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BICAMERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Bicameral Conference Committee	HB 8302	Rep. Tambunting	Granting More Electric and Power Corporation a franchise to establish, operate, and maintain, for commercial purposes and in the public interest, a distribution system for the conveyance of electric power to the end users in the City of Iloilo, Province of Iloilo and to ensure continuity and uninterrupted supply of electricity and similar public services in the said area	<p>The Bicameral Conference Committee, co-presided by Rep. Franz "Chicoy" Alvarez (1st District, Palawan), Chair of the House Committee on Legislative Franchises, and Sen. Grace Poe, Chair of the Senate Committee on Public Services, approved HB 8302 with amendments.</p> <p>Other conferees present during the bicameral conference committee meeting were the following: On the part of the House, Reps. Alfredo Garbin Jr. (Party-List, AKO BICOL), Johnny Ty Pimentel (2nd District, Surigao del Sur), Jose "Pingping" Tejada (3rd District, North Cotabato), and Sherwin Tugna (Party-List, CIBAC); on the part of the Senate, Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri and Senator Francis "Chiz" Escudero.</p>
Bicameral Conference Committee	HB 8419 & SB 1397	Rep. Yap (V.) and Sen. Sotto	Preventing the use of motorcycles in the commission of crimes through bigger number plates and identification marks	<p>The Bicameral Conference Committee, co-presided by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, Chair of the House Committee on Transportation, and Senator Richard Gordon, Chair of the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights, approved in principle the reconciled version of HB 8419 and SB 1397.</p> <p>Other conferees present during the bicameral conference committee meeting were the following: On the part of the House, Deputy Speaker Ferdinand Hernandez (2nd District, South Cotabato) and Reps. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), Joseph Stephen Paduano (Party-List, ABANG LINGKOD), and Victor Yap (2nd District, Tarlac); on the part of the Senate, Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri and Senator Gregorio Honasan II.</p>

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Dangerous Drugs	Substitute Bill to HBs 3976, 3809, 1257, 588, 860, 1413, 2568, 3191, 3403, 3609, 4659,	Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Reps. Barbers, Biazon, Bataoil, Yap (V.), Castelo,	Strengthening drug prevention and control, amending for the purpose RA 9165, as amended, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Robert Ace Barbers (2nd District, Surigao del Norte), approved the Committee Report on the substitute bill.</p> <p>Rep. Barbers presented the salient features of the substitute bill, which include the following:</p>

Continuation... Dangerous Drugs	4671, 4728 & 6984	Rodriguez (M.), Unabia, Batocabe, De Venecia, Velarde, Garcia (J.E.), and Bernos		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It provides a legal basis for the presumption of who is considered as being involved in, or as an importer, financier, and protector of the illegal drugs trade. • It penalizes negligent lessors of properties used as <i>shabu</i> laboratories. • It requires a mandatory drug test twice a year for athletes, and penalizes any athlete found positive for use of prohibited drugs with suspension, subject to investigation by appropriate agencies. • It imposes criminal liability on the partner, president, director, manager, trustee, estate administrator, or officer of the corporation or partnership who consents to or tolerates acts violating RA 9185. • It increases the composition of the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) from 17 to 20 members.
Disaster Management	Substitute Resolution to HR 2211	Rep. Savellano	Enjoining all government agencies to affirm their commitment and support to facilitate the rebuilding of the cities, municipalities, and barangays in Regions I and II, and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), severely affected by Typhoon Ompong in September 2018 and to immediately address operational concerns on infrastructure, agri-industry, and social engineering	<p>The Committee, presided by Rep. Cheryl Deloso-Montalla (2nd District, Zambales), approved the Substitute Resolution to HR 2211 and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>It also approved the Committee's Rules of Procedures for the 17th Congress.</p>
Government Enterprises	Consolidated Bill on HBs 2439, 3014 & 3487	Reps. Villarín, Batocabe, and Deputy Speaker Escudero	Abolishing the Governance Commission for Government Owned and Controlled Corporations (GCG), repealing for the purpose RA 10149, otherwise known as the GOCC Governance Act of 2011	<p>The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" Mariño (5th District, Batangas), will deliberate further on the consolidated bill in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Rodel Batocabe (Party-List, AKO BICOL), author of HB 3014 and head of the technical working group (TWG) that discussed the proposed law, maintained that the GCG has failed to perform its mandate and was negligent in protecting the rights of the rank and file employees. He added that GCG is only duplicating the functions of other government institutions.</p> <p>Several Members agreed that the GCG is a redundancy to the functions already performed by the executive branch of government and the oversight functions of Congress. They also believed that the GCG has not provided solutions to the issues and complaints raised by the affected GOCC employees.</p> <p>Baguio City Rep. Mark Go sought clarification on the compensation classification of GOCC employees and the reported withholding of the employees' bonuses.</p>

Continuation... Government Enterprises				<p>GCG General Counsel Michael Pabalinas replied that the GCG developed a compensation and position classification system (CPCS) for the GOCC sector including the rank and file employees. Pabalinas also explained that the bonuses and allowances previously enjoyed by the employees of the GOCCs were withheld pursuant to existing laws and executive orders. He went on saying that bonuses are released only when approved by the President and the Commission on Audit (COA).</p> <p>The Committee directed the GCG to submit the amount needed to compensate the employees who will be displaced if GCG is abolished.</p>
Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples	HR 409	Rep. Villanueva	Investigation into the harassment of Aeta indigenous peoples (IPs) by members of the 710th Special Operations Wing (SPOW), Philippine Air Force (PAF) by prohibiting the ingress of construction materials to be used by the Aeta for house repairs and the egress of forest and agricultural products bound for the market, and other unlawful acts committed by the 710th SPOW such as erecting permanent structures within the area covered by Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADC)	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Kalinga Rep. Allen Jesse Mangaoang, approved the Committee Report on HR 409.
	<i>Motu Proprio</i> Investigation		Investigation into the usage and overlap of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority's (BCDA) property rights with the ancestral domain of the Aeta IPs in Porac, Pampanga	The Committee approved the Committee Report on the findings and recommendations regarding the <i>motu proprio</i> inquiry into the alleged overlap of the BCDA's property rights with the ancestral domain of the Aetas in Porac, Pampanga.
	HB 7859	Rep. Villafuerte	Strengthening the healthcare system in cultural and indigenous communities by institutionalizing the training and employment of tribal health workers	The Committee approved HB 7859.
	<i>Motu Proprio</i> Investigation		Inquiry into the alleged recruitment of Lumads by military groups all over the country	<p>The Committee discussed the issues relative to the alleged recruitment of Lumads by military groups nationwide.</p> <p>The inquiry was prompted by the resolution submitted to the Committee by the Mindanao Indigenous Peoples Council of Elders and Leaders (MIPCEL) condemning the violations of IP rights, infiltration of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) - New People's Army (NPA) - National Democratic Front (NDF) of the ancestral domains in Mindanao, and the alleged kidnapping of 14 IP minors in the Municipality of Talaingog, Davao del Norte on November 29.</p> <p>National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA) representative Rowena Avila reported that the CPP-NPA-NDF, now referred to as the communist terrorist group (CTG), continues to deceive the IPs in order to recruit and use</p>

Continuation... Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples				<p>them in its propaganda and war against the government. She added that as of 2017, about 1,580 or 39% of the total CTG members of 3,996 were IPs. Avila said the CTG is able to lure and recruit the IPs by making it appear that they are promoting their cause and by providing basic services to the IP communities such as education. Avila also claimed that members of the CTG operate alternative schools for IPs using the Department of Education's (DepEd) Alternative Learning System (ALS) as cover. In reality, however, these schools serve as recruitment and training grounds for potential NPA recruits.</p> <p>MIPCEL Chair Datu Joel Unab disclosed that the NPA once influenced him to join the group but later on realized that the people running the organization were just taking advantage of their community especially the youth, to advance their vested interests.</p> <p>DepEd's IP and Education Office Executive Assistant Marie Lourie Victor explained that the DepEd issues a temporary permit to operate Lumad schools until such time that all the required documents for DepEd accreditation are submitted to the Department. She said out of the 75 existing Lumad schools, 73 were issued a temporary permit that is renewable yearly.</p> <p>Presidential Adviser for IP Concerns Undersecretary Allen Capuyan said the Lumad schools should still secure the necessary permits from the local government units (LGUs) concerned.</p> <p>Capuyan, NCIP Chairperson Leonor Oralde-Quintayo, Armed forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Unified Command Joel Mamon, and Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) Assistant Secretary Manuel Felix disclosed that an Executive Order was already signed creating a task force to address the concerns of Lumads and the insurgency problems in Mindanao.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to draft a resolution endorsing to President Rodrigo Duterte the inclusion of the promotion and protection of IPs' rights and welfare in the 10-point agenda of the Duterte administration.</p>
Labor and Employment	Substitute Bill to HBs 4562, 5911, 6650, 7116 & 7270	Reps. Laogan, Silverio, Tugna, Villarin, and Villafuerte	Maximizing the benefits of covered workers from service charges amending for the purpose Article 96 of PD 442, as amended, otherwise known as the Labor Code of the Philippines	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Randolph Ting (3 rd District, Cagayan), approved the Committee Report on the substitute bill.
	HB 8011	Rep. Lacson	Institutionalizing certain working incentives of on-the-job trainee nurses in public and private hospitals, prohibiting the collection of experience fees and providing penalties for violations thereof	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune the bill.</p> <p>Reps. Mark Go (Baguio City) and Tom Villarin (Party-List, AKBAYAN) were designated as co-chairpersons of the TWG.</p>

<p>Continuation... Labor and Employment</p>				<p>Rep. Virgilio Lacson (Party-List, MANILA TEACHERS), author of HB 8011, explained that his bill seeks to provide incentives to trainee nurses rendering experiential service to any hospital in the Philippines, and to penalize hospitals that demand payment from trainee nurses in exchange for actual nursing experience in a hospital.</p> <p>HB 8011 provides that on-the-job trainee nurses shall be entitled to meal and transportation allowances amounting to not less than 50% of the prevailing minimum daily wage.</p> <p>Former Rep. Leah Paquiz (Party-List, ANG NARS) expressed support for the bill. She said that the proposed law will institutionalize Department Order 182 series 2017, issued by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), which provides the guidelines governing the employment and working conditions of health personnel in the private healthcare industry. In part, the Department Order prohibits the practice of profit-oriented healthcare establishments of accepting volunteer-nurses.</p> <p>Despite this prohibition, Paquiz lamented that the exploitation of registered nurses still persists to this day.</p> <p>Aksyon Health Workers Secretary General Maristela Abenojar said that aside from nurses being made to pay certain fees for their prerequisite training prior to actual hiring, they are also not properly compensated for their work as regular employees of the hospital or healthcare facility.</p> <p>The Committee requested the Department of Health (DOH) to submit its official position paper on the bill while the Civil Service Commission (CSC) will be invited to comment on the plight of OJT health workers in government hospitals.</p>
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>Substitute Bill to HBs 72, 706, 2477, 3642, 6117, 6636, 7269, 7318 & 8397</p>	<p>Reps. Vargas, Angara-Castillo, Castelo, Laogan, Salo, Olivarez, Villafuerte, Siao, and Nieto</p>	<p>Institutionalizing the grant of student fare discount privileges on public transportation</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, approved the Substitute Bill to the nine bills.</p>
	<p>Substitute Bill to HB 6090</p>	<p>Rep. Sandoval</p>	<p>Establishing and constructing a hospital for the Philippine Coast Guard, its personnel, employees, their dependents and the retired uniformed personnel to be known as the Philippine Coast Guard General Hospital and appropriating funds therefor</p>	<p>The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 6090 subject to style and amendment.</p>
<p>Ways and Means</p>	<p>Substitute Bill to HBs 142, 540, 1528, 2964, 3610,</p>	<p>Reps. Acosta-Alba, Yap (V.), Gonzales (A. P.), Speaker</p>	<p>Providing for a comprehensive hazardous and radioactive wastes management and providing penalties for violations thereof</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), approved the tax provision of the substitute bill, subject to possible amendments.</p>

<i>Continuation...</i> Ways and Means	4287, 5901 & 6596	Macapagal-Arroyo, Reps. Lanete, De Jesus, and Romero		
	HB 172, in consolidation with HBs 852, 1937, 2821, 3332, 3795, 4493, 4997 & 6197	Former Rep. Nograles (K.A.), Deputy Speaker Villarica, former Rep. Villar, Reps. Suansing (E.), Noel, Tupas, Abayon, former Rep. Aglipay-Villar, and Rep. Silverio	Providing assistance to new graduates by waiving government fees and charges collected in connection with the issuance of documents required in their application for employment	The Committee approved the tax provision of the consolidated bill, subject to possible amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HB 381	Rep. Mangaoang	Creating the Chico River Basin Development Authority, defining its powers, functions, and responsibilities, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the tax provision of the Substitute Bill to HB 381, subject to possible amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 565, 1275, 2571, 4174, 5385, 5786 & 8181 and HR 44	Reps. Canama, Biazon, Rodriguez (M.), Plaza, Suansing (E.), Laogan, Relampagos, and Bravo (A.)	Reorganizing and strengthening the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), repealing for the purpose RA 6939, creating the CDA	The Committee approved the tax provision of the substitute bill, subject to possible amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 1444, 6706, 7048 & 7132	Reps. Belaro, Aumentado, and Arcillas	Strengthening the National Research Council of the Philippines of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) for the promotion of research work along scientific lines and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the tax provisions of the substitute bill, subject to possible amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 2165, 2915, 3229, 5674 & 6259	Reps. Amante, Paduano, Matugas, Cuaresma, and Alvarez (P.)	Requiring a legislative franchise for mining operations and providing incentives to minerals processing, amending for the purpose RA 7942, otherwise known as the Philippine Mining Act of 1995	The Committee approved the tax provision of the substitute bill, subject to possible amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HBs 2318, 3147, 4329 & 4963	Reps. Papandayan, Alejano, Adiong, and Rodriguez (M.)	Creating the Lake Lanao Development Authority, prescribing its powers, functions and duties and providing funds therefor	The Committee approved the tax provisions of the substitute bill, subject to possible amendments.
	Substitute Bill to HB 3231	Rep. Bernos	Creating the Abra River Basin Development Authority, prescribing its powers and functions and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the tax provision of the Substitute Bill to HB 3231, subject to possible amendments.
	HBs 846 & 3437	Deputy Speaker Villarica and Rep. Arenas	Providing for an on-line network establishment policy for the Philippines	The Committee approved the tax provision of HBs 846 and 3437, subject to possible amendments.
	HB 8171	Rep. Quimbo	Providing for the automatic suspension of the excise tax on fuel and repealing the excise tax imposed on kerosene and diesel under RA 10963, otherwise known as the Tax Reform for Acceleration and	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the seven measures. Rep. Romero "Miro" Quimbo (2 nd District,

Continuation... Ways and Means			Inclusion (TRAIN), amending for the purpose the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) of 1997, as amended	Marikina City) was designated as chair of the TWG.
	HJRs 27 & 31	Reps. Lagman and Go (M.)	Calling for the immediate suspension of the increases and scheduled increases in the excise taxes on fuel as imposed in Section 43 of RA 10963	The authors present, Reps. Quimbo, Edcel Lagman (1 st District, Albay), Rodel Batocabe (Party-List, AKO BICOL), and Mark Go (Baguio City), shared the opinion that the continuous rise in inflation rate and in the cost of basic commodities has adversely affected the poorest of the poor. They fear that this sector will once again suffer the most with the second round of increase in the excise tax on fuel, which will be implemented next year.
	HJR 29	Rep. Batocabe	Suspending the excise tax on fuel	
	HR 1838	Rep. Alejano	Calling for the immediate review of the implementation of RA 10963, and its impact on the way of life of Filipinos, specifically the poor, amidst the continued increase on inflation, and prices of fuel in order to recommend for its continued implementation or suspension as well as to come up with policies that would cushion its negative impact against the poor	Department of Finance (DOF) Assistant Secretary Ma. Teresa Habitan and National Tax Research Center (NTRC) Chief Tax Specialist Marlene Calubag maintained that they support the full implementation of the TRAIN Law. Instead of suspending the implementation of the TRAIN Law, as proposed by some quarters, Habitan suggested that efforts be undertaken to ease supply constraints and for concerned government agencies to strictly monitor the movement of oil prices.
	HR 1919	Rep. Romero	Urging President Rodrigo Roa Duterte to suspend from June 1 to August 31, 2018 the imposition of the excise tax on petroleum products provided in RA 10963	
	HR 2253	Rep. Alejano	Expressing support for the Department of Finance's (DOF) suspension of the scheduled hike on the fuel excise tax for 2019 and to exhort the same to include in the suspension the presently imposed fuel excise tax under the TRAIN Law with the goal of providing relief for the poor who has been adversely affected by such taxes and to fully realize the intention of the DOF to mitigate inflationary pressures on the country	Rep. Quimbo advocated for a more targeted approach to taxation that would spare the poorest of the poor from the impact of higher taxes. Meanwhile, Rep. Arnolfo "Arnie" Teves Jr. (3 rd District, Negros Oriental) advised the DOF to encourage the Bureau of Customs (BOC), which is an agency attached to the DOF, to improve its revenue collection to help address the tax gap.
	HBs 8523 & 8558	Reps. Suansing (H.) and Nieto	Imposing excise tax on plastic bags used in supermarkets, malls, shops, stores, sales outlets and other similar establishments	The Committee agreed to create a TWG to consolidate HBs 8523 and 8558. Rep. Lianda Bolilia (4 th District, Batangas) was designated as chair of the TWG. Rep. Horacio Suansing Jr. (2 nd District, Sultan Kudarat), author of HB 8523, explained that the imposition of an excise tax on plastic bags will encourage Filipinos to find environment-friendly alternatives to plastic bags while raising additional revenues for the government. Philippine Amalgamated Supermarkets Association, Inc. (PAGASA) President Steven Cua argued that the improper disposal of plastics, and not the use of plastic per se, causes environmental problems. Philippine Plastic Industry Association (PPIA) former President Willy Go tried to explain the merits of using plastic over paper, saying that plastics are reusable, recyclable and can be made biodegradable. In the end, however, he conceded that the use of eco-friendly reusable

Continuation... Ways and Means				bags is still the best option. He also expressed his concern that the imposition of a P10-excise tax on plastics, as proposed in the two bills, would kill the industry. Rep. Manuel Zubiri (3 rd District, Bukidnon) suggested that the government should just impose an excise tax on single-use plastic bags which is already being done in other countries.
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Natural Resources (Technical Working Group)	HB 6505	Rep. Antonio	Instituting a New Water Code, amending for the purpose PD 1067, otherwise known as the Water Code of the Philippines	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Rep. Joseph Stephen Paduano (Party-List, ABANG LINGKOD), Vice Chair of the Committee on Natural Resources, agreed to come up with a Substitute Bill to HB 6505 incorporating therein pertinent recommendations from the resource persons. The substitute bill will be submitted to the mother Committee for its consideration and approval.</p> <p>Among the recommendations from the resource persons that were agreed upon during the meeting were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain the current composition of the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), excluding the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) and the National Power Corporation (NPC) as members to avoid a potential conflict of interest; • Extend the validity period of water permits from the proposed 10 years to 50 years, subject to additional requirements from the NWRB; • Include a provision on the non-validity of water permit if the environmental compliance certificate (ECC) has not been secured and if project implementation has not started within five years from the issuance of the water permit; • Exempt from the requirement of securing a drilling permit those manual well drilling for household use and for small farms for agricultural production, but the owners should report to the NWRB the location, depth and size of their wells; and • Set up an NWRB regional office in every water resource region to provide technical support to the Water Resources Regional Councils (WRRC).

Continuation... Natural Resources (Technical Working Group)				Resource persons who have not yet submitted their respective position papers on the bill were requested to do so.
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AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Government Enterprises and Privatization	Report on the Social Security System's (SSS) financial condition and status of implementation of the second tranche SSS pension increase	<p>The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" Mariño (5th District, Batangas), listened to the report of the SSS on its financial condition and the status of implementation of the second tranche of SSS pension increase.</p> <p>Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA), one of the authors of HJR 10, called for the implementation of the second tranche of the across-the-board increase in the monthly pension of SSS pensioners.</p> <p>HJR 10 provides that the increase in the pension under the SSS amounting to P2,000 will be implemented in two schedules: the first P1,000 shall be released in 2017, while the other half shall be implemented starting January 2019. The HJR was submitted to and approved by the President, with the qualification that the second tranche will be released in 2022.</p> <p>SSS Deputy Chief Actuary Rentony Gibe reported that the implementation of the first tranche of the SSS pension hike decreased the SSS Fund's actuarial life by 10 years from 2042 to 2032. Gibe also underscored the need to increase the payment contribution of SSS members to 12.5% from 11%.</p> <p>To address the depleting funds of SSS, Rep. Mariño advised the SSS to focus on its collection and refrain from acquiring third party service to collect contributions from delinquent payers.</p> <p>The Committee directed SSS to submit its detailed plans and recommendations to efficiently collect its members' payment contributions. Likewise, the SSS was requested to submit all the documents required by the Members.</p>
North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)	Briefing by the Department of Energy (DOE) on its budget, plans and programs for North Luzon	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (1st District, Ilocos Sur), listened to the briefing conducted by the Department of Energy (DOE) on its budget, plans and programs for North Luzon.</p> <p>At the outset, DOE's Energy Policy and Planning Bureau Director Patrick Aquino apologized for the failure of DOE's senior officials to attend today's Committee meeting.</p> <p>He explained that the DOE's senior officials are now very busy attending the activities of the Department in line with the commemoration of the National Energy Consumer Month this December (Presidential Proclamation No. 1427 s.2007).</p> <p>The DOE reported that the proposed budget allocation for Northern Luzon for FY 2019 amounts to P205.8 million, which is 10% of the total DOE budget of P2.04 billion.</p> <p>Aquino likewise reported that 20.94 million out of 23.7 million households in the country already have electricity which is equivalent to 88.3% total household electrification level. As for the electrification level</p>

<p><i>Continuation...</i> North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)</p>		<p>in Northern Luzon, Aquino said the Ilocos Region (Region I) has 96.8% electrification level while the Cagayan Valley (Region II), Central Luzon (Region III) and Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) has 95.8%, 98.4%, and 89.5%, respectively, as compared to Metropolitan Manila's 98.6%.</p> <p>On the queries of Reps. Ma. Lourdes Aggabao (4th District, Isabela) and Luisa Lloren Cuaresma (Nueva Vizcaya) if solar power can be a viable alternative source of energy and if it can effectively reduce the cost of electricity to benefit the poor, Aquino replied that while the cost to produce solar energy may be on a downward trend, as compared to the high initial costs before, it cannot be entirely free after the installation since there are maintenance and other incidental expenses to also consider.</p>
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>Update on the rail and toll road projects of the government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Railway Transit (MRT) 3 Rehabilitation 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Catanduanes Rep. Cesar Sarmiento, listened to the representatives from the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Metro Pacific Tollways Corporation (MPTC), and MPCala Holdings Inc. on the status of rail and toll road projects of the government.</p> <p>DOTr Undersecretary Timothy John Batan apprised the Committee of the rehabilitation and maintenance projects being undertaken by the DOTr to improve the operations of the MRT 3.</p> <p>According to Batan, the current state of MRT 3 was a result of poor maintenance, underinvestment in renewals and upgrades, and fragmentation of ownership, operations, maintenance, rehabilitation and capacity expansion.</p> <p>Batan admitted that after the termination of the contract of the DOTr with Busan Universal Rail Inc. (BURI) as the maintenance provider for MRT 3, certain issues relative to the general repairs of the trains and tracks, upgrading of the signalling system, and requirements for spare parts need to be addressed. Thus, Batan explained that a four-part strategy consisting of gradual restoration of services through a maintenance transition team (MTT), comprehensive rehabilitation and maintenance through a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)-funded project, long-term single point of responsibility of operations and maintenance contract, and system of accountability were implemented.</p> <p>Batan said that the rehabilitation of MRT 3 would take more than 43 months or more than three years and the total cost is estimated to reach P22 billion as appraised by JICA and approved by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Board. Currently, Batan said 15 trains per hour with seven minutes headway are operating but may gradually increase with the rehabilitation project.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Sarmiento on the plans to use the Dalian trains procured from China, Batan said that these trains need to pass the validation process in order to be utilized. He said that one Dalian train set is already being utilized in MRT 3 and another train set is about to complete the validation process, hence, will soon be deployed.</p> <p>Rep. Sarmiento also inquired on the status of Metro Rail Transit Corporation's (MRTC) willingness to be the maintenance provider for MRT 3. Batan clarified that the DOTr rejected the proposal of MRTC since it is not in the business of maintaining and operating trains and that it has no technical partners, based on its proposal.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel Zubiri (3rd District, Bukidnon) emphasized that the poor maintenance of MRT 3 was due to the substandard parts that were procured at a cheaper price. Rep. Zubiri suggested that there should be an approved list of suppliers from where to procure the spare parts needed to maintain the trains.</p>

Continuation... Transportation		which would extend to NLEX southward from the end of Segment 10 in C3 Road in Caloocan City to Philippine Polytechnic University (PUP) – Sta Mesa, Manila and connect to the Skyway Stage 3, mostly traversing the PNR's tracks.
	Update on the status of the Bicol International Airport	<p>DOTr Project Manager Raul Basallote said that the runway of the Bicol International Airport is finished and can already be utilized except for the passenger terminal and auxiliary buildings. Basallote assured the Committee that the project is expected to be completed in June 2020.</p> <p>Rep. Benitez suggested constructing a temporary passenger terminal so that the airport can already be opened to the public.</p>

OTHER MATTERS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Disaster Management	Update on the preparations for the ocular inspection on December 10 of the Marawi housing settlement for Marawi victims	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan), discussed the status of implementation of the Marawi housing project, and the preparations for its upcoming ocular inspection of the project.</p> <p>Rep. Roman informed the Committee that as of December 3, the National Housing Authority (NHA) was able to finalize the acquisition of an 18-hectare lot as the site for the housing project in Marawi.</p> <p>Acknowledging the importance of conducting an ocular inspection of the housing resettlement project for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) due to the Marawi siege, Speaker Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (2nd District, Pampanga) said that aside from the Members of the House, the delegation should include representatives from the NHA and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to look into problems concerning the housing needs of the people in the area and the psychosocial impact of the war on the victims.</p> <p>The 10 Members of the House of Representatives who will be joining the ocular inspection on December 10 are the following: Reps. Roman, Makmod Mending Jr. (Party-List, AMIN), Cristina "Chiqui" Roa-Puno (1st District, Antipolo City), Vini Nola Ortega (Party-List, ABONO), Ansaruddin Abdul Malik Adiong (1st District, Lanao del Sur), Mauyag "Jun" Papandayan Jr. (2nd District, Lanao del Sur), Marilyn Alonte (Biñan City), Victoria Isabel Noel (Party-List, AN WARAY), Frederick Siao (Iligan City), and Ann Hofer (2nd District, Zamboanga Sibugay).</p>