

Committee Daily Bulletin

17th Congress
Second Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. II No. 22
September 04, 2017

PUBLIC HEARING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Housing and Urban Development	HR 599	Rep. Evardone	Inquiry into the perceived snail-paced implementation of housing relocation and resettlement projects for those affected by Typhoon Yolanda and for those living in dangerous zones, and to recommend appropriate legislation	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Alfredo "Albee" Benitez (3rd District, Negros Occidental), held a public hearing in Tacloban City on September 1, 2017 in relation to HR 599.</p> <p>Rep. Benitez said that it is within the mandate of Congress to look into the status of the P7.5 billion funding for the resettlement of victims of Super Typhoon Yolanda which hit the country last November 8, 2013.</p> <p>Citing the report of the National Housing Authority (NHA) as of February 2017, Rep. Benitez said that out of the projected 205,128 housing units under the government's resettlement program for the victims of Typhoon Yolanda, only 48,950 units were actually constructed, with only 13,997 units being occupied.</p> <p>Rep. Benitez also shared the information he got from a subcontractor of the resettlement project, named Camilo Salazar, that substandard construction materials are being used in constructing houses in the resettlement area in Balangiga, Eastern Samar. Aside from this issue, however, Salazar should not have been allowed to participate as subcontractor because he was not included in the list of subcontractors approved by the NHA to undertake the project. Rep. Benitez asked the NHA to conduct a probe on these alleged irregularities.</p> <p>Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone, author of HR 599, and Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso (3rd District, Leyte) said that personalities involved in these anomalous transactions should face criminal and civil liabilities.</p> <p>Other House Members who attended the public hearing were Rep. Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (1st District, Ilocos Sur) and Party-List Reps. Tom Villarin (AKBAYAN), Arlene Brosas (GABRIELA), and Gary Alejano (MAGDALO).</p> <p>A day before the actual public hearing, or on August 31, the Committee conducted an ocular inspection of the NHA housing sites and held dialogues with Yolanda-affected families from 11 towns in Eastern Samar. The Committee agreed to set another meeting on the status of the housing program for Yolanda victims.</p>

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Higher and Technical Education (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 6286, 898, 2166, 2951, 3472, 3586, 5990, & 6213	Reps. Hofer, Tan (A.), Santos-Recto, Herrera-Dy, Macapagal-Arroyo, Vargas, and Nieto	Establishing a medical scholarship program for qualified students in state universities and colleges	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Manuel Jose "Mannix" Dalipe (2nd District, Zamboanga City), will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4th District, Quezon), author of HB 898, suggested amending the title of the substitute bill to reflect the mandatory "return service" required from the beneficiaries of the medical scholarship program. She explained that medical scholars, after passing the medical licensure exam, shall render service in a government hospital or local health office in their hometown or any municipality in their province as may be identified by the Department of Health (DOH) or their respective local government units (LGUs).</p> <p>Representatives of state universities and colleges (SUCs) present during the meeting proposed that medical scholars should render at least 11 years of return service with commensurate salaries.</p> <p>With regard to Section 5 (Qualification Requirements) of the bill, most of the SUC representatives asserted that the admission requirement of 90% passing rate in the National Medical Admission Test (NMAT) is too high. They also said that the insufficiency of family or personal income to finance the student's medical education should not be included as one of the requirements for admission to the medical scholarship program.</p> <p>Rep. Tan also proposed that qualified medical students of the program may be allowed to enroll in private medical schools if there are no SUCs that can accommodate them in their area.</p> <p>This suggestion was supported by DOH's Career Development Management Division Chief Gwyn Grace Dacurawat, adding that the DOH already implements this policy under its medical scholarship program.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Dalipe, Deputy Executive Director of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Napoleon Imperial said that before determining the budgetary requirement for the program, there is a need first to revise the medical curriculum and to review the law governing the medical profession.</p> <p>The DOH and CHED were requested to submit the profile and status of their respective medical scholarship programs.</p> <p>Likewise, the resource persons present were requested to submit their position paper on the proposed law.</p>