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CALL TO ORDER

At 10:00 a.m., pursuant to Section 15(h), Rule IV of the House Rules, the Presiding Officer, Rep. Arthur R. Defensor Jr. called the session to order.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). The session is called to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). Please rise for the singing of the Philippine National Anthem.

Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.

PRAYER

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). Let us remain standing for a minute of silent prayer.

Everybody remained standing for the silent prayer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, I move to defer the calling of the roll.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The calling of the roll is deferred.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, I move to defer the reading and approval of the Journal of the previous session.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session for a few minutes.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The session is suspended.

It was 10:02 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:22 a.m., the session was resumed with Deputy Speaker Rolando G. Andaya, Jr. presiding.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. 3408

Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, under the Calendar of Unfinished Business, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 3408, contained in Committee Report No. 2, and for this purpose, may I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

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

The Secretary General is hereby directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 3408, entitled: AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND SEVENTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully move that the presence of the following officials of the concerned agencies, who are here in the gallery be acknowledged. First, is the Chairperson and CEO of the National Youth Commission, Chairperson Cariza Y. Seguerra; second is ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The aforementioned—please proceed, Majority Leader.

REP. SALO. ... the OIC of the Philippine Commission on Women, Ms. Cecile B. Gutierrez. We also wish to acknowledge the presence of Chairperson of the NCIP, Atty. Leonor T. Oralde-Quintayo; the Chairman of the Philippine Racing Commission, Chairman Andrew E. Sanchez; and the Chairman of the Philippine Sports Commission, Chairman William “Butch” I. Ramirez.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The aforementioned persons are welcome to the House. *(Applause)*

PHILIPPINE RACING COMMISSION

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the Bill is that it is in the period of interpellation and debate. I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Philippine Racing Commission.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Before the Chair recognizes the Sponsor, allow the Chair to make a few comments on recent developments as read in our local dailies in which statements attributed to the President regarding his perceived manipulation of the peso has been, according to the papers, rebuked by the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management. Let the Chair state that the issue or the perception of the President is not a solitary opinion. In fact, the issue of the politicization and the manipulation of the Fed is a legitimate and major issue in the upcoming presidential elections. Maybe the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management is merely expressing his thoughts on the matter. Maybe he is a closet Democrat.

Thank you very much.
So, let us now proceed.

Honorable Floor Leader, who will sponsor the budget of the Philippine Racing Commission?

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from PBA Party-List, the handsome Representative Mark Aeron H. Sambar to sponsor and answer questions, if any, on the budget of the Philippine Racing Commission.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The aforementioned Sponsor is hereby directed to defend the budget of the Philippine Racing Commission.

REP. SAMBAR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, I also respectfully move that we suspend the session for a few minutes to allow the technical staff and the resource persons of the Committee to access the floor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Okay.

Before we suspend, may I also remind the Floor Leader that we can suspend first before we recognize the Sponsor of the budget.

Thank you very much for your guidance, honorable Floor Leader.

The session is suspended.

It was 10:26 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:26 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of the Chairman of the Games and Amusements Board, Chairman Abraham Kahlil Mitra.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Welcome, former Member and now Chairman, Congressman Mitra. Welcome to your old House.

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully move that we recognize the Gentleman from the PBA Party-List, Representative Mark Sambar, to sponsor and answer questions on the budget of the PHILRACOM.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Congressman Sambar is recognized. Please proceed.

REP. SAMBAR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Esteemed colleagues, and our guests from the different agencies, good morning. This Representation is now ready to answer the questions on the budget of the PHILRACOM.

REP. GARBIN. Good morning, Mr. Speaker. There being no member of the Minority who wishes to ask questions on the budget of the Philippine Racing Commission, I move, Mr. Speaker, to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of Philippine Racing Commission.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). To the Floor Leader, for the commensurate motion.

REP. SALO. We join the Minority, Mr. Speaker, in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of PHILRACOM.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the PHILRACOM.

Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations. *(Applause)*

PHILIPPINE SPORT COMMISSION

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully move that we recognize again the Gentleman from PBA Party-List, Representative Mark Sambar, to sponsor and answer questions for the Philippine Sports Commission.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Congressman Sambar is recognized.

REP. SAMBAR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

For the Philippine Sports Commission, I am ready to answer questions on the budget of this agency.

REP. GARBIN. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Minority, there being no member of the Minority who wishes to ask question, I now move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Philippine Sports Commission.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. SALO. On behalf of the Majority, Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Philippine Sports Commission.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Philippine Sports Commission.

Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations. *(Applause)*

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Let us have a one-minute suspension of the session for picture taking and group hug. *(Laughter)*

The session is suspended.

It was 10:30 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:31 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize again the Gentleman from PBA Party-List, Representative Mark Sambar, to sponsor and answer questions on the budget of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Representative Sambar is recognized.

REP. SAMBAR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Representation is now ready to answer questions for this agency.

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

REP. GARBIN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, there being no member of the Minority, who wishes to ask questions, I move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. SALO. On behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations. (*Applause*)

The Floor Leader is recognized.

NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the National Youth Commission. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Representative Sambar is recognized to sponsor the budget of the National Youth Commission.

REP. SAMBAR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Representation is now ready to answer questions for the National Youth Commission.

REP. GARBIN. Mr. Speaker, there being no member of the Minority who wishes to ask questions on the budget of the National Youth Commission, I now move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the National Youth Commission.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much, Dep. Minority Leader.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. SALO. On behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the National Youth Commission.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the National Youth Commission.

Is there being any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations. (*Applause*)

The Floor Leader is recognized.

PHILIPPINE COMMISSION ON WOMEN

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Philippine Commission on Women, and for this purpose, Mr. Speaker, I move that Representative Mark Sambar be recognized again to sponsor the budget.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Congressman Sambar is recognized.

REP. SAMBAR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Representation is now ready to answer questions for this agency.

REP. GARBIN. Mr. Speaker, there being no member of the Minority who wishes to ask questions, I now move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Philippine Commission on Women.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much, Dep. Minority Leader.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Philippine Commission on Women.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Philippine Commission on Women.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations. (*Applause*)

GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS BOARD

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Games and Amusements Board, and for this purpose, we recognize again Rep. Mark Sambar to sponsor and answer questions on the budget of the Games and Amusements Board.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Representative Sambar is recognized.

REP. SAMBAR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Representation is now ready to answer questions for the Games and Amusements Board.

REP. GARBIN. Mr. Speaker, there being no member of the Minority who wishes to ask questions on the budget of the Games and Amusements Board—with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Games and Amusements Board.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. SALO. On behalf of the Majority, Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Games and Amusements Board.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Games and Amusements Board.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations. (*Applause*)

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully move that we suspend the session for a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Yes. Before we suspend, I would like to commend and congratulate Congressman Sambar for his stellar sponsorship of the aforementioned government agencies.

Thank you very much, Congressman Sambar, for your candid answers.

The session is suspended.

It was 10:36 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:58 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of our guests from the Department of Labor and Employment, to wit: Sec. Silvestre Bello III, Usec. Danilo P. Cruz, Usec. Ciriaco Lagunzad III, Usec. Joel B. Maglunsod, Usec. Dominador Say and the heads of the attached agencies.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The Secretary, peace negotiator, former Member of the House and my fraternity brother is welcome to the House.

Who will Sponsor the budget of the DOLE?

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the Bill is that it is in the period of interpellation and debate.

I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Department of Labor and Employment and its attached agencies. For this purpose, I move that we recognize the Lady from the Second District of Isabela, Rep. Ana Cristina Siquian Go, to sponsor and answer questions, if any, on the budget of the Department of Labor and Employment.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Representative Go is hereby recognized.

REP. GO (A.). Good morning, Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I will represent and sponsor the budget of the Department of Labor and Employment in the amount of P13.21 billion. This Representation believes that this Department is helping our labor force in the country.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize our Minority Leader, the Hon. Danilo E. Suarez, for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The dashing and debonair Minority Leader, Danilo Suarez, is hereby recognized.

REP. SUAREZ. I move to terminate. Do you want me to do that, distinguished Sponsor?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you. (*Laughter*)

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Please proceed.

REP. SUAREZ. Will the Lady from Isabela, Hon. Ana Cristina Siquian Go, yield to some minor questions? Is this the Department of Labor and Employment?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Does this mandate also cover the problem of women that are having labor problems when they are pregnant, kasama ho ba ito rito?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Mukhang ninenerbiyos kayo, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

The amount being requested by the distinguished Secretary is—is it bigger than the previous year or there is an increase as compared to the previous years?

REP. GO (A.). There is an increase, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. How much?

REP. GO (A.). In the amount of P1.6 billion, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. An improvement of P1.6 billion.

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Of course, we will have to understand that this budget preparation that will be presented for next year's expenditure was prepared as early as February.

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. And when we talk of our budgetary calendar, it will take them February, March, April, and submit it maybe in the latter part of June.

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. And that would somewhat summarize that the prepared budget was not prepared by Secretary Bello, but prepared by the previous Secretary. Will that be an acceptable statement?

REP. GO (A.). A part of it, yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. You mean to say, the good Secretary had tinkered with this proposed budget that was prepared by his predecessor.

REP. GO (A.). As far as I know, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, it was prepared in 2016, as early as May, but then, they have studied the budget and I do believe he has approved the budget, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. On that requested budget, where will the bulk of these funds be spent, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. GO (A.). For the Office of the Secretary that is amounting to P10 billion, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Can you speak louder, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. GO (A.). For the Office of the Secretary, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, amounting to P10,318,000,904, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, 78 percent.

REP. SUAREZ. Will be under the Office of the Secretary?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. And the remaining 22 percent will be spread out in what particular agency or expenditures?

REP. GO (A.). From the Office of the Secretary, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, P2.9 billion will be for a program called TUPAD, and the rest would be for the regions, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. May we have an idea on our minimum wage, is it P200, how much is our minimum wage right now, as adopted by the Department, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GO (A.). P491, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, for Manila or NCR, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. How about on the outskirts?

REP. GO (A.). P330, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Minimum.

REP. GO (A.). Yes.

REP. SUAREZ. Is that also the government rate, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. GO (A.). I do believe so, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. So, using that as a comparative figure, how are we compared with the ASEAN countries?

REP. GO (A.). Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the ASEAN, we are in the middle.

REP. SUAREZ. We are ...

REP. GO (A.). We call it median wherein in other countries like Burma, Sri Lanka and Cambodia, I think they have a lower rate. But in other parts like South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan ...

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, I am asking for the ASEAN. Korea is not ...

REP. GO (A.). Yes. Korea is not a member of the ASEAN, yes, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. No, they are not. They are observers, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. GO (A.). Okay. So, in case of the dollar, the Philippines would be considered as, or the NCR would be the highest.

REP. SUAREZ. So, you would say that we are in the lower middle as compared to, maybe, Thailand, Brunei, Malaysia. Am I correct to assume that that will be a correct analysis, we are in the middle as compared to our ASEAN neighbors?

REP. GO (A.). Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, based on ASEAN countries, based on their data, it is written here that Thailand has \$8.66 daily wage. I am talking of dollars, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, and the Philippines, in Manila or in the NCR, would be \$9.76 up to \$10.56, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. A day.

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. A day.

REP. GO (A.). As of 2016, daily, yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. So, will this be a challenging program that can be initiated by the Department to make sure that our labor cost will be somewhat, what we say, acceptable to the working class? Because if it will be too much, then, maybe we will lack investors. Do I have to assume that one of the attractions is that our salary wages here are competitive as compared to other semi or developing countries?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. I do believe so. Aside from the salaries or wages, it would be more of the Philippines as an English-speaking country, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Now, can I go to—during my early days even when I was an employee, talking about 1965, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ipinanganak na ho ba kayo noong 1965, hindi pa?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Nakita ko ho iyong mga kumpanya na nagkakaroon ng aklasan o strike. Dito ho sa 90 days, kasi magna-90 days na po ang administration ng Duterte, mayroon na po ba tayong nangyaring strike sa isang business establishment?

REP. GO (A.). 1965, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. SUAREZ. No, no, I am saying, way back when I was employed and working as a private employee, marami po akong nakikita sa dinadaan ko na mga kumpanya na may mga sign na, “We are on strike, keep out. Scabs, keep out.” So, ang gusto ko hong malaman, kasi wala akong masyadong nakikita, nababasa sa dyaryo, naririnig sa radyo o nakikita sa telebisyon about companies that are going on strike. Kaya ang tanong ko ho, magna-90 days na ho ang Duterte administration sa end ng September. Mayroon na bang nagkaroon ng pagkakataon na may establishment na nag-strike o nag-file ng notice sa Department na sila ay mag-i-strike?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, based on the DOLE data, there were eight companies since May 2016 and five, which had issued notices and three wildcats.

REP. SUAREZ. That is not during their call. I mean, are we talking here of three months ago or in the start of January of this year?

REP. GO (A.). It started May 2016, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. May of this year.

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, 2016.

REP. SUAREZ. Can we have somewhat—can you tell us the name of this business entity that went on strike?

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

REP. SUAREZ. Just for a quick response, distinguished Sponsor, ...

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. ... are there companies that are with the export processing zone, or ...

REP. GO (A.). No, Mr. Speaker. We do not have from the processing zone, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. So lahat ito, are—and how many are in the National Capital Region?

REP. GO (A.). There is none, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. So they are outside the National Capital Region.

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. So can we go up to geographic location? How many in Luzon?

REP. GO (A.). We have four in Luzon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. How many in Visayas?

REP. GO (A.). One, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. And in Mindanao?

REP. GO (A.). One in Mindanao, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Is it in Davao or . . .

REP. GO (A.). In Davao, yes, Mr. Speaker. It is Nakashin Davao International Inc., Mr. Speaker. But it is a wildcat, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Now, now that you have identified this issue, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, may I know whether the present leadership has done something to be a mediator or somewhat tried to come up with an amicable settlement so these workers can go back to work?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker. Three were settled, but the rest are still pending, Mr. Speaker, and still in process.

REP. SUAREZ. Can we have an idea on the rationale why they went on strike?

REP. GO (A.). Mr. Speaker, six are based on contractualization and the rest would be more on the terms and conditions, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. What is the position of the Secretary on endo?

REP. GO (A.). Talking to our good Secretary, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SUAREZ. Yes, you are defending the Department of . . .

REP. GO (A.). I know, Your Honor, but then . . .

REP. SUAREZ. . . . Labor and Employment.

REP. GO (A.). . . . it would be more on, they would have to end or terminate the endo, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Is that the . . .

REP. GO (A.). Total.

REP. SUAREZ. Is that the crusade of the good Secretary to put an end, once and to endo?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Even to the point of having a good number of displaced workers?

REP. GO (A.). Mr. Speaker that is why they are in process and they are studying how to go about this on what . . .

REP. SUAREZ. Do you have statistical casualties of what will happen if we will have a full implementation of endo?

REP. GO (A.). Statistical, again, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SUAREZ. I mean, if you implement that, definitely, there will be some labor casualties, so ang tawag po natin diyan ay “collateral damage.” Kaya po ba nating i-sustain iyong collateral damage kung ite-terminate ninyo iyong endo?

REP. GO (A.). That is why I do believe, Mr. Speaker. It is taking them longer than it should be to end this contractualization or endo because they still have to check and balance the casualties or what would be the collateral damage if ever they have to end this contractualization, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. What do you think would be the advantage and disadvantage of endo in terms of the employer-employee relation?

REP. GO (A.). Advantage and disadvantage, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SUAREZ. Yes, for the employer and for the employee.

REP. GO (A.). Well, Mr. Speaker, about contractual workers, if we continue, they represent a large chunk in the Philippine labor force, Mr. Speaker. It is growing in number. Actually the challenge of the organization, Mr. Speaker, is, it has to be in a manner that, when you talk about contractualization—contractual workers are defined as those whose employments have been fixed for specific project or undertaking—the completion or termination has been determined by time engagement. So, this would actually benefit, Your Honor, the companies rather than the employees if we go on with the endo or you call it contractualization.

REP. SUAREZ. Distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, your belief and maybe the position also of the

distinguished Secretary is that endo favors the employer because of the security of tenure. Is that—because ...

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

REP. SUAREZ. Ako ho, wala ho kasi kaming endo, so hindi ko—so, I think it is more along that line. Can there be a middle compromise that maybe the Department can come up with an acceptable formulation, a win-win? So, baka naman ho may magagawa na ang Department para ma-avoid natin iyong unnecessary layoff. Kasi kung minsan ho, ang mangyayari diyan, kung magmamatigasan tayo, iyon namang employer, they live in a posh subdivision. They have cars, mayayaman ho. Ang mga mabibiktima po niyan talaga ay iyong mga workers and employees. So, can your distinguished resource person have some imaginative formula or a win-win solution on this case of endo?

REP. GO (A.). I do believe, Your Honor, there still is an ongoing consultation with the employers' group, with the employees or the labor group, and they are open to all possibilities or suggestions, Your Honor, or ideas wherein it would be a win-win basis, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, can I just ...

REP. GO (A.). Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. You may ...

REP. GO (A.). On October 3, there would be a dialogue, so for the labor group, if you would be willing to attend so that you could hear the plight of our labor group.

REP. SUAREZ. Does the Department have programs now to protect workers in terms of establishments that have biohazard, environmental concerns, prone to accident? Do they have programs in terms of seeing to it that the safety of workers; and in the event that there will be an accident, does the Department have the capacity or do they have a program to give assistance outside of the employer's responsibility but on the term of assistance coming from the Department?

REP. GO (A.). On the part of the employers, Your Honor, the DOLE does have inspection or they would go for the companies and inspect; and part of the inspection would be all the safety measures for the company. About the next question, Your Honor, in giving assistance coming from DOLE, I do believe so, Your Honor. They do ...

REP. SUAREZ. No, you believe that, but have you asked your principal whether they have it?

REP. GO (A.). Yes. They have training assistance and there are available livelihood assistance, Your Honor. They have programs, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Have they done that? Have they implemented such program, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

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

REP. SUAREZ. Can I have a list on that? Can you submit a list to the Office of the Minority to somewhat substantiate your statement that, indeed, the Department has programs in terms of workers that are subject to these identified hazards that we mentioned earlier?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Your Honor, we will provide you a list today.

REP. SUAREZ. I remember, distinguished Sponsor, during the time of then President Estrada wherein the Philippine Airlines was on a distress situation and they have to secure financing. Then Secretary Blas Ople went to the Palace and I was there. Secretary Ople asked Erap to help, to make sure that the owner of the company—we call him “El Kapitan,” of course, his name is Mr. Lucio Tan—will not close the Philippine Airlines because of the displacement of workers—I think, during that time, there were about 3,000 to 4,000 workers.

Now, in that conversation, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, the management said that maybe they can avert the closure of Philippine Airlines, because that is our national flag carrier, if they can secure loans from two government entities, which are the GSIS and the SSS. Now, can I just ask a categorical question: What will be the position of the Secretary in a situation like that, helping a distressed establishment that employs people and which is a categorical symbol of being our national flag carrier? It is not happening now because PAL is making money. But if the Secretary will be caught in a position like that, may we read his mind on what he is going to do? Maybe you can consult your principal first, distinguished Sponsor.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GO (A.). May I ask for a one-minute suspension of the session, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is suspended.

It was 11:21 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:22 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

REP. GO (A.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, based on actual consultations with all these majority companies, there is no resistance.

REP. SUAREZ. There will be no resistance, meaning, the good Secretary will say to the—if a certain distressed company will approach the President, and Secretary Bello will be called by President Duterte and he says, “Secretary, here is a company and it is in distress, and they would like to avail of assistance from the GSIS and the SSS.” Will the position of the Secretary be, “Let us help them so they can survive their crisis”?

REP. GO (A.). The answer of our good Secretary, Mr. Speaker, would be, of course, definitely, he would say “yes” because it is an investment for the GSIS, and he does believe that the Philippine Airlines will be paying whatever debts they will incur or they will avail from the GSIS. And in that manner, they would be helping many of our employees, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. On a scenario and assumption that an airline company, which is our flag carrier, is in a distressed situation and needing additional cash requirement, will the good Secretary recommend that these two institutions extend assistance?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Secretary would not only recommend but support the institution in order to help our labor force or employees of the Philippine Airlines, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Well, the good Secretary is a long-time friend of this Representation; our relationship goes way, way back. In the event that there will be a scenario wherein a distressed company will approach the administration and ask for assistance from these two institutions, the GSIS or the SSS—please tell our principal, the agency that the Lady is sponsoring, not to encourage giving a financial loan or assistance based on the very simple reason that these two institutions, on their charter, it says that they cannot give assistance to a distressed company. So, baka may lumapit kay Pangulong Duterte at humingi ng tulong, lapitan si Secretary Bello, at ginawa niya iyon, next day, mai-

impeach po ang ating Pangulo. Nobody is supposed to touch the coffers of the GSIS and the SSS on the term that a company in distress. Hindi ho sila puwedeng pautangin.

REP. GO (A.). Thank you for the information, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. So, dito ho sa mga areas na distressed, sa laki na ho nitong ahensiya, at sa dami ng, just for the education—para hong learning curve sa ating Members ng House, ilan po ba ang workers ngayon na employed base sa data ng DOLE? Ilan po ang ating registered workers?

REP. GO (A.). Based on their data, Mr. Speaker, the number of overseas filipino workers as of December 2015 is 8.3 million, and the annual deployment for the land-based would be, on local, is 1.44 million and the sea-based is 407,000, Mr. Speaker.

The skilled and the professionals, because the Gentleman was asking about the blue collar and the white collar, that would be for the English-speaking countries. In the Philippines, we call them “skilled” and “professionals,” we do not use “blue collar” or the “white collar.” So the skilled and the professionals, Mr. Speaker, make up 50 percent, while low-skilled and household service workers, also 50 percent. This is based on the source from the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. So, in effect, the Sponsor is saying that our total deployed workers listed and assumptions of unlisted will reach about 9 to 10 million.

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Dito ho sa—iyong employed po natin sa ating mga establishments, ilan po ang total na private employees natin?

REP. GO (A.). Employed, Mr. Speaker, as of 2014, would be 38,651,000.

REP. SUAREZ. That is 2014?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Wala ho tayong 2015?

REP. GO (A.). And for 2015, Mr. Speaker, would be 38,000 ...

REP. SUAREZ. Is it 38,000,000?

REP. GO (A.). Ah, 38,741,000, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Dito ho sa na-inherit na unemployed statistics ng bago nating Kalihim, ilan ho ang porsyento ng ating unemployed?

REP. GO (A.). Mr. Speaker?

REP. SUAREZ. Unemployed, unemployed.

REP. GO (A.). Okay. Unemployed, based on their statistics, Mr. Speaker, would be 2.6 million, for 2015.

REP. SUAREZ. Distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ang definition po ba ninyo ng unemployed are those who can pass job fairs but there are no jobs available, no positions available? Who do you consider as unemployed?

REP. GO (A.). The definition of unemployed, Mr. Speaker, is, those who do not work or has no job or business, looking for or seeking work, available to take up work during the basic reference period or within two weeks after the interview date, Mr. Speaker.

Also, Mr. Speaker, those with temporary illness or disability would be part of those unemployed.

REP. SUAREZ. Are we—no, my question is, are these unemployed people all candidates to go to a job fair?

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. We are talking here of skilled, if they are college graduates. So, there are about P2.6 million in total who are looking for a job but there are no available positions.

REP. GO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. I think the good Dep. Majority Leader is requesting to temporarily suspend the interpellation.

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

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of the budget of the Department of Labor and Employment to give way to the calling of the roll. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is suspended.

REP. BONDOC. Just the consideration of the budget of the DOLE, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Yes, ah, okay.

There is a motion to suspend the consideration of the budget of the DOLE.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 3408

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 3408.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to suspend the session.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

ROLL CALL

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we call the roll.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). 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 reflected in Journal No. 29, dated September 29, 2016.**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. The roll call shows that 164 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). With 164 Members physically present and hopefully the same would be mentally present, together with the 80 percent of the membership from the great Bicol Region, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 3408 *Continuation*

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 3408 and request the Secretary General to read only the title of the said Bill.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The Secretary General is directed to read only the title of the Bill.

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 3408, entitled: AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND SEVENTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of the budget of the Department of Labor and Employment.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abaya). There is a motion to resume the deliberations on the budget of the DOLE.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Honorable Go is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize for his interpellation our Minority Leader, Rep. Danilo E. Suarez.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The Minority Leader is recognized. Please proceed.

REP. SUAREZ. The mentally prepared Minority Leader will proceed now, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). As usual. The Minority Leader is recognized.

REP. SUAREZ. Distinguished Sponsor, this is our fourth day and there are several Members or our colleagues who have done their part in sponsoring their respective offices. May I just say that I have to give some credit to those who came prepared, and the observation of the Minority is that the Lady has sterling performance in defending the office of the Department of Labor and Employment. (*Applause*)

REP. GO (A.). Thank you, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. With that, on behalf of the Minority, there being no more member who would like to raise any question or interpellation, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Department of Labor and Employment.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GO (A.). Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much, Minority Leader.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Department of Labor and Employment.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Department of Labor and Employment.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations. (*Applause*)

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is suspended for one minute for group hug and picture taking.

It was 11:50 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:51 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

REP. ALONTE-NAGUIAT. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the interim Officer-in-Charge, Maria Regina G. Galias, of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The aforementioned is welcomed. (*Applause*)

COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS

REP. ALONTE-NAGUIAT. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the Bill is that it is in the period of interpellation and debate. I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas and recognize the Sponsor of the Bill, the Lady from the Second District of Isabela, Rep. Ana Cristina Siquian Go.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Rep. Ana Cristina Siquian Go is hereby recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ALONTE-NAGUIAT. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session to allow the technical staff to be ready.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). One-minute suspension for group hug again. The session is suspended.

It was 11:52 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:55 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

REP. ALONTE-NAGUIAT. Mr. Speaker, for his interpellation of the honorable Sponsor, I move that we recognize our honorable Minority Leader, the Hon. Danilo E. Suarez.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The dapper Don Danilo E. Suarez is hereby recognized.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

One of the members of the Minority who has shown concern for these offices that involve overseas contract workers, overseas assistance such as this, is presently confined in St. Luke's, Congressman Bertiz. He represents the Minority in this particular area. He sent a message to assist all of these offices, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, distinguished Sponsor. So, on behalf of our friend who is presently confined in St. Luke's, there being no member of the Minority who would like to raise other questions, we move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the office of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much, Minority Leader.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. ALONTE-NAGUIAT. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the OWWA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the OWWA.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Thank you very much.

REP. GO (A.). Mr. Speaker, the Commission on Filipino Overseas.

REP. ALONTE-NAGUIAT. CFO, sorry.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Yes, correction, the Commission ...

REP. GO (A.). Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). ... on Filipinos Overseas Workers.

REP. GO (A.). Mr. Speaker, it is not workers, it is just as simple as the Commission on Filipinos Overseas. It is about migration, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The Chair is hereby corrected by the Sponsor.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, to the mentally present Speaker, we reiterate our motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Again, there is a motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the aforementioned agency.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 3408

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 3408.

I so move, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, we move to suspend the session for one hour, until one o'clock this afternoon, for a noon break.

I so move, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion for a one-minute suspension, resumption at one o'clock.

REP. BONDOC. One hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Yes, one hour, 12:00 na e, so one hour, one o'clock tayo babalik. One minute ba sabi ko? Sixty minutes. We will resume at one o'clock.

The session is suspended.

It was 11:58 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 1:45 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, we would like to acknowledge the presence of the members of the Department of Information and Communications Technology family. With us are Sec. Rodolfo A. Salalima, Usec. Jorge V. Sarmiento, Usec. Eliseo M. Rio Jr., and Usec. Denis F. Villoriente of the Department of Information and Communications Technology family.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 3408

Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. BONDOC. With that, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 3408. I move that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of said measure.

I so move, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

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

The Secretary General is directed to please read only the title of the measure.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 3408, entitled: AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND SEVENTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Before we proceed, may I request the Members for a one-minute of silence and prayer for the repose of the soul of the late Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

Everybody rose for a minute of silent prayer.

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Let us resume.

Dep. Majority Leader, who will defend the budget of the DICT?

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Gentleman from the Second District of Agusan del Norte, Hon. Erlpe John "Ping" M. Amante, to be the Sponsor of the said Department.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The Honorable Amante is recognized.

REP. AMANTE. Yes, okay. Mr. Speaker, my honorable colleagues, good afternoon.

I am ready to answer questions for the DICT.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Minority Floor Leader, Danilo E. Suarez, for his interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The Minority Leader is recognized.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I love your tie, Mr. Speaker. Is that Prada?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Likewise, honorable Minority Leader. Galing ukay-ukay ho ito.

REP. SUAREZ. Will the distinguished Sponsor yield to some clarificatory questions?

REP. AMANTE. With pleasure, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. In a nutshell, what is, because this is the maiden baptism on the part of this Department to seek a budget considering that it is a newly created office.

REP. AMANTE. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. No. This is a baptism for them. Ngayon lang po tayo mag-a-appropriate ng pera para sa kanilang opisina.

REP. AMANTE. Ngayon lang po.

REP. SUAREZ. Oo. Kaya, distinguished Sponsor, can you briefly inform the Members what is the mandate of this newly created office.

REP. AMANTE. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the Department of Information and Communications Technology's primary policy is the planning, coordinating, and implementing, and it would be the administrative entity of the Executive branch of the government that will plan, develop, and promote the national ICT development agenda.

REP. SUAREZ. I have a series of queries, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. The head of the agency is a good friend of mine. We have been enemies, friends, enemies, friends, for so long a time. And I did ask him how it feels to be on the other side of the fence, considering that the distinguished Gentleman has a proven career, is energetic and dynamic, and an executive of one of our biggest conglomerates. So, may we just call the—to satisfy my question, were there other candidates that were considered by the administration to head this very important newly created office?

REP. AMANTE. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, there were other candidates considered for the position.

REP. SUAREZ. But he was considered to be the best candidate.

REP. AMANTE. The best of the best, yes.

REP. SUAREZ. I see. Do you agree with that? Do you feel that this Department is worth defending the proposed budget?

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Ultimately, you believe that this is the taxpayers' money that we will be giving them and, ultimately, they must have this paramount duty of, at this time, protecting the interests of the consumers.

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Kasi noong—sa kanila ho, noong araw, protecting the interests of the employer. Ngayon, ang employer na ni Secretary Salalima ay ang pamahalaan, hindi na po Ayala. Liwanagin po natin ito.

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, the performance of Telco as I have said and I have related to the good Secretary during the days that he handled—even during the days of infancy when cell phone was a mere luxury, ngayon po, alam naman na hindi ka na puwedeng mabuhay kapag wala kang cell phone, and I think the bulk outside of the other areas na magiging pananagutan ng Departamentong ito ay, siyempre, kasama po iyong sana maayos mo iyong Internet, iyan po ang ating—palagay ko ang dapat na tanungin namin ay ano ba ang gagawin ng Departamento mo, ito ba—under ninyo po ba, na mapalago natin, mapalaganap at mapalaki ang area coverage ng Internet?

Pero noong panahong hawak po niya ang isang—kasi dalawa po ang contenders natin, service operators natin are Globe and Smart. The position of the Chair during that time—as I have said this once and I have said this several times, is to make money, if you are a businessman or a business enterprise, there is nothing wrong if you invest, it is your right to earn profit. Do you agree with me on that?

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. But if you make money, even if you are inefficient that is sinful.

REP. AMANTE. I agree, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Okay. Noong araw po, noong nag-spread out na itong mga cell sites, hindi po natin puwedeng masabi na o matanong kung bakit nagkakaroon tayo noong araw ng dead spot. Bakit po nagkakaroon tayo ng pagkakataon na biglang napuputol ang conversation? Iyon ho ay nangyayari noong araw. Kaya sinabi ko, nangyayari iyong dead spot, dropped calls, etcetera and yet, you are making money. That is sinful. Iyon ho ang sinasabi ko. Ngayon, nag-improve po iyan, for some time, nawala na po iyong masyadong dead spot, and dropped calls, pero lately, bumalik na naman. And I will say this in this plenary that the service of Globe is terrible. Now, can we have an explanation, bakit ho napakasama ng service ng Globe na ito, samantalang noong araw, napakaayos ng Globe noong nandoon pa si Secretary Salalima?

REP. AMANTE. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, when you are talking of speed, it is dependent on so many factors. So maybe, if you would like, the Secretary of DICT can expound on these factors to you at your convenient time.

REP. SUAREZ. Well, both are not performing well, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Pareho ho naman sila. Pero ang akin pong experience sapagkat dalawa po ang Globe ko at dalawa ang aking Smart na sabay kong ginagamit. Iyan ho, apat ang aking telepono. Wala kang pagkakataon that you can say it is a stroke of luck that you will have a conversation that can be finished in maybe one or two minutes without being cut. Nangyayari ho talaga iyan.

So, ang akin hong assumption at ako ho naman ay may kaunting background sa communication at electronics, baka iyong pag-transfer mo ng cell site, puno rin iyong cell site, maka-cut ka. That just means one thing; you are overloading the capacity of your conversational link.

REP. AMANTE. I agree with you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Well, if you agree with me, then why are we going to defend the budget of this? Are we going to say that the crusade of the new Secretary, once and for all, is to stop this nefarious practice of undermining the interests of subscribers?

REP. AMANTE. Your Honor, as I said earlier, there are many factors for this service that we have right now. One is the on-going infrastructure development that is being done. And among other things also is, maybe if you are trying to compare this with the services that are available in other countries. In other countries for instance, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, like the ASEAN countries, I am not trying to be an apologist for these two telecommunication firms, but in other countries, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the government spends money for their telecommunication needs. So there is a factor of involvement in so far as the government is concerned.

REP. SUAREZ. In other countries, I understand that the government invests on cell sites.

REP. AMANTE. Yes.

REP. SUAREZ. Here, the service provider spends for the cell sites.

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. So, ang, what can be the—iyan po ang itinakda na policy ng National Telecommunication noong araw eh. Hindi naman natin puwedeng baguhin iyon. So, ang point ko lang, distinguished Sponsor, is, considering that the head of the agency is given a mandate to do—napakalaki po ng hindi na po tayo nag-a-advance sa cell site natin. Nasa cyber na tayo.

Let me just ask this question, baka makalimutan ko lang. In terms of coverage sa buong bansa, ano ho ang coverage ng Internet natin? Ilang percentage na ho ang covered ng Internet?

REP. AMANTE. Okay. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, for Internet users, roughly 46 percent.

REP. SUAREZ. 46?

REP. AMANTE. Yes. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Nationwide?

REP. AMANTE. Nationwide.

REP. SUAREZ. Kung natuloy ba iyong, pakitanong nga lang kay, sa distinguished principal natin kung natuloy po ba iyong broadband project noong time ng dating Pangulong Arroyo. Iyan ba ay nakatulong para ma-broaden iyong ating backbone? Makakatulong ba iyon?

REP. AMANTE. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, definitely it will help if it was pushed through.

REP. SUAREZ. Kung natuloy po iyong sinasabing nating broadband, ...

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. ... pati ho itong Internet, mas malaganap at malaki ang masasakupan na area.

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, makakatulong. In fact, ang marching orders po ng ating Presidente is gumawa ng national broadband network.

REP. SUAREZ. So, itutuloy po natin ang naantalang programa ng dating Pang. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

REP. AMANTE. Itutuloy po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Wala man dito ang ating dating Pangulo ay puwede nating sabihin na vindicated siya sa kanyang ginawang programa noong araw. Ngayon natin na-realize na kung ito ay nagawa, napakalaking tulong sa ating backbone.

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. I would like to imagine, considering the cost of technology now, our project with ZTE, kung itutuloy natin, pakitanong lang kay Secretary, palagay ko this will be three times the cost of what was proposed then several years ago.

REP. AMANTE. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, definitely, with the passage of time, the price now, if it will be done, will be much, much higher than it was before.

REP. SUAREZ. So, na-double whammy tayo doon. Nawalan na tayo ng capability to expand on our backbone, kung bibili tayo ngayon, mas mahal na, Mr. Speaker.

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Dito po sa hinihinging budget ng DICT, saan po mapupunta ang karamihang pagkakagastusan nito? Where will the major expenditures be utilized?

REP. AMANTE. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the bulk of the money will go to locally funded projects. To be exact, it will be around P2.2 billion out of the total budget of P3.5 billion.

REP. SUAREZ. Ano po ang workforce ng Department ngayon? Ilan ang staff from the Secretary down. Overall, ano po ang manpower deployment ng Departmentong ito?

REP. AMANTE. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, are we to include the attached agencies?

REP. SUAREZ. Yes, including the NTC. Ang NTC po ay under dito. Ano pa ba ang ibang ahensya na under ng DICT, Mr. Speaker?

REP. AMANTE. Aside from the National Telecommunications Commission, we have the National Privacy Commission.

REP. SUAREZ. Will the good Sponsor please repeat his answer, Mr. Speaker?

REP. AMANTE. Ang NTC po at ang National Privacy Commission.

REP. SUAREZ. Going to the NTC, Mr. Speaker, ang mga cell site na located all over the country, ito ba ay kailangang bayad ang RPT sa local government?

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, magbabayad po dapat.

REP. SUAREZ. Ano po ang pagbabasehan ng pagkolekta? Ang cost ba ng cell site, including improvements, generators, transmitters, et cetera? Ano ba ang base o ang cost lamang ng lupa?

REP. AMANTE. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the basis will be the cost of the equipment and the development that is in the area attached to the . . .

REP. SUAREZ. So lahat po ng complements ng cell site is classified as improvement, na kasama sa pagsingil ng RPT?

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. May we have a budgetary cost on how much does a cell site cost on the average?

REP. AMANTE. Ballpark figure, Mr. Speaker, of P10 million.

REP. SUAREZ. That is per cell site, Mr. Speaker?

REP. AMANTE. Yes, per cell site.

REP. SUAREZ. May nasusunog pa ba tayong mga cell site ngayon, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. AMANTE. Unfortunately Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, may nasusunog pa rin po.

REP. SUAREZ. Isa lang yata ang nasusunog, tama ba ako, Mr. Speaker? Mukhang isa lamang doon sa service provider ang nasusunog.

REP. AMANTE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. From what we read in the papers, it is usually from Globe.

REP. SUAREZ. So iyong isa nasusunog, iyong isa naman fire proof. *(Laughter)*

REP. AMANTE. Hindi, iyong isa po kasi Smart, kaya matalino. *(Laughter)*

REP. SUAREZ. Kaya hindi nasusunog. Bakit hindi na lang nila baguhin ang pangalan, ang Globe lagyan nila ng Smart sign para hindi masunog? We will be very considerate with the baptism of fire of Secretary Salalima kasi ngayon lang po siya magpo-propose ng budget. We will be watching him as to how he will perform, and we will see him again next year.

I hope that the mandate given to this new Department, considering that we are marching by leaps and bounds towards a modern technology, this will play a vital role, not just in commercial or business application, but including education. Napakahalaga po na magbigyan natin ng tamang pagsasanay ang ating kabataan sa napakahalagang science na ito.

For the information of the Body, this Representation ang nagbukas ng kauna-unahang computer class sa buong Pilipinas sa isang public school noong 1992. This is where I have seen the advent of the growth of cell phones and the importance of information technology.

Kaya pakiusap lang po na bagama't napakaliit pa ng budget na hinihingi, with this amount, I hope that every peso and cent can be properly spent for this very noble objective of this newly created Department.

With that, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minority, there is no more question that we would like to raise on the proposed budget of the Department of Information and Communications Technology.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you, Minority Leader.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the DICT.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a joint motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the DICT.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations.

REP. AMANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (*Applause*)

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). May I ask for a suspension of the session.

It was 2:07 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 2:17 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, we would like to acknowledge the presence of the family members of the Department of Public Works and Highways. They are led by Sec. Mark A. Villar, Sr. Usec. Rafael C. Yabut, Usec. Raul C. Asis, Usec. Romeo S. Momo, Usec. Maria Catalina E. Cabral, Usec. Ardeliza R. Medenilla, Usec. Emil K. Sadain, LWUA Administrator Andres F. Ibarra, Road Board Exec. Dir. Luisito V. Clavano and MWSS Administrator Gerardo A.I. Esquivel. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the members of the Department of Public Works and Highways family.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Their presence is noted.

Welcome to the House of Representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the Bill is that it is in the period of interpellation and debate. I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to open the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the DPWH.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from the First District of Davao, the Hon. Karlo Alexei B. Nograles, to sponsor the budget of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations is recognized.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The budget of the DPWH has a proposed obligation budget program of P458.6 billion for fiscal year 2017, and we are ready for any questions coming from the Members of the House, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, the first to interpellate is the Gentleman from KABAYAN Party-List, Hon. H. Harry L. Roque Jr. May he be recognized

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Before the Chair recognizes the Honorable Roque, just a few reminders from the Chair, the present budget as presented is eyeing a 7 percent GDP on Capital Expenditure.

Let everyone be guided that the Capital Expenditure is not synonymous to the Infrastructure Outlay. Capital Expenditure is larger than the Infrastructure Outlay. As an example, if the Secretary of Public Works would buy a computer program, shall we say, Pokemon, he will charge that to the government under the Capital Expenditure.

If the DA buys goats for dispersal, that is not the Infrastructure Outlay, that is the Capital Expenditure. So, there is a world of difference between the Capital Expenditure and the Infrastructure Outlay.

Before we begin, may the Chair inquire from the Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Mr. Chairman, ...

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). ... from the seven percent of GDP Capital Expenditure, how much is for Infrastructure Outlay?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Infrastructure Outlay of the DPWH is P432.055 billion, P11.103 billion is for foreign-assisted projects while P417.086 billion is for direct government resources, which will be financed from direct government resources.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Yes, thank you very much.

My question was out of the seven percent of GDP Capital Expenditure, how much is for Infrastructure Outlay? Not purely for public works but the entire national government budget. I will expect the answer later.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let us now proceed with Congressman Roque.

Thank you very much.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you, Mr. Dep. Majority Leader.

Will the good Sponsor yield to a few points of interpellation?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Gladly, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Now, let me start my interpellation on processes. I hope the good Sponsor will understand that as a new Member of this august Chamber, and as a party-list Representative, it is our first time to participate in the budget process.

So, my question is, for the newcomers, particularly the party-list Congressmen who have no particular districts and who have made promises to more individuals compared to district Congressmen, because we ran national campaigns, what really is the procedure if party-list Congressmen would like to request for infrastructure projects on a national basis, given that we have no particular districts?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). All Congressmen and Congresswomen, regardless of whether you are a district Representative or a party-list Representative, can write to any department apart from the DPWH about your requests for any project that you deem fit, that will benefit your constituents or even the sectors that you represent.

Also, for district Representatives, they also have the capability, the ability and the opportunity to be active in their respective Regional Development Councils as well as Local Development Councils wherein they suggest projects and programs to be submitted to the different agencies and departments of government during the budget call. So that does not prohibit party-list Representatives like the good Gentleman, Mr. Speaker, from writing, endorsing, recommending different projects and programs to any department or agency, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Thank you for that answer, Mr. Speaker.

My next question, Mr. Speaker, is, for those who are on their first term, and not able to participate in the budget call, particularly at the level of the Regional

Development Councils, is it absolutely impossible for us to still recommend projects in the sense that our recommendations will actually be favorably acted upon by the concerned department?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, given that the budget call usually happens in January, February or March, unfortunately, for new Representatives like the good Gentleman, Mr. Speaker, it would appear that when they assumed office on June 30, at 12:00 noon, for all intents and purposes, the budget call had been completed and the respective budgets of the respective agencies and departments of government had already been, more or less, finalized. So, it is unfortunate that they were not, probably, they feel that they were not included in the whole budget process. But, I suppose, unless we change the Constitution and have our elections in January, then there is really nothing we can do as far as timelines are concerned. We have to remember that the new Secretary of Budget and Management also assumed after June 30, so then he had to submit the National Expenditure Program by August. So, more or less, there was very little time for the new Secretary to peruse and make changes in the National Expenditure Program. That is why we are here in Congress, for ourselves to take a look at the proposed budget of the President and see whether or not it directly addresses all of the concerns, issues and the priorities of the new President, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, I would like to know how faithful is the Sponsor to the NEP in terms of actually implementing the budget that the House will propose on the basis of what was submitted by the Executive to Congress in the form of the National Expenditure Program.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). With all due respect to the Gentleman, Mr. Speaker, I am just a singular vote in this House and I will yield to the collective wisdom of the entire Body.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, I would like to know if it is a futile exercise to scrutinize the NEP at this point. Because if it is, let us call a spade a spade, we can all go home and just pass the NEP. But, the last time I looked at the Constitution, the NEP should be a proposal, and those who did not participate in the preparation of the NEP should still be allowed to introduce line-item appropriation in the budget. Otherwise, it would be abdicating the most important function of the House of Representatives.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, at the proper time, we shall move into the period of amendments and the Gentleman or any Member of the House is free to propose his or her individual amendments, subject to the collective vote and agreement of the majority.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much that answer because that answer, in fact, reiterates that it is the constitutional prerogative of this Chamber and not the Executive to pass the yearly budget. Therefore, the NEP, although we have to work within deadlines, is only recommendatory. And I would hope, in fact, that this august Chamber will zealously defend this constitutional prerogative as far as preparation of the budget is concerned.

Let me now go to specific questions which I have. My first line of questioning has to do with the presence still of lump-sum appropriations in the budget. For the record, again, Article VI, Section 17 of the Constitution, on possible conflict of interest, Greco Belgica, in the case that invalidated the PDAF, was my client. But, I confirm to the whole world that the PDAF that was declared unconstitutional by my client no longer exists. There is no more lump-sum appropriation that Congressmen can utilize to identify projects which the Supreme Court declared as being unconstitutional. Although this is my personal observation, will the Sponsor confirm this fact?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). I confirm, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). What I am worried though is that although we have complied with the rule that Congressmen and Senators will hence no longer have the power to identify projects after enactment of the budget, substantial lump-sum appropriations still exist in the DPWH. Is the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, aware of these lump-sum appropriations?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). The budget of the DPWH is almost that thick in terms of the items to be financed or appropriated with the funds for implementation by the DPWH. As much as plausible and possible, I believe that the DPWH and the DBM have itemized as much of what they can itemize in the budget.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, that is true. It is very thick and, Mr. Speaker, we did our assignment. We went through each and every line of the DPWH budget and that is why my interpellation will go line by line.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). As you wish, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). I refer to No. 301038000 Code Reference under National Road Network MFO-1, P1,079,000,000.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Could you please repeat, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ROQUE (H.). No. 3010000000, under operations MFO-1 National Network P1,079,000,000.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). So it is easier, perhaps, the good Gentleman can read the page so it is easier for us to follow him.

REP. ROQUE (H.). I have with me a summary ...

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Ah summary, I thought it was on the page.

REP. ROQUE (H.) ... which I thought would facilitate discussion by having the code reference.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Mr. Speaker, I believe the Gentleman is referring to MFO-1. Am I correct, the National Road Network Services?

REP. ROQUE (H.). MFO-1, National Road Network Services, P1,079,000,000. That is correct, MFO-1, National Road Network.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). What is the question, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ROQUE (H.). Will the Sponsor agree that the P1,079,000,000 is in the form of lump-sum appropriation? If you look at the specific items under MFO-1—assets preservation of national roads; preventive maintenance, rehabilitation, reconstruction, reconstitution, construction, and upgrading of drainage along national roads—what is provided is 42 times the uniform amount of P25 million.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes. These are not lump sums, Mr. Speaker, because in fact, it is itemized there, where the P25 million will go to preventive maintenance of primary roads, secondary roads, and tertiary roads; rehabilitation, reconstruction, upgrading of damaged paved national roads; primary rehabilitation, reconstruction, upgrading of damaged paved national secondary roads; rehabilitation, reconstruction, upgrading of damaged paved national tertiary roads, and so on and so forth.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Well, Mr. Speaker, because the Sponsor says it is not a lump-sum appropriation, let us go through them one by one. Let the Sponsor identify the exact location of this project. In my understanding, that is what line appropriation is. So, let us begin. The day is, after all, young. It is only two thirty-four in the afternoon. Primary road No.1 under 3800069, preventive maintenance of primary roads, P25 million—where is this project, Mr. Speaker?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, through the course of the

year, these items are identified by the DPWH as far as preventive maintenance is concerned. For instance, as far as rehabilitation, reconstruction and upgrading is concerned, as far as upgrading, rehabilitation of drainage is concerned, and as far as improvement and widening is concerned. So, these are items in the budget that are placed there by the DPWH precisely to give them flexibility because these mostly refer to asset preservation. For example, Mr. Speaker, it is the rainy season right now, and then it cannot be predicted with certainty which section of which road in the entire country would need preventive maintenance, reconstruction or upgrading. It is only in the course of the year when the DPWH will be able to find out where these services are needed. So, you cannot categorize these items as simple lump sums because, in fact, they are not. It is clearly identified where the funds will be spent although it is impossible to determine with certainty, preciseness, and accuracy. It is indeed impossible for the DPWH, or any person for that matter, to predict which section of which road will get destroyed in the rainy season of 2017.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker.

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. TY. I move for a one-minute suspension of the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). One-minute suspension of the session.

It was 2:37 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 2:50 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

REP. ROQUE (H.). I thank the Gentleman for that very elucidating answer, Mr. Speaker. All my questions on that point have been duly addressed by his well-reasoned response. Now, there were just some—I have another quick question, and that is as far as the increase in budget is concerned. I noticed, Mr. Speaker, that the increase in new appropriations is 30 percent from the GAA of 2016; it was P285 billion and the proposed NEP provides for P372,921,000,000.

Now, my last question is, why, Mr. Speaker, is it that despite the fact that the increase is 30 percent, the increase, intended for support to operations, grew by 101 percent, from P27 billion to P54 billion? And that is my last question, Mr. Speaker.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, Mr. Speaker, my answer to the question is, as we build more and more roads, bridges, and increase our spending on other infrastructure, then obviously, more support has to be given to operations and more funding has to be given to proper design of our infrastructure projects. Since our infrastructure projects have now leveled-up to a point wherein we no longer build ordinary roads but we have to build good infrastructure, better bridges, more complicated interchanges, we need to hire more manpower, we need to get better designs for better infrastructures. So, it is not strange that as we accelerate our infrastructure spending necessarily, support to operations must also increase, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROQUE (H.). Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I have no further points on interpellation. Thank you to the Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, before recognizing the next interpellator, can we greet some guests in the gallery.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Please proceed.

REP. TY. We want to greet the guests of Cong. Cesar V. Sarmiento and Cong. Alexandria P. Gonzales from Bato, Catanduanes, namely: Vice Mayor Roy Regalado, Councilor Joselito Alberto, Councilor Paul Christian Trono ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Please stand up as your name is called.

REP. TY. ... Councilor Bong Vergara, and lastly, Councilor Nenita Taraya.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Your presence in the House is noted. Welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

Proceed.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, the next interpellator is the Gentleman from the Fourth District of Manila, Hon. Edward Vera Perez Maceda.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Representative Maceda is recognized.

Please proceed.

REP. MACEDA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Actually, I do not have interpellations. I just want to make a manifestation, a couple of manifestations. First of all, if I remember it correctly, as the Vice Chairman of the Committee on Suffrage and Electoral Reforms, and together with the Gentleman from Davao, the good Sponsor, we passed the law postponing the barangay election from this year to next year, the last Monday of October 2017. And if I am not mistaken, if the Gentleman from Davao, I guess, would remember, one of the reasons, one of the practical reasons the election was postponed was to enable this administration to be given an opportunity to move forward, kumbaga, bigyan ng pagkakataon na umarangkada kasi nagsisimula pa lang. Because one of the effects of not postponing the elections is that there would be a ban on infrastructure, necessarily, the DPWH would have been affected. But since the elections have been postponed, so I guess there is freedom granted to the DPWH now to push through with all of the programs being proposed and propounded by the President. So I guess, the onus is very high on the DPWH because as the President said, aside from his war against drugs, his priorities would be: one, investing on education and investing on people as our most valuable resource. That is why DepEd has the highest budget. Second, he wants to invest in more infrastructure, as this will be the main avenue by which the economy can be pump-primed.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a manifestation with regard to my area in the city of Manila. My district is the Fourth District of Manila, and España is there in my district, UST is there in my district. I am making a manifestation, Mr. Speaker, because for the past several decades, billions of pesos have been poured into my city and, specifically, my district supposedly tried to mitigate the flooding problem, with several pumping stations being put there. And now, there is a new program, the Blumentritt Interceptor Catchment Project. The end of the project falls squarely in the street where I live in and where my father used to live in, Piy Margal.

Up to now, the water level—whenever it rains, kaunting buhos lang ng ulan, nagkakaroon na ng baha. The water level has not gone down a single centimeter. In fact, it has gone up several inches. So, I am trying to make an appeal here, Mr. Speaker, because several millions of people, Filipinos, pass through España. And not just people from Manila: if you are coming from the south and you pass through España going to Quezon City, you pass through it going towards Congress. People from Congress, our colleagues here also pass through España going towards the south, to Makati, to Alabang, to the provinces.

So, I am appealing, Mr. Speaker, to my good friend and my nephew, the Hon. Karlo Nograles, if he can help me talk to the DPWH to make sure that this time around, because we have a new Secretary, I believe in the capability and the capacity of Secretary Villar—in fact, the Secretary has given me his assurance, with his father being from Manila also, that he would do everything in his power to help mitigate the problem in my district and in my city.

I hope that this will be given attention, Mr. Speaker, para hindi po pagbalik na naman po natin after one year, two years or three years, after hundreds of millions or billions of funds have been poured into supposedly lessening or trying to eradicate the flooding problem in my district, ganito na naman ang sitwasyon.

I have full faith, trust and confidence, Mr. Speaker, in Secretary Villar. Sana po, sana po Congressman, good Sponsor, matulungan ninyo rin ako at matulungan ako ni Secretary Villar. Dahil doon po sa lugar namin, hindi lang po libo, kung hindi daang libo pong estudyante ang naapektuhan noong mga nakaraang dekada pagpasok nila sa UST at sa ibang mga eskwelahan doon. Mayroon ding mga milyun-milyong Pilipino po at commuters ang naapektuhan na po doon. Umulan lang nang kaunti, ang baha po sa España, hanggang hita.

Patuloy naman po ang buhay pero life would almost stop, Mr. Speaker, halos humihinto sa kaunting ulan. I think now that we have a President who really wants to bring real change to the people, I believe that under his leadership, under the leadership of Secretary Villar of the DPWH, I believe that we can make a dent on this problem, in my particular area, that although it is local in scope, although the territorial jurisdiction is that it only belongs to one district, I believe it affects the entire city, the entire metro, and the entire country as well.

I hope the Gentleman from Davao can help me find solutions to this problem.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was told by the officials of the DPWH that for 2017, they will add another pumping station in the Blumentritt area worth P700 million for 2017 and, hopefully, that an additional pumping station will finally address the issue of flooding in the district of the Gentleman from Manila, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MACEDA. Thank you to the distinguished Sponsor.

Kasi po, Mr. Speaker, tuwing mayroong balita na may habagat, palagi namang nati-TV, isa sa palaging nafo-focus iyong España. So, every time na napapanood ng mga tao at baha na naman, kahit sabihin nating naayos na iyong problema sa ibang lugar, ang notion pa rin ng tao, bahang-baha pa rin

sa buong Pilipinas. Kasama na rin, isa sa mga kalye iyon. So, I guess, if you solve the flooding problem there, I mean, it will give a good impression, not only to the citizens of Manila, but to the entire Filipino population as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I also thank the good Gentleman from Manila.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, the next interpellator is the Gentleman from COOP-NATCCO, Rep. Anthony M. Bravo, Ph.D.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Representative Bravo is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend for one minute.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is suspended.

It was 3:02 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:04 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

Congressman Bravo, you have the floor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Dep. Majority Leader.

Will the distinguished Sponsor yield to just a very few questions?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, gladly, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, in the previous Budget of 2016, under the Special Provisions, there was a provision stating, among others, about the coconet wherein priority of the purchase, which is used for slope protection, will be benefitting our farmers using the coco textile. Unfortunately, in the Special Provision, for 2017, if I am not mistaken, it is not appearing anymore, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. Does it mean that the slope protection has already been completed and there will

be no more program and we disregarded already the farmers that will benefit from this program?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Mr. Speaker, are we talking about the coconet for slope protection?

REP. BRAVO (A.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker. The DPWH has informed me that the reason the Coconet Slope Protection program or project has been discontinued was because they discovered that the coconet somehow is a fire hazard and because of the dangers of the coconet. Being a fire hazard, the DPWH has seen it fit to discontinue the usage of coconet for slope protection, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BRAVO (A.). With the findings, was there any instance that in the application of the coconet, there were occurrences that happened, as you claim, that it was fire hazard? It is because we have not received any report relative to that matter. I am pointing this out, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, because in the application of this material, we will be helping our farmers, the poorest of the poor in this country, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. I recommend, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, that we reinstate this particular provision, if acceptable to the Sponsor.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Mr. Speaker, I was told by the DPWH that if they can be given time to gather the evidence where there were occurrences of fire using the coconet slope protection, but on top of their head, they remember an occurrence that happened in Region V, Bicol Region. But to be specific about the instances where a fire occurred because of the coconet slope protection, they are prepared to give the distinguished Gentleman a copy of those occurrences, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished colleague for that assurance. But if it will not be substantiated, I will still stand by my proposition that it be reinstated for the benefit of our farmers.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). We will take note of that, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. With that assurance, that ends my interpellation. Thank you.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you, the good Gentleman from COOP-NATCCO Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the next interpellator, the Gentleman from the Second District of Cebu, the Hon. Rodrigo A. Abellanosa.

I so move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The Gentleman is recognized.

REP. ABELLANOSA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, Rep. Karlo Alexei B. Nograles. I am representing the city of Cebu, the Second District, and I am very thankful to the DPWH during the term of Sec. Babes Singson. In the three years of my first term, I was able to advocate a major infrastructure project in my district and the DPWH has afforded through this infrastructure project about P700 million. It has helped a lot, once it was started and completed, in mitigating the traffic in a major highway in my district. I am very thankful to the DPWH, and I look forward to the Secretary, our colleague before, who is very affable and approachable, that we can continue to benefit from the DPWH considering that the city of Cebu is the second most problematic urban center in the Philippines after Manila. So, if Manila has been plagued with the problem of flooding and traffic, the same is it with the city of Cebu. In that regard, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I would like to highlight once again an observation that has been made consistently by this Representation in every budget presentation of the DPWH, lamenting the fact that the Visayas continues to be the smallest beneficiary.

If I may be allowed to cite again in this year's or in the 2017 proposed Budget for Capital Outlays of the DPWH, totaling Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, Luzon is appropriated 44 percent; and then after that, Mindanao, 38.9 percent; and lamentably, Visayas, only 17.1 percent, of which Central Visayas, which Cebu City belongs, is only appropriated a measly 3.6 percent. And the fact that Cebu City is contributing a lot to the GDP, to the economy, I guess it should have a better treatment from the DPWH. My colleague here from the city of Cebu, Cong. Raul V. Del Mar, is sharing the same feelings over this lack of attention. So, I hope under the leadership of the new Secretary, there will be an improvement.

From my experience in advocating for the infrastructure that I mentioned earlier, it takes a Congressman like each one of us here to bring it up to the DPWH that we need attention in these areas. If I may be allowed to read the mandate of the DPWH, it says that: "The DPWH is mandated to undertake (a) the planning of infrastructure x x x," and I would like to

emphasize, "the planning of infrastructure." So, if that pet project that I advocated for did not have a feasibility study which I also advocated, then, it would not have gotten a budget from the DWPH.

So, this will bring me to the question: What has the DPWH done so far as far as planning of infrastructure in the city of Cebu with regard to solving the problem of flooding and solving the problem of traffic is concerned? Notably, Waze application has just cited the city of Cebu as the worst place in the whole world to drive, meaning to say, because of the problem of traffic. So we do not want to continue like Manila last year when it was given that bad reputation by Waze, and now the city of Cebu. We are happy that Manila has been given full attention with regard to this problem, but sad to say, Cebu City—unless the DPWH would like to call the attention of this Representation that as far as planning is concerned, and then later on, programming funds have already been undertaken, if I may be informed.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, the good Gentleman from Cebu will be happy to note that the DPWH has just informed me that they are in the process of developing a master plan for the infrastructure projects that will be poured onto Mega Cebu. By the end of the year, the DPWH will be prepared to present this master plan in their infrastructure development master plan for Mega Cebu, and they will be happy to present it to the good Gentleman and anybody else who cares to see the master plan for Mega Cebu before the end of the year, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABELLANOSA. I am elated over that information, Mr. Speaker, and I will also personally coordinate with the DPWH Secretary and staff to ensure that this will have focus as far as the DPWH planning and funding are concerned. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Gentleman.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, the next Gentleman who will interpellate is the Minority Leader, Danilo E. Suarez.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The Minority Leader is recognized. Very nice tie.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Will the distinguished Sponsor have—are your vocal chords okay?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). It is fine. Thank you for the concern of the Minority Leader. I will be happy to answer the questions of the Minority Leader.

REP. SUAREZ. This is what we call occupational hazard.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, I am aware of the hazards of the occupation.

REP. SUAREZ. Distinguished Sponsor, I will not delve much on the proposed budget of the Department considering that we practically have somewhat seen it all. I would imagine that the parochial concern of the Members have properly been addressed in some of the areas as we have seen a sizeable amount of improvement, giving credit to the former Secretary of the DPWH, Secretary Singson, and we can see, and we can envision that the incumbent Secretary will even do better in terms of his understanding and considering that he used to be a Member of the House of Representatives and his wife is a Member of Congress as well, so dalawa po iyong ating abugado.

I just would like to air my concern, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, about the stage of the construction industry. Alam po ninyo, bago ho ako pumasok sa pulitika, nasa private sector ako. And I have seen—dati po mayroon tayong tinatawag na AG&P. I do not know kung natatandaan mo. Atlantic Gulf Philippines noong araw. We have Honiron and wala pa po itong mga DMCI. Mayroon po tayong mga malalaking construction company na Hydro Resources, pero ito pong mga ito, dito lang sa Pilipinas.

Ngayon, kapag po mayroon tayong foreign-funded project, let us say na umutang po tayo sa ibang bansa, dalawa po iyong condition diyan. Iyon pong tinatawag nating untied. Ang ibig kong sabihin, lahat po ay puwedeng mag-bid sa project. Pero, iyon pong tied loan ay pahihiramin ka po ng isang bansa, ngunit, sila lang ang puwedeng gumawa ng proyekto. Iyan po ang mga nangyari sa atin at sa ating pagnanais na maayos natin ang ating mga infra problem, kumakagat po tayo sa ganyang napakabigat na kundisyon.

So, sa atin pong nakaraang taon, iyon pong ating 7.62 na growth, distinguished Sponsor, I would think that 2.3 percent will be somewhat, ang benefactor po nito ay construction at saka po ang downstream industry. Ganyan po ka-sensitive ang construction industry sa atin. Kaya, may katungkulan po ngayon ang bagong Kalihim na dapat palakihin ang construction industry. Hindi po tayo dapat lokal lang, na dito na lang, and give them the benefits and ventures of exploring possibilities of coming up and compete with other countries as well.

Kasi tingnan po ninyo ang iyong foreign-funded project, tingnan po ninyo iyong mga nagbi-bid. Out of

15 bidders, mga isa o dalawa lang ang Pilipino. Lahat kapag hindi Hapon ay Chinese o Korean. Pati Thai po nandito na, lahat ho. Bihirang-bihira po na nakaka—unang-una po ay stringent qualification na hinihingi, kaya I think this is a wake-up call for the Secretary to somewhat give protection to our local contractors. Huwag po masyadong higitan.

Kagaya po nitong isang nangyari sa atin, kapag po tayo ay nagbibigay ng mga malalaking package, normally, napakabigat po ng stringent na mga performance, mga tinatawag natin na security—performance bond, bid bond, at kung anu-ano po, at kung mayroon pong advance payment, hinihingan po natin ng standby letter of credit. Ang ibang contractor po sa ibang bansa, sa aking pagsusuri, binibigyan po sila ng tulong ng kanilang pamahalaan. Kaya puwede po bang malaman sa ating principal, ano po ang kanyang puwedeng maibigay na assurance, na sa kanyang panunungkulan, sa nakikita nating darating na anim na taon, what will be his vision to understand the plight of our local industry?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. SUAREZ. I move for a one-minute suspension of the session, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is suspended.

It was 3:21 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:24 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, Mr. Speaker, at the outset, I would like to state that our Foreign-Assisted Projects is now just merely P11.1 billion out of the P432 billion for Infrastructure Outlay under the DPWH program. So, in other words, we are not really putting much or a big chunk of our money into Foreign-Assisted Projects, so in that way, you could say that the bias is more towards our domestic and local contractors. And, as regards domestic and local contractors, the DPWH is closely coordinating with them so that it would not be—so there is a little amount of leniency towards local contractors and would not be as strict as the foreign contractors, for instance.

So, you know, the DPWH has its challenges, but suffice it to say that in terms of building, the local construction industry, the DPWH and local contractors are good partners, working partners, and they are under

constant communication and consultation on how to best address the issues that have been raised by the good Minority Leader.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that manifestation of the distinguished Sponsor.

My concern is rather some sense of nationalism, distinguished Sponsor, because if foreign contractors get a project here, they deploy their own technicians, they come here, they have work, they have jobs and, at the end of the day, they will bring their money back to their country. So, sa akin ho, if you will look at the bidder's list, dati, I do not know—nowadays, because I have not seen the listings now—you can see only two prominent Filipino companies, and I am talking about, what are these two: the DMCI and the EEI, wala na hong iba. Samantalang iyon hong mga foreign companies, ang dami-dami nila. Pangalawa, darating ho sila dito, dala-dala iyong mga heavy equipment, tax-free ho lahat iyon.

So, dito makikita ang tulong ng kanilang gobyerno para makakuha ng trabaho at tulongan iyong kanilang local company to compete with other countries. Nandiyan po iyong gobyerno sa likod, tayo ho wala noon. Kaya nga, para lumaki ang ating industry, outside of the fact that the good Secretary will have a handful in implementing this gargantuan project that he is asking for 2017, kasama na ho siguro sa gawain niya na tingnan kung papaano tayo magkakaroon ng tulong upang mapalaki natin ang local construction industry.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, the good Secretary has assured us that in terms of Foreign-Assisted Projects, it will only be limited to projects wherein high-technology capability is needed. In other words, our local contractors have no capability to match their foreign counterparts. But it will only be limited to those infrastructure projects. Otherwise, if our countrymen and our local contractors have the ability and the technological capability and know-how to do these projects, then of course, they will be given those projects. So, foreign-assisted will only be limited to technologically challenging projects, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Well, thank you for that answer, distinguished Sponsor.

Maybe, for the benefit of our Members, we have to be informed on how we construct roads in our district, whether it is either asphalt or concrete. Pinakamaganda niyan po siyempre iyong concrete with asphalt overlay. Puwede po bang malaman natin sa Kalihim, ano po ang mas matibay, asphalt road or concrete road?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, concrete roads are more durable, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. But asphalt is more comfortable.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, asphalt is more comfortable.

REP. SUAREZ. So, it is a trade-off. What do you want, comfortable ride, or medyo bumpy ride?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). I think the DPWH takes into consideration everything including the geography of the area in order to find out what sort of road matches the geography, the topography, the climate, and if it is a flood-prone area, then obviously, we need concrete roads more than asphalt roads, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. Several years ago, this Representation authored the MVUC or the Motor Vehicle Users Charge, wherein I made it, purposely, distinguished Sponsor, a point that the revenue which will be derived out of the plates of all motor vehicles in the country be not turned over to the national funds or to the Treasury, but to a trust fund, sapagkat ang akin pong paniniwala, ang nagbabayad ng plaka ay motorista at, samakatuwid, dapat po ang unang makikinabang ay ang motorista doon sa kanilang ibinabayad sa plaka. Kini-create po natin iyan at magkakaroon po tayo ng sharing wherein the lion's share of this collection will be for the national road at magkakaroon po tayo ng, I think, if I can be given a learning curve here, nakalimutan ko na ho at medyo nagkakaedad na rin ako, am I right to say that it is 85 and 15, or 18 and 20? Can anybody from your resource group tell me the equation of how do we divide the collection of the MVUC?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). It is 80 percent for the national, 75—80 percent national; 5 percent for the special road, for road safety; and 75 percent for local.

REP. SUAREZ. Saan po, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, nakalagay iyong atin pong programang “Kalsada Natin, Alagaan Natin”? Saan po doon?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Iyan po ay nakalagay sa LGSF.

REP. SUAREZ. And that will be how many percent of the total revenue?

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker.

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, I move for a minute of suspension of the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is suspended.

It was 3:34 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:40 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct my earlier statement. I think what the honorable Minority Leader meant was the Kalsada Program wherein workers would maintain the roads of the country. I would like to assure the Minority Leader that is still being done, and it is not in the Kalsada Program of the LGSF since I misunderstood his earlier question. This is the Kalsada Natin, Alagaan Natin Program of then Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. I would like to assure the good Minority Leader that is still in place. Though it is no longer called that name, but under the General Appropriations Act, it is now part of the Roadside Maintenance Program of the DPWH.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What I am trying to highlight, distinguished Sponsor, is that ang kalsada, regardless of whether it is in asphalt or concrete, ang kalaban po ay tubig. Basta pumasok ang tubig sa base nito, kahit CTB ito o cement-treated base, huhuna po ang pundasyon ng kalsada kasi pinasok ng tubig. Paano po papasok ang tubig? Kapag naging stagnant po ang tubig pag tag-ulan. Iyon po ang objective, ang maglagay ng trabahador sa bawat lansangan on a per-kilometer basis. Ang trabaho ay linisin ang mga kalat at siguraduhin na ang drainage at ply canal will be working when the rain comes. That is the objective. Henceforth, we help in the length of usability ng ating kalsada sapagkat hindi ito nagkakaroon ng tubig pag tag-ulan. That was the objective of the Road Board when we conceptualized a percentage for this purpose to be used in that program.

Ngayon, ang akin lang gustong sabihin, ilan na po ang total na kilometro na classified as national road? Ilang libong kilometro na po tayo ngayon?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). We have 32,600 kilometers, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Kung maglalagay tayo at bibigyan ng kapahintulutan even ang mga congressional district sa kanilang district engineers, mag-identify kung sino ang magtatrabaho on a per-

kilometer basis, malaking tulong ito sa ating mga kasamahan sa Kongreso.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, I agree that it will help in job creation, employment of our people, and it will also help in the maintenance of our national roads.

REP. SUAREZ. Okay. Magkano po ang minimum wage na ibinibigay natin sa Kalsada Natin, Alagaan Natin Program, Mr. Speaker?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Around P450.

REP. SUAREZ. A day?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. That is P450 a day. Wow.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, P400 to P450 a day, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Noong panahon ko, P295lang iyan.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Tumataas rin po kasi ang minimum wage, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Sana nakita po ninyo ang vision na iyon ng Congress, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. I think we should somewhat be sympathetic to the intention of how we can control, provide and make sure that this money is properly spent on a working relation with the DPWH through the district engineers, na bigyan po tayo ng kapahintulutan na sabihing ito ang jurisdiction mo, sasabihin ng district engineer, 60 kilometers ang national road mo, nasa kanila ang pangangasiwa at sila ang kukuha ng dalawang manggagawa kada kilomtero. So mayroong employment sa 120 na sasahod ng P400 o mahigit araw-araw. That will be a big contribution to the local economy.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, I agree, Mr. Speaker. We, as a Body, can always exercise our oversight functions, particularly on the expenditures of the DPWH on the matter na nire-raise ng ating butihing Minority Leader.

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, puwede po ba nating sabihin na may manifestation na tayo rito, na tayo ay nagkakasundo? Kasi nang nakaraang administrasyon, hindi po talaga binigyan ng pagkakataon ang Congressmen na mag-identify ng mga manggagawa sa kanilang kinauukulang lansangan.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). The DPWH has committed that it is open to discussions with the Members of Congress.

REP. SUAREZ. Doon po sa aking ibinigay na panukala noong ako ang nag-akda ng batas na ito, sa mga highly urbanized area, sapagkat napakaigsi naman ng kanilang national road, ang focus ay dapat sa line canal at drainage, siguraduhin na hindi po magbabara ang imburnal pagdating ng tag-ulan.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, the DPWH has noted the observations of the good Minority Leader and will work with us accordingly.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

May I go to a somewhat parochial issue because the MWSS is under the supervision of the DPWH. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ang tubig po ng National Capital Region na ginagamit panligo, panglaba, pangluto o pangkalahatan ay nanggagaling sa Angat Dam. Ang iba po, kagaya ng Maynilad, which is one of our two service providers, mayroon mga deepwell but definitely not enough to augment the requirement of our consumers.

Ako po ay nagkaroon ng panukalang batas na i-amend ang charter ng MWSS for one basic reason. Ang MWSS po ay hindi humihingi ng pondo sa atin. We are not appropriating a single centavo to the MWSS for its operational expenditures.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). That is correct, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Ang kanila pong ginagastos ay nanggagaling sa dalawang service providers, Maynilad at Manila Water. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. Hindi po ba scandalous na ikaw ang regulator at ang nire-regulate mo ang nagbibigay ng suweldo sa iyo?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). It is a concession agreement, Mr. Speaker, and that is how the concession is.

REP. SUAREZ. But we go to the bottom line, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. Ang suweldo ay galing sa Maynilad at Manila Water which I am regulating.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Unless there is a change in the concession agreement because we are bound by it, we do not want to change the rules of the game.

REP. SUAREZ. That is precisely the reason, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, I am going to enlighten

the Majority to support the position of the Minority, that it is high time that we amend the charter of the MWSS.

Water is free right now. Hindi po natin sinisingil ang dalawang water service providers. Libre. Sila ay nagbibigay ng kanilang sinasabi, heto ang ginagastos ko per cubic meter, heto ang dapat bayaran ng consumer sa akin. Regulator po sila.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Hindi po ba ganyan tayo ngayon?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. O ngayon, ang tubig po is a very precious commodity. It is high time that we conserve water and at the end of the day, we should charge on consumption and pay where the water is coming from. Dapat bigyan naman natin ng kaukulang pansin, saan ba nanggagaling ang tubig na ating iniinom at ginagamit sa bahay. Nanggagaling ito sa Angat Dam, kaya ang Angat, ang lalawigan ng Bulacan ay tumatanggap at nakatatanggap na ng napakalaking halaga galing sa concession ng tubig na nanggagaling sa Angat Dam.

Sundan po natin. Ang tubig ng Angat, 80 percent ay galing sa Quezon province. Kami po ang nag-aalaga ng watershed ng Sierra Madre and we do not get a single centavo out of its proceeds. Palagay ko po naman ay dapat lamang itama ang kamaliang ito.

Ngayon, mayroon na naman tayong pangalawang package. Lumalaki na ang consumption ng National Capital Region, and now, we are going to tap the water of Agus River. Dalawa lamang ang pinanggagalingan ng tubig ng Kamaynilaan, Agus at Umiray. Itatapon natin iyan at ang kondisyon na sinasabi ng MWSS, wala na naman pong ibibigay ni isang sentimong duling sa isang lalawigan na nag-aalaga ng watershed. Ano po ang gagawin natin diyan? Maybe my concern is parochial because I come from the province of Quezon, but I can see this indifference and unfairness, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Right now, Mr. Speaker, there is a pending issue in the Supreme Court on whether or not ang pagbabayad ng share o national wealth sa locality, kasama ba dito ang tubig?

That is a pending issue in the Supreme Court—whether the locality is entitled to the royalties, if water ang pag-uusapan natin sa royalties na iyon. Unless the Supreme Court decides on the matter, Congress is always free to pass legislation to that effect. We, as a collective Body, can make policy decisions as long as they are approved by the majority.

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, can we not come up with a win-win solution? We look at the balance sheets of these two service providers every year, one makes about P13.8 billion and the other one makes about P11 billion profit a year, selling a commodity coming free from the MWSS. Wala pong bayad. Bakit hindi na lang natin lagyan ng isang provision na mag-agree ang DPWH, which is the supervising body of the MWSS? Simple lamang po, kung magkano ang tsina-charge ng service provider sa consumer, maglagay lamang tayo ng porsyento from the national wealth na ibibigay naman sa lalawigan. Masalimuot po at mahaba ang litigation. Kung sakaling matalo ang mayroong natural wealth, aapela po iyan. In the meantime, kung magkakaroon po tayo ng pinsala at mawawalan tayo ng tubig, can you imagine the chaos that may happen to this region if there will be a shortage of water?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). The representatives from the MWSS have agreed that the concerns of the good Minority Leader will be brought to the attention of the board in their upcoming board meeting. It will be discussed because that is a shift in policy direction. That is a change in policy that will have to be discussed by the board and be approved by the board, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Right now, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, we do not have problem with water, rainy season na po. Nararamdaman natin ang shortage ng tubig pagdating ng summer. The DPWH and the MWSS should come up with a program imploring citizens to conserve water. Sila po ba ay mayroong mga programang ganoon, to conserve water?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). They do have, Mr. Speaker. They do have regular campaigns encouraging water conservation among our citizens.

REP. SUAREZ. May I make a suggestion, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Of course, Mr. Speaker, by all means.

REP. SUAREZ. Can we come up with a policy of showering with a friend? *(Laughter)*

Hindi ka puwedeng mag-shower na mag-isa. Dapat po dalawa kayo para ang tubig na bumaba, at least, dalawa kayong makikinabang kaysa isa lang.

REP. NOGRALES (K.) I am sure they will be glad to take that up in the next board meeting, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Medyo bini-break ko lang po ang monotony.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, the Minority has no more questions to raise on the issue of the proposed budget. On behalf of the Minority, we would like to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the DPWH and its allied agencies.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. TY. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much. There is a motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the DPWH.

Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations. *(Applause)*

REP. NOGRALES (K.). To answer the question of the Chair on Infrastructure Outlays, the amount is P860.65 billion which is 5.4 percent of the GDP and it is 13.8 percent higher than the 2016 budget for Infrastructure Outlays, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much.

Likewise, the Committee is advised to also check the numbers in the NEP and the BESF regarding that answer and we will find different answers to that question.

Before we proceed, just one last manifestation. A major concern of the Public Works Department is the absorptive capacity of the particular office. The Chair has asked the Department on its new programs regarding absorptive capacity, and the response the Chair got was early procurement activities and the early awarding of contracts upon receipt of an allotment. Thank you very much for that candid answer, but the truth of the matter is, that has been the practice in the past two administrations.

So the concern on the absorptive capacity has yet to be answered by the Department, and I am concerned that our target of 7 percent of the GDP might not be met. That is the same concern of the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee.

That is a manifestation, not a question. Thank you very much.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is suspended.

It was 3:57 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:05 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION
OF H.B. NO. 3408

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 3408.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to suspend consideration of the aforementioned Bill.

Is there no objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Andaya). Before the Secretary General goes into the most boring part of our session, the Chair will now relinquish his post. But before I do that, I would like to propound a parliamentary inquiry to the Committee on Appropriations and its technical staff. They need not answer the question now; they can give me the answer in writing tomorrow. And the question is this, the query is this: Can the Executive Department, in the exercise of all its laws and its special provisions and general provisions in the present GAA—can the Executive Department fund a non-existent activity or non-existent project, meaning to say, projects or activities not approved by Congress? Can the Executive Department, in the course of the fiscal year, undertake such activity? That is the query of the Chair.

Thank you very much, and I will relinquish the post.

Thank you very much to my colleagues, and thank you very much to my provincemates in Region V.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Andaya relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Ferdinand L. Hernandez.

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

REP. DEFENSOR. For the benefit of our new Presiding Officer, Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate the motion that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). 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 Communications, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 3723, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) EXTENSION OFFICE LOCATED IN LAPU-LAPU CITY INTO A REGULAR DISTRICT OFFICE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Radaza

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 3724, entitled:

“STUDENT HOUSING ACT OF 2016”

By Representative Radaza

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 3725, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE BAGUMBAYAN DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BAGUMBAYAN, 2ND DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF SULTAN KUDARAT AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Suansing (H.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 3726, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE PHILIPPINE MOBILE HOSPITAL, DEFINING ITS PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Velasco-Catera

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 3727, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MODE OF ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION FOR AGRICULTURAL LANDS WITHIN TICAO

AND BURIAS ISLANDS, PROVINCE OF MASBATE DECLARED AS SPECIAL ECO-TOURISM ZONES OR TOURISM ENTERPRISES ZONES PROVIDING ENVIRONMENTAL SAFEGUARDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Bravo (M.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill No. 3728, entitled:

“AN ACT UPGRADING THE SALARY GRADE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS FROM SALARY GRADE 11 TO SALARY GRADE 18 AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Antonino

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 3729, entitled:

“AN ACT CRIMINALIZING PLAGIARISM, PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Castelo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 3730, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONTROL AND ELIMINATION OF DENGUE, PRESCRIBING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representatives Batocabe, Garbin and Co

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 3731, entitled:

“AN ACT INCLUDING THE FACT OF INTOXICATION AND THE PRESENCE OF NON-RESIDENT OR ALUMNI FRATERNITY MEMBERS DURING HAZING AS AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES TO INCREASE APPLICABLE PENALTIES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8049, ALSO KNOWN AS THE ANTI-HAZING LAW”

By Representatives Batocabe, Garbin and Co

TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 3732, entitled:

“AN ACT REDEFINING THE CRIME OF SYNDICATED ESTAFA, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 1 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1689”

By Representative Bagatsing

TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 3733, entitled:

“AN ACT AUTHORIZING WIRE TAPPING IN CASES INVOLVING VIOLATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9165, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘COMPREHENSIVE DANGEROUS DRUGS ACT OF 2002’, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 3 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4200 ENTITLED ‘AN ACT TO PROHIBIT AND PENALIZE WIRE TAPPING AND OTHER RELATED VIOLATIONS OF THE PRIVACY OF COMMUNICATION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’”

By Representative Bagatsing

TO THE COMMITTEE ON DANGEROUS DRUGS

House Bill No. 3734, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE ADDITIONAL INCOME TAX EXEMPTION FOR EACH DEPENDENT FROM EIGHT THOUSAND PESOS (P8,000) TO FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P50,000), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SEC. 35 (B), CHAPTER VII OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, A.K.A., THE TAX REFORM ACT OF 1997, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Cortuna

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 3735, entitled:

“AN ACT INTENSIFYING THE CRIMINAL NATURE OF VOTE BUYING AND SELLING, PRESCRIBING HIGHER PENALTIES THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SEC. 264 OF BP 881 OR THE OMNIBUS ELECTION CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES BY SETTING IT OFF AS A SEPARATE AND DISTINCT OFFENSE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Cortuna

TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND ELECTORAL REFORMS

House Bill No. 3736, entitled:

“AN ACT ALLOWING THE ORDER OF EVICTION OR DEMOLITION BY THE COURTS ONLY WHEN JUDGMENT BECOMES FINAL AND EXECUTORY AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NUMBER SEVENTY-TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINE OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT HOUSING ACT”

By Representative Marcoleta

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 3737, entitled:

“AN ACT ALLOWING FILIPINOS WITH DUAL CITIZENSHIP TO SEEK AN ELECTIVE OR APPOINTIVE PUBLIC OFFICE WITHOUT RENOUNCING THEIR FOREIGN CITIZENSHIP”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 378 OF THE INSURANCE CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

House Bill No. 3738, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A BAYANIHAN HOMEBUILDING PROGRAM FOR LOW INCOME GROUPS THROUGH GRADUATED AMORTIZATION PAYMENT (GAP) SCHEME AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 3743, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LEAP) AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION

House Bill No. 3739, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING FOOD SUBSIDY PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION

House Bill No. 3744, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS TO ALLOCATE FIVE PERCENT (5%) OF THEIR INTERNAL REVENUE ALLOTMENT FOR THE RELOCATION AND RESETTLEMENT OF UNDERPRIVILEGED AND HOMELESS CITIZENS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7279, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING ACT OF 1992”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 3740, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING THE IMPOUNDING OF MOTOR VEHICLES INVOLVED IN A VEHICULAR INCIDENT THAT RESULTED IN THE DEATH OR SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURY OF A PEDESTRIAN, COMMUTER OR BY-STANDER, UNLESS A CASH BOND IS POSTED”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 3745, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MUNICIPAL LIVELIHOOD AND EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTER IN EVERY CITY AND MUNICIPALITY AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 3741, entitled:

“AN ACT INCLUDING INCIDENTAL EXPENSES IN THE EXERCISE OF PROFESSION AS ADDITIONAL ALLOWABLE DEDUCTIONS FROM THE TAXABLE INCOME OF TEACHERS”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 3746, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS SOCIAL SECURITY AND RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS AFFAIRS

House Bill No. 3742, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE TOTAL INDEMNITY CLAIM FOR DEATH OR SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURY TO ANY PASSENGER OR THIRD PARTY WITHOUT THE NECESSITY OF PROVING FAULT OR NEGLIGENCE, AMENDING

House Bill No. 3747, entitled:

“AN ACT TO PROTECT THE FILIPINO CONSUMER FROM ARBITRARY INCREASES IN THE PRICES OF LPG BEING CHARGED BY THE PLAYERS OF THE LPG INDUSTRY, AMENDING

FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 19 AND 14 OF R.A. 8479, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS DOWNSTREAM OIL INDUSTRY DEREGULATION LAW OF 1998”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

House Bill No. 3748, entitled:

“ANACTREQUIRINGPRIVATECONTRACTORS DOING PUBLIC WORK PROJECTS TO EMPLOY SKILLED AND UNSKILLED WORKERS WHO ARE CONSIDERED INDIGENTS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT (DSWD), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED SIXTY-SIX HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIVE”

By Representative Marcoleta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

*The list of additional coauthors is reflected in Journal No. 29, dated September 29, 2016.**

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

Message dated September 28, 2016, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 4, entitled:

“CONCURRENT RESOLUTION GRANTING CONSENT TO SENATOR FRANKLIN M. DRILON TO ACCEPT THE GRAND CORDON OF ORDER OF THE RISING SUN TO BE CONFERRED UPON HIM BY THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN”

in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter dated June 29, 2016 of Atty. Roy L. Ursal, Director IV, Regional Director, Commission on Audit, Region XI, Davao City transmitting the Annual Audit Report on the University of Southeastern Philippines, for the year ended December 31, 2015.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Report of Cesar S. Pareja, Secretary General, House of Representatives, on enrolled bills, submitted to

the Office of the President, for His Excellency’s consideration and signature, pursuant to the provision of Rule VI, Section 18, Par. (h) of the Rules of the House of Representatives:

1. Consolidated House Bill No. 5713 and Senate Bill No. 2987, entitled:

“AN ACT DEFINING RAW SUGAR OR RAW CANE SUGAR, AMENDING SECTION 109(A) AND (F) OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

(Now Republic Act No. 10864)

2. House Bill No. 5746, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE MAYOR HILARION A. RAMIRO SR. REGIONAL TRAINING AND TEACHING HOSPITAL IN THE PROVINCE OF MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL INTO A MEDICAL CENTER TO BE KNOWN AS THE MAYOR HILARION A. RAMIRO SR. MEDICAL CENTER”

(Now Republic Act No. 10865)

3. House Bill No. 6152, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF BATANES AS A RESPONSIBLE, COMMUNITY-BASED CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ECOTOURISM ZONE”

(Now Republic Act No. 10866)

4. Consolidated Senate Bill No. 2950 and House Bill No. 5855, entitled:

“AN ACT REORGANIZING AND MODERNIZING THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (NBI), AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

(Now Republic Act No. 10867)

5. Senate Bill No. 449, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 5780, entitled:

“AN ACT HONORING AND GRANTING ADDITIONAL BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO FILIPINO CENTENARIANS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

(Now Republic Act No. 10868)

6. Senate Bill No. 3091, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 6415, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE NATIONWIDE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JOBSTART PHILIPPINES PROGRAM AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR”

(Now Republic Act No. 10869)

* See ANNEX (printed separately)

7. House Bill No. 5417, entitled:
“AN ACT REGULATING THE PHILIPPINE CREDIT CARD INDUSTRY”
(Now Republic Act No. 10870)
8. Senate Bill No. 3204, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 6204, entitled:
“AN ACT REQUIRING BASIC EDUCATION STUDENTS TO UNDERGO AGE-APPROPRIATE BASIC LIFE SUPPORT TRAINING”
(Now Republic Act No. 10871)
9. House Bill No. 2817, entitled:
“AN ACT SEPARATING THE CAGASAT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL - MAGSAYSAY ANNEX IN BARANGAY MAGSAYSAY, MUNICIPALITY OF CORDON, PROVINCE OF ISABELA FROM THE CAGASAT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS CORDON NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”
(Now Republic Act No. 10872)
10. House Bill No. 3219, entitled
“AN ACT SEPARATING THE CONNER CENTRAL NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL - TALIFUGO ANNEX IN BARANGAY TALIFUGO, 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 TALIFUGO NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”
(Now Republic Act No. 10873)
11. House Bill No. 3220, entitled:
“AN ACT SEPARATING THE PIO DA LIM MEMORIAL SCHOOL OF ARTS AND TRADES - TANGLAGAN ANNEX IN BARANGAY TANGLAGAN, MUNICIPALITY OF CALANASAN, PROVINCE OF APAYAO FROM THE PIO DA LIM MEMORIAL SCHOOL OF ARTS AND TRADES, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS TANGLAGAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”
(Now Republic Act No. 10874)
12. House Bill No. 4366, entitled:
“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY SAN JOSE, CITY OF ANTIPOLO, PROVINCE OF RIZAL TO BE KNOWN AS ANTIPOLO CITY NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”
(Now Republic Act No. 10875)
13. House Bill No. 5406, entitled:
“AN ACT SEPARATING THE KALINGA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL - AMBATO TINGLAYAN ANNEX IN BARANGAY AMBATO-LEGLEG, MUNICIPALITY OF TINGLAYAN, PROVINCE OF KALINGA FROM THE KALINGA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS TINGLAYAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”
(Now Republic Act No. 10876)
14. House Bill No. 5446, entitled:
“AN ACT SEPARATING THE GOV. ALFREDO ABUEG SR. NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND VOCATIONAL MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL - ARIBUNGOS EXTENSION IN BARANGAY ARIBUNGOS, MUNICIPALITY OF BROOKE’S POINT, PROVINCE OF PALAWAN FROM THE GOV. ALFREDO ABUEG SR. NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND VOCATIONAL MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS INIL U. TAHA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”
(Now Republic Act No. 10877)
15. House Bill No. 3785, entitled:
“AN ACT STRENGTHENING AND INSTITUTIONALIZING DIRECT CREDIT SUPPORT OF THE LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES TO AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES, SMALL FARMERS AND FISHERFOLK, FURTHER AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3844, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘AGRICULTURAL LAND REFORM CODE’, AS AMENDED”
(Now Republic Act No. 10878)
16. House Bill No. 5511, entitled:
“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE

SOUTHWESTERN TAGALOG REGION TO BE KNOWN AS THE MIMAROPA REGION”

(Now Republic Act No. 10879)

17. House Bill No. 3145, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING AN ADDITIONAL BRANCH OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT WITH SEAT AT CALAPAN CITY, ORIENTAL MINDORO IN THE FOURTH JUDICIAL REGION, FURTHER AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

(Now Republic Act No. 10880)

18. Consolidated Senate Bill No. 3023 and House Bill No. 6395, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING INVESTMENT RESTRICTIONS IN SPECIFIC LAWS GOVERNING ADJUSTMENT COMPANIES, LENDING COMPANIES, FINANCING COMPANIES AND INVESTMENT HOUSES CITED IN THE FOREIGN INVESTMENT NEGATIVE LIST AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

(Now Republic Act No. 10881)

19. House Bill No. 772, entitled:

“AN ACT EXEMPTING SURVIVING CHILDREN OF MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO ARE MENTALLY INCAPACITATED FROM TERMINATION OF BENEFITS UPON REACHING THE AGE OF TWENTY-ONE (21), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 25 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NUMBERED SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHT, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE AFP MILITARY PERSONNEL RETIREMENT AND SEPARATION DECREE OF 1979, AS AMENDED”

(Now Republic Act No. 10882)

20. Senate Bill No. 2794, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 4544, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A NEW ANTI-CARNAPPING LAW OF THE PHILIPPINES”

(Now Republic Act No. 10883)

21. Consolidated Senate Bill No. 2947 and House Bill No. 4116, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE BALANCED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM,

AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7279, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING ACT OF 1992”

(Now Republic Act No. 10884)

22. House Bill No. 6313, entitled:

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

(Now Republic Act No. 10885)

23. House Bill No. 6193, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO KALAYAAN BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INCORPORATED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7303, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8105, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE KALAYAAN BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INCORPORATED, A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE ISLAND OF MINDANAO AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ ”

(Now Republic Act No. 10886)

24. House Bill No. 6168, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO BYERS COMMUNICATIONS, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8107, EXPANDING ITS SCOPE INTO NATIONAL COVERAGE, AND RENEWING ITS TERM FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS”

(Now Republic Act No. 10887)

25. House Bill No. 6053, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO ZOE BROADCASTING, INC., AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7297, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE ZOE BROADCASTING NETWORK, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7968”

(Now Republic Act No. 10888)

26. House Bill No. 6038, entitled:
“ANACTRENEWINGFORANOTHERTWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO CORONA INTERNATIONAL, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7398”
(Now Republic Act No. 10889)
27. House Bill No. 5571, entitled:
“AN ACT GRANTING THE MACTAN ELECTRIC COMPANY, INC. (MECO) A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF ELECTRIC POWER TO THE END USERS IN THE CITY OF LAPU-LAPU AND THE MUNICIPALITY OF CORDOVA, PROVINCE OF CEBU”
(Now Republic Act No. 10890)
28. House Bill No. 2185, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10891)
29. House Bill No. 5570, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10892)
30. House Bill No. 5583, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10893)
31. House Bill No. 5601, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10894)
32. House Bill No. 5844, entitled:
“AN ACT GRANTING THE AVOCADO BROADBAND TELECOMS, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”
(Now Republic Act No. 10895)
33. House Bill No. 5859, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10896)
34. House Bill No. 6003, entitled:
“AN ACT GRANTING THE AMA TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS IN THE PHILIPPINES”
(Now Republic Act No. 10897)
35. House Bill No. 6005, entitled:
“AN ACT GRANTING THE INFINIVAN, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”
(Now Republic Act No. 10898)

36. House Bill No. 6011, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10899)
37. House Bill No. 6012, 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’ ”
(Now Republic Act No. 10900)
38. House Bill No. 6021, entitled:
“AN ACT GRANTING THE PILIPINAS ASIAN PEARL AIRWAYS, INC. A FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT SERVICES”
(Now Republic Act No. 10901)
39. House Bill No. 6312, entitled:
“AN ACT GRANTING THE METRO CONNECTIONS AND TELECOM CORP. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”
(Now Republic Act No. 10902)
40. House Bill No. 6314, entitled:
“AN ACT GRANTING THE MEGAMANILA TELECOM CORP. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”
(Now Republic Act No. 10903)
41. House Bill No. 6315, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10904)
42. Senate Bill No. 2239, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 925, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10905)
43. Senate Bill No. 3209, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 5572, 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’ ”
(Now Republic Act No. 10906)
44. House Bill No. 5576, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10907)
45. Senate Bill No. 3205, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 4832, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10908)
46. Consolidated Senate Bill No. 1618 and House Bill No. 4730, entitled:
“AN ACT PROHIBITING BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS FROM GIVING INSUFFICIENT OR NO CHANGE TO CONSUMERS AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR”
(Now Republic Act No. 10909)

47. Senate Bill No. 2422, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 4146, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10910)
48. House Bill No. 6418, adopted as an amendment to Senate Bill No. 29, entitled:
“AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ANY INDIVIDUAL IN EMPLOYMENT ON ACCOUNT OF AGE AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR”
(Now Republic Act No. 10911)
49. Senate Bill No. 2581, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 6423, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10912)
50. Senate Bill No. 3211, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 4531, entitled:
“AN ACT DEFINING AND PENALIZING DISTRACTED DRIVING”
(Now Republic Act No. 10913)
51. House Bill No. 5560, entitled:
“AN ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO HANS-PETER SMIT”
(Now Republic Act No. 10914)
52. Senate Bill No. 2434, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 6421, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10915)
53. Consolidated Senate Bill No. 2999 and House Bill No. 5911, entitled:
“AN ACT REQUIRING THE MANDATORY INSTALLATION OF SPEED LIMITER IN PUBLIC UTILITY AND CERTAIN TYPES OF VEHICLES”
(Now Republic Act No. 10916)
54. Senate Bill No. 3090, adopted as an amendment to House Bill No. 6414, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10917)
55. House Bill No. 5616, adopted as an amendment to Senate Bill No. 2436, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10918)
56. House Bill No. 6144, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10919)
57. House Bill No. 3222, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10920)

58. House Bill No. 3223, 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”
(Now Republic Act No. 10921)

59. House Bill No. 5452, adopted as an amendment to Senate Bill No. 2779, entitled:
“AN ACT DECLARING THE SECOND WEEK OF NOVEMBER OF EVERY YEAR AS ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL LITERACY WEEK”
(Now Republic Act No. 10922)
TO THE ARCHIVES

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary General read the following House Resolution, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding reference:

RESOLUTION

House Resolution No. 411, entitled:
“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF MIRIAM DEFENSOR-SANTIAGO, SENATOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES DURING THE TENTH, ELEVENTH, THIRTEENTH, FOURTEENTH, FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CONGRESSES”
By Representatives Alvarez (P.), Fariñas and Suarez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

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

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 411

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Resolution No. 411.

May I ask that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

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

The Secretary General is directed to read only the title of the Resolution.

With the permission of the Body, and since copies of the measure have been previously distributed, the Secretary General read only the title thereof without prejudice to inserting its text in the Congressional Record.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 411, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF MIRIAM DEFENSOR-SANTIAGO, SENATOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES DURING THE TENTH, ELEVENTH, THIRTEENTH, FOURTEENTH, FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CONGRESSES.

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

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 411.
I so move, Mr. Speaker.

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 411

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

House Resolution No. 411 is adopted
The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move for the suspension of the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is suspended.

It was 4:14 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:15 p.m., session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is resumed.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 3408

Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 3408, and kindly direct the Secretary General to read only the title of the measure.

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

The Secretary General is hereby directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 3408, entitled: AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND SEVENTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

REP. SALO. Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of the following officials of the Civil Service Commission, namely: Chairperson Alicia Dela Rosa-Bala, Commissioner Robert S. Martinez, and Executive Director Atty. Maria Anthonette Velasco-Allones.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Please rise and welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Floor Majority Leader is recognized.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

REP. SAVELLANO. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the Bill is that it is in the period of interpellation and debate. I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Civil Service Commission.

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

REP. SAVELLANO. To sponsor and to respond to the interpellation, may we recognize Rep. Raul V. Del Mar.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Representative Del Mar is hereby recognized to Sponsor and to answer questions on the budget of the Civil Service Commission.

REP. DEL MAR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Majority Leader. I have the honor to sponsor the budget of the Civil Service Commission and we are now ready to answer the questions of our colleague.

REP. CHAVEZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Majority Leader. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

On behalf of the Minority, there being no Member who wishes to ask questions, I move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Civil Service Commission.

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

REP. SAVELLANO. On behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Civil Service Commission. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). There is a motion from the Majority and the Minority to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Civil Service Commission.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Civil Service Commission is hereby terminated.

Congratulations! (*Applause*)

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DEFENSOR. I move for the suspension of the session, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is suspended.

It was 4:18 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:22 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is resumed.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REP. SAVELLANO. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the Bill is that it is in the

period of interpellation and debate. I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Commission on Human Rights.

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, can we ask for a two-minute suspension of the session. We are just analyzing the proposed budget ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). What say the Dep. Majority Leader?

REP. DEFENSOR. We have no objection, Mr. Speaker. We have no objection.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is suspended.

It was 4:23 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:27 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is resumed.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. SAVELLANO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from Cebu City, Rep. Raul V. Del Mar, to sponsor and answer questions, if any, on the budget of the Commission on Human Rights.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Representative Del Mar is hereby recognized.

REP. DEL MAR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Dep. Majority Leader.

I have the honor, likewise, now to sponsor the budget of the Commission on Human Rights, and we stand ready for questions from our colleagues.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The Dep. Majority Leader.

REP. DEFENSOR. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize the honorable Minority Leader, Rep. Danilo Suarez, for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The distinguished Congressman Suarez is hereby recognized.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Is my long-time colleague, Congressman Del Mar, willing to answer some minor interpellations?

REP. DEL MAR. Very willingly, to the distinguished Minority Leader.

REP. SUAREZ. This particular Committee, if I can, as I have read papers, listened to radios and watched television, somewhat plays a part in this EJKs, the extrajudicial killings. Is that correct, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DEL MAR. Yes, that is correct, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. May I know the position of the Commission on Human Rights in this particular case.

REP. DEL MAR. Included in their mandate, Mr. Minority Leader, is that they are obligated to investigate all these complaints of extrajudicial killings.

REP. SUAREZ. Well, I know the head of the office, he is a long-time friend and associate. The position of this Representation is this, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker: I am totally ignorant. All the while, I thought that the issue on illegal drugs is just a question of passing fancy—iyong gumamit ka, mawawala, tapos normal ka na. I never considered that it can be habit-forming or addicting. I think the head of the office is fully aware of the damage which presents a clear and present danger to the country. Does it somewhat give the position of the Commission in coming up with a weighing scale of saying that these extrajudicial killings may be Machiavellian because the end justifies the means or that somewhat, this is an unorthodox method of eliminating the problem that is already an issue that has to be dealt with because this is the position of those who are advocating this as the country is in clear danger because of narco-politics? May we know the position of the distinguished principal.

REP. DEL MAR. Yes, distinguished Minority Leader, the Commission is certainly not opposed to working against these extrajudicial killings but it is obligated to support the all-out campaign of the administration to fight crime, and especially now that illegal drugs are a menace.

REP. SUAREZ. Does the Commission, distinguished Sponsor, allocate, because in their proposed budget for

2017, do they set certain funds as assistance to victims of this process for instance, the families of those that were affected by the EJK? Do they help, and if they do, what sort of assistance do they give, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DEL MAR. Distinguished Minority Leader, they certainly assist the victims of human rights violations and while they only have a meager fund—the fund assistance proposed is P500,000, and while this sounds big, this is actually not because the allocation that they provide for assistance to victims of human rights abuses is only P5,000 per victim because of this very small funding that is given to them. That is why, Mr. Speaker, we are hopeful that we can have the support of the distinguished Minority Leader and, of course, the Majority on the increase of this fund support so that we can really adequately make our presence felt in helping the victims of human rights violations.

REP. SUAREZ. I can, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, notice the dramatic slash. If I am not mistaken, the Commission on Human Rights is asking for P1 billion. How much is the amount being requested? And yet, the approved outlay is P471 million. Am I correct in this? This is somewhat only 35 percent of what was being asked by the Commission.

REP. DEL MAR. They requested P1.3 billion but what was allocated was just P490,000 . . .

REP. SUAREZ. That is what I am trying to drive at. So, if the good Chairman can somewhat inform the Body, what was their budget in 2015?

REP. DEL MAR. Their budget, distinguished Minority Leader, for 2016 or 2017?

REP. SUAREZ. For 2015—para magkaroon lang po tayo ng variance kung magkano iyong 2015, kasi ngayon pong 2016, humihingi sila ng P1.3 billion at ang ibinigay lamang po ay P471 million.

REP. DEL MAR. For 2015, Mr. Speaker, the amount is P355,101,000.

REP. SUAREZ. Ang budget po nila was P3 billion?

REP. DEL MAR. It was P355 million, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Ang 2015?

REP. DEL MAR. Yes, 2015, that is correct.

REP. SUAREZ. Ngayon pong 2016, ang hiningi nila ay P471 million?

REP. DEL MAR. No, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. So, tumaas po?

REP. DEL MAR. Yes before 2017, in 2016, it increased to P439 million; and for next year, the proposal is P471 million only.

REP. SUAREZ. I noticed this clearly but what I am saying is—just for clarification, distinguished Sponsor, does the Commission on Human Rights work closely with a cause-oriented group that is very active in my district, the Karapatan? Do they work together hand-in-hand on some specific case of human rights violation?

REP. DEL MAR. Yes, Mr. Speaker, they work with almost all human rights organizations and groups, and Karapatan is certainly one of those groups that they are coordinating with.

REP. SUAREZ. Before I end my interpellation, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, can we just ask my good friend, the Commissioner, to please inform Karapatan that if there are specific cases in the province of Quezon and, indeed, in my district, considering that the governor is my son, to give me a copy of certain reports on abuses, as we are also very concerned with violations on human rights.

REP. DEL MAR. Yes, certainly, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. DEL MAR. I thank the distinguished Minority Leader for his questions. We also intend to have that submitted within the week, Mr. Speaker, in the same way that the Commission submitted all the documents requested by our colleagues during the pre-plenary budget hearing last week.

REP. ARCILLAS. Mr. Speaker, we think that the concerns of the good Minority Leader were already addressed. The Minority group believes that there are no other questions and concerns to be raised by the Minority, so I move to terminate the period for interpellation and debate on the budget of the Commission on Human Rights.

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

REP. SAVELLANO. On behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Commission on Human Rights.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). There is a motion from the Majority and the Minority to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Commission on Human Rights.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Commission on Human Rights is hereby terminated.

Congratulations, Commissioner Chito Gascon.

REP. DEL MAR. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Majority Leader, while the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Commission on Human Rights ends on the floor, it continues, nevertheless, in the future. The Commission stands ready to make themselves available for any questions that our Members and colleagues would like to ask even after the approval of their budget.

Thank you, distinguished Speaker and Minority Leader.

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. SAVELLANO. Mr. Speaker, I move for a suspension of the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is suspended.

It was 4:41 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:46 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is resumed.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT, AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND PROVISIONS

REP. PIMENTEL. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the Bill is that it is in the period of interpellation and debate. I move that we resume the consideration of the budget of the Department of Budget and Management, and the General Principles and Provisions.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. PIMENTEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from Davao, Rep. Karlo Alexei B. Nograles, to sponsor and answer questions, if any, on the budget of the Department of Budget and Management.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Representative, my good friend, Karlo Nograles, Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, is hereby recognized.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This is, I suppose, a continuation of the discussions that were suspended earlier on and we are ready for interpellation, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. PIMENTEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. France L. Castro of ACT TEACHERS Party-List for her interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Rep. France L. Castro is hereby recognized.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Floor Leader.

I have only two issues, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. This is with regard to the Collective Negotiation Agreement budget. Hindi ko lang po ito puwedeng mapalagpas dahil po ito po ay mga katanungan ng mga teachers natin at mga government employees. Ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ay may kinalaman doon sa budgeting ng Department of Budget and Management. May kinalaman din po ito doon sa memo ng Department of Budget and Management as regards the fund, iyong pondo po na panggagalingan ng collective negotiation incentives. Bago naman po iyon ay mayroon pong nakalagay sa badyet na separate para doon sa collective negotiation agreement incentives, pero sa ngayon po, muli, nakatali po ito doon sa tinatawag nating mga savings na manggagaling pa sa MOOE. So, ang tanong ko po, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, nagkaroon na po ba ng study ang ating Department of Budget and Management as regards the reutilization of the MOOE in our schools at ito po ba ay nagagamit lahat o kulang pa?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). We will need a moment to verify, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as we understand it, the Department of Education, when they come up with their proposals on how much MOOE is needed ng mga schools, it is actually based on the needs, looking at how many teachers, how many students in that school, and what sort of operating expenses they incurred in the past

school years? At iyon po ang nagiging basehan ng ating mga eskuwelahan at ng Department of Education sa pagpo-propose po nila ng mga MOOE sa bawat school ng bansa, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mr. Speaker, ang tanong ko po ay kung magkano po lahat ang budget ng mga schools natin sa MOOE? Although siguro tama iyong sinabi po ng ating distinguished Sponsor na kinukuha nila iyong pangangailangan sa MOOE mula doon sa ating mga schools. Pero ang tanong ko po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, iyong tungkol po doon sa CNA, kasi po mayroon pong memorandum, mayroon pong memo, Department of Budget memo na kung mayroon pong union ang isang teachers' organization o may union po, iyong kanilang CNA incentives ay nakatali doon sa MOOE. Pero alam po natin, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, na iyong MOOE po ng mga schools natin ay talagang kulang pa para gamitin nila doon sa iba't ibang pangangailangan ng school. Pero bakit po ginagawa ng DBM na itali ang CNA incentive dito sa MOOE? Hindi po ba tayo puwedeng maglaan ng separate na budget para doon sa CNA incentives, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, naiintindihan po natin ang adhikain at ang adbokasiya ng atin pong kagalang-galang na Representante ng ACT TEACHERS na ganoon nga, ito pong sinasabi niya kasi na mabibigyan sana ng additional incentives ang ating mga guro. Kaya lang, Mr. Speaker, base po sa CNA or iyong Collective Negotiation Agreement, ito po ay maso-source galing po sa MOOE. At ito pong MOOE, alam naman po natin na ginagamit para sa mga repairs, supplies, utilities, expenses na kailangan to operate the schools. Kaya nga po kami ay limitado na doon lang po natin puwedeng kukunin dahil iyon po iyong nakalagay po sa CNA.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Parang hindi po ako satisfied doon sa sagot ng ating distinguished Sponsor. Kaya ang tanong ko nga po ay, may possibility po ba na maglaan ng separate budget ang DBM? Kasi before, hindi naman ito itinali doon sa MOOE. Mayroon ito talagang line budget na specifically para sa mga CNA incentives. Kasi inaamin naman po ng ating DBM na napakaliit at kulang pa iyong MOOE ng ating mga schools. At doon pa natin pagkukuhanan iyong tinatawag nating CNA incentives.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, right now, Mr. Speaker, I will have to confess that the Department of Budget and Management is not ready to make that commitment but they are always open to discussions with the Representatives from ACT TEACHERS Party-List. But we would also like to add, Mr. Speaker, that

itinataas naman po natin and suweldo ng ating mga guro. In fact, makikita naman natin na based doon sa Executive Order No. 201 at based doon sa gusto sana nating Salary Standardization Law, kasama naman po ang ating mga guro sa pagpataas ng kanila pong mga suweldo at iyan po ay nakalaan ngayon sa 2017 na budget at iyan po ay nandiyan.

It is just the increase necessary para matugunan, ang Executive Order No. 201 ay nandiyan na po sa ating budget book. At ang kinakailangan na lamang is a joint resolution from Congress para ito po ay magawa at ma-implement sa 2017, but rest assured the money is there, prepared, ready for implementation and kasama po ang ating mga guro diyan.

Iyon nga lang po, dito po sa CNA na Collective Negotiation Agreement na binabanggit ng ating kasamahan dito sa House of Representatives is, kumbaga tali po iyong kamay natin na kung ano ang nakalagay sa CNA which is manggagaling dapat sa MOOE, unless we come up with a new agreement. Ganyan na po iyong napagkasunduan. So, the DBM has committed to still open iyong communication lines nila sa ating butihing Representante para siguro pati ang Department of Education, para siguro mapag-usapan kung ano pang mga improvements ang puwede pa nating gawin maliban po doon sa pagbibigay natin ng mas mataas na suweldo sa ating mga guro.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.) Mr. Speaker, na-appreciate ko iyong sinagot ng ating distinguished Sponsor as regards the salaries of teachers. So, iyon nga po, isa rin po sa mga issues ng teachers and employees natin lalung-laong na po iyong mga rank and file na kahit na po ipatupad natin iyong Executive Order No. 201 by 2017 at alam natin na mayroong maliit na increase ng salary ang ating mga teachers, but still mine-maintain pa rin po ng Representasyong ito ang posisyon na bukod po sa salary, dapat iyong mga benefits na sinasabi naman po ng ating batas ay dapat ma-enjoy din ng ating mga teachers, lalung-lalo na po iyong with regard to the circular or resolution as regards the CNA. Tanging ang DBM lang iyong talagang, sila iyong talagang susing ahensiya na puwedeng magbago o puwedeng baguhin ang ating mga circular kaugnay ng mga benepisyo ng ating mga empleyado at ng ating mga kaguruan.

Isa pa po sa issue na ire-raise natin, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ay iyong may kinalaman naman po doon sa Magna Carta benefits. Katulad po ng medical benefits na nakalagay po doon sa Magna Carta, RA No. 4670, na dapat po ang ating mga kaguruan doon sa kanilang Magna Carta ay dapat po mayroong free medical check-up na hindi po rin ito since 1996—mula noong ipinasá iyong ating batas, ang RA No. 4670, ay hindi pa po nakakamtan itong benepisyong ito. Ano po iyong comment ng ating distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Sa pagkakaalam po natin, Mr. Speaker, lahat po ng ating public school teachers ay covered po ng PhilHealth at dahil sila po ay covered ng PhilHealth, iyong mga primary health benefits na nakukuha ng mga miyembro ng PhilHealth ay nakukuha din po ng ating mga public school teachers. So, sa pagtugon doon sa nakalagay doon sa Magna Carta for Public School Teachers, iyong benefits po ng isang PhilHealth member ay kasama na po doon iyong mga pangangailangan ng ating mga guro when it comes to their health benefits.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Salamat, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, pero I beg to disagree ulit dahil po iyong PhilHealth ay talagang hindi rin naman nae-enjoy ng ating mga teachers. Taun-taon, nire-require ang ating mga teachers. Alam ninyo po ba mga kasamahan dito sa Kongreso, na ang mga teachers lang ang taun-taon na nire-require ng ahensya na magkaroon ng annual medical check-up, lalung-lalo na iyong mga diagnostics like X-ray, urinalysis, at saka iba pa pong mga diagnostics na hindi naman ito ginagawa sa ibang mga ahensya? Kaya po hinihiling ng Representasyong ito na sana po mapag-aralan ng ating Department of Education upang maibigay ang nararapat na benepisyo ng ating mga guro due to R.A. No. 4670.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Opo. I think the Department of Education was here yesterday and I think the Department of Education po ang dapat talagang namamahala dito, at rest assured, sa ating butihing kasamahan dito sa Kongreso na kasama ninyo po kami sa magfa-follow up at pagpe-pursue sa Department of Education na dapat talaga nilang bigyan ng importansya at pansin ang mga pangangailangan ng ating mga guro.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay, that is all, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.
Marami pong salamat.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, and to our colleague from ACT TEACHERS.

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

REP. PIMENTEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize Rep. Sarah Jane I. Elago of the KABATAAN Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Rep. Sarah Elago of KABATAAN Party-List is recognized.

REP. ELAGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

My first question pertains to Sections 27, 28, and 29 of the General Provisions. I would like to ask

particularly about Section 29, which refers to projects related to the youth.

As stated in the General Provisions, these are projects related to the youth, and I quote:

All agencies of the government are encouraged to provide the allocation for youth development projects and activities within the framework of the Philippine Youth Development Plan. x x x

Can the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, report on how this provision was implemented in the current fiscal year?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, upon my strict reading of the section, the agencies are encouraged to provide allocation for youth development projects. So, a strict interpretation of this section means that it is not really mandatory on the part of the agencies or the agencies of government to provide allocation. They are just encouraged, Mr. Speaker.

With regard to implementation and if this is followed by the different agencies of the government, I believe that the Commission on Audit regularly audits the different agencies and departments of the government as to their compliance with certain laws and procedures. I believe when COA does its audit, they also look at the General Principles of the budget book. But, I really do not have an idea, Mr. Speaker, if the section on projects related to youth is included by the COA in its strict audit of the agencies of government. Kasi nga po, gaya ng sinabi ko, it can be interpreted as being merely directory and not mandatory, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ELAGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. That is exactly the reason I asked about the implementation of this provision. On Section 27, these are the Programs and Projects Related to Gender and Development; Section 28, Projects and Programs Related to Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities; and Section 29, on the Youth. These provisions may sound good on paper, but there is no clear way in which these provisions could be implemented by our agencies. We hope that at the appropriate time, the Committee on Appropriations can look into these provisions and enhance them in a way that they will truly be implemented—iyong mararamdaman po talaga ng ating mga senior citizens, ng ating mga kabataan, at ng ating mga PWDs.

Now, my second question ...

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker. In fact, on Section 27, on Programs and Projects Related to Gender and Development, if you read it, the wording

is “shall.” The GAD plan, the G-A-D plan shall be integrated in the regular activities of the agencies which shall be at least 5 percent of the budget. So, as far as this section is concerned, Mr. Speaker, the word “shall” makes it mandatory and not merely directory. Therefore, when COA does its audit, the good Representative will be happy to know that kasama po ito sa audit ng COA. So, even if you look at the COA reports, makikita po ninyo, per agency, ino-audit po ng COA ang mga agencies and departments ng section na ito. Doon din po sa Section 28, iyong related to Senior Citizens and Persons with Disability, mayroon din pong paggamit ng word na “shall.” So, because of the use of the word “shall,” ito rin po ay mandatory at kasama rin po ito sa regular audit na ginagawa ng Commission on Audit po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ELAGO. Thank you for that information, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the good Sponsor to report on the utilization of these budgets, specifically on Gender and Development, a 5 percent of the budget of our agencies.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes. Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared to show the good Lady every department, but I would like to assure her that if you look at the COA reports, which are available online, per department, makikita ninyo po doon sa mga COA reports iyong kanilang findings per department and agency on the implementation of these sections. I perused some of the COA reports, and I saw it there. I have also been informed that part of the annual national budget call, lahat po ng ating mga agencies ay kasama din po sa mandate nila ang pag-identify ng mga projects and programs for Gender and Development. So, rest assured that the COA is on top of this at lahat ng mga ahensya ng gobyerno ay talaga namang ino-audit ng COA on their compliance with this provision.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, maraming salamat sa ibinigay na assurance ng ating distinguished Sponsor.

Now, let me bring to the Body’s attention Section 51 of House Bill No. 3408 which is entitled “Impoundment of Appropriations.” Section 51 reads, and I quote:

The President of the Philippines, upon recommendation of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), may propose the rescission or deferral of appropriations from both Houses of Congress, under any of the following:

- (a) if the appropriations were no longer required to fulfill the objectives originally sought to be achieved by the programs, activities and projects covering the same; or
- (b) in case of unmanageable National Government budget deficit.

In the current GAA, there is actually a prohibition against the impoundment of appropriations. Section 66 of Republic Act No. 10717, or the 2016 GAA, explicitly prohibits the impoundment of funds unless there is an unmanageable budget deficit. The new provision, Section 51 of House Bill No. 3408, provides a new situation wherein the President can withhold fund releases when he deems the appropriations no longer necessary. Ano po ang masasabi dito ng ating distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, the interpretation of both provisions, in 2016 and 2017, well, the 2016 GAA and the 2017 GAB are basically the same, Mr. Speaker, that there really is a prohibition against impoundment. So, nothing has been lost, the context is the same, the interpretation is the same; but in 2017 GAB or the General Appropriations Bill, we just clearly defined who are the actors that can impound, but the impoundment can only be done with limitations, namely, as the Lady has read, the fulfillment of any of the following conditions: if appropriations is no longer required to fulfill the objectives originally sought, or in case of an unmanageable National Government budget deficit, and there is a definition of what unmanageable National Government budget deficit is. Then later on, it clearly defined the role of Congress when such a proposed impoundment is exercised by the Executive.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, will this particular provision not clip the congressional power of the purse as enshrined in the 1987 Constitution?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). It will not, Mr. Speaker, because Congress, anyway, is given the power to act on the proposed rescission. So, therefore, ultimately, it is still Congress that has the final say on the matter.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, at the appropriate time, this provision ay kailangan po talaga nating mapag-aralan, at kung maaari, sa paglilinaw na hinihingi natin ngayon, we may move for the removal of this particular provision kung iyan ay babangga sa ating kapangyarihan na talagang mag-appropriate ng nararapat at para sa pangangailangan ng ating bayan.

Ang sunod naman po na aking katanungan ay tungkol sa savings and augmentation, partikular sa Section 59 ng GAA, ng House Bill No. 3408.

A particular note in this line, in Section 59, states that “In exceptional circumstances, agencies may modify the allotment issued within a program, activity or project x x x.” Mr. Speaker, can the distinguished Sponsor tell us what these exceptional circumstances as stated in Section 59 of the proposed General Appropriations Bill are?

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, hindi ba binubuksan ng probisyon na ito, Section 59 ng General Appropriations Bill, ang ating budget sa abuso na kahalintulad ng nangyari noon sa DAP o sa Disbursement Acceleration Program?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Let me read, for the record what is written on Section 59, which says, and I quote:

As a general rule, departments, bureaus and offices of the national government, including constitutional offices enjoying fiscal autonomy, and SUCs shall spend what is programmed in their respective appropriations in this Act. In exceptional circumstances, agencies may modify the allotment, subject to the approval of the following:

(a) The head of agencies for change in the object of expenditure (Salaries and Wages, Travelling Expenses or Investment Outlays) within an allotment class (Personnel Services, MOOE or Capital Outlays);

(b) The DBM for modification within a Special Purpose Fund and within the purpose authorized under the Unprogrammed Appropriations; and

(c) The President of the Philippines for the payment of Intelligence Fund within the Executive branch.

All modifications within Capital Outlays may only be made until June 30, 2017, except if due to the occurrence of calamities. All modifications in the allotment shall not entail any increase in the total amount appropriated for a program, activity or project.

So, exceptional circumstances may mean just that, if there is a calamity that will happen, that is one of the examples. For the President, in the payment of Intelligence Funds, if something exceptional happens in terms of peace and order, crime or terrorism, and, of course, we know that there are Unprogrammed Appropriations that can be used for certain purposes, meaning to say, exceptional circumstances are just that, Mr. Speaker, if it has not been foreseen. And like a calamity, it has not been foreseen and then, it happens, then, I think, those are the exceptional circumstances that can only make this section come into operation.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, muli, hindi po ba ito maaaring magbukas o magbigay ng pleksibilidad na maaaring maging lugar para sa abuso, similar to the Disbursement Acceleration Program?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). I think, we have ...

REP. ELAGO. Katulad na lang po ng ...

REP. NOGRALES (K.). I think, Mr. Speaker, the reason that we put this provision there is that we have to accept that we cannot really predict what is going to happen next year. So, we have to give some sort of flexibility among heads of agencies in terms of changes in allotment class from Personnel Services to MOOE to Capital Outlays; the DBM, in terms of modifications in the Special Purpose Funds and the Unprogrammed Appropriations; and the President of the Philippines when it comes to Intelligence Funds. But if the worry of the good Lady is in terms of abuse, I would like to assure her that the reason we have the Congress of the Philippines is for us to exercise our oversight functions over the Executive whenever we see an abuse of certain provisions in the law, including the General Appropriations Act.

Inilagay po natin itong section na ito para mabigyan ng limited leeway and elbow room just in case exceptional circumstances come about; pero, nandiyan pa naman ang trabaho ng Kongreso, lalung-lalo na at tayo po ang sumulat ng panukalang batas na ito, nandiyan pa naman ang trabaho natin na magsilbing bantay ng Ehekutibo kung kinakailangan po.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, hinggil dito sa payment, modification as regards the payment of Intelligence Funds, mayroon tayo para sa 2017 nasa higit P1 bilyon para sa Intelligence Funds na ito. Specifically, this is P1.25 billion, at ang ating concern dito ay kung iyan ay idinidiretso na lang natin or even a chunk of that budget ay idinidiretso natin sa ating mga specific budget items katulad ng budget, perhaps, ng ating state universities and colleges, iyon po ba ay magiging—o puwede ba, o may possibility ba na sa mga susunod na araw, sa pagbibigay natin ng daan sa mga amendments dito sa ating pondo.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we act as a collective Body. The Lady has obviously the right to propose her individual amendments. But at the end of the day, it is the collective wisdom and decision of the Members of the House whether or not to adopt those amendments.

I am not prepared to give an answer because I am just one vote in this Chamber. When we enter into the period of amendments, tingnan na lang natin kung papayag po ba ang mayorya sa individual amendments na ipo-propose natin. Ang sa akin lang, given the situation that we are in right now, na kamakailan lamang kami sa Davao City ay tinamaan ng bomba at marami sa aming kababayan ang nasalanta at namatay, mayroon pang nangyayaring kidnappings and beheadings by terrorist organizations.

Ngayon na mayroon po tayong external and internal threats, war against drugs and criminality, mayroon naman basehan ang pagbibigay natin ng Intelligence Funds sa ating Pangulo dahil ito ay kinakailangan para ma-secure ang bansa laban sa terorismo, sa kriminalidad, sa ilegal na droga at kung ano pa mang mga banta laban sa seguridad ng ating bansa.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. Sinusuportahan natin ang pursuit of justice, security, peace and order dito sa ating bansa. Ngunit ang sinasabi lang namin dito, kunwari ang pondo sa Intelligence Funds, iyan ay nagmula sa P250 million na ngayon ay P1.25 billion na. Hinggil sa pagbibigay ng badyet nawa ay mabigyan din natin ng prayoridad ang katulad ng sinasabi sa socioeconomic agenda ng ating Presidente, investment sa human capital development, partikular sa health and education.

Let me proceed to my last question, Mr. Speaker.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, in fact, hindi lang naman ang Intelligence Funds ang tumaas ang badyet. Gaya po ng inireport ko sa unang araw, halos lahat ng items in the budget ay tumaas naman, lalong-lalo na when it comes to the social services sector, pati sa economic services sector. Lahat naman tumaas ang pondo na inilaan natin sa mga proyekto, mga programa para sa social services, pati sa economic services natin.

Hindi naman fair sabihin na ang Intelligence Fund lang ang umakyat. Kailangang tingnan po natin sa konteksto ng kabuuang badyet. Ayon po sa ating kabuuang badyet, lahat naman halos ng ating mga programa at proyekto, lalo na para sa ating mga mahihirap na kababayan, lalo na para sa imprastraktura, lalo na para sa mga trabaho, pag-aaruga ng ating mga kababayan, lahat po naman ng mga iyan ay tumaas.

REP. ELAGO. Totoo po iyon, Mr. Speaker, na talagang tumaas ang badyet para sa ating social services, lalong-lalo na sa education bagama't may kaltas-pondo pa rin ang ating mga state universities and colleges. Pero wala sa mga pagtaas na ito ang katulad ng 500-percent increase natin sa Intelligence Funds.

For my last question, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, I would like to inquire from the DBM on the status of the additional positions under the requirements of NBC No. 461 or the Rules and Regulations on the Revised Compensation and Position Classification Plan for faculty members.

In our consultations both with PASUC and several SUC presidents, sa lahat ng ating pakikipag-usap sa iba't ibang officials ng ating state universities and colleges, palagi nilang nababanggit ang tungkol sa NBC No. 461. We were informed that the funding for the salaries of about 9,000 additional positions granted in

2015 has not yet been released, forcing several SUCs to charge these salaries to their internal income. When we asked the CHED about this during the budget briefing, Mr. Speaker, the CHED said that only the DBM can answer this. Mr. Speaker, can the distinguished Sponsor update us on the status of this issue.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, the Lady will be happy to note that the DBM has given its assurance na ito po ay currently with the DBM Secretary at kasalukuyang pinag-aaralan niya ito. All the more na tututukan ito ng ating DBM Secretary because I am happy to report to everyone that kahapon si DBM Secretary Diokno ay na-confirm na ng Commission on Appointments as our DBM Secretary. He is the first Cabinet member to be confirmed by the CA, and he has given his assurance that pinag-aaralan na po niya ang ni-raise na concern ng ating butihing kasamahan dito. In October, they will be ready to report to us the progress, at kung ano ang magiging desisyon ng DBM sa isyu na nire-raise ng ating kagalang-galang na kasamahan dito sa Kongreso.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, we are very much looking forward to that update with regard to the utilization of the salaries of 9,000 additional positions, because the CHED and the DBM will really ensure that salaries, benefits of our faculty members, our teaching personnel to be given on time so as not to compel our SUCs to get the payment for this from their internally generated income.

Iyon lang po, Mr. Speaker. Maraming salamat sa ating distinguished Sponsor para sa isang mabungang palitan ng diskusyon. Maraming salamat.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, at nagpapasalamat din ako sa kagalang-galang na Representante ng KABATAAN Party-List.

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

REP. PIMENTEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to move that we recognize the Gentleman from the First District of Albay, Rep. Edcel C. Lagman, for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Rep. Edcel C. Lagman from Albay is recognized.

REP. LAGMAN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Will the distinguished Sponsor yield to additional questions because I made a reservation last time?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, I willingly yield.

REP. LAGMAN. In the years following the ouster of President Marcos, debt service was a huge portion of the national budget. Some would even say that there were times almost 50 percent. This is not true today. But debt service still occupies a sizeable portion of the budget. This is so because the country, the government has to borrow in order to sustain and buttress the economy; it has to borrow both domestically and in the foreign market.

The question is, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, what is the percentage of debt service in the proposed national Budget for 2017?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Both, Mr. Speaker, for principal and interest, it is 19.32 percent of the Budget.

REP. LAGMAN. And what are the components, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, of the debt service?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). For debt service, Mr. Speaker, our interest payments amount to P334.876 billion and our principal amortization is P312.402 billion.

REP. LAGMAN. Could we break that down to interest payment for domestic loans and interest payments for foreign loans?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker. For domestic loans, our interest payments amount to P237.6 billion, while on foreign loans, it is P97.27 billion. For the principal amortization, domestic loan is at P232.98 billion, while on foreign, it is P79.415 billion.

REP. LAGMAN. In the case of interest payments, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, this are appropriated in the General Appropriations Act. Is that correct, Mr. Speaker?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). That is correct, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. In the case of principal amortization, this is off budget. It is not appropriated in the General Appropriations Act?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, the reason for it not being included is that we want to avoid double counting.

REP. LAGMAN. The principal amortization is principally serviced by our borrowings. Is that correct, Mr. Speaker?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). That is correct, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. So we borrow in order to pay maturing obligations.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). That is correct, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. That has been done in the previous administrations and it is still being done today.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). That is right; that is correct, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. Let me refer, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, to the budget message of the President, from which I would quote:

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 debt obligations, contribute P45 billion to the Bond Sinking Fund, and maintain sufficient cushion of cash in the treasury.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, how much of this total borrowings in 2017 will be sourced from the domestic market?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). From the domestic market, it is P505 billion, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. From the foreign market, how much would it be?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, from the foreign market, it is P126.259 billion.

REP. LAGMAN. In other words, that is consistent with the President's statement that the ratio will be 80 percent to 20 percent.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. That 20 percent amounting to P126.2 billion would translate to how much in dollars? Would it be in the vicinity of about \$2.2 billion?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). It is \$2.6 billion, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, would you agree that the country's credit rating would be an important factor in accessing, particularly, foreign financing?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, I would suppose, Mr. Speaker, that it would be an important factor.

REP. LAGMAN. If a country has a favorable credit rating, it will be able to access foreign loans at lower rates of interest because the lender would be assured of full and on time payments. Is that correct, Mr. Speaker?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). That is correct, Mr. Speaker. A lot of factors are taken into consideration by the foreign lenders, one of which would be credit ratings, our good standing as payers of our outstanding loans, among others, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. If a country suffers a downgrade in its credit rating, there will be an escalation of the cost of foreign financing. Is that correct, Mr. Speaker?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). If we fall below investment grade, Mr. Speaker, then it will have a negative effect.

REP. LAGMAN. So it is really important that we should be able to maintain a favorable credit rating or even improve that credit rating.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, that is naturally the goal and the aim of any country that wishes to improve its competitiveness, its ability to borrow from foreign lenders. Our economic managers would always work hard to maintain, or if not, improve our credit ratings.

REP. LAGMAN. Then, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, what is your take on President Duterte's statement disregarding the Standard & Poor's statement that the administration's deadly war on drugs may threaten the country's economy and imperil a good credit rating?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). I think the statements of the President are taken out of context. I think what the President just means to say is that his focus on his agenda against illegal drugs and criminality in the Philippines will not be shaken by anyone who would attempt to deter, dissuade or discourage him from this agenda. This objective is, the aim is that he has taken upon himself the work that he has taken on to rid our country of illegal drugs and criminality. In other words, nothing can derail him from his efforts and no one from our country or outside our country can shift his steadfastness in this crusade.

REP. LAGMAN. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, that is the line of many apologists for the President. After his utterances, his men would say he was quoted out of context. But, let

me quote the press release dated September 22, 2016, which reads:

President Rodrigo Duterte said Thursday he does not care about credit rating agencies after debt watcher Standard & Poor's warned that his bloody war on drugs and tough rhetoric raised questions on the predictability of the country's economic policies.

Another press account said:

President Rodrigo Duterte brushed aside Thursday the Standard & Poor's (S&P) investment rating on the Philippines, after the United States-based debt watcher warned that his administration's deadly war on drugs is threatening the country's economy.

Now, there is no question. The President should not be derailed in his campaign against the drug menace. But, in the process, the President must not derail the economy, must not imperil the economy because he could continue with his drug campaign, but at the same time, protect the economy from adverse consequences following his utterances.

Would that be a fair statement, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, Mr. Speaker, nothing has changed in the ratings that were given to us by the credit rating agencies. We are still stable and positive. So, nothing has changed, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LAGMAN. Yes, nothing has changed because they do not change their credit ratings every day. But, subsequently, there could be an impact on our credit ratings because of the President's utterances. And, I think, that those close to the President must be able to advise him to watch his statements so that adverse consequences may not follow. I would not need any comment from the distinguished Sponsor with respect to this statement.

Now, may we know, whether the distinguished Sponsor is aware of the salient features of the proposed comprehensive tax reform package submitted by the Department of Finance to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). I was present during the presentation by the Department of Finance but it was in a different venue and not the one in the Ways and Means Committee, as the good Gentleman knows, Mr. Speaker, that I have been concentrating on the budget.

REP. LAGMAN. Okay.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). So, I did not attend the Committee on Ways and Means' presentation. I did attend a presentation, a separate presentation by the Department of Finance in Malacañang before we went into the budget hearings in plenary.

REP. LAGMAN. In that case, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, I will not insist on asking the distinguished Sponsor on the salient features, the import, and the impact of these major features of the administration's comprehensive tax reform package. Most probably in another venue and with another Member of the House answering my questions, I will pursue this.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that would end my brief interpellation and I will have no more questions on the General Principles respecting the appropriations process.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). I thank the good Gentleman from the First District of Albay for the opportunity to answer his questions, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. PIMENTEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Representative Emmi A. De Jesus from the GABRIELA Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Rep. Emmi A. De Jesus is hereby recognized.

REP. DE JESUS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Muli po, magandang hapon sa balikbayan naming Sponsor at sana po ay magaling na kayo, Mr. Sponsor. Sana po ay magaling na ang Mr. Sponsor dahil noon pong first day ay nakapila po kami na magtatanong. Pero ngayon po, inaasahan ko po na sana ay maging maikling pagkakataon na lang itong maiano na.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, iyon pong muli, ang interes ng Representasyong ito with regard to general policy ng ating badyet, kanino ito naglilingkod, ang nakalaan ngayon para sa social security, welfare, and employment, ang datos po na nakuha namin ay P295,228,000,000. Dito po sa badyet na ito, ang gusto po naming malaman ay, ano po ba ang programa para sa employment ng ating mga libu-libong mga kababayan na naghahangad talaga ng trabaho na sustenado, may nakabubuhay na sahod, at hindi na po mangangailangan na sila ay lumabas pa ng ibang bayan para maghanap-buhay?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes.

REP. DE JESUS. Ano po ang pangkabuuang programa sa pondong ito na nakalaan para doon sa pagtitiyak na lalawak naman ang mga trabahong mapupuntahan ng ating mga kababayan?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, sa DSWD, mayroon po silang Sustainable Livelihood Program na binigyan po natin ng P9.6 billion. Ang Department of Labor and Employment naman ay nabigyan po natin ng P13.51 billion para sa iba't ibang mga programa ng DOLE regarding po sa employment, tulad po noong mga programa nila on rural and emergency employment, Emergency Employment Program (EEP) or the Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa Ating Disadvantaged/Displaced Workers (TUPAD). Mayroon din po silang JobStart Philippines, mayroon din po silang mga job fairs na ginagawa, mayroon din po silang mga livelihood programs. Ang DOLE po, mayroon din pong Special Program for the Employment of Students or SPES, at mayroon din po silang DOLE Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program, or DILEEP or Programang Pangkabuhayan.

Dito naman po sa TESDA, mayroon din po tayong ibinibigay na Training for Work Scholarship Program na alam naman po natin na sa pagbibigay natin ng skills training sa ating mga kababayan ay agad-agad po nating nabibigyan ng mas mataas na capacity, capability at availability para sa paghahanap ng trabaho, at mayroon din pong Private Education Student Financial Assistance Program ang TESDA under sa PESFA program nila.

In terms of the Commission on Higher Education, nakalaan din po ang mga programs natin for scholarships para po ang ating mga estudyante sa tertiary education, lalung-lalo na iyong mga mahihirap, upang mabigyan natin ng pagkakataon na makapagtapos ng kanilang pag-aaral, para mas madali para sa kanila ang paghahanap po ng trabaho.

REP. DE JESUS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Kasi, dito po sa mga pronouncements ng ating Presidente, ang isang binanggit niya ay ang pagbuhay ng mga industriya na muling magtitiyak na tayo mismo ang makikinabang doon sa ating resources. May industriya tayo na katulad ng bakal and, in fact, mayroon siyang balak noon at pronouncement na one of the industries na talagang mag-e-ensure ng daan tungo sa national industrialization ay katulad ng bakal na bubuhay doon sa ating ekonomiya. Pero doon po sa nabanggit, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sa inyong sagot, ang nakukuha po namin ay itong darating na taon ay mukhang mga palliative at mga panandaliang trabaho pa rin po ito. Tama po ba, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, at least, in the next year, tama po ba?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Hindi naman po para sa panandaliang trabaho lamang. I think one of the greatest

assets that we have as a country are our people. Kaya nga po napakalaki ng badyet na ating inilaan para sa edukasyon ng ating mga mamamayan para po ma-increase natin ang kanilang capability at abilities para po makapaghanap naman sila ng trabahong permanente at makapagbigay ng mas magandang buhay po para sa kanila.

So, hindi po natin objective ang magbigay ng short-term na livelihood or short-term work para sa ating mga mamamayan kung di ang target po natin ay mabigyan sila ng, kumbaga, permanent na trabaho, either as workers in a corporation or sa isang pabrika or as self-employed, mga negosyante na may sariling paghahanap-buhay.

REP. DE JESUS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, kaugnay po ng ganyang binabanggit, maaari po ba naming malaman ngayon saan—ano ang mga major industries natin ngayon, particularly manufacturing na masasabi nating tumatanggap ng mga manggagawa natin? At alin din iyong mga oportunidad natin na nasa service sector?

Can we have a comparative data with regard to the number of employed? Saan po ang kalakhan ng labor force natin vis-à-vis manufacturing and services?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Just a moment, Mr. Speaker. Can I ask for a one-minute suspension of the session, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is suspended.

It was 5:54 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:57 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is resumed.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. NOGRALES (K.) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Iyong tututukan po natin na mga industries are mainly agricultural industry, the manufacturing industry, tourism industry and BPOs.

As far as employment generation is concerned, Mr. Speaker, the industries that provide the most number of, or generate the most number of employment for our country is still really the agriculture industry, the manufacturing industry, and the construction industry. In terms of services, it is the wholesale and retail trade,

repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; transportation and storage; accommodation and food service activities; information and communication; financial and insurance activities; real estate activities; professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities; public administration and defense; education; human health and social work activities; arts entertainment and recreation—and that is it.

Mr. Speaker, those are the major employment generation industry groups. So patuloy pa rin ang pag-focus, pagtutok natin sa mga industriyang ito dahil ito po ay nakapagbibigay ng maraming trabaho para sa mas nakakarami nating mga kababayan.

REP. DE JESUS. Salamat po sa sagot. Pero ang gusto rin po sanang makuhanang datos, kami po sa sektor ng kababaihan, talagang ang isang sa nakikita namin, sa dinami-dami ng able-bodied women, able-bodied physically, mentally prepared, emotionally prepared at siyempre naghahangad na maging bahagi ng produksyon ay iyong dynamic economic activity ng lipunan. Kalakhan po ng oportunidad na nababagsakan nila ay iyong service industry. At ito po ay binanggit ninyo na rin na iyong wholesale and retail industry. Ang malupit, dito po nakikita iyong ongoing practice ng endo. Kaya hindi ko na po ibe-belabor ito kasi magkakaugnay e.

Ang gusto po talaga naming makita dito sa General Policy sa susunod na taon, considering that the President mentioned in many of his speeches that he really wants to uplift the plight of the majority of our people, kapag sinabi talagang “upliftment ng kalagayan,” siyempre ang sektor ng kababaihan, sabi nga namin, sana kung may trabaho, at hindi lang conditional cash transfer, hindi lang 4Ps. Ang nakikita nga namin, napaka-limited ng oportunidad. Dito ko na rin idudugtong na ang isa pang bumubukas na oportunidad, iyong forced migration na alam din naman natin ang vulnerability ng kababaihan pagdating doon sa trabaho at pangangibang bayan.

Kaya I would like to end this interpellation by saying na looking forward kami na ang makuha namin ay talagang assurance when it comes to opportunity for the majority of the people, para doon sa pag-aangat ng kabuhayan, ay ang pagkakaroon talaga ng trabaho. And when we say “trabaho,” hindi pupuwede iyong pasundot-sundot at papatse-patse, kundi magkakaroon ng job fair. Ang isa pa pong natuklasan namin, may isang probinsya o isang chapter kami sa Bataan na pagka magdya-job fair, iyon pong mga participants, sinisingil pa. Mismong job fair, pinagkakakitaan.

Kaya ang gusto po naming itala, simulan natin sana dito sa Budget na inilalaan para sa 2017, magkaroon talaga ng polisiya na ang bubuhayin ay mga industriya na tumutugon na talaga sa pangmatagalang

pangangailangan ng mamamayan. At lalung-lao na para sa sektor ng kababaihan, gusto naming maging productive forces ng lipunan. Hindi iyong makitid na makitid na opportunity na ang babagsakan ay endo o kung hindi man, mga trabahong exposed ka sa iba't ibang anyo ng harassment and vulnerabilities bilang babae.

Kaya, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, sa patakaran po, dahil nag-uusap naman tayo ng General Policies, ito po sana ang maging batayan din natin, ang pag-e-ensure na ang budget ay maglalaan ng sapat na pondong magtitiyak at bubuhay sa ating industriya para sa trabaho ng mas marami.

Magandang hapon po at maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Maraming salamat.

Mr. Speaker, nagpapasalamat po kami sa ating kagalang-galang na Representante ng GABRIELA Party-List.

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

REP. PIMENTEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize the Minority Leader, Cong. Danny Suarez.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Distinguished Minority Leader, Representative Suarez, is recognized.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Dito po, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, sa DBM Organizational Outcome, ang sensitive issue ho sa grupo ng Minority ay gusto lang naming malaman ang structural program ng bagong administrasyon.

Si Secretary Diokno ay sa DBM. Siya ho ang hahawak ng pera. Department of Finance, siya ho ang mangongolekta ng pera ...

REP. NOGRALES (K.). That is correct.

REP. SUAREZ. .. at mayroon kayong mga Executive agency na gagastos. I think maliwanag ho na sinabi natin, ang concern natin, absorptive capacity. Maaaring napakagalang ng programa ni Secretary on how to disburse the fund, magaling mangolekta, pagkatapos hindi naman natin magagastos nang tama sa oras. But let us go to a sensitive issue, and this is the efficiency in collection. Sa structure ba ngayon ng bagong administrasyon, do you have an alarm signal? Let us say na medyo malaki po ang shortfall against the target, will there be a cohesive action on the part of the group of the DBM, the Finance and other related offices?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, Mr. Speaker, they do it on a monthly basis. We have the BIR and the Bureau of Customs that both have targets to meet on a monthly basis, at ito po ay inirereport naman ng ating news every time, let us say, the BOC, the Customs, or the BIR falls short of its revenue targets. So, itong revenue targets ang parang parameters natin at mga red flags na ginagamit. Kapag nagsho-shortfall, then we need to push both offices to collect proper taxes.

REP. SUAREZ. Well, the Gentleman used the words "red flag." Iyong red flag po ay maraming connotation iyon.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Red flag, meaning to say, short na po.

REP. SUAREZ. Shortfall ho at hindi iyong red flag na parehong nasa isip natin, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Hindi ko po alam kung ano iyong ibang red flag, Mr. Speaker. *(Laughter)*

REP. SUAREZ. So, ang point ho natin ay mayroon ho silang cohesive program, na sinasabi na parang hindi ho naman under ni Secretary Diokno ang collection agency, na parang sasabihin po nila kay Secretary Dominguez. How will the mechanism be implemented kung, let us say na, nagkaroon po tayo ng pagkukulang sa ating mga target revenues?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, and the mechanism is actually the DBCC because they are both part of the DBCC.

REP. SUAREZ. Yes. So, nandoon na ho tayo . . .

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes.

REP. SUAREZ. . . . sa sinasabi nating mayroon ho kaming gagawin kaagad na aksyon at malalaman po natin because the root issue is inefficiency in several collection offices. I am talking about the RDO. I am talking about port of entry, hindi po ba?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Ngayon, ang isa ho nating nakitang pagkukulang, for instance, on the part of the Bureau of Customs, noong nakaraang administrasyon, mayroong nawala po tayong 3,400 containers. Natatandaan po ninyo iyon?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, I remember reading it in the newspapers. It was widely reported in the news, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Nakita na ho ba iyong 3,400 containers?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Not completely, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Hindi pa ho nakikita?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Hindi completely.

REP. SUAREZ. Alam ba ninyo, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, muntik na hong i-commission natin si David Copperfield ng Las Vegas sapagkat napakagaling po niya sa illusion. Iyon pong elepante ay kaya niyang iwala at saka isang tangke. Kaya gusto niyang malaman, papaano kaya naiwala ng Bureau of Customs ang 3,400 containers? Medyo nawala po iyong galing niya sa magic noong nangyari iyon. So, sa aking pagkakakilala at sa nakita kong kilos ng ating mga bagong pamunuan ng napaka-sensitive na offices na ito, palagay ko po naman ay hindi na ito mangyayari.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Not under the watch of the new President, Mr. Speaker. Ginawa niya rin pong krusada hindi lamang ang krusada against illegal drugs and criminality, kung hindi crusade din po niya iyong pag-eliminate ng corruption. Even before becoming President, during the campaign, sinabi na po niya na isa sa mga dapat talaga nating bantayan ay iyong mga collecting agencies natin tulad ng Bureau of Customs, pati na po ang BIR. And that is why he put very competent and honest people, halimbawa, sa BIR, si Commissioner Dulay, at si Faeldon naman sa Bureau of Customs, with marching orders for them to clean the ranks of the BIR and the Bureau of Customs, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

So, ang sinasabi ko lang ho ay iyong mga weaknesses na nakita natin noong araw, medyo matagal na rin ako dito sa trabaho kong ito. Ang isa pa hong weakness ng ahensiyang ito ay iyon pong record na nanggagaling po sa debarkation port. Let us say po na ang isang barko ay aalis sa Hong Kong, o sa China, o aalis po ng Tokyo, kapag ho nai-summarize ninyo iyong record ng umaalis at iyong presyo ng kargamento, hindi po nagta-tally sa ating tinatanggap. And the difference is alarming. Iyan po ang isa sa mga naging weaknesses noong nakaraang anim na taon. Hindi po ito na-take-up when we deliberated on the budget of the Department of Finance, not to embarrass the good Secretary, but this may be the right time for the Congress, on the part of the Minority, to relay our concern, the weakness, in terms of revenue measure. Napakalaki po ng gap

between iyong umalis at iyong dumating. Kaya, sana, there are safeguards na sinasabi natin na bantayan po natin sapagkat ito ay nangyari ng napakahabang period noong nakaraang anim na taon.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes. The good Secretary from the DBM is here. He is part of the DBCC organization, and he has given his assurance that iyong concern po ng Kinatawan will be relayed to the Department of Finance and the entire DBCC organization, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Bukas ho ay ating ihi-hear ang Commission on Audit, and I hope the position of the Minority in terms—kailan po ba ang COA?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Tomorrow.

REP. SUAREZ. Bukas?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Oo, sana iyong mapapag-usapan po natin, the point of agreement between the principal, which is the COA, the Majority, the Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, and the Minority on our part, in the interest of the members, is there should be a clear understanding of what we can do and what we cannot do. Kasi, para sa amin po, distinguished Sponsor, ang point ko po ay iyon hong ibinibigay na menu sa atin ay parang sinasabi, “This is the money that you can use.” We are not saying that we are entitled to such amount, but that we can recommend for expenditures in terms of complementing our specific districts, hindi po ba? Ang gusto ko lang hong makita, iyong leeway na kapag sinabi ng COA that this is doable and there is no culpable violation of any existing laws, sana po ay mai-relay ang message sa DBM sapagkat sila po ang gagawa ng SARO.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Sana we can have that assurance, that the Secretary of Budget and Management will be open-minded after we deliberate on the budget of the Commission on Audit. Sapagkat nagkaroon na po kasi ng mga experience tayo na, sabihin natin na nagkaroon ng abuso sa kapangyarihan ng pananalapi, at hindi naman natin inaasahan na mangyayari ulit ito. So, iyan ho ay pag-uusapan pa natin bukas. Sinasabi ko lang ngayon ang ating mungkahi o suggestion sa good Secretary Diokno, doon sa ating mapag-uusapan ng COA because at the end of the day, I think the DBM will yield to what COA will ultimately say, if this is doable or if this is not doable. Can we have that assurance from the good Secretary?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Well, the good Secretary has an open mind and he has always said that Congress exercises the power of the purse.

REP. SUAREZ. Being open-minded is not the answer to the query of the Minority, Mr. Speaker. What I am asking is, will he agree that whatever the COA will say to be doable and not doable, the DBM will yield to this?

REP. NOGRALES (K.). As long as it is not in violation of the Supreme Court's decision.

REP. SUAREZ. That is what I am saying, Mr. Speaker. What is doable and not doable will be always subject to what the law says, you know.

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Yes, of course, we will always follow what the law says, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. It is 6:15, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

On the part of the Minority, we do not have any more questions to raise on the issue of what is being requested on the budget for the Department of Budget and Management and on the General Principles and Provisions.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, distinguished Sponsor.

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

REP. NOGRALES (K.). Thank you very much, the honorable Minority Leader. *(Applause)*

REP. PIMENTEL. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Department of Budget and Management, and on the General Principles and Provisions.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). There is a joint motion from the Majority and the Minority to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Department of Budget and Management, and on the General Principles and Provisions.

Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Department of Budget and Management, and on the General Principles and Provisions is hereby terminated.

Congratulations, Secretary Diokno.

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Yes, Mr. Speaker. We would like to acknowledge the presence of the guests of

the Hon. Sarah Jane I. Elago from the KABATAAN Party-List. We have the following student leaders, namely: the College Publication and Student Council Representatives from the TUP Office of the Student Regent; the Technological University of the Philippines, Manila and Taguig Student Council; the University of the Philippines, Office of the Student Regent; the UPAIP Student Council; the UP-Manila USC; the Manila Collegian; the Philippine Collegian; the De La Salle University, University Student Government; the University of Sto. Tomas, the Flame and the Varsity; and the Mindanao State University, Office of the Student Regent, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The guests of Representative Elago will please rise to be recognized.

Welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. HERRERA-DY. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is suspended.

It was 6:17 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:40 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is resumed.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, we would like to acknowledge the presence of our guests from the Department of the Interior and Local Government: Sec. Ismael D. Sueno; Usec. for Local Government Austere A. Panadero, Usec. P/Dir. Catalino S. Cuy, Usec. Atty. Jesus V. Hinlo Jr., Usec. Atty. John R. Castriciones, and the whole DILG family. And, of course, we also have with us P/D/Gen. Ronald M. Dela Rosa, Chief of the Philippine National Police.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Please rise to be recognized.

Welcome to the House of Representatives, especially Sec. Ismael Sueno who is from my province, South Cotabato. Welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Floor Leader is recognized.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status of the Bill is that it is in the period of interpellation

and debate. I move that we resume the consideration of the budget of the Department of the Interior and Local Government including its attached agencies.

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

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Lady from the Lone District of Nueva Vizcaya, Rep. Luisa Lloren Cuaresma, to sponsor and answer questions on the budget of the DILG.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). Representative Cuaresma is recognized to sponsor and answer questions on the budget of the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

REP. CUARESMA. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and Mme. Floor Leader.

So, tonight, we will be presenting the budget of the Department of the Interior and Local Government which includes the Office of the Secretary of the DILG, the Bureau of Fire Protection, the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology or the BJMP, the Local Government Academy, the National Police Commission, the Philippine National Police, and the PPSC, under this is the PNPA That is all. There are seven agencies under the DILG, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. HERRERA-DY. I move that we recognize the Hon. Jose L. Atienza Jr. from BUHAY Party-List for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The distinguished Gentleman, Rep. Lito Atienza of BUHAY Party-List is hereby recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Floor Leader, honorable Sponsor.

Ang atin pong tatalakayin ay isa sa pinakamahalagang kagawaran ngayon, one of the most critically important departments today considering that we are facing a problem on drugs in the country. Thanks to President Duterte and his efforts. And, of course, for the continuing war on drugs waged by our Philippine National Police, thanks to General Dela Rosa and our PNP forces.

Will the Lady help us clarify certain matters on the functions of the DILG in general and the possible solutions in particular?

REP. CUARESMA. With pleasure, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po.

So, in a nutshell, how would you describe the main or rather how would you identify the main functions of the DILG?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, first of all, before answering the query of the honorable Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List, the Hon. Lito Atienza, I would like to inform my colleagues, Mr. Speaker and Your Honor, that in the budget of the DILG, there is an increase of 20 percent out of the whole budget of the DILG, which already includes all the different agencies attached to the DILG.

Now, with regard to the query of the Hon. Lito Atienza, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of salient features of the fiscal year's budget of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, and, of course, each agency has its own highlights and salient features of the program that they are supposed to implement this coming fiscal year of 2017.

Now, for example, with the DILG, Office of the Secretary, of course, problems related or attached to the local government unit. With the PNP, of course, we have like taking care of the peace and order situation in our nation. And for the Bureau of Fire Protection, of course, what is nice is, we will be able to increase particularly the support that shall be given to local government units when it comes to fire trucks and the establishment of fire stations. Aside from that, when it comes to the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, I am also glad to inform, Mr. Speaker, and Your Honor, and my colleagues, that as compared to the previous or this year's budget, for the construction of jails, we have allocated P1.7 billion as compared to this year's budget of P39.4 million. We talk, of course, of the NAPOLCOM, but when we talk of personnel salary schedule, there is really an increase because of salary standardization, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, since the Lady decided to go deep into the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology immediately, let me just ask the Lady, how many jails do we have in the country today managed by the DILG?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, there are 463 jails that are being managed by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology.

REP. ATIENZA. Yes, by all means, can Lady Sponsor get the data as much as she can as we would like to enlighten our Members and our nation as to the exact role of the Department of the Interior and Local Government in our bureaucracy? Sapagkat ang isa sa malalang problema ngayon ay ang ating mga city jails.

I can start with the city jail of Manila and you can follow it up with the city jail of Quezon City right here in Metro Manila.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes.

REP. ATIENZA. Ang mga kulungan po rito ng ating mga kalunsuran ay nagsisiksikan na. Halos hindi na nga po makahiga ang mga inmates sapagkat kulang po talaga ang kanilang mga probisyon. Ang Maynila po, for instance, iyang kulungan ng Maynila ay binuo lamang for almost a thousand inmates. E ngayon ay siguro kulang-kulang 4,000 ang detainees ang nariyan. So, you can imagine the condition of our inmates in the City Jail of Manila.

In Quezon City, it is not different. Ang mga detainees po diyan ay halos hindi na rin nabubuhay nang ayon po sa isinasaad ng ating Saligang Batas. Our Constitution provides that detainees should be given treatment that is really according to human standards. Nakapasok na po ba kayo sa city jail sa kalunsuran? I mentioned Quezon City and Manila in particular.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes. Mr. Speaker and Your Honor. Unfortunately, hindi pa ho ako nakapasok sa Quezon City Jail, ...

REP. ATIENZA. Nakita po ninyo?

REP. CUARESMA. ... but I was able to look into the...

REP. ATIENZA. Mayroon po bang plano ang Bureau of Jail Management and Penology to improve the conditions and to avoid being sued one day by any inmate in violation of the Constitution, if we continue with these conditions? Sabi nga nila, ang biruan ho diyan, kung minsan ang kanilang pagtulog ay hinahati na lang sila sa gabi sapagkat hindi po makahihiga lahat pagsapit ng gabi sapagkat wala pong sapat na higaan ang mga preso. So, mayroon po bang immediate plans that we can probably inform our people today in this continuing dialogue?

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. In fact, I was just informed earlier that it is a good thing that the Department of Budget and Management allocated a larger portion of the fund coming from—allotted for the DILG the amount of P1.7 billion for the construction of BJMP. But unfortunately, when it comes to Quezon City, there is a proposal—because there is already a lot donated by the city government, two hectares, at the Payatas. And they are in need really of P1.2 million, but unfortunately, the amount allotted for BJMP is just this much amount.

The amount for BJMP shows that there is an increase of 38 percent, that is amounting to like P11 point something million. And what is good in next year's budget is that from P39.4 million, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, it was increased to so much percentage. If I have to compute, from P39.4 million, it was increased to P1.7 billion, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Though, no matter how much we—the DILG would want to improve, particularly those stated, Mr. Speaker, by the Hon. Lito Atienza, but the problem now really lies on the funding.

REP. ATIENZA. Tungkol po naman sa Maynila, mayroon po ba silang plano na baguhin ang kalagayan diyan o pababayaang na lang natin sila sa kanilang kalagayan ngayon? I was hoping I would not concentrate on the city of Manila lest I might be accused of having a parochial orientation during the interpellation. But Manila, being the center of the country and the capital city, we must address the problem of our inmates at the city jail.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. And I know, for a fact, that the city jail of Manila, under the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology and the Department of the Interior and Local Government in the past, already constructed an alternative new city jail for the city, somewhere in Bicutan, if I am not mistaken. Tama po ba iyon? Iyon po ay 15 taon na yatang nakaraan. Ngayon po ba ay ginagamit na iyon o iyon po naman ay pinayagan na lamang mabulok?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, iyon pong sinasabi ninyong jail sa Bicutan, puno na rin po iyon. At may sinasabi nga kanina during the pre-assembly na may lot naman tayo na kung saan tayo puwedeng magpatayo. But iyon nga po ang problema natin is your funding, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. But anyway, we will try to give priority to this one in the event that we be able to source out funds, lalung-lalo na ho ang Manila, Quezon City. Kanina ho may nagsabi rin po dito sa Malabon na ganyan din po ang sitwasyon sa Navotas, I mean.

REP. ATIENZA. Kaya nga po, iyon po bang city jail na binuo roon, na ginastusan po ng daan-daang milyong ay nagagamit na o kung hindi naman ay pinamamahayan na ng mga kung sinuman?

REP. CUARESMA. Hindi po. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, iyon po bang sa Bicutan na sinasabi po ninyo ay ginagamit po at puno na rin po.

REP. ATIENZA. Sino po ang gumagamit, Mr. Speaker?

REP. CUARESMA. Manila City Jail, iyon hong ...

REP. ATIENZA. Ginagamit ...

REP. CUARESMA. ... ito po ay annex po ng Manila City Jail, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. Ginagamit ng city jail ng Maynila? Iyon po ba ang nais ninyong paniwalaan ko?

REP. CUARESMA. Mga inmates po ng Manila City Jail. Ito po iyong annex bale po, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Ilan po ang nakakulong doon sa bagong city jail na itinayo ng DILG sometime in the 19 or 2000 or 2001, fifteen years ago? Ilan po ang nakakulong doon ngayon?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, mga isang libo na po ang nakatira doon po sa Bicutan City Jail.

REP. ATIENZA. Hindi ko po narinig iyong figure.

REP. CUARESMA. One thousand po.

REP. ATIENZA. One thousand inmates?

REP. CUARESMA. One thousand plus po.

REP. ATIENZA. Tiyak po ba kayo diyan sa sinasabi ninyo? Sapagkat I can double check on that immediately.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, siguro po, sabay po tayo. Inspeksyunin po natin, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, iyon pong sa Bicutan City Jail po.

REP. ATIENZA. Doon po naman sa city jail proper eh bakit po naiwan pa iyon? Ang plano noon ay ililipat na pong lahat iyon. Therefore, we did not accomplish anything. You constructed a new building in a big space with a lot of money and now you are telling me that you are now servicing 1,000 inmates. And how many do you have in Quiapo, Manila?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the one in Bicutan could only accommodate that much. In fact, marami na ho masyado. Masikip na po. And the one that we have here in Manila is already, there are 4,000 inmates housed in this jail po dito sa may ...

REP. ATIENZA. This is what I cannot understand and much less accept that the Department of the Interior and Local Government spends a lot money, builds alternative new premises for the inmates of Manila City

Jail and then limits its size to 1,000 inmates and leaves behind 4,000 more languishing in the city jail of Manila in Quiapo. That does not make sense, Mr. Speaker. I do not know if anyone would accept that as an intelligent way of addressing the problem. Ako ay naniniwala na ang panibagong pamunuan ng Department of the Interior and Local Government ngayon ay hindi po papayag sa ganyang klaseng sistema. The honorable Sponsor was a former Governor, the Secretary of the Interior today was a former Governor and a former Mayor. Yours truly was a former Mayor, so nagkakaintindihan po tayo. Subalit, ...

REP. CUARESMA. Yes.

REP. ATIENZA. ... hindi natin dapat tanggapin na ang gobyerno ay ganyan magtrabaho. Gagamit ng daan-daang milyong salapi to solve the problem and yet create another bigger one.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I think we have a new administration. And I think, with the leadership now of the DILG Secretary, together in partnership, of course, with the local government unit, maybe we can improve the situation of our inmates in the different jails in the country.

REP. ATIENZA. May we get an up-to-date report on this particular issue, Mr. Speaker. We would not think twice about filing the necessary charges, if necessary, if warranted. But we need the data now from the present management of the jails particularly in the city jail of Manila because they are the ones who are in control of the records.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Under the present Executive order of the President, now that we have freedom of information, direction for the Executive offices, we are demanding for this particular report so that we can take definitive action on the conditions existing in the city jail of Manila. Iyon po ay nais ko lamang gawing sample natin para mapag-usapan ang mga city jails sa bansa. Gaya ng sinabi ko sa inyo, there is a continuing violation of the constitutional guarantee that every inmate should be given humane conditions. Ang kundisyon po sa city jail ng Maynila ngayon ay hindi po natin matatawag na humane.

Will the present management of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology agree with this Representation to say we have deplorable conditions now in the city jail of Manila?

REP. CUARESMA. Yes. Mr. Speaker, we will be furnishing the Gentleman, as he requested, the needed documents, particularly in the Manila City Jail. Kung

puwede po siguro, one time, we personally visit ang sa Bicutan, Mr. Speaker. Through the help of the Hon. Lito Atienza, we can really come up with, if not a solution but some sort of ideas on how we will be able to improve the situation of the inmates, particularly those jails inside the National Capital Region.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, we are taking up these issues for the benefit of the new Secretary of the Interior, knowing very well that he would not want to perpetuate, definitely not continue a policy that is in violation of the Constitution. Kaya hihintayin ko po ang report on the Bicutan Jail para naman magamit nating take-off point.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, pagtulung-tulungan natin gumawa ng paraan upang magampanan ngayon ng Department of the Interior ang tungkulin nila. Tungkulin po iyan. Hindi ito pribilehiyo o hindi maliit na bagay kundi tungkuling mahalaga ng Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, kaya ayusin natin ang ating mga city jail.

Ngayon po ba, Mr. Speaker, with the ongoing campaign on the drug situation in the country, would the Sponsor say that the city jails today are even more crowded than a year ago?

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. We admit that there is an increase. In fact, there is a 59-percent increase.

REP. ATIENZA. Mabuti naman at nagkakaisa tayo na hindi naman dapat itatwa. Punung-puno ang mga city jail ngayon.

REP. CUARESMA. Opo.

REP. ATIENZA. Dahil, tama lang, hinuhuli ang mga may kinalaman sa droga. Ang ating mga kulungan, kapag hindi natin aayusin, talagang magiging problema iyan. Kaya ko binigyan ng diin ang katanungan na tanggapin natin na punung-puno na ngayon ng ating mga kababayang nagkamali ng landas at nakukulong ngayon sa mga city jail.

Mayroon po bang paraan na nakikita ang kasalukuyang Jail Management Bureau Director to alleviate, if not solve the problem?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, one problem that we have to settle is a donation for the lot, or maybe if, like the national government or the LGU, can provide an amount for the purchase of the lot, siguro malaking bagay iyon.

On our level now, siguro what we have to do is to increase the allocation for the DILG so that we also can increase, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the amount that shall

be utilized for the improvement of the different jails, not only in the National Capital Region, but all over the country, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. Mayroon po kaming panukala na kung tatanggapin ng ating kagalang-galang na Sekretarya ng Kagawaran ay maaari nating pagtulungan as immediate means of improving the conditions in the city jails, particularly in Metro Manila.

Mayroon po kaming suggestion. Gumawa tayo ng immediate census ng mga nakakulong at naka-detain sa mga city jail. Tingnan po natin ang mga kaso nila. At this point, I am willing to take a position. Marami sa mga inmate diyan ay hindi naasikaso ang kanilang usapin sa korte sa bagal ng takbo ng ating criminal justice system. Marami diyan ay minor offense ang kanilang ipinagkakulong, subalit dahil hindi nadedesisyunan ang kanilang kaso, nananatiling nakakulong. Ang gobyerno pa ngayon ang nagkakaproblema.

I would like to invite the Bureau Director and the DILG, in general, to note that we can craft a resolution, a House bill, and address it to the President, that maybe he can issue a general amnesty for all those who have served beyond the expected punishment for their acts. Palabasin na po natin sila para lumuwag ang ating mga city jail. Marami diyan ay minor offenses, pangkaraniwang krimen lang, nakulong dahil walang abogado at wala namang umaasikaso. Ang bagal-bagal po ng ating hustisya. Kung ayaw pa nating tanggapin iyan, talaga namang may problema tayong lalala pa. With the slow wheels of justice grinding, we can help by allowing those who have already overserved the possible punishment for their acts to be released back to their families. In the same manner, maluluwagan po naman ang ating mga kulungan. Kung mayroon nang census ang Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, hihingan ko sila ng report on that matter. Kung wala naman, panahon na siguro para gumawa tayo. Simple lang po naman iyan.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, in fact, the BJMP already has a database. Mayroon na po silang database in cooperation with the Supreme Court and the DOJ. Kasi doon sa amin sa lalawigan ng Nueva Vizcaya, when I was a Governor, may mga nakakulong na wala naman palang kaso. That is why it is a good thing that the BJMP has a database now which is already in coordination with the DOJ and the Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Kung ganoon po, kami ay nakikiusap, bigyan ng record primarily sa Metro Manila.

REP. CUARESMA. Opo, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, the suggestion of this Representation actually has a nationwide coverage. Lahat dapat ng mga city jail—sa probinsiya ninyo sa Nueva Vizcaya, sa probinsiya sa Davao, all over the country ...

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, all over, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. ... should be experiencing the same study, the same census, case to case, detainee by detainee, at tingnan po natin. Ang nahuli na nagnanakaw ng manok sa probinsya ay nakakulong na ng tatlong taon, baka naman puwede na siya pakawalan.

Ang drug-related cases, ihihiwalay po natin iyan. Ang mga may kinalaman sa droga, as we have always stood pat on this philosophy, we should not even give them any chance to go out and peddle more drugs in the communities. Pero ang mga pangkaraniwang kriminal na naligaw lang ng kanilang landas dahil sa pangangailangan, maaari na siguro nating pakawalan. Sumasang-ayon po ba ang ating Director doon sa pilosopiyang iyon, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, we will provide a copy of the software, para at least po, and attached to the software are the reports, pati ang database. Gusto ko ring pag-aralan ito so that, together maybe, we can find out some ways on how to really improve on our jail problems.

REP. ATIENZA. At this point, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, I pose a question that has not been answered yet. Is the Director of the present city jail management in agreement, at least, to the idea that we should try and liberate our present jail accommodations with those who are arrested or detained by the campaign of the President.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ...

REP. ATIENZA. Sang-ayon po ba kayo?

REP. CUARESMA. ... definitely.

REP. ATIENZA. So sumasang-ayon po kayo?

REP. CUARESMA. Opo, sumasang-ayon po kami, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. We appreciate that. In other words, we see a solution, an improvement to what we have pointed out that our jails are crowded, and it will be more overcrowded as General Bato and the PNP continues its war against drugs which we appreciate, except for the mysterious killings.

We, in the Minority, are all fully supportive of that campaign. Ang mga hindi maipaliwanag na mga pangyayari ng karahasan at pagpatay sa loob ng tahanan, sa harap mismo ng mga pamilya, iyon po ay hindi namin masasang-ayunan. Anyway, we continue this campaign

and there will be more inmates and detainees. Let us prepare for them by also taking a look at how we can decongest the present city jails.

We thank the good Director for his open-mindedness on the issue.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Shifting to another matter, Mr. Speaker, ang functions po naman ng DILG on fire prevention. Nandito po ba ang ating pinakahepe ng Bureau of Fire Protection?

REP. CUARESMA. Nandito po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ATIENZA. Sa ngayon po ba, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, lahat ng fire prevention stations all over the country are still under the Department of the Interior and Local Government?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ang isang prioridad ng ating DILG Secretary in the person of Secretary Sueno is to improve the BFP, because not all LGUs have a fire station and fire trucks. That is why in this year's budget, mayroon po tayong na-allocate for the purchase of fire trucks, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, including the construction of fire stations and additional personnel for the Bureau of Fire Protection.

REP. ATIENZA. Tinanong ko po kanina, Mr. Speaker, isang basic question. Are all the fire districts still under the DILG or with the Fire Prevention Bureau?

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker, as mentioned earlier the Bureau of Fire Protection is still under the DILG.

REP. ATIENZA. Sila po ba ay naniniwala na tama ang sistema at pangangalaga ng ating mga barangay laban sa sunog, napangangalagaan ang ating fire districts sa ilalim ng BFP?

REP. CUARESMA. With the priority, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, that shall be given by the new leadership of the DILG, we hope that by next year, we will really be able to construct additional fire stations, aside from the allocation of salaries among the additional recruits for firemen, and the purchase of fire trucks to be distributed to the different municipalities that have fire stations but do not have a fire truck.

REP. ATIENZA. Ako po ay lumaki sa Maynila. Nakita ko bilang isang bata ang magagandang fire stations sa lungsod. Isa sa pinakamagandang tanawin

ay ang mga bumberong mabilis tumugon sa sunog sapagkat maayos ang kanilang tirahan habang sila ay on-duty. I will not forget the impression that some of our most dedicated public servants are the firefighters of the city. But time has already passed and all these beautiful fire stations, which should form part of the heritage of Manila, ay napabaya na po. Karamihan dito ay nangangabulok na at nanggigitata ang hitsura. Nandoon ang mga nagkalat na kariton; nandoon ang illegally parked vehicles sa harap mismo ng fire station, na hindi ko malaman saan dumadaan ang bumbero kapagka emergency na ang tawag.

Mapalad tayo sapagkat sa kabila ng kakulangang ito at mga pangyayaring hindi tama, nakatutugon pa rin po ang ating Bureau of Fire Protection sa mga sunog na nangyayari sa tulong po ng civilian fire volunteers.

To give you an example, in Manila, there used to be more than 40, almost 50 fire trucks. Today, Manila has probably no less than 15 firetrucks. So where are the firefighters coming from? They are all coming from the fire volunteers of the different districts. Kung wala po ang fire volunteers, I would say, we would be helpless against the threat of destruction of any fire incident. Nangyayari ito sa iba't ibang lungsod whether you are in Mandaluyong, San Juan or in any other city.

Mapalad tayo na mayroong volunteerism sa ating pag-uugali bilang Pilipino. Handang maglingkod ang civilian sa isang trabaho ng gobyerno. Kaya sasang-ayon ba tayo na, siguro ay panahon na, tingnan natin, epektibo ba ang sistemang ito o maybe we should now take a serious look at decentralizing firefighting in our system?

I cannot see the fire department of New York, the fire department of San Francisco to be under any office of the federal government. Hindi po pupuwede iyon. Kailangan ang fire department ng New York City ay sa ilalim ng Alkalde ng New York. Ang fire department ng San Francisco ay sa ilalim ng tanggapan ng Alkalde ng San Francisco City. Dito sa atin, ang fire department ng Quezon City ay sa ilalim ng tanggapan ng Bureau of Fire Protection Management under the national supervision of the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

Kaawa-awa naman po ang ating mga bumbero. Hindi sila nabibigyan ng sapat na suporta sa kanilang kabayanihan. Iyan po ang aking tinutumbok. This is the golden opportunity to talk about these problems because we cannot just continue spending money, every year deliberating on the budget of the fire prevention bureau but the service and the effectiveness of firefighting is not improving.

Again, I would like to give credit to the fire volunteers because they are a big help without which we would probably have a problem already in our hands. I would like the Sponsor to know, we are looking into

possible ways and means of improving this. I hope those who are now holding power within this present government will be open-minded on this issue, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, this is the first time that the Bureau of Fire Protection has a program of allocating fire trucks, particularly in the provinces, because there are areas in the different LGUs that do not have even a fire truck. That is why in the 2017 Budget, we will be purchasing fire trucks that shall be given to the different LGUs, particularly to LGUs with a fire station but without a fire truck.

It is so unfortunate, as you have mentioned, Mr. Speaker, and Your Honor, that in the city of Manila—we understand that the different LGUs are supporting the different needs of the Bureau of Fire Protection in their respective localities. What is nice in this new administration, through the leadership of our Secretary of DILG, since this Bureau of Fire Protection is one of his programs—improvement or upgrading of the BFP is one of his priority programs. We hope that in the years to come, through his leadership, we will be able to really improve the services that shall be given by the Bureau of Fire Protection.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, magkano po ba ang inilalaan natin para sa pamatay-sunog sa ating Budget for the DILG for 2017?

REP. CUARESMA. In fact, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. ATIENZA. Just give us a round figure, honorable Speaker.

REP. CUARESMA. I would just like to inform Mr. Speaker and Your Honor, that the Bureau of Fire Protection was allotted the amount of P12.977 million, that is an increase of—I mean, as compared to 2016 budget, there is an increase of 14 percent for BFP because of the construction of the Bureau's additional fire stations.

REP. ATIENZA. Magkano po diyan sa total fund na iyan ang gagamitin sa karagdagang gamit katulad po ng additional fire trucks or firefighting equipment? Ang mabigyan lahat ng bumbero ng sapat na gamit upang ang buhay naman nila ay maligtas sa pagtugon sa sunog, at siguro ay mai-adjust ang kanilang suweldo nang karapat-dapat.

Mayroon po ba tayong pondong ganoon?

REP. CUARESMA. Actually, Mr. Speaker, and Your Honor, the number of fire trucks that shall be purchased from the 2017 Budget is for 34 units of fire

trucks, but from the Automatic Appropriation, there will be 76 units additional fire trucks that shall be purchased. Mr. Speaker, and Your Honor. Aside from this, from the Automatic Appropriation, there will be 70 units of fire stations that shall be constructed, and from the regular fund for 2017, there will be 40 units of fire stations that shall be constructed, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. At a glance, Mr. Speaker, we will say that the funds that the Bureau will be getting would not be enough or sufficient to be more effective in their efforts.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Anyway, ...

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, and Your Honor, ...

REP. ATIENZA. ... if we can increase it, I would be proposing to increase it, but that is the job of the DBM, but I am willing to support any effort to improve ...

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. ... and increase the budgets of the Bureau of Fire Protection, and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology because these are two bureaus under the DILG which badly need government attention, na taun-taon na lamang, ito ay de-kaon na nakikita natin sa libro natin. Pero iyong nakikita po at nararanasan ng ating mga mamamayan sa labas, kapag nagkakaroon po ng tunay na gusot sa mga city jail, sa ating mga sunog, ay hindi po sapat ang ating kakayahan.

Again, salamat sa mga volunteers na mga tumutulong sa ating mga kulungan. Salamat sa mga fire volunteers na tumutulong sa sunog, natutulungan ang ating bumbero, pero nakakahiya pong ipagpatuloy nating ganito na lang tayo nang ganito na wala tayong solusyon. Humanap ng paraan, gumawa ng bagong kulungan, 15 years ago, sa Maynila, hindi pa nagagamit, nabubulok na, at hindi po nagbago ang kalagayan sa city jail of Manila.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker and Your Honor, ...

REP. ATIENZA. ... on these three issues, I am confident that the new Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, because of his experience, will be more in control of the direction of these very important bureaus.

Let me shift to another more important element.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, but before the Gentleman

will shift to another, I would like to thank, Mr. Speaker, the honorable Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List, the Hon. Jose "Lito" L. Atienza Jr., for the support that he shall be providing for the programs of the Bureau of Fire and the Bureau of Jail.

REP. ATIENZA. As we have mentioned, we consider the Department of the Interior as one of the most critical, important, essential, basic, and fundamental in our service to our people. Kapag hindi natin inayos, palagay ko ay mawawalan ng saysay lahat iyong budget na ating pinag-uusapan.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, that is it, Mr. Speaker and Your Honor. Though how much the DILG would like to implement a lot of programs of the different agencies attached to the DILG, but the problem really is the funding, because this is just the amount, the amount of P148 billion was the only amount allocated by the DBM. Once again, I am so grateful that the Hon. Lito Atienza is, siya po ay nag-o-offer po. He is offering his services and initiative para po madagdagan ang pondo po ng DILG in the years to come.

REP. ATIENZA. We appreciate the position of the Lady on these issues, and her agreeing that we see a problem and we should act on it accordingly.

Now, shifting to the most important function of the DILG, I would not touch on the local government supervision anymore, as I have said, the Lady was a Governor, our Secretary was a Governor, we in this Congress, many of us came from the LGUs, so we know the different situations and conditions where the DILG can be of help to our local government units. But, on the matter of maintenance of peace and order, could I get a definite answer from the Lady as to her interpretation of the DILG's role in our peace and order campaign.

Susundan ko na po ng mas related and somehow connected question. Ang Philippine National Police po ba ay nasa pangangalaga, pagmamaneho at liderato ng DILG? Sila po ba ang kagawaran na may kinalaman po sa pagmamaneho ng ating kapulisan?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker and Your Honor, yes po.

REP. ATIENZA. Ako ay nagpapasalamat sa ating kagalang-galang na Kinatawan ng Nueva Vizcaya sa kaniyang malinaw na pagsagot sa isang simpleng tanong. Sino po ba ang aasahan natin sa pangangalaga ng kapayapapaan at kaayusan? Ang sabi po niya, PNP. Tama po, at ako ay sumasang-ayon sa inyo, 1,000 percent o 1 million percent, sapagkat iyon po ay isinasaad ng batas. Subalit dito sa hapag na ito, dito po sa Kongresong ito, noong isang Kongreso,

ang lakas ng loob noong DILG Secretary na nakaupo diyan, at noong nagdedepensa ng kanyang budget na sabihin ang PNP raw ay hindi sa ilalim ng DILG. You can check the records on that. We debated no less and I was trying to stress, you cannot deny the fact because it is so mandated by law that the PNP is under the direct control and supervision of the DILG. Salamat po naman na ang ating Sponsor ngayon at ang panibagong liderato ng Philippine National Police ay tumatanggap ng kanilang makabuluhang tungkulin na sila ay nagtratrabaho kasama ng kabuuan ng Kagawaran ng DILG. Sila ay nabibilang sa hanay ng mga binibigyan ng direksyon ng ating Sekretaryo ng Department of the Interior. Sapagkat doon sa ganoong klaseng attitude nakakakita po tayo ng solusyon sa mga problema natin ngayon.

Dahil sa nakaraang administrasyon, ayaw nilang tanggapin ang katotohanan, anong nangyari? Lumaganap ang droga sa ilalim po ng ilong ng Sekretaryo ng Interior noong mga panahong iyon. Alam niya ang nangyayari marahil, alam ng Kapulisan ang nangyayari subalit wala silang ginawa sapagkat sabi nila wala silang pakialam. That was the height of insensitivity, honorable Sponsor. Our country went almost in total darkness with the drug problem because the government then did not even lift a finger to prevent the growth of the drug menace in the Philippines. Iyon po ang sasabihin kong tahasan, i-check ninyo ang records natin. Ang ating debate noon ay nagmukha tayong tanga pare-pareho na ayaw tanggapin ng gobyerno ang tungkulin na ipinipilit naman ng ating Saligang Batas. Kaya ngayon po naman ay sasabihin kong palagay ko ay maganda ang ating hinaharap. We know the chain of command and we know their responsibilities, as I am sure each and every policeman in the country realizes that one is part of the organization called the Philippine National Police under the direct supervision of the Department of the Interior and Local Government. Sang-ayon po ba ang ating honorable Sponsor doon sa aking naturan na iyon? Because this is another record now being put in our books in the Congress of the Philippines.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker and Your Honor, I agree with your statement. Kitang-kita naman po nating lahat sa ngayon the changes through the leadership, of course, of our Secretary of DILG and our Chief PNP in the person of General Ronald Dela Rosa. And I was telling, Mr. Speaker and Your Honor, in fact, General Dela Rosa that with his accomplishment, with just more than a hundred days as Chief PNP, we do appreciate the accomplishment of the PNP, Mr. Speaker and Your Honor. I know that even the BUHAY Party-List Representative, at times really is very appreciative of the performance of the PNP through the leadership, of course, of Chief PNP Dela Rosa.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, palagay ko po ay mas malinaw ang ating direksyon ngayon sa bansa sapagkat tinatanggap ng mga dapat tumanggap ng kanilang tungkulin na isinasaad ng ating Saligang Batas, ng ating Local Government Code at nitong budget proposal na ito. Ako ay nagtataka talaga na papaano tumanggi iyong nakaraang gobyerno. And again, I will reiterate if the drug problem today has already escalated to the magnitude that we are almost called a drug country ay dahil po sa kapabayaan noong mga namuno sa nakaraan. Hindi po marahil sa pagkukulang ng mga namahala or ng ating mga kapulisan, kundi iyong mga namahala sa kapulisan. Where there is a denial of responsibility while they were asking for the same, the same authority and the same budget support, the problem has exacerbated with no immediate attention given by the PNP nor by the DILG during those years. Salamat sa Diyos tapos na po iyon, iyong panahong iyon.

Madilim na po iyong panahong iyon at ngayon ay may bago na tayong sinag ng pag-asa, na inaasahan natin na ito ay magiging mas epektibo dahil dito sa fundamental issue ng budget deliberation; na dito sa Kongreso ng Pilipinas, akalain ninyong ang lakas ng loob sabihing wala silang magagawa sa pulis dahil hindi raw sa ilalim nila iyon. Talagang kapag naaalala ko po iyon ay naiisip ko na pong lahat iyong nangyayari sa Bilibid, nangyayari po ngayon sa problema natin at kalagayan ng ating mga barangay sa droga, at ako ay nagpapasalamat sa Diyos.

Bagama't itong lingkod na ito ay hindi po tumulong sa ating Pangulo noong siya ay kandidato—iba po ang aking tinulungan, hindi po ako bumoto sa kaniya sapagkat mayroon po akong ibang ibinoto—pero ako ay natutuwa at nagpapasalamat sa Panginoon, siya ay dulot sa atin na dapat nating tanggapin. Iyan ay biyaya ng Panginoong Diyos sapagkat mahal tayo ng ating Panginoon. Hindi Niya pinayagang tayo ay magpatuloy sa landas na walang pupuntahan, na mayroon tayo ngayong all-out war on the number one destroyer of the family, destroyer of the life of any individual, and destroyer of our nation. Kung hindi po siguro nanalo itong taong ito ay, kung ang nanalo po ay iyong dati, naku, eh tuluy-tuloy po, happy days will continue in our nation. Tuluy-tuloy din po iyong sistema ng kabulukan. Buti na lang po, ginusto ng Panginoon na sila ay hindi umabot sa nilamang noong nanalo sa kabila ng lahat ng kanilang pagsisikap, na palagay ko ay kasama na iyong mga drug lords ng Bilibid sa kanilang pagsisikap manalo iyong taong iyon. Hindi po nanalo.

I thank God for the blessings that we have and we will continue therefore to support while we fiscalize in whatever way we can. If we see any wrongdoing, we will point it out. But if we see that this government is doing it right, we, at BUHAY Party-List, we, in the opposition, will be part of the solution.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker and Your Honor, maganda po iyong inyong sinasabi.

REP. ATIENZA. Again, let me stress the point, I am interpellating not because I doubt the capacity of the leadership of the DILG, no. I believe in Secretary Sueño and his experiences, and his vast knowledge on how to do good at the DILG. I am doing this interpellation to stress the fact: we have to work very hard, we have to put those who were part of the problem and who caused the problem not only in court. I long for that day that they will be the ones behind bars. Abutin po naman sila sana ng mabagal nating hustisya at makulong ang dapat makulong.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we end our questioning as we would like to give the Lady a respite from our questions which I am sure she was able to answer very clearly. Salamat po ng marami sa inyo at sa inyong pasensya.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, and the Hon. Lito Atienza, maraming salamat po at, I am so grateful for all the appreciation that you are giving to the performance of, not only of the DILG but as well as our PNP and, of course, the President of the Philippines. The more I know that our co-servants in the government from DILG the more I will strive and work harder for the betterment of the people or for the betterment of the whole community and the people of the Republic of the Philippines.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend session for a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is suspended.

It was 7:39 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:40 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The session is resumed.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Minority Leader, Cong. Danilo Suarez, for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez). The

distinguished Gentleman from Quezon, the Minority Leader Suarez, is recognized.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Will the Distinguished Sponsor be willing to yield to some minor clarificatory questions? May I know from the leadership of the DILG, on the budget proposed for 2017, is there any allocation of benefits to the local government, particularly, barangay officials, elected or appointed.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, is the question of the Minority Leader about the support to the barangays?

REP. SUAREZ. The barangay officials are under the DILG.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, but I think the support that has been allocated in the 2017 budget is only for training in the barangay level, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. For the information of the distinguished Lady from Nueva Vizcaya, this Representation, in the last three Congresses, filed a bill seeking benefits, retirement, and separation pay for barangay officials, both elected and appointed.

In the meantime that it is not yet properly legislated and funded, my question is, does the proposed budget for 2017 give somewhat a little appreciation or benefit to our elected officials and appointed officials in far-flung barangays?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker and Mr. Majority Leader, I think, in the Budget for 2017, we know for a fact that the election for barangays is next year pero wala pong nailagay.

REP. SUAREZ. So, wala po tayong nakalagay na ...

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, wala po.

REP. SUAREZ. Kung sakaling may mamatay tayong kapitan, condolence na lang? Ganoon po?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, iyon pong support that shall be given to those kinds of situation comes from the DBM, as per information given me by the DILG.

REP. SUAREZ. So, ang sinasabi po ninyo ay iyong tulong na maaaring ibigay sa mga nangangailangan nating nagkakasakit or naaaksidenteng barangay officials, both elected and appointed, ay manggagaling sa local government units.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, it will not come from the local government unit.

REP. SUAREZ. Wala?

REP. CUARESMA. It is only kapag namatay iyong barangay official, that there is support coming from ...

REP. SUAREZ. GSIS.

REP. CUARESMA. It is a cash incentive coming from the Department of Budget and Management but it is not lodged in the ...

REP. SUAREZ. Your Honor, we have two million elected and appointed officials. Ibig sabihin, sa hinihinging budget ng DILG para sa 2017 wala ho tayong binibigay na benepisyong man lang? Wala ho namang sweldo iyan kung hindi per diem at kung anu-anong allowances.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned earlier, the funding for, like for example, death benefits for a barangay official is not lodged in the budget of the DILG but ...

REP. SUAREZ. Let me rephrase my—I will make this a suggestion to the leadership of the DILG.

This Representation would like to suggest that the DILG leadership, on the proposed budget next year, because this was not crafted by the incumbent Secretary, iba po naman ang nag-prepare nitong budget na ito....

REP. CUARESMA. That is for 2018 po?

REP. SUAREZ. ...maaari po bang sa susunod na budget, na kayo na po ang magdra-draft under the Duterte Administration, hanggang wala po tayong nile-legislate na measure na mabibigyan ng insurance, separation pay, o retirement ang mga barangay officials, both elected or appointed, ay mabigyan naman ng kaunting tulong sila sa 2018 Budget. I am talking a year and a half from now.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we take note po of that recommendation.

REP. SUAREZ. So, kino-commit po ng leadership ng DILG na maglalagay po tayo? Okay.

Alam po ninyo ang kasaysayan naman natin, kayo po ay naging gobernador, iyong mga tanod natin, nag-aawat na, siya pa ang nasasaksak, wala pong tumutulong. Hindi po ba? Kaya, ang akin pong pakiusap, huwag naman natin silang pabayaang sapagkat ito pong lingkod barangay na ito, ito po iyong kapag gabi ay sinusundo sa bahay ang kapitan, may nag-aaway, may may sakit. Ito ho ang mga naghahanap ng maaarkilahang tricycle o jeep para madala iyong mga ka-barangay niya sa ospital. Napakalaki ng paglilingkod nila na hindi natin nabibigyan ng tamang tulong.

Can I go to another issue? Mr. Secretary, distinguished Sponsor, ano po ang ideal number sa ating bansa ng police to citizen ratio? Ano po ang ideal? Ilan po dapat? Sa mga ibang bansa, ano po ang ideal sa kanilang pagsusuri? Ilan po ang dapat pulis sa bawat mamamayan?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minority Leader, the ideal is supposedly 1:500, but ...

REP. SUAREZ. One is to ...

REP. CUARESMA. It is 1:500 po.

REP. SUAREZ. Isang pulis sa 500 tao?

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker, by law po. Ito po iyong ...

REP. SUAREZ. Iyon po ang ideal o iyon po ang ...

REP. CUARESMA. Yes po. But the actual po is, the police to population ratio is 1:561.

REP. SUAREZ. Ngayon po tayo sa ating kasalukuyang panahon, ilan po ang ratio ng ating pulis sa bawat mamamayan?

REP. CUARESMA. It is 1:561 po.

REP. SUAREZ. 560?

REP. CUARESMA. One po—1:561, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. So, malapit ka na po doon sa ideal ratio na 1:500.

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, that is why in next year's budget, there is funding for an additional 10,000 new policemen, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. Nagkaroon tayo ng proliferation ng issue ng drugs. Sa amin pong lalawigan ay 63 percent ng inmates and counting, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, 63-percent of their cases are drug-related. Samakatuwid, iyon pong, gaya ng sinabi ni Congressman Atienza, hindi po tayo nakahanda at hindi natin inaasahan itong surge ng number ng drug problem. Kaya, gaya ng sinabi ni Lito, Congressman Atienza, we are not prepared. So, talaga hong nagkakaroon tayo ng unusual number of inmates kaya iyon pong ating kulungan ay hindi po handa.

So, ang tanong ko ho ay ito: gaya din ng sinabi ni Congressman Atienza, napakarami pong nakakulong na hindi pa nabibigyan ng trial. Habang walang trial iyan, nakakulong iyan. So, can we ask the leadership of the DILG to come up with a working relation or working

arrangement with the Department of Justice, na kung maaari ay bilis-bilisan naman nang kaunti ang mga trials sapagkat kawawa din naman iyong mga nakakulong.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minority Leader, in fact, as I have mentioned earlier, they have a database. Pero kung minsan, ang problema po, iyon ating hong mga courts po, kulang po ang mga judges.

REP. SUAREZ. Hindi. Iyon pong database ay nandiyan na ho iyan. Iyong database is ...

REP. CUARESMA. Opo.

REP. SUAREZ. ... iyan na ho ang actual.

REP. CUARESMA. Opo.

REP. SUAREZ. Ang sinasabi lang ho natin ay sobra po ang dami ng inmates ninyo sapagkat iyong users ay hinuhuli po. Tama po ba ako, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. CUARESMA. Opo.

REP. SUAREZ. Users are also being put to jail, hindi po ba?

REP. CUARESMA. Sa ngayon ho, hindi pa ho lahat ng users, Mr. Speaker, ay nakulong.

REP. SUAREZ. Ang hinuhuli lang po ay user-pusher.

REP. CUARESMA. Iyong pong mga user po, usually ang target po natin ay sa rehabilitation naman po sila.

REP. SUAREZ. Anyway, I will go to another subject.

REP. CUARESMA. Iyon pong mga nahuhuli, iyon po iyong mga nakukulong, but those users na nag-surrender po, iyon po ang hindi po nakukulong, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. May I know the assets of the Philippine National Police right now? Can they come up with an assessment and give comfort to the Members of the House right now to say that the assets of PNP are capable of handling both urban and rural warfare? Are they prepared? Can the Sponsor ask the good General Bato the question of the Minority, whether the PNP right now is capable of confronting issues on both urban and rural warfare? It is a simple question answerable by “yes” or “no.”

REP. CUARESMA. Okay, Mr. Speaker and Minority Leader, I think our PNP is ...

REP. SUAREZ. So, we are prepared and we are ready?

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, I think so, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. I think the good General knows what I mean by close quarters in terms of urban area.

So, my last question is, are they comfortable with their communication gears? Nakikita po natin sa mga pelikula, iyong mga pulis, hindi po ba ang bibilis nila. Kapag may operation, ang mga bibig, may microphone. Do we have that capability? And with our SWAT team, are we fully armed and equipped for emergency situations like that?

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker and Majority Leader, in fact, we are equipping the DILG, and our PNP are equipping our Special Action Forces.

REP. SUAREZ. We are beefing-up, we are trying to improve further,...

REP. CUARESMA. SWAT pala, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. In your proposed Capital Outlay, is there an allocation for such programs?

REP. CUARESMA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SUAREZ. My last issue—because I think everybody is itching to go home and I have the marching signal from the Majority Leader, who is giving me dagger looks—I would like to address to the DILG and the good general, General Dela Rosa: iyon po kasing gambling is a way of life as far as Filipinos are concerned. Halimbawa po, iyan po iyong sabong.

Ang amin lang pong pakiusap, in the event that there will be a game that will be allowed to be played, can we just be assured that three conditions will be there: number one, it is fair; it is honest; and it is equitable. Meaning, iyon pong bettor na mamamayan ay may pag-asang manalo dahil sa siya po ay suwerte. Ang akin pong point, I hope the leadership of the DILG and the PNP will not allow a game that is rigged. Alam po ninyo siguro ang ibig kong sabihin. I will differentiate the terms “legal” and “rigged.” Kung maaari lang po ay bigyan kami ng assurance. Iyan po kasing mga kababayan naming, naaawa po kami, na taya nang taya, alam naman namin na rigged iyon pong kanilang tinatayaan.

REP. CUARESMA. Mr. Speaker and Minority Leader, we will take note of his observation and recommendation.

REP. SUAREZ. Well, with that assurance, Mr.

Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, maybe one of these days, I will have to seek an audience with the good General and explain the two issues. We will take up this issue under other offices, the Office of the President and the PCSO.

There being no more questions that the Minority would like to raise on the proposed measure and budget for the DILG and its allied agencies, we move to terminate the period of interpellation. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Majority, we join the Minority in terminating the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the DILG and its attached agencies.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Hernandez) There is a motion from the Majority and Minority to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the DILG.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the DILG is hereby terminated.

Congratulations to Secretary Ismael D. Sueno and General Ronald “Bato” M. Dela Rosa.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION
OF H.B. NO. 3408

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 3408.

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

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. HERRERA-DY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the session until September 30, at ten o'clock in the morning.

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

The session is adjourned and shall resume on September 30 at ten o'clock in the morning.

It was 7:56 p.m.