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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Appropriations	Substitute Bill to HBs 5590, 5593, 343, 930, 1056, 2385, 2387, 2828, 2832, 2868, 3897, 4652 & 4687	Reps. Nograles (K.A.), Vargas, Romualdez, Abaya, Antonino, Abad, Deputy Speaker Andaya, Reps. Villarín, Zarate, De Jesus, and Nieto	Reforming the budget process by enforcing greater accountability in Public Financial Management (PFM), promoting fiscal sustainability, strengthening Congress' power of the purse, instituting an integrated PFM system, and increasing budget transparency and participation	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1 st District, Davao City), approved the Substitute Bill to the 13 bills. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.
	Substitute Bill to HB 2094	Rep. Tinio	Declaring Filipino sign language as the national sign language of the Filipino deaf and the official sign language of government in all transactions involving the deaf, and mandating its use in schools, broadcast media, and workplaces	The Committee approved the funding provision of the Substitute Bill to HB 2094.
	Substitute Bill to HB 3335	Rep. Noel	Promoting the development of entrepreneurship skills among government employees to inspire innovativeness and to ensure their productivity even beyond government service	The Committee approved the funding provision of the Substitute Bill to HB 3335.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 1557, 1570 & 3134	Reps. Villafuerte, Vargas, and Revilla	Granting incentives to Filipino filmmakers who are given honors in notable international film festivals and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the funding provision of the Substitute Bill to the three bills with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 4018, 4904, 5023, 5326, 5433, 5443 & 6190	Reps. Unabia, Yap (A.), Macapagal-Arroyo, Chavez, Panganiban, Deputy Speaker Garin, and Rep. Geron	Replacing the quantitative import restrictions on rice with tariffs, amending for the purpose RA 8178, as amended, creating the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund	The Committee approved the funding provision of the Substitute Bill to the seven bills with amendments and subject to style.
	Substitute Bill to HB 5158	Rep. Unabia	Providing a socialized microfinancing program for micro enterprises, thereby promoting entrepreneurship	The Committee approved the funding provision of the Substitute Bill to HB 5158 with amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 5729, 5889, 5923 & 6287	Reps. Vargas, Tugna, Herrera-Dy, and Villafuerte	Instituting a Philippine Labor Force Competencies Program, and establishing free access to technical and vocational training programs	The Committee approved the funding provision of the Substitute Bill to the four bills with amendments.

Continuation... Appropriations	Substitute Bill to HBs 6236, 3278, 3855, 4466, 5683 & 2394	Majority Leader Fariñas, Reps. Ocampo, Bravo (A.), Siquian Go, Tan (A.), and Zarate	Abolishing the Road Board created by RA 8794 and transferring its powers and functions to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and to the Department of Transportation (DOTr), amending for the purpose RA 8794	The Committee approved the funding provision of the Substitute Bill to the six bills with amendments and subject to style.
Climate Change (Special Committee)	HB 201	Rep. Cari	Providing funds for the coastal management development programs of coastal cities and municipalities with the aim of enhancing, rehabilitating and improving the country's coastal marine resources	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Christopher Co (Party-List, AKO BICOL), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the three bills. The TWG will be chaired by Rep. Elisa "Olga" Kho (2nd District, Masbate).
	HB 2969	Rep Ermita-Buhain	Establishing a coastal climate change adaptation program for coastal local government units (CLGUs) by providing them financial and technical assistance	Rep. Jose Carlos Cari (5th District, Leyte), author of HB 201, presented that his bill seeks to allocate at least P5 billion annually for a period of 10 years for the rehabilitation and improvement of the country's coastal marine resources. The funds shall be released to coastal cities and municipalities subject to the rules and regulations to be prescribed by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the implementing agency.
	HB 5672	Rep. Acosta-Alba	Adopting an integrated coastal ecosystem management as a national strategy to ensure the sustainable development of coastal and marine environment and resources, establishing supporting mechanisms for its implementation, and providing funds therefor	For her part, Rep. Elenita Milagros "Eileen" Ermita-Buhain (1 st District, Batangas) said that her bill, HB 2969, aims to develop national and local adaptation strategies to improve the ability of coastal inhabitants to cope with the impact of climate change. Rep. Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba (1st District, Bukidnon), author of HB 5672, explained that the proposed National Coordinating Committee on Integrated Coastal Ecosystem Management (ICEM) will be tasked to coordinate the review and implementation of the National ICEM Framework to ensure the sustainable development of the country's coastal and marine resources. The National Coordinating Committee will be chaired by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), with concerned government agencies, academe, non-government organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders, as members. Nilda Baling, chief, Integrated Coastal and Marine Partnership Section at the DENR, discussed the goals and elements of the ICEM Program. She cited the importance of a legislation that will institutionalize the program. The following resource persons expressed their support for the bills: National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), Philippine Rehabilitation Authority (PRA), League of Cities, League of Provinces, Partnership in Environmental Management for the Sea of East Asia (PEMSEA), and RARE Philippines.

Continuation... Climate Change (Special Committee)				They were requested to submit their position papers on the bills for the consideration of the TWG.
Good Government and Public Accountability	HR 882	Rep. Fariñas	Inquiry into the use by the Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte of its shares from the excise taxes on locally manufactured Virginia-type cigarettes or the Special Support Fund under RA 7171 for a purpose other than those provided for by the said law, and into its highly irregular purchase of motor vehicles made through cash advances without the benefit of public biddings for the total amount of P66.45 million	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur), approved the Committee Report on HR 882.
	HR 1188	Rep. Evardone	Inquiry into the alleged grossly disadvantageous lease contract entered into by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Philippine Exporters Confederation, Inc. (PhilExport), and Manila Exposition Complex, Inc. (MECI)	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on the issues raised in HR 1188 in its next meeting.</p> <p>DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez affirmed that the contracts of lease and sublease entered into by the DTI (lessor), PhilExport (lessee), and MECI (sub-lessee) in January 1996 was grossly disadvantageous to the government based on the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The P1,000 per year lease consideration was too small an amount. • The PhilExport did not comply with its obligation under the lease contract to develop the subject area within two years and to construct a building within the complex for trade investors. <p>The lease contract covers a period of 50 years, renewable for another 25 years, covering an area of 4.9 hectare (ha.) prime government property located at the southwest corner of Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue and Roxas Boulevard.</p> <p>Sergio Ortiz-Luis, president and chief executive officer of PhilExport, claims that the government should have provided the funding for the construction of the facilities needed to establish the Philippine Trade Center (PTC). The PTC is intended to house the trade promotion offices and permanent exhibit sites of the country's export products.</p> <p>PhilExport is the accredited export organization which was selected by the Export Development Council (EDC), by virtue of RA 7844 or the Export Development Act of 1994, to manage and grant parcels of the Philtrade lot through a long-term lease and to represent the concerns and interests of the export sector.</p> <p>Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. (1st District, Surigao del Sur) stressed that a congressional inquiry on the issue is not necessary and just let the DTI run after the other party involved.</p>

<p><i>Continuation...</i> Good Government and Public Accountability</p>				<p>Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone, author of HR 1188, opined that PhilExport should be more transparent in its dealings especially when it comes to subleasing the property to private third-party entities.</p> <p>The resource persons present were requested to submit their respective position papers on HR 1188. Likewise, the National Development Company (NDC) was asked to submit its financial statement and investment plan.</p> <p>The NDC is an attached agency of the DTI which manages trade investment portfolios. It was created to develop, finance, and implement pioneering development-oriented projects vital to the sustainability of the government's structural reforms and economic policies.</p> <p>The Committee will issue a show cause order against Bobby Cheng Sai Chong, chairman of MEDCO Holdings, Inc., and Guillermo Luchangco, chairman and chief executive officer of Science Park of the Philippines, Inc., to explain their failure to attend the hearing today and in the past Committee hearings despite the written invitations sent to them by the Committee. MEDCO and Science Park are likewise sub-lessees within the property in question.</p>
<p>Local Government jt. w/ Muslim Affairs and Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity</p>	<p>Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 92, 6121, 6263 & 6475</p>	<p>Deputy Speaker Sema, Reps. Macapagal-Arroyo, & Dimaporo (M.K.), and Speaker Alvarez</p>	<p>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>	<p>The Joint Committee, chaired by Reps. Pedro Acharon Jr. (1st District, South Cotabato and General Santos City), Maanyag "Jun" Papandayan Jr. (2nd District, Lanao del Sur), and Ruby Sahali (Tawi-Tawi), for the Committees on Local Government, 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>Health Assistant Secretary Abdullah Dumama Jr. agreed to the proposal that matters related to health be under the concurrent powers of the national government and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (BAR).</p> <p>Dumama recommended the inclusion in the draft Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) a provision stating that in case of unexpected economic crisis, calamities, and insurgencies, the BAR shall allow the national government to deliver health care services in the Bangsamoro area. He also suggested the inclusion in the bill a provision promoting the right to health care services of the Bangsamoro people.</p> <p>Bangsamoro Transition Commission (BTC) Commissioner Hussin Amin interposed no objection to the recommendations of Dumama, but reminded the body that Section</p>

<p>Continuation... Local Government jt. w/ Muslim Affairs and Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity</p>				<p>98 of the proposed BBL already states that “the BAR Government guarantees a comprehensive and integrated health service to its constituents and upholds the people’s right to have access to health.”</p> <p>Meanwhile, Justice Assistant Secretary Sergio Yap II suggested that the draft substitute bill should clearly state that the BAR’s power, authority, and right to explore, develop, and utilize the natural resources will be subject to the provisions of the 1987 Philippine Constitution.</p> <p>On the jurisdiction of the Shari’ah courts on <i>hudud</i> (crimes against Allah) and <i>ta’zir</i> (minor offenses), Yap pointed out that the penalties that should be imposed by the Shari’ah courts must be in accord with the penalties prescribed under the Revised Penal Code of the Philippines and must adhere to the Constitution.</p> <p>Rep. Celso Lobregat (1st District, Zamboanga City) noted that the jurisdiction of Shari’ah courts in the proposed law expands to commercial and criminal actions which is contrary to the 1987 Philippine Constitution. He likewise requested the opinion of the Department of Justice (DOJ) on the following provisions: Section 111, that Shari’ah Court’s decision is “final and executory;” Section 113, on the proposed creation of Shari’ah Judicial and Bar Council; and Section 128, on the appointment of at least one justice in the Supreme Court and two justices in the Court of Appeals.</p> <p>Yap replied that the Supreme Court is the best office to comment on these provisions, but promised that he will review the jurisdiction of Shari’ah courts with regard to commercial and criminal actions.</p> <p>The representatives of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) and the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) expressed support for the proposed establishment of a PSA regional office and the designation of an Assistant Solicitor General in the BAR, respectively.</p> <p>On the recommendation of Rep. Lobregat to include in the proposed law a provision on the normalization of communities within BAR, BTC Commissioner Jose Lorena explained that normalization process is an executive action that does not need a legislation.</p> <p>Normalization is a process that would enable communities affected by the decades-long armed conflict in Mindanao to return to normal life (Source: OPAPP website)</p> <p>The BTC was requested to submit to the</p>
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Continuation... Local Government jt. w/ Muslim Affairs and Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity				<p>Committee a clear definition of the following terms used in the proposed law: <i>baitamal</i>, <i>awqaf</i> and <i>sakat</i>; and the rationale and other details with regard to the creation of the ad hoc joint body to maintain the Zones of Joint Cooperation.</p> <p>In the next meeting, representatives from the Supreme Court will be invited to comment on the issues pertaining to the Shari'ah court.</p>
Public Order and Safety	HB 7141	Rep. Espino	Amending RA 9372, otherwise known as the Human Security Act of 2007 (by deleting provisions that are redundant with existing laws and are anti-law enforcement, among other amendments)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), will continue its deliberation on the bills in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Amado Espino Jr. (5th District, Pangasinan), author of HBs 7141 and 5507, said that the proposed amendments pertain to the inclusion of additional punishable acts and predicate crimes that constitute terrorism and the deletion of provisions that are deemed anti-law enforcement.</p>
	HB 5507	Rep. Espino	Declaring as unlawful the membership in any Philippine court-proscribed or United Nations Security Council-designated terrorist organization and providing penalties for violation thereof	<p>Rep. Acop said that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss the merits of amending RA 9372 to give it more teeth in view of the terrorist attack perpetrated by the Maute Group in Marawi City. He informed the body that the Committee has a pending request with the Committee on Rules for a joint referral of the bills with the Committee on National Defense and Security.</p> <p>The resource persons committed to submit their position papers on the bills within five days.</p>

IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Justice	Determination of probable cause in relation to the verified complaint for impeachment against Supreme Court Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno, filed by Atty. Lorenzo G. Gadon, and endorsed by 25 House Members	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Reynaldo Umali (2nd District, Oriental Mindoro), suspended the meeting on the determination of probable cause relative to the impeachment complaint against the Chief Justice until March 07, 2018, when its Members will vote on the matter.</p> <p>In today's hearing, the Committee focused its discussion on the following allegations against Sereno:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-disclosure of her earnings as government counsel in an arbitration case against the Philippine International Air Terminals Co., Inc. (Piatco) in her Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN); • Betrayal of public trust when she appointed a key official, the Chief of the Philippine Mediation Center Office (PMCO), without authority or approval of the Supreme Court (SC) en banc, in violation of SC-established rules and the Constitution; and • Obstruction of justice by ordering the Muntinlupa City Regional Trial Court (RTC) judges not to issue warrants of arrest against Senator Leila de Lima. <p>The Committee also held an executive meeting to hear the testimonies of invited psychiatrists on Sereno's psychiatric and/or psychological evaluation report when she applied for the position of chief justice.</p>

Continuation... Justice		<p>Atty. Socorro Inting, current chief of the Judicial and Bar Council's (JBC) Office of Recruitment, Selection and Nomination (ORSN), and Judge Ricardo Pascual, former chief of the ORSN and now presiding judge of the Metropolitan Trial Court (MTC) Branch 116 in Taguig, testified that based on the record of the JBC, Sereno submitted only three SALNs for the years 2009, 2010, and 2011 when she applied for the position of chief justice, and two of which were not subscribed.</p> <p>Pascual explained that the JBC requires that applicants for chief justice position should submit all their SALNs while in government service. Nevertheless, the JBC considered Sereno to have substantially complied with the requirement, accepting her explanation that locating the missing SALNs has become very difficult as contained in her letter to the JBC dated July 23, 2012.</p> <p>Deputy Commissioner Arnel Guballa of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) testified that Sereno substantially declared all income and legal fees she earned from the Piatco case in her income tax returns (ITRs) from 2004 to 2009, which amounted to \$625,179.68 or P32.5 million, but admitted there were certain discrepancies therein.</p> <p>Guballa noted that Sereno committed six violations for evading the payment of taxes and failure to pay the correct taxes, particularly pertaining to her value-added tax (VAT) as a professional.</p> <p>With regard to betrayal of public trust, Justice Adolfo Azcuna, chancellor of the Philippine Judicial Academy (PHILJA), to where the PMCO is attached, testified that Atty. Brenda Jay Mendoza, head of the PMCO, was appointed by a panel of three senior SC justices, including Sereno, upon the recommendation of PHILJA, a unit of the SC charged with training judges and other court personnel.</p> <p>On the allegation of obstruction of justice, Judge Juanita Guerrero of Branch 204, Regional Trial Court (RTC) in Muntinlupa City, categorically denied that she received a call from Sereno or any other SC official tending to influence her decision in the drug-related cases against Senator Leila de Lima.</p> <p>Guerrero, who was the first judge in Muntinlupa City to issue a warrant of arrest against De Lima, likewise attested to the integrity of her fellow judges Amelia Fabros-Corpuz and Patria Manalastas-De Leon of Muntinlupa City RTC Branches 205 and 206, respectively, who were originally assigned to hear the cases against the Senator.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Energy (Technical Working Group)	HB 2942	Rep. Castelo	Amending certain sections of PD 910, or the law creating the Energy Development Board (EDB) (by providing that all fees, revenues, receipts, royalties, and other monies collected by the EDB shall form part of the General Fund to be used to finance energy resource development and exploitation projects of the government and for such other purposes that redound to the general public welfare)	The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Jay Velasco, will deliberate further on the four bills in its next meeting. Rep. Velasco said he does not favor the transfer of the entire Malampaya Fund to the General Fund, explaining that it is needed to finance energy resource development projects or undertakings. He suggested that 80% of the Malampaya Fund can go to energy-related projects and the remaining 20% can go to scholarship programs related to energy development.
	HB 3593	Rep. Batocabe	Amending PD 910, specifying the use of the Malampaya Fund	

Continuation... Energy (Technical Working Group)	HB 3877	Rep. Zarate	Amending PD 910, mandating the transfer of Malampaya funds to the General Fund subject to congressional appropriation for the purpose of re-nationalizing the country's power and energy industry	<p>On the other hand, Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA), author of HB 3877, pointed out that proceeds from the Malampaya gas exploration project should be properly utilized and be subject to Congressional appropriation.</p> <p>Manila Electric Company (MERALCO) Vice President Lawrence Fernandez said that the Malampaya Fund should be utilized for projects aimed at reducing electricity rates.</p> <p>Replying to the query of Rep. Velasco, Undersecretary Raul Aguilos of the Department of Energy (DOE) said that the DOE identifies the projects that will be funded through the Malampaya Fund.</p> <p>The National Power Corporation (NPC) and the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM) will be invited to attend the next TWG meeting to answer all the queries regarding their stranded debts.</p> <p>Likewise, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) and the legal staff of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and DOE were directed to attend the next TWG meeting.</p>
	HB 4604	Rep. Ramirez-Sato	Authorizing the use of the Special Fund composed of the government share from the exploration, development and exploitation of energy resources for renewable energy development and biodiversity conservation activities, amending for the purpose Section 8 of PD 910, and specifying the use of the special fund for biodiversity conservation	
Government Enterprises and Privatization jt. w/ Public Works and Highways (Technical Working Group)	HB 6193	Rep. Macapagal-Arroyo	Granting one-time condonation of interest arrearages and penalties in favor of qualified local water districts (LWDs) pertaining to their loan with the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA)	The joint technical working group (TWG), co-chaired by Rep. Jesus Nonato Sacdalan (1st District, North Cotabato) for the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, and Rep. Deogracias Ramos Jr. (2nd District, Sorsogon) for the Committee on Public Works and Highways, approved HB 6193.
	HB 140	Rep. Noel	Reducing the water rates and charges for water users in the barangay/s hosting the water resource within a water district, thereby amending PD 198, as amended	The joint TWG will deliberate further on the six bills in its next meeting.
	HB 221	Rep. Villarica	Creating the National Water Resources Management Authority and appropriating funds therefor	It agreed to request the Committee on Rules for the referral of HBs 2457 and 4995 to the Joint Committee instead of the Committee on Government Reorganization considering that these two bills have subject matters similar to that of the six bills under deliberation.
	HB 479	Rep. Sy-Alvarado	Instituting a national dam safety program, establishing the National Dam Safety Authority, penalizing violations therefor	HBs 2457 and 4995 propose the creation of a department for water resources.
	HBs 517 & 2075	Reps. Herrera-Dy and Ramirez-Sato	Rationalizing the economic regulation of water utilities, creating the Water Regulatory Commission	
	HB 5025	Minority Leader Suarez	Amending 6234, or the law creating the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and dissolving the National Waterworks and Sewerage Authority (by specifying that MWSS is a purely regulatory agency)	
Transportation (Technical Working Group)	HR 1584	Rep. Sarmiento (C.)	Urging all concerned government agencies to protect the rights and promote the welfare of passengers using the country's port system or RoRo (Roll-on, Roll-off) network	The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Malabon City Rep. Federico "Ricky" Sandoval II, will continue its discussion on the issues raised in HR 1584 in its next meeting.

<p>Continuation... Transportation (Technical Working Group)</p>				<p>Rep. Sandoval solicited the views of the resource persons on how best to deal with congestion in seaports and assist stranded passengers during inclement weather or other reasons that lead to delayed or cancelled voyages.</p> <p>The Port Operations and Services Department Manager of the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), Lilian Javier, suggested that ticketing offices located inside the ports should be transferred elsewhere as this is seen to add to the number of people inside the ports.</p> <p>Brigadier General Joselito Ramos, wing commander of the Philippine Air Force (PAF), said PAF's resources are available to assist stranded maritime passengers in terms of mobility and even medical assistance.</p> <p>PPA Legal Services Department Manager Hiyasmin delos Santos disclosed that at present, there is no written rule with regard to ship owners and terminal operators' responsibilities or obligations to passengers in case of delayed, cancelled or unfinished voyages.</p> <p>The informal arrangement is that shipping companies will provide services and pay for the accommodation of passengers during the first day the trip was cancelled or delayed, with the terminal operator providing the same services on the second day. Thereafter, the passengers are left to fend for themselves, Delos Santos said.</p> <p>Maritime Industry Authority's (MARINA) Legal Service head Virgilio Calag informed the TWG that a memorandum circular governing the passenger bill of rights is being drafted, which will later be subjected to a series of public consultations.</p> <p>Deputy Administrator for Operations and Services Landrico Dalida Jr. of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) said that coastal radars will be available next year which will greatly improve PAGASA's work of providing the PCG and other sectors with timely updates on the state of the seas.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) requested to be given more time to finalize its position paper on the measure.</p> <p>The other resource persons were also requested to submit their respective position papers as soon as possible for consideration by the TWG.</p> <p>In the next meeting, representatives from shipping companies will be invited to comment on the issues raised.</p>
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AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Mindanao Affairs	<p>Briefing by the following government agencies on their plans and programs for Mindanao:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Maximo Rodriguez, Jr. (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City), listened to the briefing conducted by NEDA and MinDA on their plans and programs for Mindanao.</p> <p>NEDA Undersecretary Adoracion Navarro said that the masterplan for the development of Mindanao is included in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022. According to Navarro, the PDP envisions the Philippines to be an upper-middle income country by 2022 with a gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of seven to eight percent.</p> <p>Navarro mentioned the following goals for each region in Mindanao:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula) - center for sustainable agri-fishery industries of the Philippines; Region X (Northern Mindanao) - gateway and leading industrial core and trade center in Southern Philippines; Region XI (Davao Region) - financial, trade and services center of Southern Mindanao; Region XII (SOCCSKSARGEN) - agri-industrial hub and ecotourism center in Southern Philippines Region XIII (CARAGA) - fishery, agro-forestry, mineral and ecotourism center; and Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) - potential <i>halal</i> hub of the Philippines. <p>The government's flagship projects for Mindanao, according to Navarro, include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of the Asian Halal Center; Improvement of the growth corridors in Mindanao; Construction of additional facilities for the Laguindingan International Airport in Misamis Oriental and the Panguil Bay Bridge connecting Misamis Occidental and Lanao del Norte; Establishment of the Mindanao Logistics Infrastructure network; and Construction of the Davao City by-pass road project and the Mindanao Railway Project from Tagum City, Davao del Norte to Digos City, Davao del Sur. <p>The Committee requested NEDA to help increase the budget allocation for Mindanao from 12.5% to 18% of the national budget for 2019. In response, Navarro gave assurance that NEDA will do its best to increase the budget allocation for the Mindanao Region.</p> <p>Secretary Datu Abul Khayr Dangcal Alonto informed the Committee that for 2019, MinDA's priority plans and programs are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the proposal for a shift from a presidential form of government to a federal one; Connect Mindanao through the planned trans-Mindanao high-speed railway; Establish the Tawi-Tawi Economic Zone and Freeport; and Establish agro-economic cooperative zones. <p>MinDA Deputy Executive Director Romeo Montenegro said that Mindanao needs an additional budget of P1.25 trillion spread over a five-year period to fund projects that aim to improve the current socio-economic status of Mindanao. He asserted that more budget should be allocated to infrastructure and economic projects, rather than on social services, as the two have greater impact on economic development and poverty reduction.</p>

<p><i>Continuation...</i> Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Budget and Management (DBM) 	<p>assist MSMEs in disaster stricken areas, and P1.91 billion for the implementation of the “Pondo sa Pagbabago at Pag-asenso (P3) Program.” The amount of P4.9 billion shall be set aside for SB Corp.’s lending portfolio this year.</p> <p>The P3 Program is a financing program for microenterprises that is easy to access and is being made available at a reasonable monthly interest rate of 2.5%.</p> <p>DBM Assistant Division Chief Elizabeth Guevarra reported that under the 2018 General Appropriations Act (GAA), a total of P2.25 billion was allocated to the DTI for its MSME development programs.</p> <p>The 2018 GAA also provides a special provision allocating an amount of P1 billion as subsidy for the implementation of the P3 Program.</p> <p>Rep. Jocelyn Limkaichong (1st District, Negros Oriental) asked if DTI has a list of entrepreneurs that have improved their businesses through the assistance of DTI.</p> <p>DTI Assistant Secretary Blesila Lantayona replied that the Department is currently developing a database on MSMEs to include data on their asset size, category, type of industry, and their current status.</p> <p>Reps. Limkaichong and Rodrigo Abellanosa (2nd District, Cebu City) inquired whether information technology (IT) development projects could be covered under any of DTI’s programs for MSMEs.</p> <p>SB Corp. Senior Vice President Melvin Abanto said they could be accommodated through the credit line program for MSMEs. Lantayona added that IT projects can also benefit from the Shared Services Facilities (SSF) program for MSMEs in collaboration with state universities and colleges (SUCs).</p> <p>SSF program provides machinery, equipment, tools and other similar auxiliary items, skills and knowledge under a shared system to produce quality products and make the MSME sector more competitive in both domestic and international markets.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to file a resolution requesting President Rodrigo Roa Duterte to allocate P6 billion for the implementation of the P3 Program.</p>
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