBH) to RBH 4	Rep. Alejano	Proposing to immediately convene the Joint Oversight Committee on the Human Security Act of 2007 in order to review and assess the implementation of RA 9372 to effectively provide better security and protection for our people from acts of terrorism	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), adopted the substitute version of RBH 4, and approved the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>MAGDALO Party-List Rep. Gary Alejano, author of RBH 4, said that his resolution aims to review the implementation and assess the effectiveness of RA 9372 in preventing acts of terrorism, thus the need to convene the Joint Oversight Committee on the Human Security Act of 2007 which has this mandate.</p> <p>Florentino Manalastas Jr., head of the Legal</p>

Continuation... Public Order and Safety				<p>and International Affairs Office of the Anti-Terrorism Council-Program Management Center (ATC-PMC), Office of the President (OP), disclosed that since the law's enactment in 2007, there were only two recorded cases of violation of RA 9372. Both cases were successfully prosecuted and the accused were convicted.</p> <p>When asked why only two cases were filed despite a number of terroristic acts perpetrated in the country, Manalastas explained that law enforcers opted to use the Revised Penal Code in filing a case against terrorists to avoid the penalty of P500,000 for every day that a person who is accused of terrorism and has been detained or deprived of liberty or arrested without a warrant as a result of such an accusation but was eventually acquitted. Manalastas added that it takes a while to charge a person or a group with terrorism due to the difficulty of gathering evidences and getting witnesses.</p> <p>Manalastas said that the ATC will be able to finalize its proposed amendments to RA 9372 by the first week of September. He also mentioned that the ATC came up with the National Action Plan on Countering Violent Extremism, a strategic plan which incorporates and harmonizes all plans and strategies of government offices against terror attacks.</p> <p>The Committee requested ATC to submit a copy of these documents for reference by the Committee.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Special Committee on Food Security (Technical Working Group)	HBs 2496 & 5746	Reps. Estrella and Calixto-Rubiano	Providing for a system of redistributing and recycling food surplus to promote food security	The technical working group (TWG), presided by Rep. Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba (1 st District, Bukidnon), will deliberate further on the four bills in its next meeting.
	HB 4263	Rep. Escudero	Banning supermarkets, food establishments and other similar businesses from throwing away and spoiling unsold food	Rep. Evelina Escudero (1 st District, Sorsogon), author of HB 4263, said that the bills seek to compel food establishments and supermarkets to donate their unsold food, which are still edible and good for consumption, to various institutions in need of such. She explained that while there is already RA 9803 or the Food Donation Act of 2009, this law only encourages the donation of food for charitable purposes, unlike the four bills which compel the donation of food.
	HB 4675	Rep. Nieto	Mandating the donation of all surplus or left over but still edible foods to charitable institutions and foundations by all restaurants, hotels, supermarkets, fast food chains, and other similar food establishments and providing penalties for violation thereof	ABONO Party-List Rep. Conrado Estrella III, author of HB 2496, underscored the need to identify first the agency that will be in-charge of ensuring that the food to be donated is still

Continuation... Special Committee on Food Security (Technical Working Group)				<p>edible and safe to eat. He mentioned that food establishments are afraid that they might be sued if the food they will donate will cause health problems to the recipients.</p> <p>Luz Tagunicar, Supervising Health Program Officer at the Department of Health (DOH), explained that under RA 9803, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is tasked to ensure the safety of foods that will be donated.</p> <p>With regard to ensuring the safety of food being sold in restaurants, Tagunicar said that it is the responsibility of the sanitary inspection department of local government units (LGUs).</p> <p>Rep. Escudero prefers that the food establishments themselves be the ones responsible in ensuring that the food to be donated is still safe for consumption.</p> <p>Representatives from the Departments of Trade and Industry (DTI), Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and Agriculture (DA), National Nutrition Council (NNC), Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), manifested their support for the bills.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to invite experts from the University of the Philippines (UP) public health office, food technologists, and hotel owners to attend the next TWG meeting.</p>
People's Participation (Technical Working Group)	Substitute Resolution to HRs 780 & 799	Reps. Batocabe and Mangaoang	Inquiry into the status of implementation of RA 9418 or the Volunteer Act of 2007 and on various volunteering efforts undertaken by concerned national government agencies (NGAs), local government units (LGUs), and other stakeholders towards national development	The technical working group (TWG), chaired by San Jose del Monte City Rep. Florida "Rida" Robes, terminated its inquiry into the status of implementation of the Volunteer Act of 2007. The TWG will report its findings to the mother Committee in the latter's next meeting.

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Mindanao Affairs	<p>Briefing by the following government agencies on their proposed 2018 budget and plans and programs for Mindanao:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Maximo Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City), listened to the briefing conducted by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Road Board of the Philippines (RBP), and the Department of Health (DOH) on their 2018 budget and plans and programs for Mindanao.</p> <p>DSWD Undersecretary Mae Fe Ancheta-Templa said that of the proposed budget of P137.67 billion for 2018, P48.74 billion or 35.44% goes to the following DSWD regional offices in Mindanao:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region IX – P10.04 billion; • Region X – P8.12 billion; • Region XI – P8.54 billion; • Region XII – 7.45 billion; • CARAGA – P5.89 billion; and • ARMM – 8.7 billion. <p>Templa also discussed its plans and programs for each of the six regions comprising Mindanao.</p>

