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PRE-PLenary CONFERENCE ON THE FY 2018 BUDGET

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	Pre-plenary conference on the proposed FY 2018 budget, and plans and programs of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), held a pre-plenary conference with the ARMM regional government to thresh out issues and concerns raised by House Members relative to its proposed FY 2018 budget prior to the deliberations on its budget in the plenary.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte) initially sat as the presiding officer during this pre-plenary conference but Deputy Speaker Bai Sandra Sema (1st District, Maguindanao) later took over as Rep. Dimaporo had to attend to an equally important meeting.</p> <p>ARMM Regional Governor Mujiv Hataman and other ARMM officials promised to attend to the concerns of House Members, some of which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delayed processing of appointments of teaching personnel in Tawi-Tawi; • Delayed release of salaries of employees of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in Maguindanao; and • Completion of the school building projects in the 2nd District of Lanao del Sur. <p>On Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's (2nd District, Pampanga) query whether there are schools in ARMM that are teaching Wahhabism, Hataman stressed that it is not being taught in any school in the ARMM.</p> <p>Wahhabism is an eighteenth-century reformist/revivalist movement for socio-moral reconstruction of society that proposes a return to an idealized Islamic past through reassertion of monotheism and reliance on Quran and hadith (a collection of traditions containing sayings of the prophet Muhammad), rejecting medieval interpretations of Islam and jurisprudence. (Source: http:// www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e2467)</p> <p>The Committee will discuss ARMM's budget again in another pre-plenary conference upon the latter's submission of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of commitment from the ARMM stating that the projects included in its proposed 2018 budget will be completed before the deliberations on the FY 2019 national budget; • Inventory of all projects in the ARMM; • Documents from the ARMM Department of Education (DepEd) showing the delivery of equipment in schools in Tawi-Tawi for the years 2016 and 2017 as well as a liquidation report on the funds used for its educational programs in the Province of Basilan; • List of all Madaris or Islamic schools in the ARMM; and • Inventory report on all projects in Basilan under the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Subcommittee on Investigation and Enforcement Reforms of the Committee on Justice (Technical Working Group)	HBs 8, 775, 3081 & 3296	Majority Leader Fariñas, Reps. Aglipay-Villar, Castelo, and Escudero	Institutionalizing a criminal investigation system, repealing for the purpose RA 5180, or the law prescribing a uniform system of preliminary investigation by provincial and city fiscals and their assistants and by state attorneys or their assistants, as amended	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Committee Secretary Rene Delorino, will deliberate further on the four bills in its next meeting.</p> <p>The TWG discussed Sections 1 to 6 of the proposed measures using HB 8, authored by Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas (1st District, Ilocos Norte), as the working draft.</p> <p>Department of Justice's National Prosecution Service (NPS) state prosecutor Hazel Decena-Valdez commented that while the proposed law means additional responsibilities for the prosecutors as they will directly supervise the conduct of criminal investigations, it will also ensure that only cases that warrant a full-blown trial will be elevated to the courts, thus reducing the number of cases that the courts will handle.</p> <p>On the other hand, Philippine Judges Association (PJA) Secretary General Raquelen Vasquez expressed reservation on the proposed law, arguing that it will just prolong the proceedings. Under the present set up, Vasquez said the judge determines if there is probable cause for the case to be tried in court, otherwise he dismisses the case.</p> <p>The NPS, PJA, Philippine National Police (PNP), and the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) were requested to submit their respective position papers for the TWG's consideration.</p>
Justice (Technical Working Group)	HB 3467	Rep. Herrera-Dy	Revising RA 8049 or the Anti-Hazing Law	<p>The TWG, presided by BAGONG HENERASYON Party-List Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy, also the author of HB 3467, concluded its deliberation on the bill. It agreed to draft a substitute bill using as reference a bill with similar subject matter that was approved on third reading during the 16th Congress, and incorporating in it the pertinent recommendations of the resource persons.</p> <p>Thereafter, the substitute bill will be submitted to the mother Committee for its consideration and approval.</p>
Welfare of Children (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to HB 894	Rep. Tan (A.)	Prohibiting the roaming, loitering or sleeping of unchaperoned children at unsafe hours outside their domicile, providing penalties for their parents or guardians and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan M.D. (4th District, Quezon), will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting</p> <p>Among the issues and concerns raised during the meeting were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The word "domicile" connotes a broader meaning and therefore needs to be clarified; • The exception in the bill allowing children to do errands during unsafe hours (10:00 PM – 5:00 AM) at the instance of their parents or guardians provided that they have a written and signed certification from their parents/guardians is questionable since this does not eliminate the risks faced by children on the streets during these hours (Section 6);

<p>Continuation... Welfare of Children (Technical Working Group)</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A protocol or procedure must be established in the conduct of counseling and other interventions for children (together with their parents or guardians), who were “rescued” pursuant to the proposed law (Section 7); • The term “rescued,” as used in Section 7, must be clarified or replaced with another word that does not connote a negative meaning; and • The National Youth Commission (NYC) and the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) should be involved in the formulation of the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the proposed law (Section 10). <p>The CWC and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) promised to submit a draft protocol in the counselling of children.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bill for the TWG’s consideration.</p>
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