

Committee Daily Bulletin

17th Congress
Second Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. II No. 80
February 6, 2018

COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Banks and Financial Intermediaries	HB 3148	Rep. Alejano	Amending Section 22 and repealing Section 23 of RA 3518 or the law creating the Philippine Veterans Bank (PVB), by allocating 20% of the net profits of the PVB after deducting the guaranteed earnings of the preferred shares to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone, will deliberate further on HB 3148 and HR 335 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Minority Leader Danilo Suarez (3rd District, Quezon), author of HR 335, said that the Philippine Veterans Bank (PVB) is primarily owned by WW II Philippine veterans. However, issuances of PVB shares of stocks to unqualified individuals, who were elected as directors of the PVB, were reported despite the provisions of RA 3518 that stocks shall only be owned by individual veterans, their widows, orphans or compulsory heirs.</p> <p>Rep. Suarez emphasized the need to redefine who the Philippine war veterans are, and ensure that the PVB will operate for their and their families' benefit as intended by the law.</p> <p>Rep. Gary Alejano (Party-List, MAGDALO), author of HB 3148, maintained that 20% of the profit of the PVB should be funneled to the VMMC since it is the central rehabilitation facility for veterans.</p> <p>PVB President and Chief Operating Officer (COO) Nonilo Cruz gave a brief account of PVB's performance in recent years.</p> <p>He said prior to May 2013, the PVB was in poor financial condition with little or no balance sheet management, inadequate risk management system, and weak audit and internal control.</p> <p>However, with the current management of the PVB, the bank was rehabilitated and has instituted regulations compliant with Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) circulars on credit change and booking of sound loan portfolio.</p> <p>Lt. Gen. Ernesto Carolina, administrator of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), manifested his support for the bills but raised some recommendations to further improve the proposed law.</p> <p>The Committee requested a list of the officers of the PVB before its new Board assumed office.</p>
	HR 335	Minority Leader Suarez	Calling for a review of the structure of the PVB to protect the benefits and rights of World War II Philippine veterans	

Legislative Franchises	HB 4906	Rep. Velasco	Extending for another twenty-five (25) years the franchise granted to Delta Broadcasting System, Inc. to establish, maintain and operate radio and television broadcasting stations within the Philippines under RA 7723	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Franz "Chicoy" Alvarez (1st District, Palawan), approved HB 4906.
Local Government jt. w/ Muslim Affairs and Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity	Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 92, 6121, 6263 & 6475	Deputy Speaker Sema, Reps. Macapagal-Arroyo and Dimaporo (M.K.), and Speaker Alvarez	Providing for the Basic Law for the Bangsamoro and abolishing the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), repealing for the purpose RA 9054, or the law strengthening and expanding the Organic Act for the ARMM, and RA 6734 or the law providing for an Organic Act for the ARMM	<p>The Joint Committee, chaired by Reps. Pedro Acharon Jr. (1st District, South Cotabato and General Santos City), Mauyag "Jun" Papandayan Jr. (2nd District, Lanao del Sur), and Ruby Sahali (Tawi-Tawi), for the Committees on Local Government and on Muslim Affairs and the Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity, respectively, will deliberate further on the draft substitute bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>At the outset, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza commended the effort of the Joint Committee in harmonizing the four bills. He said that the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) provides an enabling law for the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) forged between the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) last March 27, 2014. This bill, he added, reflects the aspirations of the Bangsamoro people and provides a just and lasting solution to the armed conflict in Mindanao.</p> <p>Dureza assured the body that the BBL adheres to the Philippine Constitution and will not cause the secession of the Bangsamoro from the Philippine Republic.</p> <p>When asked about the absence in today's meeting of the Bangsamoro Transition Commission (BTC) members, representing the MILF and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), Dureza explained that the Joint Committee's schedule coincides with the Senate's public consultations in Mindanao also with regard to the BBL.</p> <p>The Members of the Joint Committee requested the BTC to come up with a clear definition of "Bangsamoro" and an "opt-out" provision that will allow an area under the Bangsamoro to leave the territory should it later decide to do so. BTC Commissioner Maisara Dandamun-Latiph assured the body that the request will be discussed by the BTC en banc.</p> <p>Some Members expressed their reservation on the phrase "right to self-determination" stated in the preamble of the proposed law. They argued that the phrase may be construed as Bangsamoro's desire to seek independence from the Republic of the Philippines.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Celso Lobregat (1st District, Zamboanga City) showed a letter of MILF</p>

<p>Continuation... Local Government jt. w/ Muslim Affairs and Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity</p>				<p>Chair Al Haj Murad Ibrahim dated December 29, 2014 appealing to the House of Representatives and the Senate to pass the proposed BBL "with no changes." He said he will seek clarification with the MILF about Ibrahim's stand when its members attend the next meeting of the Joint Committee.</p> <p>The Joint Committee requested the submission of the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position of the MNLF Founding Chair Nur Misuari on the proposed BBL (c/o the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process or OPAPP); • Position paper of the OPAPP and the BTC on the draft substitute bill; • BTC's certified true copy of the result of the 2001 plebiscite held in connection with the Expanded ARMM Law (RA 9054); • Commission on Elections' (COMELEC) official statement that the documents related to the RA 9054 plebiscite were destroyed by fire last year. <p>For its next meeting on February 12, the Joint Committee will again request the presence of BTC Chair Ghazali Jaafar and other BTC members representing the MILF, MNLF, and indigenous peoples (IPs).</p>
<p>Natural Resources</p>	<p>HR 1032</p>	<p>Rep. Zarate</p>	<p>Inquiry into the clearing of 7,000 old-growth trees by the Ipilan Nickel Corporation-Global Ferronickel Holdings, Inc. in Brooke's Point, Southern Palawan and its serious environmental impacts to Palawan's communities and ecosystems</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Arnel Ty (LPGMA, Party List), will deliberate further on the issues raised in HRs 1032 and 1084 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Region IV-B Director Natividad Bernardino of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) provided a background of the mining agreement between the DENR and Ipilan Nickel Corporation.</p> <p>Initially, a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement was granted by DENR to Celestial Nickel Mining and Exploration Corp. (CNMEC) on September 18, 1993. The latter then entered into an Operating Agreement with Ipilan on August 25, 2005. This granted Ipilan the right to operate the mine which covers 2,835.06 hectares of land. Eventually, Ipilan was issued an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) by then DENR Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) OIC-Director Juan Miguel Cuna on October 8, 2010.</p> <p>A Special Tree Cutting and Earth-balling Permit was also issued to Ipilan last May 26, 2016 by then DENR IV-B Regional Director Oscar Dominguez. The permit covers 52.15 hectares for the first and second year of mining operations and road development. It also allows the cutting of a maximum of 13,490 trees with 16 centimeters and above in diameters, and the</p>
	<p>HR 1084</p>	<p>Deputy Speaker Abueg</p>	<p>Inquiry into the alleged violation of the Ipilan Nickel Corporation in Brooke's Point, Palawan</p>	

Continuation... Natural Resources				<p>earth-balling of 14,439 trees with 15 centimeters and below in diameters.</p> <p>Earth-balling is a process of transferring a tree from one location to another leaving most of the root system undisturbed and intact.</p> <p>On December 14, 2016, the ECC of Ipilan was cancelled by then DENR Secretary Gina Lopez.</p> <p>Despite the cancellation, Ipilan proceeded to cut trees and use unregistered chainsaws. Based on reports, extensive tree cutting was conducted from the third week of April to the first week of May 2017. Initial reports also showed that approximately 7,000 trees have been cut.</p> <p>The Special Tree Cutting Permit (STCP) of Ipilan was suspended by DENR IV-B on May 17, 2017, and a show cause order was also issued in violation of Section 68 and 77 of PD 705 (Forestry Code of the Philippines).</p> <p>Brooke's Point Mayor Mary Jean Feliciano thanked the Committee for its initiatives to stop the numerous violations of Ipilan. Aside from the illegal use of chainsaws, the latter continued to operate without ECC, mayor's permit, business permit and certificate of precondition from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), Feliciano said.</p> <p>The Certificate of Precondition is issued by the NCIP attesting to the grant of free and prior informed consent (FPIC) by the concerned indigenous cultural communities/indigenous peoples.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Jose Atienza Jr. (BUHAY, Party-List) said that DENR should have been more persistent in its efforts given the gross violations of environmental laws that were committed. He also proposed that the DENR IV-B be held liable for any possible lapse or negligence and that the Committee should send a letter to Ipilan to urge it to stop its illegal activities.</p> <p>Majority of the Members concurred with Atienza.</p> <p>In the next meeting, the Committee will invite Florencio Diaz, community environment and natural resources officer, and Oscar Rodriguez, former IV-B regional director, both from the DENR.</p>
Rural Development	HB 6997	Rep. Ramos	Providing for a rural development amelioration fund	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Deogracias Ramos Jr. (2nd District, Sorsogon), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to discuss the bill further.</p> <p>The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Wilfredo Caminero (2nd District, Cebu).</p>

Continuation... Rural Development				<p>Rep. Ma. Lourdes Aggabao (4th District, Isabela) presided over the meeting to allow Rep. Ramos to sponsor his bill.</p> <p>Rep. Ramos said that his bill seeks to provide economic growth to rural barangays by allocating funds for them in the annual national budget. The proposed annual appropriation for every rural barangay is P4 million, to be utilized for the following: infrastructure (P1 million); agriculture and fisheries development (P1 million); livelihood program (P1 million); burial, food, medical, transportation and educational assistance (P500,000); and nutrition program (P500,000).</p> <p>Assistant Director Dimpna Lejos of the Local Government and Regional Coordination Bureau, Department of Budget and Management (DBM) said that the proposed law will have a significant impact on the expenditure program of the national government as it would entail about P145.24 billion annual appropriation for the 36,310 barangays nationwide.</p> <p>She explained that as a policy of the government, proposals like this should have a parallel measure such as a special appropriation bill with a certification by the national treasurer that funds are actually available or to be raised by corresponding revenue measures.</p> <p>In addition, Lejos said the DBM has an existing local government support fund (LGSF)-financial assistance (FA) amounting to P7.03 billion, which can be availed of by local government units (LGUs).</p> <p>Representatives from the National Nutrition Council (NNC), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) expressed support for the bill. The resource persons were requested to submit their official position papers on the bill.</p>
Science and Technology	Substitute Bill to HBs 1833, 5541 & 6670	Reps. Vargas, Romero, and Villafuerte	Strengthening RA 8439 or the Magna Carta for scientists, engineers, researchers and other science and technology personnel in government	The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair Kalinga Rep. Allen Jesse Mangaoang, approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 1833, 5541 and 6670.
	HR 11	Deputy Speaker Garcia	Congratulating and commending Arianwen Rollan for honoring the country with her award from the Qatar Foundation for her research on the anti-tumor properties of malunggay seeds featured in the 2016 Intel International Science and Engineering Fair	The Committee adopted HR 11.
	HRs 1592 & 1596	Rep. Alejano and Belaro	Congratulating and commending Hillary Andales from the Philippine Science High School-Eastern Visayas Campus for bringing honor and prestige to the country as the first Filipina to win the 2017 Breakthrough Junior Challenge	The Committee directed the Secretariat to prepare a substitute resolution for the two measures.

Continuation... Science and Technology	HB 2163	Rep. Ramirez-Sato	Instituting reforms in the existing policy on access and benefit-sharing from the utilization of Philippine genetic resources	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune the bill.</p> <p>Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" Mariño (5th District, Batangas) will act as the TWG Chair.</p>
	HB 4690	Rep. Mariño	Improving DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) facilities in the country	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to deliberate further on HB 4690.</p> <p>Guimaras Rep. Ma. Lucille Nava, M.D. will act as the Chair of the TWG.</p> <p>Rep. Mariño, author of HB 4690, underscored the importance of DNA analysis as a technological tool that not only helps determine the identity and lineage of persons, but the identity of victims and suspects as well during criminal investigations.</p> <p>The resource persons from the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) expressed support for the bill.</p> <p>Director Elmo Francis Sarona of the PNP's Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management stated that the bill could pave the way for the creation of a national forensic DNA database that will provide a reliable method of identification that would result in expeditious investigations and resolution of criminal cases.</p> <p>Rep. Mariño said that his bill focuses on improving and enhancing existing government-funded DNA facilities in the country and not creating new ones.</p> <p>The PNP was requested to submit to the Committee its proposal to establish a national forensic DNA database including the number of laboratories and personnel that will be required for its operation.</p>

COMMITTEE MEETING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Constitutional Amendments	Discussion on the "administration of resource generation and fiscal allocation in a federal system of government"	<p>The Committee, chaired by Southern Leyte Rep. Roger "Oging" Mercado, will continue its discussion on the "administration of resource generation and fiscal allocation" in its next meeting in line with its review of the proposed shift to a federal system of government.</p> <p>Rep. Mercado explained that transitioning to a federal system will change the government's fiscal administration wherein regions will have greater fiscal autonomy leading to a more improved delivery of basic services at the grassroots level.</p> <p>Several Committee Members expressed concern on the impact of a new fiscal administration to provinces that heavily rely on the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA). Under the federal system, regions will keep a larger percentage of their revenues while allocating a smaller percentage to the national government.</p>

<p>Continuation... Constitutional Amendments</p>		<p>According to OIC-Deputy Executive Director Jose Arnold Tan of the Bureau of Local Government Finance, Department of Finance (DOF), the new fiscal administration will be beneficial to regions with higher revenues, which contribute more than what they receive from the IRA, as in the case of the National Capital Region (NCR). Tan added that 80% of the regions in the country are IRA-dependent as of today.</p> <p>Rep. Horacio Suansing Jr. (2nd District, Sultan Kudarat) asked why local government units (LGUs) continue to request larger IRA allocations when in fact, based on the Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2016, there was a combined LGU surplus funds of P136.15 billion.</p> <p>For some Committee Members, this was a sign of poor budget planning and management among the LGUs which affects the delivery of basic services.</p> <p>On the issue of national debt, several Committee Members were concerned that the new revenue sharing arrangement being contemplated under a federal system would affect the country's ability to pay its debts.</p> <p>In response, Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Undersecretary Tina Rose Marie Canda said that the Federal Assembly could earmark portions of the regional revenues to pay for the national debt.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit to the Committee all pertinent data relative to the current resource generation and fiscal allocation including IRA allocations and sources of income of both the national and local governments.</p>
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AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
<p>Banks and Financial Intermediaries</p>	<p>Briefing by the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) on its current financial and investment program</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone, listened to the briefing conducted by President and General Manager Jesus Clint Aranas of the GSIS on its current financial and investment program.</p> <p>Aranas reported that based on 2016 and 2017 figures, GSIS recorded a growth of P11 billion in its total assets, representing an asset growth of 9.29% in 2017 as compared to only 5.72% in 2016.</p> <p>He added that achieving the asset growth of 9.29% already surpassed the agency's target to meet its actuarial requirement which will ensure adequate service to GSIS beneficiaries.</p> <p>Moreover, Aranas disclosed that the income generated from operations represented 1.5% of the total assets of GSIS for 2017 as compared to only 0.83 % in 2016, which is largely due to premium contributions that exceeded the increase in the claims and benefits in the social insurance fund income.</p> <p>Speaker Pantaleon "Bebot" Alvarez (1st District, Davao del Norte) inquired whether the GSIS is the largest insurance entity in the country and if it engages in reinsurance, to which Aranas answered in the affirmative.</p>