



# Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 17<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

## House of Representatives

Vol. 1

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

No. 22

### CALL TO ORDER

*At 4:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Pia S. Cayetano called the session to order.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The session is called to order.

### NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Everybody is requested to rise for the singing of the Philippine National Anthem.

*Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.*

### PRAYER

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Please remain standing for a minute of silent prayer and meditation.

*Everybody remained standing for the silent prayer.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (A.D.). Mme. Speaker, may I move for the deferment of the calling of the roll.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Upon motion of the Dep. Majority Leader, the motion to defer the calling of the roll is in order.

REP. GONZALES (A.D.). Mme. Speaker, I move for the deferment of the approval of the Journal of the previous session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion to defer the approval of the Journal is approved.

REP. GONZALES (A.D.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General will please read the Reference of Business.

### REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

*The Secretary General read the following House Bills on First Reading, Message from the Senate and Communication, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:*

### BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 3518, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING 20% DISCOUNT ON TRAVEL TAX TO SENIOR CITIZENS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES”

By Representative Arcillas  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

House Bill No. 3519, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO INCLUDE IN THE CURRICULUM OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS THE RESPONSIBLE USE OF THE INTERNET, VIDEO/PHOTO EQUIPMENT, SMART PHONES AND THE LIKES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Arcillas  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 3520, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING EACH CITY OR MUNICIPALITY TO SET ASIDE A PORTION OF ITS TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION FOR FOREST PARKS AND PROVIDING FOR THE MAINTENANCE THEREOF”

By Representative Arcillas  
TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REFORESTATION

House Bill No. 3521, entitled:

“ANACTPROVIDINGFORTHECONVERSION OF THE GSIS-SAMPAGUITA ROAD IN BARANGAY CALENDOLA, CITY OF SAN PEDRO, PROVINCE OF LAGUNA, INTO A NATIONAL ROAD AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT THEREOF”

By Representative Arcillas  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 3522, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES ON THE LENDING INSTITUTIONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE AND UNDERCOMPLIANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF R.A. NO. 10000, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE ARGI-AGRA REFORM CREDIT ACT OF 2009’, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 10 THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Pineda and Romero  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 3523, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE COCONUT INDUSTRY TRUST FUND, PROVIDING FOR ITS MANAGEMENT AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Pineda and Romero  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 3524, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE FINES FOR LESS SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURIES AND SLIGHT PHYSICAL INJURIES AND MALTREATMENT, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLES 265 AND 266 OF ACT NO. 3815, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED PENAL CODE”

By Representative Del Rosario  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 3525, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY 201, ZONE 20 IN THE CITY OF PASAY, METRO MANILA”

By Representative Calixto-Rubiano  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 3526, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JUNE 20 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF GUINAYANGAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY”

By Representative Tan (A.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 3527, entitled:

“AN ACT AUTHORIZING GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS TO UTILIZE ALL ITS INCOME FOR HOSPITAL OPERATIONS PARTICULARLY MAINTENANCE AND OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES (MOOE) AND CAPITAL OUTLAY”

By Representative Tan (A.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 3528, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 84, 86, 89, 90 AND 97 OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Tan (A.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 3529, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A PRE-HOSPITAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE SYSTEM, PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT, SUPERVISION AND REGULATION OF THE PRE-HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CARE PROFESSION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Tan (A.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 3530, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTING THE MAGNA CARTA OF DAY CARE WORKERS AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Unabia  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 3531, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING ALL SHOPPING MALL OWNERS TO PROVIDE ROAD SETBACKS ON THEIR ESTABLISHMENTS AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Castelo  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND  
INDUSTRY

House Bill No. 3532, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE COMMUNITY  
INFORMANT REWARD PROGRAM AND  
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Bernos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER  
AND SAFETY

House Bill No. 3533, entitled:

“AN ACT TRANSFERRING THE AUTHORITY  
TO TAX AND TO ISSUE PERMITS  
TO EXTRACT SAND, GRAVEL AND  
OTHER QUARRY RESOURCES FROM  
THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR TO THE  
MUNICIPAL OR CITY MAYOR, AMENDING  
FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO.  
7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE  
‘LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991,’  
AS AMENDED”

By Representative Limkaichong  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 3534, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING PRESIDENTIAL  
DECREE NO. 1467, AS AMENDED BY  
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8175, OTHERWISE  
KNOWN AS THE REVISED CHARTER  
OF THE PHILIPPINE CROP INSURANCE  
CORPORATION ACT”

By Representative Vergara  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT  
ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION

House Bill No. 3535, entitled:

“AN ACT ENHANCING AND PROMOTING THE  
SEED INDUSTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES,  
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC  
ACT NO. 7308, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS  
THE ‘SEED INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT  
ACT OF 1992’ ”

By Representative Garin (S.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
AND FOOD

House Bill No. 3536, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE  
COMPREHENSIVE POLICY ON HUMAN  
IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV)  
AND ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY  
SYNDROME (AIDS) PREVENTION,  
TREATMENT, CARE, AND SUPPORT,

AND ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE  
NATIONAL HIV AND AIDS PLAN,  
REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE  
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8504, OTHERWISE  
KNOWN AS THE ‘PHILIPPINE AIDS  
PREVENTION AND CONTROL ACT OF  
1998,’ AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS  
THEREFOR”

By Representative Garin (S.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 3537, entitled:

“AN ACT REVITALIZING THE COCONUT  
INDUSTRY, APPROPRIATING FUNDS  
THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES”

By Representative Garin (S.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
AND FOOD

House Bill No. 3538, entitled:

“AN ACT TO PROMOTE THE PRODUCTION,  
PROCESSING, MARKETING AND  
DISTRIBUTION OF PHILIPPINE MANGO,  
MANDATING THE CREATION OF A  
FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR,  
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Garin (S.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
AND FOOD

House Bill No. 3539, entitled:

“AN ACT PROMOTING SOIL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGIES AND  
APPROACHES FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND  
MANAGEMENT”

By Representative Garin (S.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL  
RESOURCES

House Bill No. 3540, entitled:

“AN ACT PROMOTING THE SCIENTIFIC  
PROPAGATION, PROCESSING,  
UTILIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF  
PHILIPPINE NATIVE ANIMALS, HEREBY  
CREATING THE PHILIPPINE NATIVE  
ANIMAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER”

By Representative Garin (S.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
AND FOOD

House Bill No. 3541, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION  
ON THE BASIS OF ETHNICITY, RACE,  
RELIGION OR BELIEF, SEX, GENDER,

SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSIONS, LANGUAGE, DISABILITY, HIV STATUS, AND OTHER STATUS, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR”

By Representative Garin (S.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

House Bill No. 3542, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE PROVISION OF A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM FOR ALL SCHOOL CHILDREN AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Tan (A.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 3543, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING SATELLITE OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE (NSO) IN EVERY LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT NATIONWIDE”

By Representative Bolilia  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON POPULATION AND FAMILY RELATIONS

House Bill No. 3544, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM TO PROCESS AND TO PAY CLAIMS OF LEGITIMATE CLAIMANTS AND BENEFICIARIES WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS UPON FULL SUBMISSION OF ALL NECESSARY APPLICATION DOCUMENTS THEREOF AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Castelo  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION

House Bill No. 3545, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE FROM PLAYING IN CASINOS AND PRESCRIBING FINES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF”

By Representative Castelo  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

House Bill No. 3546, entitled:

“AN ACT RE-NUMBERING THE THREE (3) DPWH DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICE (DEO) CONFERRING INTO THE

LEGISLATIVE NUMBERING WITHIN THE THREE (3) CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS IN THE PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE THREE (3) REPUBLIC ACTS GOVERNING THE CREATION OF THESE THREE (3) DPWH DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICES”

By Representative Jalosjos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 3547, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING AN AGRICULTURE AND FISHERY INSTITUTE IN THE PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE, TO BE KNOWN AS THE ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (ZNAIF) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SERGIO OSMEÑA, ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Jalosjos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 3548, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING SEPTEMBER 8 OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN CELEBRATION OF SIDLAKASILAK FESTIVAL”

By Representative Relampagos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 3549, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 443, 454 AND 463 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991’”

By Representative Relampagos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 3550, entitled:

“AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION TO CONDONE PENALTIES ON DELINQUENT CONTRIBUTIONS AND TO DETERMINE THE MONTHLY SALARY CREDITS, THE SCHEDULE AND RATE OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND THE RATE OF PENALTY ON DELINQUENT CONTRIBUTIONS AND UNPAID LOAN AMORTIZATIONS, THEREBY FURTHER

AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1161, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE SOCIAL SECURITY LAW”

By Representative Relampagos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION

House Bill No. 3551, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING NATURAL RESOURCES AND CULTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT THROUGH TOURISM WITH THE IMPOSITION OF ENVIRONMENTAL FEES OR ‘GREEN FEES’ FOR THE USE, PRESERVATION, CONSERVATION, DEVELOPMENT, PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE COUNTRY’S NATURAL RESOURCES AND CULTURAL HERITAGE”

By Representative Relampagos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

House Bill No. 3552, entitled:

“AN ACT REORGANIZING AND STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL PARKS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, RENAMING THE SAME ‘URBAN PARKS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY,’ AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Relampagos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill No. 3553, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A ONE STOP SHOP LAND TRANSPORTATION SATELLITE OFFICE IN TICA O ISLAND, PROVINCE OF MASBATE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Bravo (M.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 3554, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-PURPOSE AQUACULTURE ECOSYSTEM BASED BREEDING FARM FOR THE PRODUCTION AND MULTIPLICATION OF HIGH BREED CRABS AND SHRIMPS IN TICA O AND BURIAS ISLANDS, PROVINCE OF MASBATE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Bravo (M.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES RESOURCES

House Bill No. 3555, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION

OR GENDER IDENTITY (SOGI) AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR”

By Representative Villarín  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

House Bill No. 3556, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE OUTSOURCING OF WORK AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 106 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Go (M.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 3557, entitled:

“AN ACT EXPANDING TRAVEL TAX EXEMPTION TO INCLUDE THE COUNTRY’S REPRESENTATIVES TO INTERNATIONAL SPORTS TOURNAMENTS, ACADEMIC CONFERENCES AND BEAUTY PAGEANTS, AMENDING PD 1183 AS AMENDED”

By Representative Go (M.)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

House Bill No. 3558, entitled:

“AN ACT TO ENSURE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO MEMBERS OF INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMMUNITIES AND PREFERENCE IN CERTAIN CASES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Cuaresma  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMMUNITIES AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

#### ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

Rep. Michael L. Romero, Ph.D. for House Bills No. 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 796, 797, 798, 1870, 1871, 1872, 2287, 2396, 2514, 2531 and 3532 and House Resolution No. 328;

Reps. Celso L. Lobregat, Franz E. Alvarez and Vini Nola A. Ortega for House Bill No. 287;

Rep. Virgilio S. Lacson for House Bills No. 287, 288, 1430, 1431, 1433, 1434, 1435, 1436, 1438, 1439, 1440, 1441, 1442, 1444, 1445, 1447, 1448, 1449, 1450, 1452, 1454, 1456, 2798, 3350, 3351, 3352 and 3353;

Reps. Manuel F. Zubiri and Jose Antonio “Kuya Jonathan” R. Sy-Alvarado for House Bills No. 2564, 2565, 2566 and 2567;

Rep. Mark O. Go for House Bill No. 2565;

Rep. Mario Vittorio “Marvey” A. Mariño for House Bills No. 458 and 3181;

Rep. Johnny Ty Pimentel for House Bills No. 876, 877 and 3469;

Rep. Eugene Michael B. De Vera for House Resolution No. 328;

Rep. Dale “Along” R. Malapitan for House Bills No. 477, 478, 479, 480, 1871, 2287, 2396, 2514 and 2531;

Reps. Enrico A. Pineda, Ricardo T. Belmonte Jr., Salvador B. Belaro Jr. and Teodoro “Ted” G. Montoro for House Bills No. 287 and 288;

Rep. Antonio R. Floirendo Jr. for House Bill No. 2;

Rep. Christopher “Toff” Vera Perez De Venecia for House Bill No. 2659;

Rep. Marlyn L. Primicias-Agabas for House Bills No. 2804, 3105, 3236, 3261 and 3390;

Rep. Joaquin M. Chipeco Jr. for House Bills No. 159, 568, 635, 1592 and 3050;

Reps. Alberto T. Ungab and Dale “Along” R. Malapitan for House Bills No. 262, 264 and 2430;

Reps. Mercedes “Didi” C. Cagas, Imelda R. Marcos, Romero “Miro” S. Quimbo, Randolph S. Ting, Marisol C. Panotes, Emmi A. De Jesus, Greg G. Gasataya, Roger G. Mercado, Joel Mayo Z. Almario, Roy M. Loyola, Lorna C. Silverio, Dale “Along” R. Malapitan, Doy C. Leachon, Ron P. Salo, Salvador B. Belaro Jr., Rene L. Relampagos, Evelina G. Escudero and Linabelle Ruth R. Villarica for House Bill No. 2798;

Rep. Wilfredo S. Caminero for House Bill No. 3410;

Rep. Greg G. Gasataya for House Bills No. 477, 478, 1871, 2287, 2396 and 2514;

Rep. Nancy A. Catamco for House Bills No. 923, 3146 and 3223;

Rep. Lorna C. Silverio for House Joint Resolution No. 4;

Rep. Gwendolyn F. Garcia for House Bill No. 18;

Rep. Micaela S. Violago for House Bills No. 290, 592, 593, 1309, 1312, 1316, 1320, 1323, 1325, 1415, 1537, 1593, 1595, 1596, 1614, 2264, 2478, 2482, 2542, 2743, 2909, 3016 and 3049 and House Resolution No. 328;

Rep. Jericho Jonas B. Nograles for House Bill No. 3532 and House Resolution No. 328;

Rep. Maria Vida Espinosa Bravo for House Bills No. 921, 925, 926, 928, 1983, 1998, 1999, 2019, 2231, 2236, 2238, 2258, 2363, 2684, 2776, 2778, 2916, 2917, 2918, 3134, 3135, 3177, 3178, 3218, 3219 and 3220;

Rep. Lianda B. Bolilia for House Bills No. 3169 and 3469;

Rep. Erlpe John “Ping” M. Amante for House Bills No. 2389, 2915 and 3470;

Rep. Florida “Rida” P. Robes for House Bill No. 2491;

Rep. Raul “Boboy” C. Tupas for House Bills No. 1204, 1205, 1212, 2977 and 3159;

Rep. Corazon T. Nuñez-Malanyaon for House Bills No. 1204, 1211, 1213, 2977 and 3159;

Rep. Manuel T. Sagarbarria for House Bills No. 1204, 1205, 1213, 2973 and 2977;

Reps. Michael John R. Duavit and Ma. Lourdes R. Aggabao for House Bills No. 1204, 1205, 1206, 1207, 1209, 1210, 1211, 1212, 1213, 2812, 2973, 2974, 2975, 2976, 2977 and 3159;

Rep. Ruby M. Sahali for House Bill No. 344;

Rep. Roy M. Loyola for House Bill No. 554;

Rep. Cesar V. Sarmiento for House Bills No. 5, 9, 50, 87, 89 and 210;

Rep. Noel L. Villanueva for House Bill No. 1208 and House Resolution No. 17;

Rep. John Marvin “Yul Servo” C. Nieto for House Bills No. 119, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 299, 304, 337, 396, 417, 448, 449, 515, 1226, 2349, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355 and 2798 and House Resolution No. 174;

Reps. Jose Christopher Y. Belmonte, Carlo V. Lopez and Emmanuel F. Madrona for House Bill No. 56;

Rep. Rogelio J. Espina, M.D. for House Bill No. 59;

Reps. Alfredo A. Garbin Jr., Christopher S. Co and Rodel M. Batocabe for House Resolution No. 334; and

Rep. Ronaldo B. Zamora for House Bills No. 334, 1208 and 2798 and House Resolution No. 17.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

Message dated September 13, 2016, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 1112, entitled:

“AN ACT POSTPONING THE OCTOBER 2016 BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9340, AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10656, PRESCRIBING ADDITIONAL RULES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

#### COMMUNICATION

Letter dated 25 July 2016 of Salvador C. Medialdea, Executive Secretary, Office of the President, transmitting two (2) original copies each of the following Republic Acts, all of which lapsed into law on 21 July 2016 pursuant to Art. VI, Sec. 27 (1) of the Constitution:

1. R.A. No. 10891, entitled:  
“AN ACT GRANTING THE FIRST BAY POWER CORP. (FBPC) A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF ELECTRIC POWER TO THE END USERS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BAUAN, PROVINCE OF BATANGAS”
2. R.A. No. 10892, entitled:  
“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO IBAAN ELECTRIC CORPORATION (FORMERLY IBAAN ELECTRIC AND ENGINEERING CORPORATION) TO CONSTRUCT, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN AN ELECTRIC LIGHT, HEAT, AND POWER SYSTEM IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF IBAAN, PROVINCE OF BATANGAS UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7578”
3. R.A. No. 10893, entitled:  
“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO MASBATE COMMUNITY BROADCASTING CO., INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7510, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE MASBATE COMMUNITY BROADCASTING CO., INC., A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE ISLANDS OF MASBATE AND ROMBLON AND THE WHOLE OF THE VISAYAS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ ”
4. R.A. No. 10894, entitled:  
“AN ACT EXTENDING TO ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO THE PHILIPPINE TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE CORPORATION (PT&T) TO ESTABLISH, INSTALL, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE WIRE AND/OR WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS, LINES, CIRCUITS AND STATIONS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES FOR PUBLIC DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4161, AS AMENDED”
5. R.A. No. 10895, entitled:  
“AN ACT GRANTING THE AVOCADO BROADBAND TELECOMS, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”
6. R.A. No. 10896, entitled:  
“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO PEOPLE’S BROADCASTING SERVICE, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7477, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9213”
7. R.A. No. 10897, entitled:  
“AN ACT GRANTING THE AMA TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS IN THE PHILIPPINES”
8. R.A. No. 10898, entitled:  
“AN ACT GRANTING THE INFINIVAN, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”
9. R.A. No. 10899, entitled:  
“AN ACT GRANTING VERITAS MEDIA ARTS INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PROVINCE OF BOHOL AND THE VISAYAS”
10. R.A. No. 10900, entitled:  
“AN ACT EXTENDING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO BELL TELECOMMUNICATION PHILIPPINES, INC., AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7692, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING TO BELL TELECOMMUNICATION PHILIPPINES, INC., A FRANCHISE TO INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ ”
11. R.A. No. 10901, entitled:  
“AN ACT GRANTING THE PILIPINAS ASIAN PEARL AIRWAYS, INC. A FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT SERVICES”
12. R.A. No. 10902, entitled:  
“AN ACT GRANTING THE METRO CONNECTIONS AND TELECOM CORP. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN

TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS  
THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”

13. R.A. No. 10903, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING THE MEGAMANILA TELECOM CORP. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”

14. R.A. No. 10904, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING THE PILIPINAS RADIO WAVES CORP. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND/OR TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”

15. R.A. No. 10905, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING ALL FRANCHISE HOLDERS OR OPERATORS OF TELEVISION STATIONS AND PRODUCERS OF TELEVISION PROGRAMS TO BROADCAST OR PRESENT THEIR PROGRAMS WITH CLOSED CAPTIONS OPTION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

16. R.A. No. 10906, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING STRONGER MEASURES AGAINST UNLAWFUL PRACTICES, BUSINESSES, AND SCHEMES OF MATCHING AND OFFERING FILIPINOS TO FOREIGN NATIONALS FOR PURPOSES OF MARRIAGE OR COMMON LAW PARTNERSHIP, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6955, ALSO REFERRED TO AS THE ‘ANTI-MAIL ORDER BRIDE LAW’”

17. R.A. No. 10907, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AREAS IN THE PROVINCE OF CAMIGUIN, ORGANIZING THE CAMIGUIN TOURISM COUNCIL AND MANDATING SUPPORT FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE PROVINCE OF CAMIGUIN”

18. R.A. No. 10908, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE INTEGRATION OF FILIPINO-MUSLIM AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HISTORY, CULTURE AND IDENTITY IN THE STUDY OF PHILIPPINE HISTORY IN BOTH BASIC AND HIGHER EDUCATION”

19. R.A. No. 10909, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS FROM GIVING INSUFFICIENT OR NO CHANGE TO CONSUMERS AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR”

20. R.A. No. 10910, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE PRESCRIPTIVE PERIOD FOR VIOLATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3019, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘ANTI-GRAFT AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT’, FROM FIFTEEN (15) YEARS TO TWENTY (20) YEARS, AMENDING SECTION 11 THEREOF”

21. R.A. No. 10911, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ANY INDIVIDUAL IN EMPLOYMENT ON ACCOUNT OF AGE AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR”

22. R.A. No. 10912, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING AND STRENGTHENING THE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR ALL REGULATED PROFESSIONS, CREATING THE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER RELATED PURPOSES”

23. R.A. No. 10913, entitled:

“AN ACT DEFINING AND PENALIZING DISTRACTED DRIVING”

24. R.A. No. 10914, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO HANS-PETER SMIT”

25. R.A. No. 10915, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING, MODERNIZING AND ALIGNING THE PRACTICE OF AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING IN THE COUNTRY INTO THE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED PRACTICE OF AGRICULTURAL AND BIOSYSTEMS ENGINEERING, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

26. R.A. No. 10916, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING THE MANDATORY INSTALLATION OF SPEED LIMITER IN PUBLIC UTILITY AND CERTAIN TYPES OF VEHICLES”

27. R.A. No. 10917, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9547, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING THE COVERAGE OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7323, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS”

28. R.A. No. 10918, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING AND MODERNIZING



THE PRACTICE OF PHARMACY IN THE PHILIPPINES, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED FIVE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED TWENTY-ONE (R.A. NO. 5921), OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE PHARMACY LAW”

29. R.A. No. 10919, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OF SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES (USTSP), PROVIDING FOR THE PURPOSE THE AMALGAMATION OF THE MINDANAO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MUST) AND THE MISAMIS ORIENTAL STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY (MOSCAT), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

30. R.A. No. 10920, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE CONNER CENTRAL NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL – CUPIS ANNEX II IN BARANGAY CUPIS, MUNICIPALITY OF CONNER, PROVINCE OF APAYAO FROM THE CONNER CENTRAL NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS CUPIS NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

31. R.A. No. 10921, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE CONNER CENTRAL NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL – ILI ANNEX IV IN BARANGAY ILI, MUNICIPALITY OF CONNER, PROVINCE OF APAYAO FROM THE CONNER CENTRAL NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS ILI NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

TO THE ARCHIVES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (A.D.). Mme. Speaker, may we recognize Cong. Joel Mayo Z. Almario of the Second District of Davao Oriental for his manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Cong. Joel Almario is recognized.

REP. ALMARIO. Thank you very much, Mme. Speaker, Dep. Majority Leader.

This is just a manifestation that in yesterday's session, Mme. Speaker, this Representation was recorded as present, having been actually not on the floor because we had a Commission on Appointments meeting. By our Rules, the members of the Commission on Appointments, if they have such meetings, are exempted. However, there was a votation yesterday, Mme. Speaker, for House Bill No. 3504, entitled: AN ACT POSTPONING THE OCTOBER 2016 BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9340 AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10656, PRESCRIBING ADDITIONAL RULES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

I would like to manifest my support and my affirmative vote for such House Bill, Mme. Speaker, thus, this manifestation. That will be all.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The manifestation of the Gentleman is noted. Thank you.

REP. ALMARIO. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE HOUR

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we open the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Ariel Casilao of Party-List ANAKPAWIS, who wishes to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Rep. Ariel “Ka Ayik” B. Casilao of Party-List ANAKPAWIS is recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. CASILAO

REP. CASILAO. Thank you, Mme. Speaker, Dep. Majority Leader.

My privilege speech will cover, since we are approaching the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Martial Law, this Representation is obliged to present some issues similar to the situation we experienced before.

Mme. Speaker, fellow colleagues, good afternoon.

Ang ating kalagayan po ngayon, karamihan po sa focus ng ating media ay nase-sensationalize iyong mga usapin ng pagpatay in the conduct of the war on drugs of this administration. In fact, most of our media outfits focus on counting dead bodies. In fact, there are several media outfits, on a day-to-day basis, that present data on the figures about the killing in the course of this war on drugs. Unfortunately, Mme. Speaker, fellow colleagues, ang hindi natin namamalayan o ang hindi rin pinapansin ng ating mga kasamahan sa media ay ang nagpapatuloy na pamamaslang o iyong tinatawag naming political killings sa hanay ng mga organisadong mga manggagawa, organisadong magsasaka at mga manggagawang bukid, kasabay na ang ating mga kapatid na Lumad at mga iba pang indigenous people.

Sa darating na Setyembre 21 ay papatak ang ika-44 na anibersaryo ng deklarasyon ng Martial Law. Para sa masang anakpawis, ang Martial Law ay pasismo; sistematikong atake sa demokratikong karapatan ng ating mamamayan; extrajudicial killings; malawakang military operations; zonings that lead to massive forced evacuations ng mga magsasaka, mga Lumad o indigenous people; pagsupil sa karapatang magpahayag, mapayapang pagkilos at pag-oorganisa; pag-atake sa mga unyon ng mga manggagawa; tahasang demolisyon sa pamayanan at komunidad ng mga maralitang lungsod at iba pang mga batayang karapatang nilalabag at sistematikong nilalabag noong panahon ng diktadura.

Mme. Speaker, nakalulungkot isipin na sa pagkalipas ng mahigit apat na dekada, ang mga magsasaka, kabilang na ang mga organisadong mga magsasaka at mga manggagawang bukid ay patuloy na nakararanas ng pamamaslang, panggigipit at mala-Martial Law na pakikitungo.

Mme. Speaker, ilan lamang sa mga nadokumento ng Kinatawang ito, kaakibat ng kanyang mga miyembrong organisasyon, una ang mga pamamaslang na ito ay kaugnay sa kanilang patuloy na pakikibaka para sa tunay na reporma sa lupa at ang mga tulad nito, mga killings connected to armed conflict or connected to land disputes, or labor disputes. Ilalahad ko po ang ilan sa mga bagong kaso, mga kasama at Mme. Speaker.

Una, bago pa man ipinahayag ng ANAKPAWIS Party-List at ng Makabayan ang pagsuporta sa muling pagsisimula ng pormal na usapang pangkapayapaan sa pagitan ng NDFP at ng GRP. Napakapositibo na ito para sa ibayong pag-uusap sa pinagmulan at dahilan ng armadong tunggalian na ito. Ang usapang pangkapayapaan na ginawang pagpapatupad sa unang hakbanging pangako ni Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte ay sa pagpapalaya una ng mga bilanggong pulitikal at mga consultant nito, gayundin sa pagbibigay daan para sa pagbabalik ng ating mga kapatid na Lumad sa kanilang lupang pangako.

Nakikiisa kami, Mme. Speaker, fellow colleagues, sa tagumpay ng first round ng formal peace negotiation

na ginawa noong Agosto 22 hanggang Agosto 27, sa Oslo, Norway, kung saan ni-reaffirm ang nakaraang agreements, for example, the Hague Joint Declaration and the succeeding agreements thereof. Ngayon ay nakatuon para sa usapin at pagtalakay sa susunod na napakahalagang agenda, ang substantive agenda na socioeconomic reforms. Isa sa mga naunang kasunduan na muling pinagtibay ng kasalukuyang peace talks ay ang Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law o CARHRIHL, na pangunahing patungkol habang nagkakaroon ng usapang pangkapayapaan ang mga armadong puwersa, ang AFP at ang NPA, ay sumunod sa guidelines o patungkol sa usapin ng proteksyon ng karapatang pantao at pagpapatupad sa internasyonal na makataong batas. Sa panibagong commitment ng ating gobyerno, ang CARHRIHL ay muling io-operationalize, pagaganahin ang Joint Monitoring Committee, at ang joint secretariat ng bawat partido ay maglulunsad ng kanyang mga pagtanggap ng mga reklamo sa usapin ng paglabag sa karapatang pantao at internasyonal na makataong batas.

Gayunman, Mme. Speaker, habang malugod nating tinatanggap ang mga balita kaugnay sa tagumpay ng unang round ng panumbalik ng pormal na negosasyon ng peace talks, nagpapatuloy ang mga sinasabing human rights violation at bumibiktima sa mga kapatid nating magsasaka, manggagawang bukid at mga manggagawa, na siyang pinakaugat kung bakit mayroong armadong tunggalian.

Noong Hulyo, Mme. Speaker, sa unang buwan pa lamang ng administrasyong Duterte, may dalawang Lumad na biktima ng extrajudicial killing, kasama rito ang isang buntis sa bayan ng San Fernando, Bukidnon. Pangalawa, nagkaroon, at reported ito sa mga media outfits, sa local ng aerial bombing, hamletting sa Caraga, Davao Oriental, kakumbinasyon ng malawakang combat operations, food blockade at looting, at nagbunga ng massive evacuation ng humigit-kumulang 1,000 pamilya ng mga Lumad.

Pangatlo, may tinortyur na manggagawang bukid ng abaka sa Catanduanes at may pinatay na Lumad leader o extrajudicial killing sa isang Lumad leader, at sugatan na Lumad leader sa Davao City. Noong Agosto naman, may mga kaso rin ng human rights violations sa peasant sector na supporters at mga miyembro ng partido ng Kinatawang ito—illegal arrest sa dalawang lider-magsasaka sa Quezon at Bicol ng PNP-CIDG; illegal arrest sa Cebu sa isang missionary at teacher ng Rural Missionaries of the Philippines ng PNP at CIDG; at nitong nakaraan lamang, na aking binanggit sa una kong mga pahayag, ang overkill na demolisyon sa Patungan sa Maragondon, Cavite; at ang massacre sa apat na magsasaka sa Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija.

Mme. Speaker, fellow lawmakers, as we hear this few enumeration of incidents that victimized the Filipino

farmers, I really hope that we accept it in ourselves na ito ay systematic. Hindi ito isolated cases, kung hindi symptoms ng panunumbalik na isang maladiktadurya at pasistang pamamaraan, violent assault on the Filipino peasant class who are asserting their right to land and the implementation of a genuine land reform.

Mme. Speaker, this development, I believe, we already know, is reminiscent of how the former administration, the Aquino regime's counterinsurgency operational Plan Bayanihan. Hindi ito ang inaasahan natin sa gitna ng mga paborableng kundisyon na pinasimulan ng administrasyong Duterte.

Kanina nga, sa budget briefing ng DND, Mme. Speaker, inilahad ni General Visaya na hanggang December 2016 na lang ang internal security Plan Bayanihan. Pero hangga't sa loob ng limang taong implementasyon nito, kaakibat dito ang mataas at mahabang listahan ng mga pangalan ng mga lider-magsasaka, aktibista, lider-manggagawa na kabahagi sa listahang mga pinatay, ikinulong ng walang rason, at iba pang mga paglabag sa karapatang pantao.

Mme. Speaker, last September 1, was the first anniversary of the Lianga massacre, and this humble Representation from ANAKPAWIS would like to recognize the victims as martyrs, who, amidst the hardship and the threat that beget serving the Lumad indigenous people, they remained firm to carry out their noble duties. I honorably mention in this privilege speech, the sacrifices of Alcadev Exec. Dir. Emerito Samarca, the two indigenous people—Lumad community leaders Dionel Campos and Datu Juvello Sinzo, and may their martyrdom remind us lawmakers to legislate measures that would eventually dismantle the political, economic and social bases that led to their demise.

As a form of remembrance for the fallen martyrs of martial law who wagered with their lives to fight for democracy and freedom, I would like also to pay respect to the victims of the Aquino regime, especially the 307 victims of extrajudicial killings or the political killings from which 283 were from the peasant sector. As we demand justice for the victims of martial law by continuing the call to hold the Marcoses responsible for the dark-age atrocity in the country, we demand, similarly, justice and to hold the Aquino presidency for the barbarism endured by the Filipino farmers, farm workers and the working class, the indigenous people and other rural-based sectors. Kailangan din nating gunitain ang mga biktima ng mga pamamaslang at iba pang paglabag sa karapatang pantao na pinakawalan ng Oplan Bayanihan.

For my last point, Mme. Speaker, as contributory to the peace efforts of the Duterte presidency, I urge the House leadership and Members to join the nationwide clamor for the release of at least 500 political prisoners, incarcerated in prisons in different parts of

the country. Among them are elderly, sickly, women and nursing mothers. I urge the honorable Members of the House to support the Amnesty Resolution, filed by the Makabayan Coalition that calls for the release of political prisoners.

Mme. Speaker, we would like to challenge each Member of the House to appreciate the advocacy for human rights directly as a call to protect, promote and uphold the interest of the marginalized, the vulnerable, the voiceless and the powerless. In the Philippine context, it is the peasant class that has been the main victim of human rights abuses as shown in our history.

Mme. Speaker, fellow lawmakers, to make our call for justice for the victims of martial law more meaningful and concrete, we should also call for justice for victims of the regimes that followed the Marcos dictatorship, including that of Aquino, as well as the continuing atrocities of the military against the marginalized. We from Anakpawis view peace not merely as a ceasefire or the absence of armed conflict, but an environment based on justice and social equity: there would be no peace if Filipino farmers are to be displaced from their land incessantly; there would be no peace if the Filipino toiling masses are snatched of the fruits of their labor; and of course, there would be no peace if the right to self-determination of the Filipino people as a people remains to be dictated or dominated by a foreign power such as US imperialism.

Lastly, Mme. Speaker, for the Filipino peasants, peace is security of their rights to land and to labor on farms with liberty, without threat, without intimidation, without disruption. Hence, Mme. Speaker, our call this very moment, among our fellow lawmakers, is land and peace for the Filipino farmers in our country.

Thank you, Mme. Speaker, fellow colleagues. Good afternoon. Maayong hapon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Thank you Representative Casilao.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARIN (O.). Mme. Speaker, we move to refer the privilege speech of Rep. Ariel Casilao to the Committee on Rules.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the privilege speech is referred to the Committee on Rules.

REP. GARIN (O.). Mme. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of our guests in the gallery. We have the guests of Rep. Gil

“Kabarangay” P. Acosta from the Third District of Palawan, to wit: Punong Barangay Jean Villarin, Barangay Macarascas, Puerto Princesa City; Brgy. Kgdw. Roderick Cervancia, Barangay Inagawan, Puerto Princesa City; Provincial Information Office of Palawan employees: Ms. Honeylyn Balladares, Mr. Dominic Fresnillo and Mr. Ernie Batul; from the district office: Ms. Emma Barrientos, Mr. Eugene Tabang and Mr. Glenard Sioce. May they be acknowledged, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). May we ask the guests aforementioned to rise and be acknowledged. You are welcomed by the Members of the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

REP. GARIN (O.). Mme. Speaker, let us also acknowledge the presence of the guests of Cong. Ma. Theresa V. Collantes. They are the BHW Presidents from the Third District of Batangas: (*Applause*) Thelma Alano, Fe Peña, Imelda Suan, Ernie De Villa, Tess Lazaro, Nita Mendoza, Nessie Dimaunahan, Isabel Fedelino, Lauding Ortega, Marcela Latayan and Amelia Abu, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). We welcome the guests of Congresswoman Collantes, the BHWs. Please rise so we may acknowledge your presence. Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

REP. GARIN (O.). Mme. Speaker, may we recognize Rep. Gil “Kabarangay” P. Acosta from the Third District of Palawan, who wishes to avail of the Privilege Hour, with his speech about Puerto Princesa as a gateway to Palawan’s tourism hubs.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Representative Acosta is recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ACOSTA

REP. ACOSTA. Thank you very much, Mme. Speaker, and distinguished colleagues of the Seventeenth Congress of the Republic of the Philippines.

Magandang hapon po sa ating lahat. Good afternoon to all.

Today I rise to deliver a privilege speech. Tourism, as a development issue and a theme of national interest, holds a special place in my heart as a Palaweno, not just because the Third District of Palawan, consisting of the city of Puerto Princesa and the municipality of Aborlan, is an important tourist destination, but also because tourism is an engine of regional and countrywide development, Mme. Speaker.

As we all know, dear colleagues, tourism is an important sector of the Philippine economy and national socio-economic life. In fact, Section 2 of Republic Act No. 9593 or The Tourism Act of 2009, states, and I quote:

The State declares tourism as an indispensable element of the national economy and an industry of national interest and importance, which must be harnessed as an engine of socioeconomic growth and cultural affirmation to generate investment, foreign exchange and employment, and to continue to mold an enhanced sense of national pride for all Filipinos.

Section 2(c) of the same law, Mme. Speaker, highlights the State in promoting “a tourism industry that is ecologically sustainable, responsible, participative, culturally sensitive, economically viable, and ethically and socially equitable for local communities.”

Indeed, Mme. Speaker, dear colleagues, this national tourism framework has been given a unique place in the pantheon of our national development efforts and policy formation.

As an agent of national development, the travel and tourism industry contributed 7.8—I say again, Mme. Speaker—7.8 percent to the country’s gross domestic product in 2015 or equivalent to P227.62 billion, and attracted roughly 5.4 million foreign visitors, an increase of 11.5 percent from 2014 as against the Asian tourist average of 8.5 percent and the worldwide average of 4 percent, according to a Department of Tourism data. Further, the tourism sector directly employs 4.99 million Filipinos, a 12.5 percent share of the total national employment.

The foregoing figures show, Mme. Speaker, dear colleagues, that tourism growth brings large numbers of tourists and travelers to a destination and, consequently, can create employment opportunities and increase revenues for affected communities and the nation as a whole.

While the foregoing figures also include other tourist destinations in the country, it is good to know that Palawan, our province, has been in the forefront of the tourism boom in the country. Palawan’s enormous tourism potential has been recognized. A foreign publication, *Lonely Planet Magazine*, recognizes Palawan as “one of the real treasures of the Philippines.” Palawan’s world-class diving, snorkeling and jungle trekking make it a must-see destination for nature lovers and adventure sports fans. In the *Conde Nast Traveler’s* Readers’ Choice Awards for 2014, Palawan once again was named as one of the best islands in the world by the *National Geographic Traveler Magazine*. It claimed top spot based on over 76,000 votes. Thanks to the Puerto

Princesa's Underground River, it outranked Maui, Big Island and Kauai of Hawaii, Santorini and Cyclades in Greece, and the Great Barrier Reef and Kangaroo Island in Australia.

Truly, tourism plays an increasingly important role in the province's economy as Palawan has a number of world-class natural attractions, and its proven potential is highlighted in the country's tourism master plan, Mme. Speaker.

In the middle of the island of Palawan is the captivating Puerto Princesa City. Ito po ang aking distrito. It is the gateway to Palawan. It boasts of a multitude of tourist accommodations and facilities that can be a jump-off point to a wide array of attractions, both within and around the capital city such as showcases of festivals on arts and culture, visits to historical landmarks and museums, city trips to sports and recreation facilities, leisure and entertainment hubs, health and wellness nature centers, souvenir shops and bay cruising, Mme. Speaker.

We are blessed with the magnificent Honda Bay which consists of several islets with beautiful beaches for diving, snorkeling, island hopping and the picnic-ideal Mitra Ranch that overlooks Honda Bay. It is the house of former Speaker Ramon V. Mitra Jr. who is also from our province, Mme. Speaker.

We are blessed with the Palawan Wildlife Reserve and Conservation Center that researches on how best to preserve endangered species such as crocodiles and the mystical butterfly garden where tourists can experience being surrounded by butterflies.

To the north of Puerto Princesa, Mme. Speaker, we are blessed with the world-famous St. Paul Subterranean River National Park, popularly known as the Puerto Princesa Underground River, a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of the 7 Wonders of Nature, featuring a spectacular limestone-cast landscape alongside the eight-kilometer traversable subterranean river which leads into an underground cavern or lagoon known as the "Cathedral."

Mme. Speaker, we are further blessed with the majestic El Nido Reserve which is one of the most beautiful places on earth—ito po ang sabi ng mga patuloy na bumibisita sa aming lalawigan. The abundance of rainforests, mangroves, white sand beaches, coral reefs and limestone cliffs where visitors may even dine amongst the rare aquatic mammal, the dugong. Of course, Coron Island has been regarded by the *Forbes Traveler Magazine* as one of the Top 10 best scuba sites in the world, and El Nido was made famous in the western world by the American TV series, *Amazing Race*.

To the south of Puerto Princesa, Mme. Speaker, we are blessed to have the historical Tabon Cave, a 138-hectare complex of rugged cliff and deep slopes known as the "Cradle of Philippine Civilization" that yielded

the fossil remains of 22,000 year old Tabon Man. Hence, a deeper look on the tourism statistics of Puerto Princesa is in order, Mme. Speaker, dear colleagues. We are thankful that in 2015, Puerto Princesa has attracted 818,961 tourist arrivals, a good 10-percent increase from the 740,272 tourist arrivals in the year 2014, the breakdown of which is that 70 percent came from domestic tourism and 30 percent from outside of the country. It is interesting to note, Mme. Speaker, that the summer months of June and July, posted increasing shares of percentage of tourist arrivals at 19 percent and 14 percent, respectively.

We are thankful that the Puerto Princesa Underground River alone generated P54.6 million in revenues. From last year, its domestic tourist arrivals accounted for 261,277 and its foreign equivalent reached 74,606. We are pleased to report, Mme. Speaker, dear colleagues, for the first seven months of this year, the foreign tourist arrivals of Puerto Princesa that visited Underground River have surpassed that of the domestic tourism at 211,216 and 155,524, respectively, effecting roughly P34.06 million in revenue. The bulk of foreign tourists in Puerto Princesa City alone came from the countries of Taiwan, Korea, China and the United States.

With these developments, Mme. Speaker, please bear in mind that the growth in tourist arrivals can result in income growth and economic welfare which is often seen as one of the important reasons for tourism development.

Mme. Speaker, dear colleagues, from these figures before us today, we can say that tourism is solely dynamic in our economic development in the entire country. As a labor-intensive industry, tourism provides jobs to the local communities in the province through craft production, tour-guiding services, vehicle rentals and recreation services. Employment opportunities also are available in the transportation, accommodation and food service sectors. Local residents, Mme. Speaker, also put up their own small enterprises with very minimal capital requirements like food stands, travel services, souvenir shops and the like. Truly, tourism's positive impact on local economy is through its multiplier effect.

Mme. Speaker, at this juncture, this Representation would like to convey the following suggestions that would increase the tourism potential of the province of Palawan and the city of Puerto Princesa to help intensify tourist arrivals in the country which lag behind. Nahuhuli po tayo nang malayo, Mme. Speaker, sa ating mga kapit-bansa which are the countries of Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia and Vietnam.

Mme. Speaker, medyo napasarap na po ako ng pagtatalakay dito, but then let me suggest, for the kind consideration of my dear colleagues, iyon pong policy program to expand and intensify secondary attractions, kasi lumalabas po ngayon, Mme. Speaker,

dear colleagues, ang napupuntahan lamang ay ang Underground River and some other tourist spots. There must be some projects that must be supported by the national government and with the incoming support of the local government units. We are doing this in our province, in the city of Puerto Princesa, Mme. Speaker.

I am also proposing a plan or program to improve infrastructure facilities in the province of Palawan, in the city, that is, a cruise port facility that could cater to tourists and visitors making use of a cruise ship in the province of Palawan.

Records that are available and were given to us by the Department of Tourism and the PPA prove that iyon pong Port of Puerto Princesa ay siya lamang dinadalaw ng halos every vessel or cruise ship every month, na hindi po nangyayari sa ibang tourist destinations sa ating bansa.

Number three, a measure declaring the province of Palawan as an ecological tourism capital of the Philippines. Palawan is the last frontier, Puerto Princesa is part of Palawan and we are saying that with the kind support of this government, of this Congress, Mme. Speaker, we can prove that we can spell the difference in our country.

In short, Mme. Speaker, I am sharing this information as a positive note. Mas maganda pong mapakinggan paminsan-minsan naman ang mga positibo at magagandang balita sa ating bansa. May pag-asa po tayo. Kaya nga po ipiniprisinta ko ang impormasyong ito for the kind consideration and information of our dear colleagues in this House of Representatives.

On behalf of our people in the Third Congressional District of Palawan, Mme. Speaker, maraming-maraming salamat po. Magandang hapon po sa ating lahat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Thank you, Rep. Acosta. The Presiding Officer is a fan of your district. Next time, we will invite his Honor to also show us some pictures.

REP. ACOSTA. Yes. We will do that, Mme. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. ORTEGA (V.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the Hon. Gil “Kabarangay” P. Acosta of the Third District of Palawan to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. So referred.

REP. ORTEGA (V.) Mme. Speaker, we would like to acknowledge the presence of some guests of our colleagues in the gallery, the guests of our dear Cong. Vilma Santos-Recto. They are the Rotary Club of Lipa South, District 3820: President Toto Loisaga, past President Lito Go, Director and President of Love Lipa Foundation—Bernardine Go, Director Alvin Castillo, Director Norie Recinto, and Director Elmer Borlaza.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The guests of Representative Vilma Santos-Recto who are standing at the back portion of the gallery are welcome. The House of Representatives welcomes you warmly. (*Applause*)

REP. ORTEGA (V.). Mme. Speaker, we would like to acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Teddy Brawner Baguilat Jr.: the visitors from the Technological Institute of the Philippines (TIP), Political Science students and their advisers headed by their Dean, Dr. Jocelyn T. Arcillas. Welcome to Congress.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The guests of Rep. Teddy Brawner Baguilat Jr., the students and professors from the TIP are welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. ORTEGA (V.) Mme. Speaker, I move that we suspend the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Privilege Hour is suspended.

#### ROLL CALL

REP. ORTEGA (V.). Mme. Speaker, I move that we call the roll.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General will please call the roll.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is as follows, per Journal No. 22, dated September 14, 2016:*

#### PRESENT

Abad	Acop
Abayon	Acosta
Abellanosa	Advincula
Abu	Aggabao
Abueg	Aglipay-Villar
Acharon	Akbar

Almario	Cojuangco	Kho	Relampagos
Almonte	Collantes	Khonghun	Revilla
Alonte-Naguiat	Cortes	Labadlabad	Roa-Puno
Alvarez (F.)	Cortuna	Lacson	Robes
Alvarez (P.)	Cosalan	Lagman	Rodriguez (I.)
Amatong	Cua	Lanete	Rodriguez (M.)
Andaya	Cuaresma	Lazatin	Roman
Angara-Castillo	Cueva	Limkaichong	Romero
Antonino	Dalipe	Lobregat	Romualdez
Aragones	Daza	Lopez (B.)	Romualdo
Arbison	De Jesus	Lopez (C.)	Roque (H.)
Arcillas	De Venecia	Lopez (M.)	Sacdalan
Arenas	De Vera	Macapagal-Arroyo	Sagarbarría
Atienza	Defensor	Maceda	Sahali
Aumentado	Del Mar	Malapitan	Salceda
Bag-ao	Deloso-Montalla	Manalo	Salimbangon
Bagatsing	Duavit	Mangaoang	Salo
Baguilat	Dy	Mangudadatu (Z.)	Sambar
Barbers	Elago	Marcoleta	Sandoval
Barzaga	Erice	Marcos	Santos-Recto
Bataoil	Eriguel	Mariño	Sarmiento (C.)
Batocabe	Ermita-Buhain	Marquez	Sarmiento (E.)
Bautista-Bandigan	Escudero	Matugas	Sema
Belaro	Espina	Mellana	Singson
Belmonte (F.)	Espino	Mending	Suansing (E.)
Belmonte (J.)	Estrella	Mercado	Suansing (H.)
Belmonte (R.)	Eusebio	Mirasol	Suarez
Benitez	Evardone	Montoro	Sy-Alvarado
Bernos	Fariñas	Nava	Tambunting
Bertiz	Fernando	Nieto	Tan (A.)
Biazon	Ferrer (J.)	Noel	Tan (S.)
Billones	Ferrer (L.)	Nogralas (J.)	Tejada
Biron	Ferriol-Pascual	Nolasco	Teves
Bolilia	Floirendo	Nuñez-Malanyaon	Tiangco
Bondoc	Flores	Oaminal	Ting
Bordado	Fortun	Olivarez	Tinio
Bravo (A.)	Fortuno	Ong (E.)	Tugna
Bravo (M.)	Fuentebella	Ong (H.)	Turabin-Hataman
Brosas	Garbin	Ortega (P.)	Ty
Bulut-Begtang	Garcia (G.)	Ortega (V.)	Umali
Calderon	Garcia (J.)	Pacquiao	Unabia
Caminero	Garcia-Albano	Paduano	Ungab
Campos	Garin (R.)	Palma	Unico
Cari	Garin (S.)	Pancho	Uy (R.)
Casilao	Gasataya	Panganiban	Vargas
Castelo	Geron	Panotes	Velarde
Castro (F.L.)	Go (A.C.)	Papandayan	Velasco
Castro (F.H.)	Go (M.)	Pichay	Velasco-Catera
Catamco	Gonzales (A.P.)	Pimentel	Veloso
Cayetano	Gonzales (A.D.)	Pineda	Vergara
Celeste	Gonzalez	Plaza	Villafuerte
Ceramica	Gorriceta	Primicias-Agabas	Villanueva
Cerilles	Gullas	Quimbo	Villaraza-Suarez
Chavez	Hernandez	Radaza	Villarica
Chipeco	Herrera-Dy	Ramirez-Sato	Violago
Co	Hofer	Ramos	Yap (A.)



Yap (M.) Zarate  
Zamora (R.) Zubiri

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Mme. Speaker, the roll call shows that 240 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). With 240 Members responding to the call, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

#### APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. ROA-PUNO. Mme. Speaker, I move that we approve Journal No. 21, dated September 13, 2016.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) Hearing none, the motion is approved.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE HOUR *Continuation*

REP. ROA-PUNO. Mme. Speaker, I move that we resume the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Privilege Hour is resumed.

REP. ROA-PUNO. Mme. Speaker, I now move that the Lady from the KABATAAN Party-List, the Hon. Sarah Jane I. Elago, be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Rep. Sarah Jane Elago of the Party-List KABATAAN is hereby recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ELAGO

REP. ELAGO. Mme. Speaker, my dear colleagues, good afternoon.

I rise to speak on a matter concerning the situation in our state universities and colleges.

Mme. Speaker, last August 30, during the briefing for the proposed budget of the Commission on Higher Education, this Representation revealed before the Committee that 57 State universities and colleges will again suffer hefty cuts in their budget for 2017. These cuts are not readily observable from a cursory reading of the proposed budget under the National Expenditure Program. Yet a closer look, Mme. Speaker, reveals the deep cuts, especially

in the budget for maintenance and other operating expenses.

This Representation expresses deep concern over these cuts. Mme. Speaker, ang panibagong budget cut po sa ating mga pampublikong pamantasan ay siguradong magiging dahilan na naman ng mga administrador ng mga nasabing pamantasan para higit pang taasan ang pagsingil ng mga matrikula at iba pang bayarin sa ating mga estudyante.

In fact, Mme. Speaker, data from the 2017 Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing reveal related and worrying developments. Despite the expected lower enrolment in public higher education institutions next academic year due to the implementation of the K to 12 Program, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) expects the country's 114 SUCs to earn a total of P43.3 billion in combined internal income, including fees collected from students. Data from the DBM show that of the P43.3 billion expected income, P7.8 billion will be sourced from tuition collection while P4.4 billion will be from other income collected from students.

What we are worrying is that our state schools might introduce new and higher fees in the coming year just to meet the internal income target. Despite the expected lower enrolment, these figures show us that the policy of charging higher fees on students remains largely intact. In the end, Mme. Speaker, students stand to lose much if the government continues in this pathway towards increasing unaffordability and inaccessibility of even our State schools.

In the past days, Mme. Speaker, my dear colleagues, this Representation has been gathering signatures from many of you in a move to stop the impending budget cuts. This Representation is glad to report to the House plenary today that some legislators, about 112, have already signed this joint undertaking.

For the record and information of our colleagues who have not seen this Joint Statement, let me read it in its totality, along with the names of all the signatories:

#### *Unity Statement Calling for the Strengthening of Public Education through Greater State Subsidy to State Universities and Colleges.*

We, legislators of the Seventeenth Congress, believe that education is a right. It is the constitutional obligation of the State to prioritize education to inculcate patriotism and nationalism among the youth.

We thus express our strong appeal for greater State funding for the qualitative functioning of our nation's 114 State universities and colleges.

We believe that higher education is an instrument of empowerment, and thus



contributory for national development. Higher education serves a public and social purpose. Contrary to current market-driven economic policies, higher education is a public good and should not be left vulnerable to free market forces and commercial interests.

In the past years, we have witnessed the gradual dilution of the public character of our State schools. Education has been reduced to being a lucrative business milking the youth and our parents dry for profit. Since 2010, we have seen a steady increase in tuition rates and a sharp increase in the collection of other school fees. These collections are no less than profiteering measures driven by massive deregulation, privatization, and denationalization of education.

While State schools are being compelled to earn more income, the government's funding meanwhile remains largely insufficient.

In the proposed 2017 national budget, SUCs are given an immediately accessible budget of P56 billion, an increase of P7.8 billion or 18 percent from the current P47.4 billion. However, a closer scrutiny of the budget reveals that 57 State schools will still incur cuts in their budget. Ten SUCs are said to incur cuts in their overall budget, while 35 schools are said to sustain cuts in their operating budget. The total budget for maintenance and other operating expenses or the MOOE for all SUCs will actually decrease by P256 million, from the current P11.5 billion to P11.3 billion in 2017. Some 33 SUCs will also sustain cuts in their budget for capital outlay, including the University of the Philippines.

The government's current budget framework for state schools is contradictory to its intention of developing public education. Greater State funding is needed for our schools to regain their public character and to provide ample support for student services and faculty development.

In this light, we call on the honorable Committee on Appropriations and Members of both Chambers of Congress to immediately stop the impending budget cuts and augment the funding for public tertiary education with the end view of achieving free public education in due time.

We believe that we need a kind of education that will capacitate the youth as agents of social change. It is, therefore, imperative for us to collectively advance our demands to strengthen

public education. Without education, the nation's chance for national progress and development is left to chance.

We also call on students and the general public to join us in the fight to reclaim our right to education. We call on our school administrators to join us in asserting higher budget for public higher education.

We enjoin them to conduct varied forms of affirmative action to clamor for greater support to public education. We enjoin everyone to join the Youth Action Day for Education and Human Rights on September 21, and together, let us fight for our right to education.

Signed by Your Honors: Elago; Tinio; Castro, France; Cortuna; Batocabe; Uybarreta; Jericho Nograles; Dalog; Antonino; Garin (S.); Brosas; Nieto; Cuaresma, Mangaoang; Nolasco; Go (M.); Savellano; Sy-Alvarado; Pancho; Villanueva, Noel; Khonghun; Gonzales (A.D.); Silverio; Canama; Abayon; Romero; Pineda; Ricardo Belmonte; Lopez, Benhur; Salon; Del Rosario; Gan Lee; Panotes; Nuñez-Malanyaon; Roman; De Venecia; Evardone; Belmonte, Feliciano; Sema; Sahali; Bagatsing; Casilao; Vergara; Lopez (M.); Revilla; Alonte-Naguiat; Violago; Lagman; Salceda; Maceda; Mariño; Zarate; Bravo; Palma; Acharon; Oaminal; Robes; Garcia, Joet; Go (A.); Yap (M.); Veloso; Sambar; Dalipe; Ting; Acop; De Jesus; Ocampo; Belmonte, Jose Christopher; Tambunting; Ortega (V.); Crisologo; Tan (A.); Suansing (E.); Biron; Pichay; Akbar; Pimentel; Dimaporo (M.); Panganiban; Cerilles; Daza; Atienza; Cortes; Durano; Calderon; Sarmiento (E.); Radaza; Laogan; Del Mar; Escudero; Yu, Divina; Gonzales, Alexandria; Noel, Victoria; Lacson; Ferrer; Gullas; Bordado; Villarín; Pacquiao; Catamco; Tejada; Gasataya; Villaraza-Suarez; Rodriguez, Maximo; Amante; Primicias-Agabas; Unabia; Ty; Marcoleta; Ramos, Deogracias; Fortun; Vargas, Alfred; Herrera-Dy; Belaro.

Mme. Speaker, sa punto pong ito, nais lamang po ng Representasyong ito na maalar mabuti ng Committee on Appropriations ang pahayag na aking binasa at sa pagbabalangkas ng ating 2017 General Appropriations Bill pa lamang ay mapigilan na natin ang nakaambang mga kaltas sa ating mahal na mga State universities and colleges.

Mme. Speaker, nagawa na po ng Kongresong ito na pigilan ang pagkaltas ng pondo, lalung-lalo na sa MOOE, ng ating mga pampublikong pamantasan noong Sixteenth Congress. Nawa ay muli natin itong magawa. At sa sama-sama nating pagkilos, makakahakbang po

tayo paunti-unti sa isang magandang hinaharap kung saan hindi lamang garantisado ang pondo ng ating mga pampublikong pamantasan, kundi tuluyan na ring magiging libre ang pampublikong edukasyon sa lahat ng antas.

Maraming salamat at magandang araw po sa inyong lahat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Thank you, Rep. Sarah Jane Elago from the Party-List KABATAAN.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we refer the privilege speech of the Honorable Elago to the Committee on Rules.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Asst. Majority Leader, Rep. Christopher “Toff” Vera Perez De Venecia, from the Fourth District of Pangasinan, who wishes to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Representative De Venecia from the Fourth District of Pangasinan is recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. DE VENECIA

REP. DE VENECIA. Mme. Speaker, my distinguished colleagues, I rise to speak on behalf of the millions of cineastes in our country, as well as my family—the late Senator Jose Vera, who founded the country’s largest dream factory, Sampaguita Pictures; my grandfather, the late Doc Perez, the biggest star-maker; and my aunt, Marichu Vera Perez-Maceda, former Chair of the Film Development Council and producer of the iconic film, *Batch ’81*—to congratulate and applaud the movie *Ang Babaeng Humayo*, or *The Woman Who Left*, its director, Lav Diaz, as well as its actors and producers, for winning the Golden Lion Award for Best Film in the Venice International Film Festival.

Four days ago, last September 10, in the Italian village of Lido in Venice, a Filipino movie made history when the Venezia Jury of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Venice International Film Festival announced that the Philippine entry, *Ang Babaeng Humayo*, won the elusive Golden Lion Award for best film. In addition, the movie was chosen as Best Foreign Language Film at the Sorriso Diverso Venezia Awards, before the major honors were announced.

The film’s victory is remarkable because it is the first time that a movie from our country has won in the 73-year-old film festival. *Ang Babaeng Humayo* is a sweeping opus about revenge and forgiveness, directed by Lav Diaz, who was also its screenwriter, cinematographer, editor, and co-producer. As an artist myself, I applaud Lav Diaz for his unparalleled vision, genius and unwavering commitment to his craft. Imagine, for this movie, he had to put on five different hats, a feat in itself and one that I am privy to, having written, directed, and produced stage plays here in our local shores. You know, *Ladies and Gentlemen*, art is not easy. In the international circuit, Lav Diaz has been referred to as a master of slow cinema. This is not without basis, because his movies run longer than most. *Ang Babaeng Humayo* is more than three hours long, a hiccup for Diaz considering that the running time of his *Ebolusyon ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino* is 10 hours and a half. But, this is precisely why artists such as Lav are necessary, because he pushes the boundaries of what art can be. He creates beyond the horizon. And what is a horizon but the limit of our sight? Where we see limitations, he sees possibilities. Lav has been quoted as saying that cinema should not be imposed on and “It is just like poetry, just like music or painting where it is free. Whether it is a small canvass or it is a big canvass, it is the same.”

He is, in essence, the consummate subversive, and a true artistic and creative provocateur. His unflinching commitment to his art, done as always in the spirit of freedom and dialogue, led Diaz to achieve breakthroughs in moviemaking: *Hele sa Hiwagang Hapis*, that runs for more than eight hours, won the Alfred Bauer Award in the 2016 Berlin International Film Festival; *Batang West Side*, five hours, won the Silver Screen Award as the Best Asian Feature Film at the 2002 Singapore International Film Festival; *Norte, Hangganang Kasaysayan*, 4 hours and 30 minutes, won the 2013 Nuremberg International Human Rights Film Award in Germany; while *Mula sa Kung Ano Ang Noon*, five-and-a-half hours, scooped the coveted Golden Leopard Prize at 2014 Locarno Film Festival in Switzerland.

Much time has been spent in making these films. Much time is needed to appreciate these films. It has taken a long time for a Filipino film to bag the top prize at the Venice International Film Festival. My dearest colleagues, it is high time that we give our film and creative industries the recognition and welfare they deserve.

I therefore applaud the collective achievement of Lav Diaz. His body of work is a testament to his genius and is an inspiration to all Filipinos. The success of his films also increased the world’s awareness of Filipino artistry and the fact that Filipinos are capable of making world-class quality work.

This Representation likewise commends all the actors in *Ang Babaeng Humayo*, particularly Charo Santos, whose sturdy portrayal as Horacia Santos in the eponymous movie was described as “remarkable” by *Variety Magazine* and “majestic” by the *Hollywood Reporter*, in which she brings to fore all the unstable emotional contours of a mentally unraveling avenger. Charo Santos’ resolve to return to movie acting after decades of hiatus while serving as former Chief Executive Officer and President of ABS-CBN is indeed admirable and moving. Makes you wonder, it is never too late to pursue your dreams and to return to your first love.

I also congratulate and commend the producers of *Ang Babaeng Humayo*, the Cinema One Originals and Sine Olivia Pilipinas, for making a movie based principally on its cinematic truth and artistic strength.

In view of the stirring success of our Filipino artists in Venice and the prestige that they have given to our country, I would like to rally the Members of this august Chamber to take a second look at the importance and benefits we give to the Philippine movie industry. It is lamentable that while developed countries like the United States, China and the United Kingdom rank arts and culture, film, theatre, and their creative industries as among their top exports and drivers of their economic growth, culture is still perceived in this country as excess, an exercise exclusive to a select few. To quote a long-standing sentiment from the bureaucracy and the powers that be, “Aanhin namin iyong culture-culture na iyan kung marami ang gutom? Ano ang pakialam ko sa culture na iyan?”

On the contrary, the culture and the arts sector creates employment, attracts investments, generates tax revenues and encourages tourism. In Korea, *hallyu* culture has been ranked as the second biggest driver of their economic growth, with K-Pop and Korean novelas having the immense power of putting Korea in the map. *Hallyu* refers to the growing popularity of Korean entertainment, culture, drama and music in other countries particularly in East and Southeast Asia. The Korean government took full advantage of such cultural phenomenon and utilized its media industries to expand exports of Korean dramas and pop music. Total exports in 2015 due to *hallyu*, totaled \$7.03 billion. Of the total, \$2.82 billion exports were cultural and entertainment contents consisting of Korean music, drama, and TV programs, movies, animation and games.

It is said that in our own country, our creative industries contribute five percent to our nation’s GDP. Imagine that once upon a time, tourism contributed a mere five percent. Now, it is close to eight percent, being identified as one of this administration’s top priorities and among the most exciting drivers of our economy.

Let us remember, my dear colleagues, that culture serves as an enhancement of tourism, and we should not neglect to galvanize the sector in the act of nation-building.

I recall that there were few efforts to help the cinematic arts. In 2002, during the speakership of my father, Jose De Venecia, he coauthored the creation of the Film Development Council of the Philippines to encourage the production of quality movies. One feature of this law was the creation of the Film Ratings Board that grants financial incentives to moviemakers based on merits. In the Seventeenth Congress, our lawmakers have filed a number of significant bills to promote the film industry, some of which include: House Bills No. 1557, 1570 and 3134, supporting the production of Philippine independent films by providing incentives to filmmakers who are given honors in notable international film competitions, authored by Cong. L-Ray Villafuerte, Cong. Alfred Vargas and Cong. Strike Revilla, respectively; House Bill No. 2215, developing and promoting film tourism in the Philippines, authored by Cong. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo; House Bill No. 2448, providing for artists’ welfare, authored by Cong. Arthur C. Yap; and House Bill No. 2624, providing a five-year tax holiday for the film industry, authored by the Hon. Jose L. Atienza Jr.

I urge that these bills, among other measures that aim to strengthen the arts and culture sector, be taken up in Congress and be championed by our colleagues, because despite the lack of support from both the private and the public sectors over the years, our creative industries have persisted through the magnanimity of a select few who recognize their value and contribution. Imagine what the sector can achieve if we galvanize the private and public sectors’ full support.

In recent months, I was fortunate to meet two groups of artists. The first, Artists Welfare Project, Inc. led by Nanding Josef, Lisa Macuja, Ronnie Lazaro, Mae Paner and Karina Constantino-David. I also attended the National Development Meeting for the Arts Summit together with my colleague, Cong. Cristal L. Bagatsing; former Senator Nene Pimentel; Film Development Council Chair Liza Diño-Seguerra; Chris Millado of the Cultural Center of the Philippines; and Cecile Guidote-Alvarez, President of the Philippine Center of the International Theatre Institute, among others. In the said summit, we laid out plans that will help in the further development of the arts and culture sector in our country particularly the film industry, two of which are:

1) To ensure the protection of artists’ welfare.

Ladies and Gentlemen, did you know that at present, there are no standardized benefits to artists as those enjoyed by regular workers like medical, disability, retirement benefits, housing assistance and even death insurance? It is very sad. This is because

the nature of their work does not allow them to be identified as employees as defined by the Labor Code of the Philippines and jurisprudence. In recognition of their invaluable contribution in promoting the country's cultural development, there is a need to consider the arts sector as a legitimate industry whose workers need to be protected.

2) The creation of a film archive.

Movies are records of our nation's history and our evolution as Filipinos. From *Jack en Jill* produced by Sampaguita Pictures in 1954 to *One More Chance* and *A Second Chance*, in 2007 and in 2015, respectively, directed by Cathy Garcia-Molina, audiences would observe a clear trajectory of how our language, fashion, music, art, mores, circumstances, and traditions have evolved over the years, and even the way we make our films. Sadly, the Philippines may be the only country left without a national film archives that stores and preserves such films. In view of the resurgence of Philippine movies, which film scholars and critics hail as the Third Golden Age of Philippine Cinema, the need to conserve and protect film negatives and/or prints has become more urgent because cinema is a part of the nation's historical, cultural and artistic heritage and tradition. We cannot allow these to waste away because of sheer neglect. We must act on such measure.

In this respect, I would like to commend Cong. Lucy Torres-Gomez for authoring House Bill No. 2404, establishing a National Film Archive to be managed by the Film Development Council of the Philippines.

To conclude, I urge that the Members of Congress support these initiatives that will bring our film industry, as well as our other creative industries, to new and even greater heights. The narrative and visual aspects of a movie make it wholly unique and a truly standout art form. Films are a powerful medium, not just for leisure, but for education, integration, and culture. It is also a powerful vehicle for social transformation and propaganda especially since cinema is a highly accessible social art form, the participation in which generally cuts across economic lines and boundaries. And, when galvanized properly and efficiently, the film industry can be a driving force of our economy.

Thank you and have a good day.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Thank you, Representative De Venecia.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we refer the privilege speech of the Honorable De Venecia to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we extend the Privilege Hour for another 15 minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Privilege Hour is extended.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, we would like to recognize the last to avail of the Privilege Hour, the Hon. Anthony M. Bravo, Ph.D., of Party-List COOP-NATCCO.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Representative Bravo of Party-List COOP-NATCCO is recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. BRAVO (A.)

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

Honorable Speaker, distinguished colleagues, I rise today to speak about the proposal of the government to borrow anew to augment the national government budget for the Fiscal Year 2017.

This is alarming, Mme. Speaker, because I learned that there are available funds amounting to as much as P1 trillion from unused appropriations and other sources of potential funds which could be used to finance the budget deficit and other obligations of the government.

On page 9 of The President's Budget Message – Fiscal Year 2017, Mme. Speaker, it is written and I will read, *in toto*:

Borrowings and debt. Total borrowings in 2017 will reach P631.3 billion. This amount will be used to finance our P478.1-billion deficit, settle P89.3 billion in maturing debts obligations, contribute P45 billion to the Bond Sinking Fund, and maintain sufficient cushion of cash in the Treasury. Our total borrowings for 2017 will be 9.2 percent lower than this year's projected borrowings due to lower refinancing requirements. This will more than offset the expansion in our deficit program.

In other words, Mme. Speaker, the government is proposing to borrow a total of P631.3 billion to finance the budget deficit of P478.1 billion to settle maturing debt obligations of P89.3 billion and to contribute to the bond sinking fund in the amount of P45 billion.

What I can surmise from this, Mme. Speaker, is, *tayo ay mangungutang na naman para ipambayad sa utang. Tayo ay mangungutang ulit para punan ang patuloy na lumalaking budget deficit. What do we get from this vicious cycle of dependence on the borrowings and debt servicing? Only one thing is clear to me, Mme.*

Speaker. Our national debt, which includes both foreign and domestic borrowings, will continue to balloon until it becomes too heavy to bear. According to government projections, our national debt will rise to P6.5 trillion by 2017. Nangangahulugan po ito na bawat isa sa ating 103 milyong Pilipino ay may utang na P63,000 na kailangang bayaran.

As legislators, we need to address this problem as we are mandated to give our share of wisdom and reason to the Executive department's will and determination to bring real change to the Filipino nation. We are now in the middle of the budget process and I believe that it is a perfect time to tackle this issue, or else, deficiencies in the fiscal policies are repeated again and again.

For us to understand this dilemma, Mme. Speaker, let us take a quick review of the fiscal performance of the past administrations. Let us start with the Marcos and Aquino administrations. In 1985, the Marcos government posted a P282-billion debt and a budget deficit of P11 billion. In the aftermath of the EDSA Revolution when the Cory Aquino government assumed power in 1986, the national debt almost doubled to P411 billion, while the budget deficit also rose to P31 billion. The Aquino administration ended its term with a P672-billion debt. What is common in the two administrations is that they spent more than what the government gets in revenues.

When President Fidel Ramos came to power in 1992, he reformed the taxation system, managed external debt through debt restructuring, and implemented a mandatory savings of 10 percent. His prudence in billions in public spending actually bore fruits as his government was the only one which posted budget surplus in the last four years of his term. The data speak for itself, Mme. Speaker. The expenditures of the Ramos administration or Ramos government in the last four years of his term are lower than the revenues it collected and this careful budgeting was able to turn around the budget deficit, and, in fact, posted a P16-billion budget surplus in 1994, P11 billion in 1995, P6 billion in 1996, and P1.5 billion in 1997. We must commend him for his accomplishment as it truly entails political will to be able to achieve that.

During the Estrada and the Arroyo administrations, the country's fiscal performance went back to dismal state. The national debt continued to rise so as the budget deficits. The GMA administration implemented austerity measures through Administrative Order No. 103 which sought to reduce the public sector deficit and decrease public sector debt. That is why we could see that in the year 2007, the budget deficit was actually down to P12 billion from P147 billion in 2001 when President Arroyo came to power. Debt servicing was also one of the top priorities of the Arroyo administration; however, the political turmoil in the last two years of her administration brought

the budget deficit back to P314 billion and debt has reached P4.6 trillion.

In the Benigno Aquino administration, the national debt continued to rise from P4.8 trillion in 2011 to P6.1 trillion in 2016. Aggressive tax collection and higher income of GOCCs revved up government revenues, and this addressed the budget deficits. The P73-billion budget deficit in 2014 was the lowest during the term of the Benigno Aquino administration. However, his term ended with P388 billion budget deficit and P6.1 trillion debt.

Now, the Duterte administration's fiscal policy looks no different, Mme. Speaker. The 2017 proposed national government budget projects a budget deficit of P478 billion, and I reiterate, a debt of P6.5 trillion.

The question, Mme. Speaker, is: Shall we keep this kind of phasing in our budget expedition or shall we undertake possible solutions to this decades-long problem of budget deficit and constantly ballooning debt?

Mme. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, I want to show you that borrowings are unnecessary because we have, in fact, available funds that remain unutilized and are just sitting in the coffers of the National Treasury.

Data from the National Expenditure Program itself show that every year, there is unused appropriations. As we all know, Mme. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, unused appropriations is composed of unreleased appropriations by the DBM and unobligated allotments or allotments released by the DBM but have not been awarded to suppliers and have reached the end of validity period. We had unused appropriations of P72 billion in 2002, P182 billion in 2005, P227 billion in 2010 and P486.8 billion in 2015.

So, this is the situation, Mme. Speaker. In 2015, our total budget was P2.9 trillion. With this amount, we could have accomplished so much and addressed the poverty situation in the country. But poverty index in 2015 remained at 26.3 percent which is even worse compared to the poverty index of 25.2 percent in 2012. There is no improvement in poverty for the last nine years. This means that nothing much has changed with the socioeconomic status of Filipinos despite increases in the budget every year. National budget increased by P1.8 trillion over a period of nine years or from P1.1 trillion in 2006 to P2.9 trillion in 2015.

Was it probably because of inefficient spending and poor budget execution? As we can see, Mme. Speaker, we had unreleased appropriations of P133.6 billion and P353 billion unobligated allotments in the same year.

These figures mean one thing. The government underspent a whopping P486.8 billion in unused appropriations. So, what happened to the DBM and the Executive Department? Why did they fail to implement funded programs and projects that could have benefited our countrymen and addressed the persistent wide economic gap between the rich and the poor?

To give you an idea of where unused appropriations are coming from, we can take a look at the National Expenditure Program or NEP recently submitted by President Duterte to Congress. The DILG, for example, has unused appropriations of P8.8 billion in 2015. The Department of Agriculture has unused appropriations of P9.8 billion. The Department of Agrarian Reform has unused appropriations of P11.9 billion. The Department of Health has unused appropriations of P12.7 billion. The DND or the Department of National Defense has unused appropriations of P14.5 billion. Similarly, the DSWD posted an unused appropriations of P18.4 billion. The Department of Education had a higher underspending amount of P51.8 billion. The highest unused appropriations is posted by the DPWH at P116.2 billion.

Mme. Speaker, my dear colleagues, we are talking here of billions of pesos being unspent amid the public clamor for improved economic and social services. Clearly, there is something wrong with our budget implementation. To add to this P486.6 billion unused appropriations in 2015, I would like to walk you further to other sources of funds for the same year.

The government had earmarked revenues of P294.8 billion; budgetary support to government corporations in the form of subsidies amounting P130 billion; and off-budget funds of P79 billion for the year 2015. If we add up the earmarked revenues, the BSGC funds, off-budget funds and unused appropriations, Mme. Speaker, we could get a total of P1 trillion or even more. Simply put, Mme. Speaker, we have a huge amount available that could potentially address our deficit. Is the DBCC aware of these figures? What is the plan of the DBCC through the DBM to resolve this issue?

Ako po ay napapaisip na kung mayroon naman pala tayong mapagkukunang pondo, bakit pa kailangan nating mangutang? Ngayon po ay gusto kong manawagan sa ating butihing mga kasama dito sa House. To me, we have to look at this issue seriously because based on the data I have just presented, it is very clear that: one, we have persistent budget deficit and national debt; two, we have a serious problem on the absorptive capacity of the national government agencies; and three, we have available funds due to underspending and other potential sources such as the earmarked revenues, off-budget funds and subsidies to GOCCs.

Mme. Speaker, this august Chamber has a Constitutional mandate to reform the budget. Article VI, Section 24 of the Philippine Constitution says:

All appropriation, revenue or tariff bills, bills authorizing increase of the public debt, bills of local application, and private bills shall originate exclusively in the House of Representatives, but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments.

At this juncture, Mme. Speaker, may I humbly propose then that the Committees on Appropriations, and Ways and Means scrutinize how we could utilize this P1 trillion potential fund and determine which direction we should go. Are we going to use these funds to address the growing budget deficit and national debt? If so, it is perhaps necessary for us to consider the one-fund concept in government budgeting and accounting. This policy was enunciated through Presidential Decree No. 1-1-7-7 or 1177 which requires that all income and revenues must accrue to the General Fund and thus can be freely allocated to fund programs and projects of the government as prioritized.

The Cory Aquino administration used the one-fund concept in its account-cleaning efforts. President Aquino issued a presidential directive mandating all agencies against keeping separate accounts to transfer unauthorized or expired balances to the National Treasury. President Ramos likewise issued a similar directive in 1996 to reiterate a one-fund policy and discourage all attempts to created new off-budget accounts.

I believe that the wisdom of this august Body on the applicability of one-fund concept is very important in addressing the budget deficit and growing debts. In addition, Mme. Speaker, I hope that the Duterte administration will also tap the expertise of former President Ramos in fiscal management, not only as special envoy to China.

I dream of seeing the day when our children and grandchildren will no longer have to carry the burden of paying government debts, accumulated in the past three to four decades, because we already achieved a balanced budget and eliminated budget deficits.

Thank you very much, Mme. Speaker. Good afternoon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Thank you, Representative Bravo.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, may we recognize the Hon. Gary C. Alejano who wishes to interpellate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). To interpellate, His Honor is recognized.

REP. ALEJANO. Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

Good afternoon, my colleagues. I just would like to inquire if the distinguished Gentleman from COOP-NATCCO is willing to take questions from this Representation.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Certainly, with great honor to be interpellated by a great man from MAGDALO Party-List, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ALEJANO. Thank you, Mme. Speaker.

Iyong topic po ninyo ay napaka-interesting at napakaimportante especially that we are now in the budget season. I-clarify ko lang po ulit, how much is the unused appropriation of the national government in the year 2015?

REP. BRAVO (A.). The unused appropriation for 2015 is amounting to P353 billion. That is the unobligated allotment, Mme. Speaker, Your Honor. If you add the unreleased appropriation, it will be more than P400 billion.

REP. ALEJANO. P486 billion.

REP. BRAVO (A.). P486 billion, to be exact.

REP. ALEJANO. Thank you, Honorable Bravo. Ano po ang underlying reasons and the implications of this large amount of unused, hindi po nagagamit na pondo ng ating gobyerno?

REP. BRAVO (A.). For me, Mme. Speaker, distinguished colleague, it simply means that the absorptive capacity of the agency is low.

REP. ALEJANO. The absorptive capacity...

REP. BRAVO (A.). The absorptive capacity is low.

REP. ALEJANO. Ang ibig mo bang sabihin niyan, Mme. Speaker, ang absorptive capacity ay iyong kanilang kakayahan na gastusin ang pondong nakalaan sa kanila?

REP. BRAVO (A.). Exactly, Your Honor, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ALEJANO. In that respect, Honorable Bravo, Mme. Speaker, in your own opinion, why is it that different agencies of the government are still asking for more, if they cannot spend the money allotted to them?

REP. BRAVO (A.). In fact, Mme. Speaker, distinguished colleague, in every budget presentation of any government agency, I am raising this issue that why do they ask for an increase in a budget when in fact, they were not even able to use the allotment or appropriated amount by Congress in the preceding year.

REP. ALEJANO. So, would that mean, Mme. Speaker, that aside from the absorptive capacity of the agencies of the government, that also implies that agencies of the government failed to plan and to execute certain plans?

REP. BRAVO (A.). I agree, Your Honor.

REP. ALEJANO. I pointed out that issue because the number of personnel in their planning department before the increase in their budget is still the same as the number of personnel when they increased their budget. That is why, kulang ang personnel na nagpapalano sa kanilang mga ahensya. Is that correct, Honorable Bravo?

REP. BRAVO (A.). You are correct, Your Honor, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ALEJANO. Ang budget po natin ay kinukuha po sa sources of revenues ng ating gobyerno. Pag hindi po ito akma doon sa projected expenses ng ating gobyerno, tama po ba na nangungutang ho tayo para punuan ang kakulangan, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BRAVO (A.). Yes, Your Honor.

REP. ALEJANO. Kung ganoon ang sitwasyon na manghihiram ho tayo dahil kailangan ho nating punuan ang projected expenses, and with the fact na hindi naman pala natin nauubos ang ating pondo, we are increasing our national debt unnecessarily. Is that correct, Honorable Bravo, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BRAVO (A.). Exactly, Mme. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ALEJANO. May I know on your side, Honorable Bravo, the standing national debt of our national government, if you know this.

REP. BRAVO (A.). The outstanding debt for 2015?

REP. ALEJANO. Yes, Honorable Bravo.

REP. BRAVO (A.). In 2016, it is actually P6.1 trillion.

REP. ALEJANO. P6.1 trillion.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Outstanding debt.

REP. ALEJANO. I ask that question, Mme. Speaker, dahil po lumalaki ang ating utang na binabayaran din po natin ang interest. Inuutang po natin ang pondo na at the end of the day ay hindi naman po natin nagagastos. This will be subject to anomalies kung hindi po ito nagagastos. Ang taumbayan po ang nabe-burden dito po sa pangungutang ho natin, Mme. Speaker, Honorable Bravo.

In relation to this, Honorable Bravo, have you heard about the pronouncement of the President to holders of all appointed positions in the government to tender their resignation?

REP. BRAVO (A.). Come again, Your Honor, Mme. Speaker?

REP. ALEJANO. Narinig po natin, I think a couple of weeks ago, na pinapa-resign po lahat ang mga nappoint sa pwesto sa gobyerno, I think as far back as the time of President Ramos. Is that correct, Honorable Bravo?

REP. BRAVO (A.). Yes, Your Honor. Para po sa akin ay tama lang po iyon para magkaroon ng elbow room ang ating mahal na President na lagyan ng tamang tao na magpapalakad sa mga ahensyang iyan.

REP. ALEJANO. Well, assuming na hindi po sila tama, how about kung nagpe-perform na ho sila ng trabaho and they have gained skills in and mastery of their jobs or fields of expertise? Hindi po ba ito mag-i-impact again doon sa absorptive capacity ng mga ahensya dahil alam naman ho natin na pag bago ang nakaupo, mag-a-adjust muna ho iyan, mag-aaral muna iyan, mayroong learning curve ang mga nakaupo. And since we have already historical unused appropriations, would it not all the more increase the unused appropriations of our government?

REP. BRAVO (A.). For me, Mme. Speaker, distinguished colleague, as we can see, data show us that the previous heads of offices, through this agency, are not performing well, in fact, judging from the vicious cycle of unused appropriation from 2010 to the present. So, I think that is one of the reasons the President decided to have a replacement of these Secretaries so that—maybe, he has in mind that there are other more capable of running the agency and once and for all to perform well as far as spending is concerned.

REP. ALEJANO. I understand, Mme. Speaker, Honorable Bravo, if you are replacing major positions in the government but not all, thousands of them. Actually, he will not be able to fill them up in just so short a time. Napakarami po ito. Again, kung ganoon karami po, even those with fixed term are being replaced because, of course, they were being asked to resign, they might be seen as holding on to their position, so they resigned, some of them. Since they are very numerous, ang sinasabi ko, would it not impact again on the absorptive capacity and/or delay the implementation of the projects?

REP. BRAVO (A.). Well, for this Representation, we give the benefit of the doubt to the President that he will really appoint competent personnel in such capacities.

REP. ALEJANO. Thank you, Honorable Bravo. I will just go to my next question. Would you agree on

the budget process and deliberations we are conducting here in the House of Representatives? Would you agree to the process, to the scheduling of the budget briefings and deliberations here in the House of Representatives, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BRAVO (A.). In some aspects, yes, but in some aspects, no. In some aspects, yes, because agencies are given the chance to present their budgets in a committee hearing and we are given a chance to scrutinize; but no in some aspects, because the time allotted is really very limited. Anyway, we still have the plenary where we can fully scrutinize the budget of any agency.

REP. ALEJANO. Would you agree, Mme. Speaker, Honorable Bravo, that during the budget briefing of the different agencies of the government, the heads of agencies would just spend around 5 to 10 minutes explaining their performance in the past year and their proposed budget for the next year, and considering the fact that these agencies' budgets involve billions of pesos, would you agree that the time allotted for their briefing is just very short?

REP. BRAVO (A.). As I have mention a while ago, the time allotted is really very limited and has to be extended some more. It is really very short.

REP. ALEJANO. Yes, I raised that issue, Mme. Speaker, because during the budget briefing, it is also at the same time that Members of the House of Representatives ask their questions and I cannot fault Members of Congress to ask some parochial questions. Now, with the limited period of time in the budget briefing, heads of agencies of the government were not able to really explain in detail their performances and their proposed budgets, and then Members of Congress who just received their budget briefing in the morning or during that time, will not have enough time to scan the papers given to them, and then, napakabilis, magkakaroon na ng budget deliberation at the same time, na binabasa pa lang natin iyong mga papers nila.

Mme. Speaker, Honorable Bravo, if I may, I have raised this in the last Congress, that in order for the House of Representatives to really focus on important policy issues regarding the budget of every agency of government, we should devote enough time for each department. We can avoid parochial concerns by conducting consultations prior to the budget briefing. Would the Gentleman agree, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BRAVO (A.). Partly yes, I agree; partly no, because there is still a proposal that after the budget presentation by the agency, there will be pre-plenary wherein we can still ask questions.



REP. ALEJANO. Yes, I understand, Mme. Speaker. However, we should do it in a more systematic way wherein we allow government agencies to present their budget in detail and allow Members of Congress to take note of their questions and any questions on the budget, and then, the next time that agency will go back to the House of Representatives, that would be the time for Members of Congress to ask questions from the different agencies of government. By this time, government agencies would be receiving questions. Would the Gentleman agree with that, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BRAVO (A.). I agree to that proposal, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ALEJANO. I mentioned that, Mme. Speaker, Honorable Bravo, because nakalungkot po na during the deliberations, five minutes lang po ang itatanong natin sa isang ahensya na bilyun-bilyon ang pondo. And it is not helping Members of Congress to really understand the budget, plus the fact na ang NEP natin ay designed para hindi mabasa, napakaliit ng mga nakasulat doon sa NEP. Alam po ng ating mga kasama dito na napakaliit ng mga letra, ng mga numbers doon sa NEP, and without the aid of agencies of government to really expound on those proposed budgets and their past performances, Members of Congress would not be able to understand really the programs of that agency. Would the Gentleman agree, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BRAVO (A.). I agree with the observation of the distinguished colleague, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ALEJANO. Another matter, Mme. Speaker, is on the issue of budget planning where we have the Local Development Council in every local government unit. The task to the Local Development Council is to come up with a local development plan—short term, medium term and long term. In that Local Development Council, the Members of Congress are allowed to send their representatives in order to raise the concerns of the Members of Congress. That is according to Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991. Is the Gentleman aware of that, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BRAVO (A.). Yes, Mme. Speaker. That is supposed to be the process of budgeting.

REP. ALEJANO. I mentioned that because we are spending so much time on discussing parochial concerns during budget hearings when in fact, we would have the time to really raise our concern there in the Local Development Council. With the ruling of Supreme Court that Members of Congress should not interfere in the implementation of the projects, and considering also the process by which we can improve the speed

and the quality of budget deliberations, there should be extensive deliberations on the budget in the grassroots level. Would the Gentleman agree with that, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BRAVO (A.). I fully agree, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ALEJANO. That is why, Mme. Speaker, when the PDAF was declared unconstitutional, or even before that when it was questioned before the Supreme Court, this Representation recommended that all local governments in the country should have a comprehensive local development plan so that Members of Congress would be able to recommend their programs and projects as long as they are part of the local development plan. We cannot just recommend outside of any plan of the local government units. Since the power of the purse belongs to Congress, it is our right to really make sure that the funds are not excessive, are not used improperly. That is why I recommend that we improve the planning process even here in Congress, in the local level, so that when the proposed budget reaches the House of Representatives, we would be able to discuss at the policy level so that we can perform our functions and mandates very well, Mme. Speaker, to be sure that the Executive Department is doing its mandate as well. Would the Gentleman agree, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BRAVO (A.). I agree, Mme. Speaker. I am submitting myself to that long process of budgeting under the local development plan. It will really address or eliminate regular unnecessary, excessive and extravagant budgeting.

REP. ALEJANO. Thank you, Honorable Bravo. I hope that we would be able to come up with a law which this Representation intends to file to require all local government units to come up with a comprehensive long-term master development plan so that there will be sustainability when it comes to planning and implementation of programs and projects, so that there will be harmony of all plans from the local level to the provincial, regional and even to the national level, without really delaying the process of budget briefing and deliberations here in the House of Representatives. So far, it has been the practice of agencies of government to propose budgets that include a lump-sum budget, and it is only here in Congress where agencies of the government start to itemize lump-sum budget. Does the Gentleman agree to that observation, Mme. Speaker?

REP. BRAVO (A.). I agree and have the same observation, Mme. Speaker. But in some areas, their projects or programs are being scrutinized by the Regional Development Council, and some of these councils are very active in submitting detailed project proposals.

REP. ALEJANO. I agree, Mme. Speaker. However, as per my observation as well, nagiging copy-paste na lang ang plano. Kung ano ang plano ngayon, ika-copy-paste na lang for the next year without really looking into the purpose of their proposal. Plus the fact that napakalakas po ng pulitika dito sa Pilipinas, kapag napalitan ang isang local chief executive, ang mga plano niya ay siguradong hindi susundin ng kaniyang katunggali sa pulitika kapag ito ay nanalo. Kaya nga po dapat magkaroon ng maliwanag na planning process ang ating bansa para hindi naman every time babaguhin ang plano at pag dating sa itaas, marami ang tinatawag nating “budget insertions,” Mme. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Yes, Mme. Speaker.

REP. ALEJANO. That is all for me, Mme. Speaker, Honorable Bravo. Thank you for the opportunity and thank you also for educating us and our colleagues when it comes to the budget.

Good evening.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker, thank you distinguished colleague.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Thank you Gentlemen.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, the next to interpellate is the Hon. Ariel “Ka Ayik” B. Casilao from ANAKPAWIS Party-List.

REP. CASILAO. Thank you, Dep. Majority Leader.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The Honorable Casilao is recognized.

REP. CASILAO. Thank you, Mme. Speaker. Will the Gentleman from Coop-NATCCO yield to some clarificatory questions?

REP. BRAVO (A.) Certainly, Mme. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. CASILAO. Una po, noong narinig ko ang privilege speech ninyo, I came to a point to remember the interpellation during the budget briefing of the DBCC. I asked questions pertaining to the fiscal policy with regard to the ballooning foreign and domestic debts. The Gentleman mentioned that currently, we have a P6.1 trillion debt or a total of P63,000 per individual if we divide that by our current national population.

Now, would the Gentleman agree sa usapin na, the fiscal policy of this government is debt-driven? Para bang for the longest time, sa napakahabang panahon, from government to government, administration to administration, it is incumbent upon each administration that the fiscal policy relies or is dependent on the very interest of debt-driven or umaasa sa utang, especially sa international financial institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, the ADB and all other financial institutions that lend money. Makakautang and yet it will add up on our principal and the corresponding interest and penalties every year.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Yes, Mme. Speaker. Actually it is a vicious cycle since 2002 to the present.

REP. CASILAO. Yes. I brought this out, Mme. Speaker, because when I asked the DBM how can Congress get away with this kind of vicious cycle, especially that every year, in every budget deliberation, we tend to allocate automatically 33 to 38 percent as payment for our domestic and foreign debts, but, the principal in every year, ay hindi nababawasan, in fact, tumataas pa, the Gentleman from COOP-NATCCO even provided a yearly data on this. Hindi makikita sa bawat taon na bumababa ang principal sa domestic and foreign debts natin. In fact, for every allocation, automatic allocation, as provided by the existing law, debt payment consumes 33 to 38 percent of our national budget, pero hindi lumiliit ang principal. Since martial law, pagkatapos mangutang si former President Marcos hanggang sa mga nagdaang mga Presidente, hindi na po ito lumiit.

As the Gentleman mentioned, it is a vicious cycle. Domino effect ito sa kabuuang dapat paglaanan natin ng mga mahahalagang alokasyon para tugunan ang mga batayang pangangailangan ng ating mamamayan. I agree also with the Gentleman from COOP-NATCCO, that if we do not do something about this, about this vicious cycle, ang hindi pa pinapanganak may naka-tag na nauutang. How much more na lumolobo ito every year. The ball is in our hands, in Congress. We should look, we should review, revisit the existing laws that provide this condition that the Gentleman from COOP-NATCCO is saying, the vicious cycle, Mme. Speaker.

For my last inquiry, Mme. Speaker, what would the Gentleman suggest to this Congress, to this august Body, a legislative action that will directly and immediately address what he calls a vicious cycle, the ballooning debt problem, and get rid of the so-called attitude in every fiscal year, that our government is very dependent and relies on debts from financial institutions?

REP. BRAVO (A.). As I have mentioned, Mme. Speaker, distinguished colleague, I am proposing, once again, the one-fund concept wherein all of the

collections would be given or reverted to the general fund. From thereon, Congress will act as to how it will be spent, meaning, there will come a time if we would do so, we will be spending on the level of our collection or revenue.

REP. CASILAO. Thank you for that answer, Mme. Speaker. This Representation I will be supportive of that initiative. Also, I would like to encourage my fellow colleagues and the Gentleman from Coop-NATCCO, that we start revisiting the law, the Automatic Appropriations Act, that would entail reviewing and revisiting the provisions that tie up—nakatali tayo sa automatic appropriations—especially on spending, on automatically paying our foreign and domestic debts.

Hindi ko naman po sinasabi na gayahin natin ang ibang Latin American countries that declared to suspend or freeze their payment of foreign and national debts. Ang sinasabi ko lang po, may problema na tayo sa utilization, problema na ng previous administrations, and even if we personally witness unobligated billions of funds that are unutilized, may problema din tayo mismo sa polisiya. I encourage all my fellow colleagues in this Body, that for us to deliver the clear mandate of the President and the message of the President to return back ang ibinabayad nilang buwis sa pamamagitan ng serbisyong publiko, we should or there is really a need for us to urgently revisit that law. Ang bola po ay nasa atin, kaya't sa tingin ko po, kailangan din nating pag-usapan, and this Representation eventually will file a correlative bill on that issue.

That would be all, Mme. Speaker.

Thank you very much, Congressman Bravo.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mme. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished colleague.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Thank you, Gentlemen.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we refer the privilege speech and all interpellations to the Committee on Rules.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the speech and all the interpellations are referred to the Committee on Rules.

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we take up the Additional Reference of Business, and direct the Secretary General to read the same.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Secretary General is directed to read the Additional Reference of Business.

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

*The Secretary General read the following House Bill on First Reading, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding reference:*

#### HOUSE BILL ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 3605, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 13 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3019, AS AMENDED, ENTITLED THE ‘ANTI-GRAFT AND CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT’ ”

By Representatives Alvarez (P.), Fariñas, Suarez and Roque (H.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. GULLAS. Mme. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until Monday, September 19, 2016, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Cayetano). The session is adjourned until four o'clock in the afternoon on Monday, September 19, 2016.

*It was 6:19 p.m.*