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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Health	HRs 444, 480, 1519 & 1675, and Privilege Speech 125	Reps. Tan (A.), Suansing (E.), Atienza, Zarate, and Leachon	Inquiry into the legality of the procurement process and use of public funds relative to the school-based dengue immunization program of the Department of Health (DOH) as well as the efficacy and safety of the vaccine procured	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo, Chair of the Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability, and Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4th District, Quezon), Chair of the Committee on Health, will deliberate further on the issues raised relative to the five measures in its next meeting.</p> <p>At the outset, both Reps. Romualdo and Tan explained that the Joint Committee decided to reopen the inquiry into the DOH's purchase of the dengue vaccine, Dengvaxia, from pharmaceutical company Sanofi Pasteur to seek answers to questions that were left hanging during the previous hearings.</p> <p>In April 2016, the government launched a school-based immunization program to selected public schools in certain parts of the country. A year after, Sanofi released a statement that based on its long-term clinical trial data on Dengvaxia, children who have not been exposed to dengue and were vaccinated with the dengue vaccine were more likely to get severe dengue after immunization.</p> <p>Rep. Romualdo said that there was a need to identify and clarify the roles of former and current officials of the DOH and officials of other agencies who were involved in the purchase of Dengvaxia. He questioned why the DOH requested funds for the purchase of the vaccine, which during that time, had yet to be issued a Certificate of Product Registration (CPR) by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The CPR certifies the safety, quality and efficacy of drugs or vaccines.</p> <p>Rep. Doy Leachon (1st District, Oriental Mindoro) added that aside from the CPR, Dengvaxia needed to be included in the Philippine formulary if it were to be purchased using public funds.</p> <p>The lawmakers pressed the resource persons from the DOH to identify who suggested the inclusion of the dengue vaccine in the agency's request for funding. The funds for the purchase</p>

<p><i>Continuation...</i> Good Government and Public Accountability jt. w/ Health</p>				<p>of the vaccines were sourced from the savings from the Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund and the Pension Gratuity Fund.</p> <p>DOH's Disease Prevention and Control Bureau Director Joyce Ducusin, who was one of the members of the technical working group that listed the vaccines for funding, said that she could not pinpoint who exactly suggested the inclusion of the dengue vaccine. Ducusin, however, admitted that it was the first time that the DOH requested funding for the purchase of a vaccine without a CPR. According to Ducusin, this was partly due to then Health Secretary Janette Garin's instruction to submit in one day the list of vaccines that needed funding to comply with the deadline given by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) at that time.</p> <p>Garin avered that there was no undue haste in the purchase of the dengue vaccine because discussions about the matter had been going on as early as 2002, long before she became the DOH Secretary. Garin also told the Joint Committee that the purchase was part of the multi-year strategic plan of the DOH and is aligned with the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO).</p> <p>For its next meeting, the Committee will invite FDA Director General Charade Galang-Puno as well as the FDA personnel responsible for the processing of Dengvaxia's CPR.</p> <p>The DOH was also instructed to submit the minutes of its August 25 and December 10, 2015 meetings about the dengue immunization program.</p>
<p>Legislative Franchises</p>	<p>Substitute Bill to HB 2262</p>	<p>Rep. Cueva</p>	<p>Granting the Cadiz Radio and Television Network, Inc. a franchise to construct, install, establish, operate and maintain radio and television broadcasting stations in the Western Visayas area</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Franz Alvarez (1st District, Palawan), approved the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HB 2262.</p>
	<p>Substitute Bill to HB 7287</p>	<p>Rep. Ferrer (J.M.)</p>	<p>Renewing the franchise granted to Ultimate Entertainment, Inc. under RA 8102 for another 25 years from the effectivity of this Act</p>	<p>The Committee approved the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HB 7287.</p>
	<p>Substitute Bill to HB 7980</p>	<p>Former Rep. Nograles (K.A.)</p>	<p>Renewing for another 25 years the franchise granted to RT Broadcast Specialist Phil., Inc. under RA 8126</p>	<p>The Committee approved the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HB 7980.</p>
	<p>Substitute Bill to HB 4555</p>	<p>Rep. Dimaporo (M.K.)</p>	<p>Granting the Lanao del Norte Electric Cooperative a franchise to construct, operate and maintain a distribution system for the conveyance of electric power to the end-users in all municipalities of the Province of Lanao del Norte</p>	<p>The Committee approved the Committee Report on the Substitute Bill to HB 4555.</p>

Continuation... Legislative Franchises	HB 5602	Rep. Mendoza	Renewing for another 25 years the franchise granted to Vimcontu Broadcasting Corporation under RA 8116	<p>The Committee approved the bill.</p> <p>Rep. Raymond Democrito Mendoza (Party-List, TUCP), author of HB 5602, highlighted the advocacy of the Visayas-Mindanao Confederation of Trade Union (Vimcontu) Broadcasting Corporation to promote the welfare of Filipino workers by providing a network where issues affecting their rights and other significant events that directly affect them and their families are discussed. Rep. Mendoza added that the Vimcontu is the only broadcasting company that is owned and managed by workers and workers-union under the Associated Labor Unions-Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (ALU-TUCP).</p> <p>The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) interposed no objection to the bill.</p> <p>Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Legal Counsel Ann Kathleen Gatdula expressed her support for the bill. However, Gatdula advised Vimcontu to submit its General Information Sheet (GIS) for the years 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2017 and its financial statements for years 2013-2015. Gatdula said that SEC will issue a Certificate of Good Standing to Vimcontu upon submission of these documents and the payment of corresponding fees and penalties.</p> <p>Vimcontu President Gerardo Seno promised to comply with the SEC requirements.</p>
	HB 8379	Rep. Quimbo	Renewing for another 25 years the franchise granted to ABC Development Corporation, presently known as TV5 Network, Inc., under RA 7831	<p>The Committee approved the bill.</p> <p>Rep. Romero "Miro" Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City) said that the renewal of TV5 Network's franchise will allow it to continue to provide the viewers a wide array and well-balanced programming.</p> <p>Party-List Reps. Ron Salo (KABAYAN) and Rodante Marcoleta (SAGIP) expressed support for the bill but suggested that TV5 should improve its programming to be at par with the two leading networks (ABS-CBN Corporation and GMA Network) in the country.</p> <p>TV5 Network President Vincent "Chot" Reyes said that first in the agenda of the network is to improve its financial status after incurring losses in the past years. He, however, assured the Committee that TV5, known in the industry as a Sports News TV network, will adjust its programming to be more competitive with ABS-CBN and GMA in the future.</p> <p>Representatives from the NTC and SEC expressed their support for the renewal of the franchise of TV5 Network.</p>
Revision of Laws	HB 7856	Rep. Fariñas	Declaring September 8 of every year as a special working holiday in the entire country to commemorate the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Marlyn Primicias-Agabas (6 th District, Pangasinan), approved HB 7856.

Continuation... Revision of Laws	HBs 4968, 7741, 8065, 8293 & 8376	Reps. Unico, Barzaga, Salimbangon, Cari, and Robes	Declaring special non-working holidays in various parts of the country to commemorate special events	The Committee approved the five bills.
	HBs 8215 & 8261	Deputy Speaker Garcia-Albano and Rep. Ungab	Declaring March 1 of every year as a special non-working holiday in the City of Davao to be known as the "Araw ng Dabaw," repealing for the purpose RAs 7551 and 7685	The Committee agreed to come up with a substitute bill using HB 8215 as the lead bill, and later on approved the same.
	HB 8066	Rep. Cari	Declaring June 16 of every year as a special working holiday in the City of Baybay, Province of Leyte	The Committee approved HB 8066 subject to style and amendment.
	HB 5699	Rep. Primicias- Agabas	Amending Article 7 of EO 209, otherwise known as the Family Code of the Philippines (by adding persons authorized to solemnize marriage)	The Committee will deliberate further on HB 5699 in its next meeting. The Department of Justice (DOJ), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), and other concerned agencies will be invited to the Committee's next meeting for them to present their comments and recommendations on the bill.
	HB 7911	Rep. Gomez	Declaring June 29 of every year a special non-working holiday in the City of Ormoc, Province of Leyte in celebration of the city's fiesta	The Committee will deliberate further on HB 7911 in its next meeting.
	HB 8210	Rep. Rocamora	Declaring September 17 of every year a special non-working holiday in the Province of Siquijor in commemoration of its founding anniversary, to be known as "Adlaw sa Siquijor"	The Committee will deliberate further on HB 8210 in its next meeting.
Trade and Industry	HBs 2882, 6609 & 7803	Reps. Villafuerte, Nieto, and Garcia (J.E.)	Providing benefits and programs to strengthen, promote, and develop the Philippine Startup Ecosystem	The Committee, presided by Vice Chair Rep. Manuel Zubiri (3 rd District, Bukidnon), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the four bills.
	HB 3057	Rep. Yap (V.)	Creating the Innovation Council and providing benefits and programs to strengthen, promote, and develop the Philippine Startup Ecosystem	At the outset, Rep. Zubiri said that the bills seek to encourage and support the growth of new and innovative businesses through the provision of incentives and the removal of constraints in the form of tax breaks, easier business registration procedures, technical support and training programs, and other forms of assistance from the government. The ultimate objective of the bill is to create a thriving and globally-competitive Filipino startup communities, able to generate employment and spur economic growth. Rep. Jose Enrique "Joet" Garcia III (2 nd District, Bataan), author of HB 7803, presented the merits of his bill as well as sponsored HBs 2882, 6609 and 3057 in behalf of their authors. Representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), and the business sector expressed their support for the bills. On the other hand, Department of Finance (DOF) Chief Tax Specialist Miriam Tasarra

Continuation... Trade and Industry				<p>expressed her objection to the bills particularly the tax exemption provisions as they go against the principles of the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program (CTRP) of the government, particularly the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law, which rationalized the grant of tax incentives.</p> <p>In addition, Tasarra said that there are already existing laws that support the growth and development of microenterprises.</p> <p>Kickstart Ventures Inc. President Minette Navarrete believes that tax exemption is not a critical factor for encouraging the growth of startup businesses as long as the government extends other forms of assistance.</p> <p>Kickstart, a subsidiary of Globe Telecom, is a leading venture capital firm in the Philippines that aims to accelerate collaboration between enterprises and startups.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bills.</p>
Ways and Means	Substitute Bill to HBs 4839, 8286 & 8334	Deputy Speaker Garin, Reps. Suansing (H.), and Nieto	Amending Sections 141, 142 and 143 of RA 8424, as amended, otherwise known as the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997 (by restructuring and increasing the excise tax rates on alcohol products)	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1 st District, Nueva Ecija), approved the substitute bill.

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 also be used for other purposes that redound to general public welfare, aside from these funds being used to finance energy resource development and exploitation projects of the government)	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Jay Velasco, terminated its discussion on the eight bills.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to draft a substitute bill, which will be presented to the mother Committee for its consideration and approval.</p>
	HB 3593	Rep. Batocabe	Amending PD 910, specifying the use of the Malampaya funds	
	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	
	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	

Continuation... Energy (Technical Working Group)			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	
	HB 7579	Rep. Rodriguez (M.)	Amending PD 910 creating an EDB, defining its powers and functions, providing funds therefor	
	HBs 8082, 8327 & 8352	Reps. Velasco, Villafuerte and Alejano	Reducing electricity rates by allocating the net national government share from the Malampaya Natural Gas Project for the payment of the stranded contract costs and stranded debts of the National Power Corporation (NPC)	
Ways and Means (Technical Working Group)	HBs 8252 & 8323	Reps. Suansing (E.) and Villafuerte	Amending certain sections of RA 8424, otherwise known as the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended (by redesigning the financial sector taxation into a simpler, fairer, more efficient, and revenue neutral tax system)	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by the Committee Chair herself, Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), terminated its deliberations on the two bills. The Secretariat was tasked to draft a substitute bill, which will be submitted to the mother Committee for its consideration and approval.</p> <p>The TWG agreed on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the definition of “bank” as provided for under the General Banking Law of 2000; • Impose 15% final tax on certain passive income such as interest income, insurance income and dividends; • Exempt the health maintenance organizations (HMOs) from paying the “improperly accumulated earnings tax;” • Exclude from the computation of gross income for purposes of taxation the gains from redemption of shares or units of participation in a collective investment scheme that has at least 1,000 owners, investors, or participants; and • Retain the documentary stamp tax of P30 on notarized documents. <p>Meanwhile, Deputy Speaker Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA) suggested to retain the tax exemptions which are already afforded to cooperatives and basic sectors as provided for under the Philippine Cooperative Code of 2008 (RA 6938, as amended), Credit Surety Fund Act of 2014 (RA 10744), and Microfinance Non-government Organizations Act (RA 10693).</p>