

Committee Daily Bulletin



17th Congress
Third Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. III No. 36
October 1, 2018

BICAMERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Bicameral Conference Committee	HB 4113 & SB 1305	Former Rep. Aglipay-Villar and Sen. Hontiveros	Increasing the maternity leave period to 105 days for female workers in the government service and the private sector with an option to extend for an additional 30 days without pay, providing a parental leave period for adoptive parents, and granting an additional 15 days for solo mothers	<p>The Bicameral Conference Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy (Party-List, BAGONG HENERASYON), Chair of the House Committee on Women and Gender Equality, and Sen. Risa Hontiveros, Chair of the Senate Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality, approved the Bicameral Conference Committee Report on HB 4113 and SB 1305.</p> <p>Other conferees who were present during the bicameral conference committee meeting were the following: On the part of the House, Deputy Speaker Pia Cayetano (2nd District, Taguig City), Reps. Edcel Lagman (1st District, Albay), Emmi de Jesus (Party-List, GABRIELA), Mark Go (Baguio City), and Arnel Ty (Party-List, LPGMA); on the part of the Senate, Sen. Maria Lourdes Nancy Binay.</p>

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Higher and Technical Education	Substitute Bill to HB 5910	Rep. Bernos	Converting the Abra State Institute of Sciences and Technology (ASIST) in the Municipalities of Lagangilang and Bangued, Province of Abra into a state university to be known as the University of Abra and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Antique Rep. Paolo Javier, approved the substitute bill subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Subsequently, the Secretariat shall transmit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations for consideration and approval of its funding provision.</p>
	HB 8229, in consolidation with HB 7998	Reps. Ong (H.) and Noel	Including the EVSU - Dulag Campus as a regular campus of EVSU, amending for the purpose RA 9311 or the law converting the Leyte Institute of Technology (LIT) in the Province of Leyte into a state university to be known as the EVSU and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 8229, in consolidation with HB 7998, subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Subsequently, the Secretariat shall transmit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations for consideration and approval of its funding provision.</p>
	HB 8292, in consolidation with HB 8246	Reps. Javier and Castelo	Declaring the Polytechnic University of the Philippines as the National Polytechnic University, strengthening it for the purpose, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 8292, in consolidation with HB 8246, subject to style and amendment.</p>

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education				Subsequently, the Secretariat shall transmit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations for consideration and approval of its funding provision.
	HB 204	Deputy Speaker Abueg	Creating the Palawan State University System in the Province of Palawan and the City of Puerto Princesa, amending for the purpose RA 7818	<p>The Committee approved HB 204 subject to style and amendment. A joint ocular inspection of the university will be conducted by the Committee and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to transmit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations for consideration and approval of its funding provision.</p>
	HB 8263	Rep. Mellana	Converting the Agusan del Sur State College of Agriculture and Technology (ASSCAT) in the Municipality of Bunawan, Province of Agusan del Sur into a state university, integrating therewith the satellite campus in the Municipality of Trento, Province of Agusan del Sur to be known as the Agusan del Sur State University (ADSSU) and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 8263 subject to style and amendment. A joint ocular inspection of ASSCAT will be conducted by the Committee and CHED to ensure that it complies with the requirements for the conversion to a state university.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to transmit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations for consideration and approval of its funding provision.</p>
Ways and Means	HRs 359 & 2040	Reps. Suansing (E.) and Suansing (H.)	Investigation into the proper implementation of RA 9335, otherwise known as the Attrition Act of 2005, with the end in view of strictly implementing said Act in order to optimize the revenue generation capability and collections of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and the Bureau of Customs (BOC)	<p>The Committee chaired by Rep. Estrellita Suansing (2nd District, Nueva Ecija), will deliberate further on the two resolutions in another meeting.</p> <p>The Attrition Act was passed to optimize the revenue generation capability and collection of the BIR and BOC by providing for a system of rewards and sanctions to encourage their officials and employees to exceed their revenue targets.</p> <p>In separate meetings, the Committee discussed with the BOC and the BIR the issues raised in the two resolutions.</p> <p>BOC Commissioner Isidro Lapeña, replying to the query of the Chair on the status of implementation of RA 9335, said that the BOC is constantly communicating with the Department of Finance (DOF) for the issuance of the amended implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of RA 9335 so that the Bureau can fully implement the law.</p> <p>In the meantime, Lapeña said BOC officials and employees are required to submit their "Employee's Performance Commitment" as part of the requirements of RA 9335.</p> <p>Rep. Johnny Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur) asked the BOC on the source of funds for the implementation of the incentives and rewards program for BOC employees under RA 9335. Lapeña answered that the fund will be sourced from the revenue collection of the BOC in excess of its revenue target.</p>

Continuation... Ways and Means				<p>On the “one-strike policy” of the BOC, Lapeña explained that a memorandum has been issued directing all district and deputy collectors, chiefs of formal entry divisions, and examiners to be responsible in achieving the targets assigned to them, failure of which will result to their possible replacement or relief from their posts.</p> <p>Rep. Suansing reminded the BOC that the said policy might have a negative effect on the performance of the personnel and might contravene with RA 9335. She also requested the BOC to submit its proposed amendments to RA 9335 that would improve the law.</p> <p>Meanwhile, BIR Commissioner Caesar Dulay reported that the Bureau is having difficulties hiring certified public accountants (CPAs) whose expertise is highly needed in most of the aspects of the Bureau’s functions. He said the BIR offers a little over P20,000 monthly salary for new employees which is no match to the offers of private companies and other government agencies.</p> <p>Dulay also claimed that the stringent requirements set by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) is another factor that discourages CPAs to apply for employment with the BIR.</p> <p>Rep. Lianda Bolilia (4th District, Batangas) suggested that the BIR should reclassify or upgrade some of its positions and adjust the compensation for CPAs. Dulay welcomed the suggestion and promised to discuss it with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).</p>
	HR 1824	Rep. Suansing (H.)	Inquiry into the possible violations of RA 10863 or the Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA) in connection with the alleged unauthorized withdrawal of 105 containers from the Port of Manila, with the end in view of addressing potential loss in government revenue	<p>The Committee terminated its inquiry on HR 1824 with the BOC’s report that charges were already filed against erring BOC personnel and customs brokers and importers.</p> <p>National Bureau of Investigation’s National Capital Region (NBI-NCR) Director Cesar Bacani reported that several executives of the Manila South Harbor’s port operator, importers, and customs brokers were charged accordingly in connection with the case.</p> <p>The Committee requested the NBI to submit its investigation report on the falsification of signatures of BOC officials that led to the unauthorized withdrawal of the 105 containers from the Port of Manila.</p>
	HR 1145	Rep. Villanueva	Inquiry into the alleged irregularities in tax assessment and collection involving Del Monte Philippines, Inc. resulting to revenue loss to the government	<p>The Committee terminated its inquiry in connection with HRs 1145 and 1162.</p> <p>The Commission on Audit (COA) was instructed to submit a report on its investigation into the alleged irregularities in</p>
	HR 1162	Rep.	Inquiry into the substantial disparity in the	

Continuation... Ways and Means		Villanueva	amount of deficiency tax liabilities as assessed by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and the corresponding payment made by the taxpayer	tax assessment and collection involving Del Monte Philippines, for reference by the Committee in the drafting of its Committee Report.
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PUBLIC HEARING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Natural Resources	HR 1706	Rep. Ty	Inquiry into the reported establishment of structures in forest areas, including shorelines in boracay	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Rodrigo Abellanos (2nd District, Cebu City), held a public hearing in Casa Pilar, Boracay Island on September 28 in relation to HR 1706. This is the fourth of a series of public hearings conducted by the Committee on the matter.</p> <p>The Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Task Force led by its head, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu, presented the latest update on the rehabilitation of Boracay Island. With the DENR Secretary were the other members of the Task Force: Secretaries Eduardo Año of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, Virginia Orogo of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and Bernadette Romulo-Puyat of the Department of Tourism.</p> <p>The Task Force's general plans for the island include the following: regulating the activities in the coastal and marine reserves; protecting the resources of the island by banning huge beach parties and regulating water sports and other activities such as building sand castles; strictly implementing the easement laws at the beach front; establishing a zero waste policy; and limiting tourist arrivals and even the number of residents based on the island's carrying capacity.</p> <p>Replying to the query of the Committee Members, the Task Force admitted that the masterplan for Boracay is still being prepared by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).</p> <p>Rep. Jesus Nonato Sacdalan (1st District, North Cotabato) proposed that the Committee recommend the creation of a Boracay Island Development Authority to manage the development of the island after the rehabilitation period.</p> <p>Aside from Reps. Abellanos and Sacdalan, other House Members who attended the public hearing were Aklan Rep. Carlito Marquez and Rep. Ariel "Ka Ayik" Casilao (Party-List, ANAKPAWIS).</p>

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Ways and Means	Briefing by the Bureau of Customs (BOC) on its collection performance and the status of the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for RA 10863 or the law modernizing the customs and tariff administration	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Estrellita Suansing (2nd District, Nueva Ecija), listened to the briefing of BOC on its revenue collection performance and the status of the IRR of RA 10863.</p> <p>Customs Commissioner Isidro Lapeña said that in compliance with the instruction of the President to institute reforms in the BOC, he has implemented a five-point priority program for the BOC which are: stamping out corruption in the Bureau; increasing revenue collection; ensuring trade facilitation; strengthening anti-smuggling efforts; and enhancing personnel incentives and compensation and the system of rewards and sanctions.</p> <p>Lapeña reported that he has made significant efforts in deterring a long-time modus in the BOC allowing consignees to evade the payment of correct taxes in connivance with corrupt BOC personnel. In the recent illegal withdrawal of 105 containers at the Port of Manila, for example, Lapeña said that criminal and administrative charges have already been filed against customs brokers and employees who were found to be involved in this wrongdoing.</p> <p>Another anti-corruption measure in the BOC is the implementation of the “1-assessment system” or the Enhanced Goods Declaration Verification System (EGDVS), an electronic system of processing and monitoring the declaration of imported goods with lesser human intervention to limit attempts of influence-peddling and connivance. Lapeña cited the positive developments in the course of the EGDVS’ pilot implementation in the Ports of Batangas, Subic, and Clark.</p> <p>On BOC’s revenue collection performance, Lapeña reported positive figures for the past two years: BOC’s total collection of P435.64 billion from January to September 30, 2018 grew by 34.5% compared to the same period last year; and its total collection of P458.18 billion in 2017 increased by 15.6% compared to the 2016’s P396.36 billion. In 2017, BOC accomplished an all-time high monthly collection of over P40 billion from September to December 2017.</p> <p>To encourage better performance from the BOC personnel, Lapeña said that he will implement the incentive and rewards system under RA 9335 or the Attrition Act of 2005.</p>
	Briefing by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) on its collection performance and the status of the implementing rules and regulations (IRRs) of RA 10963 or the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law	<p>The Committee listened to the BIR’s report on its revenue collection performance and the status of the TRAIN Law’s IRRs.</p> <p>BIR Commissioner Caesar Dulay reported that the Bureau’s collection for the first six months of 2018 has reached P969.9 billion, which is 3.22% higher than its P938.7 billion target.</p> <p>Several lawmakers inquired as to why majority of BIR regional offices failed to reach their respective targets despite the figures presented by the Commissioner.</p> <p>BIR Deputy Commissioner Arnel Guballa explained that the BIR’s regional offices could not meet the targets set because the bulk of their tax collections come from micro, small and</p>

<p><i>Continuation...</i> Ways and Means</p>		<p>medium-sized businesses whose incomes fall under the amount exempted from tax under the TRAIN Law. His statement was supported by several regional directors present during the meeting.</p> <p>On the status of the IRRs of the TRAIN Law, Dulay said that the BIR has already drafted 74 revenue regulations which will soon be ready for implementation.</p> <p>Several lawmakers questioned how the BIR is able to impose the appropriate tax on beverages that use sugar and high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). Guballa said that the BIR relies on the certification given by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which in turn uses the declaration of the manufacturers as its basis for issuing the certification.</p> <p>Rep. Suansing doubted the reliability of the food manufacturers' declarations and suggested that the BIR should maintain the P12 per liter tax on beverages that use HFCS until the FDA is able to conduct actual tests on them. Dulay agreed with the suggestion of Rep. Suansing.</p> <p>Under the TRAIN Law, an excise tax of P6 per liter shall be imposed on drinks containing caloric or non-caloric sweetener and P12 per liter on drinks containing HFCS.</p>
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