

Committee Daily Bulletin



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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Agrarian Reform	HB 5652	Rep. Mercado	Mandating the transfer of the Provincial Agrarian Reform Office in the Municipality of Sagod to the City of Maasin, Southern Leyte	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Rene Relampagos (1st District, Bohol) approved the Committee Report on HB 5652.
	HB 5487	Speaker Alvarez	Rationalizing the requirements imposed by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) regarding land registration to facilitate speed and efficiency in land registration	<p>The Committee approved HB 5487 subject to style.</p> <p>Rep. Ruwel Peter Gonzaga (2nd District, Compostela Valley), who sponsored HB 5487 on behalf of the author Speaker Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez (1st District, Davao del Norte), said that the proposed measure, in effect, amends Sections 6 (Retention Limits) and 10 (Exemptions and Exclusions) of RA 6657 or the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988.</p> <p>HB 5487 provides that the requisite clearance or approval permits from the DAR for the purpose of registering lands shall only apply to those covered by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). This means, no such clearance shall be required for agricultural lands with an area of five hectares and below, as provided for in Section 6 of RA 6657, and those lands used or found necessary for parks, wildlife, forest reserves, and other purposes as identified in Sec. 10 of RA 6657.</p> <p>DAR Undersecretary for Field Operations Karlo Bello and Undersecretary for Legal Affairs Luis Meinrado Pangulayan support the bill, saying that it will expedite the transfer, sale or disposition of agricultural lands not covered by the CARP. However, DAR recommends the inclusion of a provision in the bill requiring a certificate of aggregate land ownership to ensure compliance with the five-hectare retention limit under the CARP.</p> <p>Land Registration Authority (LRA) Deputy Administrator Robert Leyretana pointed out that without the DAR clearance, the LRA has no way of determining whether a land being registered is covered by CARP or not except when it is specified in the tax declaration.</p> <p>Representatives from the Landbank of the</p>

Continuation... Agrarian Reform				<p>Philippines (LBP), National Irrigation Administration (NIA), National Housing Authority (NHA), National Home Mortgage and Finance Corporation (NHMFC), Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC), Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB), and Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) expressed support to the bill.</p> <p>On the other hand, representatives from the Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (PAKISAMA), Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC), and farmer-beneficiaries oppose the bill, arguing that it might not amply protect the rights of CARP beneficiaries.</p> <p>To address this concern, Pangulayan recommended to include a provision in the bill that will require an affidavit from the landowner who is selling an agricultural land that he has given a written notice to the agricultural lessee of his intention to sell the land in relation to the lessee's right of pre-emption (preferential right to buy the land) pursuant to Sections 11 and 13 of RA 3844 or the Agricultural Land Reform Code.</p>
Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources	Consolidated Bill on HBs 407 & 1363	Rep. Vargas-Alfonso	Establishing a fisheries research center in the Municipality of Abulug in the Second District of Cagayan and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee, presided by Rep. Wilter "Sharky" Wee Palma II (1 st District, Zamboanga Sibugay), approved the Consolidated Bill on HBs 407 and 1363 subject to style and amendment.
	HBs 788, 6110 & 6151	Reps. Gullas and Mercado	Establishing fish ports in certain municipalities in the Province of Cebu and Province of Southern Leyte, appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the bills subject to style and amendment.
	HB 1412	Rep. Amante	Establishing mariculture development parks in three municipalities in the Province of Agusan del Norte and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the bill subject to style and amendment.
	HB 3063	Rep. Marquez	Establishing a Provincial Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Training, Development, and Product Center in the Province of Aklan and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the bill subject to style and amendment.
	HB 5331	Rep. Dimaporo (M.K.)	Establishing a freshwater aquaculture center under the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) for a multi-species breeding farm and hatchery in the Municipality of Balo-I, Province of Lanao del Norte and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the bill subject to style and amendment.
	HBs 6289, 6290, 6291 & 6292	Rep. Villafuerte	Establishing multi-species marine hatcheries in certain municipalities in the Province of Camarines Sur and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the four bills subject to style and amendment.
	HB 1399	Rep. Amante	Establishing the Philippine Eel Research Center in the Municipality of Jabonga, Province of Agusan del Norte and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune the bill.

Ecology	HB 2286	Rep. Marquez	<p>Repealing Section 20 of RA 8749, otherwise known as the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999 and amending pertinent provisions of RA 9003, also known as the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to deliberate further on HB 2286.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Carlos "Charlie" Cojuangco (1st District, Tarlac).</p> <p>Aklan Rep. Carlito Marquez, author of HB 2286, said that repealing Section 20 of the Clean Air Act and amending certain provisions of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act will allow the use of incineration as an alternative mode of waste disposal. He explained that there are already modern and safe ways of converting waste to energy (WTE) which will not only help solve garbage disposal problems but will also generate electricity.</p> <p>Reps. Horacio Suansing Jr. (2nd District, Sultan Kudarat), Orestes Salon (Party-List, AGRI), and Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-PACMAN) expressed support for the bill.</p> <p>Likewise, representatives from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB), National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC), Department of Science and Technology – National Research Council of the Philippines (DOST-NRCP), and the Quezon City Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department were one in saying that the proposed law will facilitate waste management and address the problem of lack of sanitary landfills.</p> <p>Also in support of the bill are representatives from the private sector: the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI), Pollution Control Association of the Philippines, Inc. (PCAPI), and the De La Salle University.</p> <p>On the other hand, representatives from the Mother Earth Foundation (MEF), Health Care Without Harm (HCWM), Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA), and the EcoWaste Coalition expressed objection to the bill, citing the harmful effects of toxic chemicals emitted during incineration which are considered to be highly carcinogenic.</p> <p>Rep. Marquez and NSWMC Executive Director Eligio Idefonso explained that landfills and open dumpsites, which are being used in the country's waste disposal system, also emit harmful chemicals and higher level of pollutants than incinerators.</p>
	HBs 769 & 1827	Reps. Aglipay-Villar and Vargas	Amending Section 46 of RA 8749, to shift liability for smoke belching from the driver to the owner of the motor vehicle	The Committee deferred deliberations on HBs 769 and 1827 pending submission of the resource persons' position papers.

<p>Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Justice</p>	<p>HR 867</p>	<p>Speaker Alvarez</p>	<p>Inquiry into the alleged grossly disadvantageous contract entered into by the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) and the Tagum Agricultural Development Company, Inc. (TADECO)</p>	<p>The Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur), Chair of the Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability, and Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso (3rd District, Leyte), Vice Chair of the Committee on Justice, will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 867 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Pimentel reminded the body that the objective of the meeting is to determine whether or not the government has been put in a grossly disadvantageous position in the joint venture agreements (JVAs) entered into by the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) with the Tagum Agricultural Development Company, Inc. (TADECO).</p> <p>Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Regional Director for Region XI Felix Alicer presented a historical background on the lands in Davao del Norte that were placed under the management of BuCor.</p> <p>Alicer related that pursuant to Proclamation No. 414 issued in 1931, an area of 28,818 hectares in the Province of Davao del Norte was reserved as government penal colony which turned out to be 30,907 hectares after the conduct of a survey. Subsequent presidential proclamations ceded land areas to various entities, leaving only 7,797 hectares under the control of BuCor, and out of which 5,344 hectares are actually being used by the TADECO under two JVAs.</p> <p>Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Chair Teresita Herbosa admitted that the SEC has not obtained a copy of the JVAs between BuCor and TADECO which could provide information on the terms of the contracts including the profit-sharing arrangement between the two parties. She, however, said that based on TADECO's audited financial statement for 2016, TADECO reported a production and profit share of P44.9 million that was given to BuCor, which accounts to less than 1% of TADECO's revenue for the same year amounting to P2.3 billion.</p> <p>TADECO President and CEO Anthony Valoria refuted Herbosa's claim, explaining that the figures cited by the SEC chairperson pertain to the net income of Anflo Management and Investment Corporation (ANFLOCOR), which is a management and holding company of several entities, including TADECO.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Pimentel read the document submitted by Del Monte Fresh Produce Philippines Inc. (DMFPPI), which disclosed that Del Monte International GmbH (DMI), the buyer in the supply contract with TADECO, paid US\$129.78 million to TADECO for the purchase of 25.35 million boxes of bananas in 2016.</p>
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<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Justice</p>				<p>Rep. Pimentel determined that every box of bananas costs US\$5.12 which is equivalent to P250 at peso-dollar exchange rate of P49. On Valoria's admission that BuCor only received P2.45 per box as its share in the said transaction, Reps. Pimentel and Veloso decried the said sharing arrangement for being grossly disadvantageous to the government.</p> <p>Responding to Rep. Veloso's concern that the inmates working in the banana plantation are not receiving their due pay, Valoria gave assurance that the inmates are commensurately paid.</p> <p>The Commission on Audit (COA) was requested to submit its report on the Special Audit on the JVAs between BuCor and TADECO upon completion and to include in the audit the income generated by BuCor on the use of lands under the control and operations of the Davao Penal Colony (DAPECOL).</p> <p>The Committee will subpoena Teodoro Santos and Leonardo Rabelo, former and current corporate finance director of Dole Philippines Inc. to compel their attendance in the next joint Committee meeting. DMFPPI General Manager Danilo Bernardo Roman will also be invited to attend the next meeting.</p>
<p>Government Enterprises and Privatization</p>	<p>HB 5898</p>	<p>Majority Leader Fariñas</p>	<p>Granting survivorship benefits to the dependent children of a deceased retired chairperson or commissioner of the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), Commission on Audit (COA), Civil Service Commission (CSC), and the Ombudsman, who is a solo parent as defined under RA 8972, and the surviving parents, or nominated persons of the deceased retiree, amending RA 10084</p>	<p>The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" Mariño (5th District, Batangas), approved HB 5898.</p> <p>Representatives from the COMELEC, COA, CSC, and the Office of the Ombudsman expressed their support for the bill.</p> <p>COMELEC Commissioner Ma. Rowena Amelia Guanzon said that amending RA 10084 will allow the nomination of persons to be beneficiaries of the deceased retirees even if they are not related to the latter by blood, consanguinity or affinity.</p> <p>RA 10084 grants survivorship benefits only to the surviving legitimate spouse of a deceased retired member of these constitutional bodies.</p> <p>Atty. Eunice Sta. Maria-Manahan, OIC chief of the Commission on Human Rights' (CHR) Legislative Linkages Division, proposed that the CHR chair and commissioners be also covered by the bill inasmuch as the CHR is also a constitutional body just like the four agencies now covered by RA 10084.</p> <p>AKO BICOL Party-List Rep. Rodel Batocabe said that since the bill is an amendatory measure to RA 10084 which covers only the COA, CSC, COMELEC, and the Ombudsman, the CHR and other agencies seeking similar benefits could be covered by a separate bill.</p>

Continuation... Government Enterprises and Privatization	HBs 2439 & 3487	Reps. Villarín and Escudero	Amending certain provisions of RA 10149, otherwise known as the GOCC Governance Act of 2011	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to harmonize the bills. Rep. Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba (1st District, Bukidnon), author of HB 6206, emphasized that directors of GOCCs and GFIs should pursue a professional corporate directorship course or program and pass the corresponding qualification examination before being appointed to the said position in order to professionalize the practice of corporate directorship in these government offices. <i>Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas</i> (BSP) Assistant Governor Restituto Cruz expressed reservation on the proposal that the BSP will be tasked to identify and accredit the learning institutions that will offer the professional corporate directorship course and conduct the corresponding examination. Cruz explained that the said function does not fall under the mandate of the BSP.
	HB 6206	Rep. Acosta- Alba	Professionalizing the practice of corporate directorship in government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs), amending for the purpose RA 10149	
	HB 3014	Rep. Batocabe	Abolishing the Governance Commission for GOCCs (GCG), repealing for the purpose RA 10149	The Committee will deliberate further on HB 3014. Rep. Batocabe, author of HB 3014, said that the GCG was not created to deliver outstanding financial performance of GOCCs at the expense of the welfare of the government corporations' rank and file employees. Under RA 10149, the GCG has the power to recommend the reorganization, merger, streamlining, abolition and privatization of GOCCs and GFIs. Various groups of GOCC rank and file employees pushed for the abolition of the GCG due to its alleged failure to fully deliver its mandate; its overlapping function with other government agencies; and its "insensitivity" to the plight of the GOCC workers. They claimed that unlike other state workers who are enjoying new salary rates under the latest Salary Standardization Law, GOCC workers are still receiving salaries under their old rates, some of which were set as far back as 1997. Executive Order No. 7 issued in 2010 rationalizes the compensation and position classification system in GOCCs and GFIs. The Order also imposed a moratorium on increases in salaries, allowances, benefits, and other incentives in GOCCs and GFIs unless approved by the President. GCG Chair Samuel Dagpin Jr. said that the agency is currently studying a new system to address the issues on compensation and benefits of the rank and file employees in GOCCs. Rep. Mariño directed the GCG to conduct a dialogue with the various associations of GOCC rank and file employees to settle their respective issues and present to the Committee the result of the said dialogue.

Government Reorganization jt. w/ Public Works and Highways	HB 2457	Rep. Yap (A.)	Rationalizing the resource management of the water sector, creating the Department of Water, Sewage and Sanitation	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Virgilio Lacson (Party-List, MANILA TEACHERS), Vice Chair of the Committee on Government Reorganization, and Rep. Celso Lobregat (1st District, Zamboanga City), Chair of the Committee on Public Works and Highways, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate HBs 2457 and 4995.</p> <p>The TWG will be co-chaired by Reps. Christopher V.P. de Venecia (4th District, Pangasinan) and Deogracias Ramos Jr. (2nd District, Sorsogon).</p> <p>Rep. Lacson stressed that in studying the proposed creation of a new department, the Committee should take into consideration the following issues: possible duplication and redundancy of functions; budgetary impact; and the implication on the government's policy to right-size the bureaucracy.</p> <p>Resource persons from the Department of Agriculture (DA), Civil Service Commission (CSC), National Water Resources Board (NWRB), Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA), National Irrigation Administration (NIA), Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC), Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), and National Power Corporation (NPC) expressed support for the bills.</p> <p>Also in support of the bills were the representatives from the Philippine Association of Water Districts, Inc. (PAWD) and Manila Water Company, Inc.</p> <p>On the other hand, Supervising Environmental Management Specialist Leza Cuevas of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), opined that the creation of a new body to handle water management, sewage and sanitation will impinge upon the functions of the DENR under RA 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004.</p> <p>Having learned that several bills on water resource management have been referred to other Committees of the House of Representatives, the joint Committee agreed to request the Committee on Rules to change the referral of these bills to the Committee on Public Works and Highways.</p> <p>The Committee asked the resource persons to submit their respective position papers on the two bills.</p>
	HB 4995	Rep. Suansing (E.)	Creating the Department of Water Resources and Services and appropriating funds therefor	
Labor and Employment	Substitute Bill to HBs 675 and 2229	Reps. Aglipay-Villar and Revilla	Expanding the prohibited acts of discrimination against women on account of sex, amending for the purpose Articles 135 and 137 of Presidential Decree No. 442, as amended, otherwise known as the Labor Code of the Philippines	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Randolph Ting (3rd District, Cagayan), approved the Committee Report on the substitute bill.

Continuation... Labor and Employment	Substitute Bill to HB 5067	Rep. Go (M.)	Increasing the service incentive leave of employees amending for the purpose Article 95 of Presidential Decree No. 442, as amended	The Committee approved the Committee Report on the substitute bill.
	HBs 4722, 5630, 5779, 5841, 5843 & 6322	Reps. Del Rosario, Villafuerte, Tugna, Vargas, Nieto, and Sy- Alvarado	Institutionalizing telecommuting in the workplace	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to deliberate further on the six bills.</p> <p>The TWG will be co-chaired by Rep. Luis Raymund "LRay" Villafuerte Jr. (2nd District, Camarines Sur) and Benguet Rep. Ronald Cosalan.</p> <p>Rep. Villafuerte, author of HB 5630, said that the proposed law institutionalizes "telecommuting" or a work arrangement which allows employees to work from home without violating the Labor Code.</p> <p>Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso (3rd District, Leyte) asked how work hours rendered from home are being monitored and authenticated under a telecommuting work arrangement.</p> <p>Rep. Villafuerte explained that companies engaging in telecommuting have installed a system wherein telecommuters are required to log in and log out of the internal server of the companies to detect and record the number of hours rendered by employees working from home. Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) Undersecretary Eliseo Rio Jr. confirmed the statement of Rep. Villafuerte.</p> <p>Rep. Veloso, Rep. Ricardo "RJ" Belmonte Jr. (Party-List, SBP), and Renato Magtubo, national president of the <i>Partido ng Manggagawa</i>, expressed support for the measures. They however, stressed that the proposed law must adhere to the Labor Code.</p> <p>Also in support of the bills were representatives from the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the IT and Business Process Association of the Philippines (ITBPAP), Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP), Civil Service Commission (CSC), Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), and the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW).</p> <p>DOLE Assistant Secretary Amuerfina Reyes and Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP) Associate Director Arnel Almaden recommended that telecommuting be a voluntary work arrangement subject to existing labor laws, rules and regulations.</p> <p>On the other hand, Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI) Director Luna Cun Uy Go expressed reservation on the bill, stating the need for a more thorough discussion of issues relating to its implementation.</p> <p>The resource persons were asked to submit their respective position papers to the TWG.</p>

Legislative Franchises	Substitute Bill to HB 5504	Rep. Yap (A.)	Renewing the franchise granted to the Bohol Chronicle Radio Corporation to construct, maintain and operate radio broadcasting stations in the Philippines under RA 7634 to another 25 years from the date of approval of this Act	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Franz “Chicoy” Alvarez (1 st District, Palawan), approved the Substitute Bill to HB 5504 and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HB 4555	Rep. Dimaporo (M.K.)	Granting the Lanao del Norte Electric Cooperative (LANECO) a franchise to construct, operate and maintain a distribution system for the conveyance of electric power to the end-users in all the municipalities of the Province of Lanao del Norte	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the bill in another meeting.</p> <p>HB 4555, authored by Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte), grants LANECO a new franchise that will include the three municipalities that are being serviced by another cooperative, Lanao del Sur Electric Cooperative (LASURECO), but are part of the Province of Lanao del Norte.</p> <p>The proposal to transfer the three municipalities - Baloi, Pantar and Pantao Ragat - to LANECO's covered areas gave rise to issues that must be resolved first prior to the approval of the new franchise.</p> <p>LANECO acting general manager Sherwin Mañada contends that the uncollected bills or stranded debts of LASURECO's consumers should not be passed on to LANECO and that LASURECO's distribution system in these municipalities should be turned over to LANECO without cost.</p> <p>On the other hand, LASURECO General Manager Nordjiana Dipatuan-Ducol emphasized that the accumulated debts of P115 million should either be condoned through a legislative action or transferred automatically to LANECO and that LANECO should buy-out all the power distribution assets LASURECO had installed in the three municipalities.</p> <p>National Electrification Administration (NEA) Legal Services Department Manager Xerxes Adzuara is hopeful that the issues and concerns raised by LANECO and LASURECO will be resolved.</p> <p>Atty. Mildred Ople of the legal service division of the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) supports the passage of the bill as it is consistent with the policy of “one province, one electric cooperative.”</p> <p>COOP NATCCO Party-List Rep. Anthony Bravo Ph.D. said that NEA should be able to come up with solutions that are amenable to the two cooperatives.</p> <p>To resolve the issues among themselves, the Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to be headed by NEA, with the following as members: LANECO, LASURECO, and representatives from the Municipalities of Baloi, Pantar and Pantao Ragat in the Province of Lanao del Norte.</p>

Tourism	HR 956	Deputy Speaker Garin	Inquiry into the status of implementation of RA 10816 or the Farm Tourism Development Act of 2016	<p>The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair Rep. Franz “Chicoy” Alvarez (1st District, Palawan), terminated its deliberation on HR 956 and agreed to report out to the House its findings and recommendations.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA), author of HR 956, said that the Department of Tourism (DOT) and the Department of Agriculture (DA) should be able to standardize the requirements and procedures for the accreditation of farm tourism camps or sites to successfully implement the law.</p> <p>DOT Region VI Regional Director Helen Catalbas and DA Agriculture Training Institute Chief Renato dela Cruz both expressed their willingness to conduct workshops and meetings to come up with a standardized farm tourism accreditation requirements and procedures. In the meantime, Catalbas said that inasmuch as the DA has yet to come up with its own requirements on farm tourism accreditation, the DOT’s guidelines may be used by the DA as its reference for now.</p> <p>Owners of accredited farm tourism sites in the Philippines Anette Patdu and Desiree Duran highlighted the benefits of farm tourism in terms of creating jobs and livelihood opportunities and in building communities.</p>
	HB 4526	Rep. Acosta	Declaring the Province of Palawan as the Cruise Ship Capital of the Philippines	The Committee approved HB 4526.
	HB 4711	Rep. Matugas	Declaring Siargao and Bucas Grande Islands in the Province of Surigao del Norte as ecotourism zones and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved HB 4711.
	HBs 4846 & 4979	Rep. Hofer	Declaring the Malubal Falls and the Underground Tipan Cave in the Province of Zamboanga Sibugay as ecotourism sites and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved HBs 4846 and 4979.
	HR 1087	Rep. Sarmiento (E.)	Inquiry into the roadmap, programs, projects and action plans of the DOT that aim to regulate tourist spots in order to promote sustainability	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HR 1087 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Edgar Sarmiento (1st District, Samar), author of HR 1087, underscored the need to sustain the country’s tourism sites, particularly Boracay Island, which has been a major tourism destination attracting millions of tourists worldwide.</p> <p>Nennette Graf, president of the Boracay Foundation Inc., reported that until now, the needed improvements in the drainage and sewerage system of the Island have not been given attention up to this time. She called on the government to immediately address the growing environmental problems besetting the Island to retain its stature as the country’s most popular beach resort.</p>

IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS

COMMITTEE	MEASURE	SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
Justice	Impeachment Complaint	Verified complaint for impeachment against Commission on Elections (COMELEC) Chair Juan Andres Bautista	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Reynaldo Umali (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro), dismissed the verified complaint for impeachment filed against COMELEC Chair Juan Andres Bautista by Atty. Jacinto Paras and Atty. Ferdinand Topacio due to insufficiency in form.</p> <p>The complaint, which was endorsed by three House Members - Deputy Speaker Gwendolyn Garcia (3rd District, Cebu), Rep. Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino (7th District, Cavite), and KABAYAN Party-List Rep. Harry Roque Jr. - was declared insufficient in form for lack of proper verification following a vote of 2 in favor of the complaint and 26 against.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Umali discussed the rules of procedure in impeachment proceedings. He mentioned that with the requirements on filing and referral of the complaint having complied with, the impeachment proceeding against the COMELEC Chair is deemed "initiated" on September 7, 2017. This date becomes the basis for the "one-year bar" rule, which means that no other impeachment complaint may be entertained against the same official for a period of one year.</p> <p>Rep. Roque, together with Deputy Speaker Garcia, moved that the substitute verification submitted by complainants Paras and Topacio on September 13, 2017 be admitted. Rep. Roque explained that since the rules of procedure in impeachment proceedings do not explicitly prohibit the rectification or correction of errors as to form, the substitute verification may be allowed. The Deputy Speaker added that Section 14 (Amendment or Substitution), Rule 110, of the Revised Rules of Court allows the amendment or substitution of a complaint or information, both in substance or in form, which she said may also apply to the impeachment complaint."</p> <p>Majority Leader Rodolfo Fariñas (1st District, Ilocos Norte) opined that the regular courts allow the substitution or amendment of complaints to avoid multiplicity of suits, which may not be applicable in the House of Representatives</p> <p>Other House Members also objected to the substitution of the verification saying that it is tantamount to violating the one-year bar rule. They also noted the "improper" filing of the motion to admit the substitute verification.</p> <p>For his part, Rep. Edcel Lagman (1st District, Albay) argued against the acceptance of the substitute verification saying that it has no basis in the rules of the House. He added that the attempted substitution is a clear indication and admission of the verification's "fatal defect."</p> <p>Likewise, KABAYAN Party-List Rep. Ron Salo pointed out that the prescribed form of verification is not hard to follow, particularly among lawyers who are presumably learned and trained in the practice of law. Thus, failure to comply with the prescribed form merits the dismissal of the verified impeachment complaint, Rep. Salo added.</p>

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Subcommittee I (Constitutional Amendments)	Review of certain provisions of the 1987 Philippine Constitution in connection with the proposed shift to a federal form of government	The Subcommittee I, chaired by the Committee Vice-Chairperson, Rep. Corazon Nuñez-Malanyaon (1st District, Davao Oriental), on its first meeting, focused its discussion on Article VI (Legislative Department) and Article VII (Executive Department) of the 1987

<p>Continuation... Subcommittee I (Constitutional Amendments)</p>		<p>Constitution.</p> <p>The Federalism Study Group of the PDP-Laban Federalism Institute presented its proposed “Constitution of the Federal Republic of the Philippines,” highlighting the basic changes to Articles VI and VII.</p> <p>Edmund Tayao, executive director of the Local Government Development Foundation (LOGODEF), a member-organization of the study group, said that his group proposes a federal structure with a semi-presidential system of government.</p> <p>Tayao added that there will be a "dual executive" with the President as the head of state and the Prime Minister as the head of the government. The President will be nationally elected to serve for five years up to a maximum of two consecutive terms. Candidates for the presidency shall be nominated by political parties with at least 20% representation in the Federal Assembly. The President is the symbol of the nation and solidifies the country especially in times of crises.</p> <p>On the other hand, the Prime Minister is nominated by the Federal Assembly and with its consent, appointed by the President. He may be removed at any time on a vote of “no confidence” by the Federal Assembly. The Prime Minister runs the day-to-day affairs of the government.</p> <p>Tayao also presented the structure of the proposed Parliament, which will replace the current Congress. He said the Parliament will be composed of a Senate and a Federal Assembly. There will be three senators per region who will serve for five years for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Senate will only exercise consent legislation on the bills and resolutions passed by the Federal Assembly and may not initiate any legislation.</p> <p>Tayao went on to say that the Federal Assembly will be composed of a maximum of 400 members, 60% of whom will be elected by plurality votes in legislative electoral districts and 40% by proportional representation in political parties. The Federal Assembly is vested with primary legislative powers and its members will also have the same term of office as the Senators.</p> <p>When asked about the benefits of shifting from a unitary to a federal form of government, Institute for Political and Electoral Reforms (IPER) Executive Director Ramon Casiple, also a member of the PDP-Laban’s Federalism Study Group, explained that a federal government will strengthen government institutions and will allow for an efficient and effective implementation of government policies and programs. He added that participative democracy can be better achieved under a federal system than in a unitary system.</p> <p>Rep. Doy Leachon (1st District, Oriental Mindoro) suggested that a provision be included in the draft constitution that would protect the interests of poor regions. He also asked the Institute to identify where the seat of government will be in every region.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA) recommended that the current party-list system be considered in the proposed federal government.</p> <p>The Subcommittee will meet again on September 27 to review Article X (Local Government) of the 1987 Constitution and a new article on federal taxation in conjunction with two draft constitutions under consideration, one of which was the one submitted by the PDP-Laban Federalism Institute and the other was an attachment to Resolution of Both Houses (RBH) No. 8, authored by Reps. Aurelio “Dong” Gonzales Jr. (3rd District, Pampanga) and Eugene Michael De Vera (Party-List, ABS).</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Energy (Technical Working Group)	HB 4892	Rep. Batocabe	Establishment of the virtual one stop shop (VOSS) for the purpose of streamlining the permitting process of power generation projects	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by the author of HB 4892 himself, AKO-BICOL Party-List Rep. Rodel Batocabe, will deliberate further on the bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Batocabe said that his bill seeks to address the lengthy process of approving power generation projects by allowing a single submission and processing of documentary requirements; supplying an online platform through which government agencies can approve applications as well as coordinate and share information; and by providing a single gateway for new power generation developers from which they can access all information necessary to comply with the requirements.</p> <p>Chrysogonus Herrea, senior vice president of Meralco Power Generation Co. (MGen), expressed support for the proposed measure. Herrea narrated the company's experience in securing various permits from various government agencies which took them almost five years to put up three power plants. He claimed that at least 62 key government permits are needed to develop a power plant and five grid interconnection permits are required from the transmission system operator.</p> <p>One of the recommendations made during the TWG meeting was to allow 20 to 30 working days for documents to be processed by various agencies except those from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and local government units (LGUs) which may require a longer period to process applications.</p> <p>Manifesting their support for the bill were representatives from the following government agencies: Departments of Energy (DOE), Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Labor and Employment (DOLE), Trade and Industry (DTI), the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Agrarian Reform (DAR), National Power Corporation (NPC), National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO), Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM), Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP)</p> <p>Likewise, the representative from the Philippine Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. (PHILRECA) expressed support for the bill.</p> <p>The DOE and the ERC were requested to come up with uniform guidelines and requirements in the issuance of permit to put up power generation projects.</p>

Continuation... Energy (Technical Working Group)				The resource persons were requested to submit their position papers within five days.
Housing and Urban Development (Technical Working Group)	HB 83	Rep. Benitez	Constituting an Administrative Capital City Planning Commission for the purpose of studying the feasibility of relocating the capital and seat of government of the Philippines and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Alfredo "Albee" Benitez (3rd District, Negros Occidental), also the author of HB 83, agreed to come up with a substitute bill, 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> <p>Rep. Benitez said that the bill proposes the creation of an Administrative Capital City Planning Commission that will lead the development of a comprehensive plan to relocate the different government agencies and establish the administrative capital city outside Metro Manila, thereby decongesting the metropolis.</p> <p>Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) Project Development Manager Joaquin Loyzaga reported that the Clark Green City located within the Clark Special Economic Zone has allotted a total of 288 hectares of land for government offices. Loyzaga added that Clark Green City has also designated commercial and residential areas within this 9,450- hectare property.</p> <p>Rep. Jose Christopher Belmonte (6th District, Quezon City) expressed doubt that the priority of BCDA's Clark Green City is to accommodate the offices of the government, saying that he believes it is more concerned with attracting investors into the area.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Benitez, Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (PHIVOLCS) Deputy Director Bartolome Bautista assured the Committee that Clark City is a safe place to live because it is resilient to disaster.</p>