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BICAMERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Bicameral Conference Committee	HB 5745 & SB 1233	Rep. Panganiban and Sen. Pangilinan	Creating the Coconut Farmers and Industry Trust fund, providing for its management and utilization	<p>The Bicameral Conference Committee, co-chaired by ANAC-IP Party-List Rep. Jose Panganiban Jr. and Senator Cynthia Villar, chairpersons of the Committee on Agriculture and Food of both Houses, approved the harmonized version of HB 5745 and SB 1233.</p> <p>Other conferees present during the bicameral conference committee meeting were the following: On the part of the House, Reps. Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA), Celso Lobregat (1st District, Zamboanga City), Jericho Jonas Nograles (Party-List, PBA), Edcel Lagman (1st District, Albay), Manuel "Chiquiting" Sagarbarria (2nd District, Negros Oriental), Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4th District, Quezon), Conrado Estrella III (Party-List, ABONO), Cecilia Leonila Chavez (Party-List, BUTIL), Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon), Danilo Suarez (3rd District, Quezon), and Arthur Yap (3rd District, Bohol); on the part of the Senate, Senators Ralph Recto and Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan.</p>

BUDGET BRIEFINGS

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Appropriations	<p>Budget briefings by the following agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), started hearing the budget presentations of different government agencies after the culmination of the briefings of the members of the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) on the proposed National Expenditure Program (NEP) for fiscal year 2019.</p> <p>First in the line was the PCSO, with Public Relations and Corporate Communications Division head Agnes Ibera presenting the agency's operational and financial performance, contribution to the government social programs, and plans for 2019.</p> <p>Ibera reported that the PCSO has generated revenues amounting to P52.98 billion from its Lotto, Lotto Express, Small Town Lottery (STL), and Sweepstakes games in 2017 and P30.75 billion for the first half of 2018. The PCSO has also paid a total of P16.7 billion in taxes to the national government from 2017 up to the first semester of 2018. It has</p>

<p>Continuation... Appropriations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) 	<p>also increased its allocation for the Individual Medical Assistance Program (IMAP) by 107% benefitting mostly indigent patients and victims of calamities and national emergencies.</p> <p>The 2019 budget of the PCSO (net receipts allocation) shall be distributed as follows: Prize Fund, P30.67 billion (55%); Charity Fund, P16.72 billion (30%); and Operating Fund, P8.36 billion (15%).</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. (1st District, Surigao del Sur) questioned the legality of allocating funds to the Congressmen from the proceeds of the STL. He informed the Committee that he intends to file a resolution calling for an investigation into this questionable allocation.</p> <p>ACT TEACHERS Party-List Rep. France Castro inquired about the huge payments made by PCSO based on a Commission on Audit (COA) report, including the P5.3 billion documentary stamp taxes paid to the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).</p> <p>Atty. Lauro Patiag, assistant general manager of PCSO's Management Services Sector, explained that based on the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law, the Documentary Stamp Tax (DST) on all PCSO games increased. The PCSO board agreed to utilize the Charity Fund to cover the payment of the DST. However, as of July, the increase in the DST has been passed on to the bettor, Patiag said.</p> <p>Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay) said that the funds for the payment of the DST should have been taken from PCSO's Operating Fund and not from the Charity Fund, which might have affected its charitable programs. PCSO General Manager Alexander Balutan said that based on a 1995 Board Resolution, the PCSO Board is empowered to utilize the Charity Fund for other purposes other than what is mandated.</p> <p>The PCSO was requested to submit to the Committee a copy of the said 1995 Board Resolution and a list of congressional districts and lawmakers who received allocations from the proceeds of the STL from the period 2017 up to the first half of 2018.</p> <p>The Committee also listened to the briefing conducted by PAGCOR officials on the agency's operational and financial performance, contribution to the government's social programs, and plans and programs for 2019.</p> <p>Malabon City Rep. Federico Sandoval II sat as the presiding officer during the presentation of PAGCOR.</p> <p>PAGCOR Assistant Vice President for Corporate Communications Carmelita Valdez presented PAGCOR's major plans for 2019, which include the following: increase its gross gaming revenues and contributions to nation-building; increase revenues by rationalizing costs to improve and maintain net operating income margin; and enhance tourism and entertainment offerings in gaming operations to be at par with other international jurisdictions.</p> <p>PAGCOR Assistant Vice President for Accounting Sharon Quintanilla presented the agency's accomplishments for 2017 and for the 1st semester of 2018, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAGCOR's total income for 2017 increased to P59.86 billion from P55.06 billion in 2016, which enabled the agency to remit P41.36 billion to the government as its contribution to nation-building; For the first half of 2018, PAGCOR generated a gross income of P67.60 billion, of which P25.29 billion was remitted to the government; and
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Continuation... Appropriations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total tax payments for 2017 reached P9.61 billion; and cash dividends remitted amounted to P2.59 billion also for CY 2017. <p>Likewise, PAGCOR Assistant Vice President for Entertainment James Patrick Bondoc reported on other significant accomplishments of the agency.</p> <p>Asked by Iligan City Rep. Frederick Siao on the status of PAGCOR's School Building Project, PAGCOR Chair Andrea Domingo explained that the funding for the program was discontinued in line with the directive of President Rodrigo Duterte to focus on health programs for the poor. Another reason, Domingo said, was the Department of Education's (DepEd) stand against using gambling-sourced money to fund school building projects.</p> <p>On the proposal to privatize PAGCOR, Domingo said that the government will greatly benefit if PAGCOR remains a government entity considering the billions of pesos that it remits. She added that the privatization of PAGCOR will affect its 9,000 regular employees and their families.</p> <p>Rep. Antonio Tinio (Party-List, ACT TEACHERS) inquired about the status of the provisional license that was issued to Galaxy Entertainment Group and Leisure and Resorts World Corporation in March 2018 to operate a casino in Boracay Island. Domingo replied that a directive was issued by the President that no such thing shall be allowed once this world-renowned tourist destination reopens in October.</p>
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COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Appropriations	Substitute Bill to HBs 6075, 344, 108, 596, 2638, 3093, 4203, 4648, 138, 397, 454, 805, 1132, 1149, 1374, 1379, 1485, 1763, 1812, 2146, 2555, 2608, 2661, 2784, 2804, 2854, 3083, 3094, 3509, 3889, 4521, 4809, 5593, 6786, 6794, 6857, 7218, 7324, 7693 & 7789	Reps. Salceda, Romualdez, Alejano, Pichay, Gatchalian, Castelo, Herrera-Dy, Leachon, Noel, Belmonte (J.C.), Gomez, Batocabe, Tan (A.), Vargas, Abayon, Zarate, Pineda, Santos-Recto, Angara-Castillo, Rodriguez (I.), Gomez, Ortega, Escudero, Yu, Biazon, Villafuerte, Mariño, Rodriguez (M.), Lanete, and Sy-Alvarado	Creating the Department of Disaster Resilience, defining its powers and functions, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Karlo Alexei Nograles (1st District, Davao City), approved the substitute bill.</p> <p>Rep. Nograles said that the proposed law is a priority agenda of the Duterte administration, adding that the President himself urged for the passage of the bill during his State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 23.</p> <p>Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo said that the proposed Department of Disaster Resilience will be responsible for leading, organizing, and managing the national effort to reduce disaster risk; prepare for and respond to disasters; recover and rehabilitate; and build the necessary infrastructures after the occurrence of disasters. He added that some government offices or units whose functions are related to disaster resilience will be transferred to the proposed Department.</p> <p>Rep. Romualdo is the chair of the Committee on Government Reorganization, from which the substitute bill originated.</p>
Women and Gender Equality	Substitute Bill to HBs 2591, 194, 508, 2932, 3691, 4822	Reps. Villarica, Bertiz, Majority Leader Andaya, Reps. Roque (H.), Brosas,	Expanding the definition of sexual harassment and strengthening the mechanisms to monitor compliance with policies against sexual harassment in the workplace and in	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy (Party-List, BAGONG HENERASYON), approved the substitute bill subject to style and amendment and the corresponding Committee Report.

Continuation... Women and Gender Equality	& 5977	and Antonio	educational and training institutions, and prescribing penalties for violations thereof, repealing for the purpose RA 7877, otherwise known as the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995	
	Substitute Bill to HBs 2592,1471, 2664, 2850, 5153 & 7534	Reps. Villarica, Abayon, De Jesus, Cuaresma, Tambunting, and Villafuerte	Defining electronic violence against women (eVAW) and their children, providing protective measures, and prescribing penalties, amending for the purpose RA 9262, otherwise known as the Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004	The Committee approved the substitute bill subject to style and amendment and the corresponding Committee Report.
Youth and Sports Development	Substitute Bill to HB 5032	Rep. Pineda	Redefining the crime of game-fixing and prescribing stiffer penalties therefor	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Conrado Estrella III (Party-List, ABONO), approved the Substitute Bill to HB 5032 subject to style and the corresponding Committee Report.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
People's Participation (Technical Working Group)	Substitute Bill to HB 7198	Rep. Salon	Strengthening nation-building through the institutionalization of a strategic volunteerism based multi-sectoral public-private partnership framework, in all local government units and congressional districts in the country	The technical working group (TWG), presided by Committee Secretary Dr. Rolando Cronico, will wait for the additional comments or proposed amendments of the resource persons before finalizing the substitute bill and presenting it to the mother Committee for consideration and approval.

AGENCY BRIEFINGS

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)	Briefing by the Philippine National Police (PNP) 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 PNP relative to its budget, plans and programs for North Luzon.</p> <p>PNP Deputy Director Benjamin Hulipas of the Directorate for Integrated Police Office – Northern Luzon (DIPO-NL) reported that under the 2019 National Expenditure Program (NEP), the PNP's regional offices in Regions I and II and in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) are set to receive P299.54 million, P275.27 million, and P257.16 million, respectively, for their maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE).</p> <p>Also under the 2019 NEP, Hulipas informed the Committee that six new police stations will be established in North Luzon: one in Region I; four in Region II; and one in CAR.</p> <p>Hulipas also presented the PNP's thrusts which are to improve crime prevention and suppression efficiency through unrelenting operations against criminality, enhanced police operational systems, improved scientific investigation, and the prompt filing of cases, among others.</p>

