



# Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 17<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND REGULAR SESSION  
*House of Representatives*

Vol. 3

Monday, December 4, 2017

No. 43

## CALL TO ORDER

*At 4:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Raneó “Ranie” E. Abu called the session to order.*

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

## NATIONAL ANTHEM

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

*Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.*

## PRAYER

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

*Everybody remained standing for the silent prayer.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you. The Majority Leader is recognized.

## ROLL CALL

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

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

The Secretary General will please call the roll.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is as follows, per Journal No. 43, dated December 4, 2017:*

## PRESENT

Abayon

Abellanosa

Abu

Abueg

Acharon

Acop

Acosta-Alba

Adiong

Advincula

Agarao

Aggabao

Albano

Alejano

Almario

Alvarez (F.)

Alvarez (P.)

Amatong

Andaya

Angara-Castillo

Antonio

Aquino-Magsaysay

Aragones

Arbison

Arenas

Atienza

Bag-ao

Bagatsing

Baguilat

Banal

Barzaga

Bataoil

Batocabe

Belaro

Belmonte (F.)

Belmonte (J.C.)

Benitez

Bertiz

Billones

Biron

Bolilia

Bondoc

Bordado

Bravo (A.)

Bravo (M.V.)

Brosas

Calderon

Caminero

Campos

Cari

Casilao

Castelo

Castro (F.H.)

Catamco

Cerilles

Chavez

Chipeco

Co

Cojuangco

Cortuna

Crisologo

Cuaresma

Cueva

Dalipe

Datol

Daza

De Jesus

De Venecia

De Vera

Defensor

Del Mar

Del Rosario

Dimaporo (A.)

Duavit

Durano

Dy

Elago

Enverga

Erice

Eriguel

Ermita-Buhain

Escudero

Espino

Evardone

Fariñas

Fernando

Ferrer (J.)

Ferrer (L.)

Ferriol-Pascual

Floirendo

Flores

Fortuno	Palma
Garbin	Panganiban
Garcia (G.)	Papandayan
Garcia (J.E.)	Pichay
Garin (R.)	Pimentel
Gasataya	Pineda
Gatchalian	Plaza
Geron	Primicias-Agabas
Go (M.)	Ramirez-Sato
Gonzaga	Ramos
Gonzales (A.P.)	Revilla
Gonzales (A.D.)	Roa-Puno
Gonzalez	Rocamora
Hernandez	Rodriguez (I.)
Herrera-Dy	Roque
Hofer	Sahali
Jalosjos	Salimbangon
Kho	Santos-Recto
Labadlabad	Sarmiento (C.)
Lacson	Sarmiento (E.M.)
Lagman	Savellano
Lanete	Sema
Laogan	Siao
Lazatin	Silverio
Lee	Singson
Limkaichong	Suansing (E.)
Lobregat	Suansing (H.)
Lopez (B.)	Sy-Alvarado
Lopez (C.)	Tambunting
Loyola	Tan (A.)
Macapagal-Arroyo	Tan (M.)
Madrona	Tejada
Malapitan	Teves
Manalo	Ting
Mangaoang	Tinio
Marcos	Tolentino
Mariño	Treñas
Marquez	Tugna
Martinez	Umali
Matugas	Unabia
Mellana	Ungab
Mending	Unico
Mercado	Uy (R.)
Mirasol	Velasco
Montoro	Veloso
Nieto	Vergara
Noel	Villafuerte
Nogralas (J.J.)	Villanueva
Núñez-Malanyaon	Villarica
Oaminal	Violago
Ocampo	Yap (A.)
Olivarez	Yap (V.)
Ong (E.)	Yu
Ortega (P.)	Zamora (R.)
Pacquiao	Zubiri
Paduano	

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. The roll call shows that 201 Members responded to the call.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With 201 Members responding to the call, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve Journal No. 42 dated November 29, 2017.

I so move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; Journal dated November 29, 2017, Journal No. 42, is hereby approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, at this point, I would like to acknowledge the presence of the guests of the Hon. Kaka J. Bag-ao of the Lone District of Dinagat Islands, all her guests from the Network to Stop AIDS Philippines, Dangal Pilipinas and LAGABLAB, and they are the following: Action for Health Initiatives; the Library Foundation – SHARE, HIV/AIDS Awareness Campaign Group; Association of Positive Women Living with HIV/AIDS, Incorporated; NoBox Transitions Philippines; Peer Educators Movement for Empowerment of Pasay, Manila, Caloocan, Quezon City; HIV/AIDS Support House; Health Action Initiatives Network; Sustained Health Initiatives of the Philippines; the Red Whistle; B-Change; Kapisanan ng mga Kamag-anak ng Manggagawang Migranteng Pilipino; Philippine NGO Council on Population, Health and Welfare, Incorporated; Juan Positive Movement; GAYON; Philippine Sex Workers Collective; Candon Youth Movement; Mindanao AIDS Advocates Association, Incorporated ; ALAGAD-Mindanao; Tagum Advocates on HIV/AIDS Incorporated; United Western Visayas, Incorporated; Northern Mindanao AIDS Advocates; Cross Breeds; SHINE SOCCSKSARGEN; Helping Advance the Vulnerable Through Empowerment Network; Cebu Plus Association and Viva Vivo Zamboanga.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The guests of Rep. Kaka Bag-ao, please rise. May I request the guests of Rep. Kaka Bag-ao to please rise. Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

Before I recognize the Majority Leader, I would like to congratulate the Secretariat. We have now a new clock here in the Plenary. Congratulations!

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I would like further to acknowledge the presence of the guests of the Hon. Francisco Gamboa Datol Jr., Representative of the SENIOR CITIZENS Party-List from the Federation of Senior Citizens Association of the Philippines from San Narciso, Zambales. They are Luz Falsario, Filipina Macabali, Nelie Fernandez, Dante Pamisan, Myrna Bueno, Lilia Pobre, Victorio Ladiereo, Robert Farne, Elizabeth Fuento, Sacarias Dacayo, Rodolfo Fababier, Jesus Famisan, Dominador Apostol, Roger Sabio and Angelita Pampo. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). 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 and Resolutions on First Reading, Messages from the Senate, Communications and Committee Reports, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:*

#### BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 6726, entitled:

“AN ACT ENABLING THE AUTHORITY OF THE LIGANG MGA BARANGAY TO ESTABLISH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE SECTION 495 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8553, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991”

By Representative Pimentel

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 6727, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF NUEVA VIZCAYA A MINING FREE ZONE AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR”

By Representative Cuaresma

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill No. 6728, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A JOINT CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON MINING”

By Representative Cuaresma

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Bill No. 6729, entitled:

“AN ACT TO PURSUE THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES MODERNIZATION PROGRAM, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9184, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT REFORM ACT”

By Representative Biazon

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

House Bill No. 6730, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING AT LEAST ONE SCHOOL IN ALL PROVINCES AND HIGHLY URBANIZED CITIES NATIONWIDE TO OFFER THE ARTS AND DESIGN TRACK AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Garcia (J.E.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 6731, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FREE EDUCATION FOR THE CHILDREN OF UNIFORMED PERSONNEL KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY”

By Representative Sy-Alvarado

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 6732, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE HINUNANGAN BAY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND DEVELOP THE HINUNANGAN BAY AND ITS TRIBUTARIES, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS”

By Representative Mercado

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

#### RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 1487, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION BY THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON

THE EXCLUSION OF ALL UNIFORMED PERSONNEL UNDER THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES AND PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE FROM THE SALARY STANDARDIZATION LAW”

By Representative Suarez  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1488, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO DECLARE THE TINAGBINONGAN AND THE PALSUGUAN RIVERS AND ITS ADJACENT FOREST COVERS AS PROTECTED AREAS”

By Representative Bernos  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Resolution No. 1489, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO LENDING COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS IMPOSING EXCESSIVE INTEREST RATES ON LOANS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS”

By Representative Castelo  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

#### MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Message dated November 27, 2017, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date designated Senators Panfilo M. Lacson, Gregorio B. Honasan II, Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay and Francis N. Pangilinan as conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1239, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING THE CHIEF OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) AND THE DIRECTOR AND THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION AND DETECTION GROUP (CIDG) THE AUTHORITY TO ADMINISTER OATH AND TO ISSUE SUBPOENA AND SUBPOENA DUCES TECUM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6975, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG) ACT OF 1990”

and House Bill No. 4863, entitled:  
“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE

NATIONAL POLICE-CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION AND DETECTION GROUP (PNP-CIDG) BY RESTORING ITS AUTHORITY TO ISSUE SUBPOENA AD TESTIFICANDUM OR SUBPOENA DUCES TECUM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 35(B)(4) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6975, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1990’ ”

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Message dated November 27, 2017, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 1439, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE ENERGY VIRTUAL ONE STOP SHOP FOR THE PURPOSE OF STREAMLINING THE PERMITTING PROCESS OF ENERGY GENERATION PROJECTS”

in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives

TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

Message dated November 27, 2017, informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 1533, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE BALIK SCIENTIST PROGRAM, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSE”

in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

#### COMMUNICATIONS

Letter dated November 2, 2017 of Zenaida T. Tan, Assistant Regional Director, Regional Office XI, Department of Public Works and Highways, submitting the Monthly Progress Status Report for projects implemented by their office for the month of October 2017 within the First Legislative District of Davao del Norte.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated November 3, 2017 of Stefanie Ann Y. Eriguel, Municipal Mayor, Municipality of Agoon, Province of La Union, submitting their Report on Fund Utilization of Program/Project Implementation of the Local Government Support Fund for the Quarter Ended September 2017.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated November 8, 2017 of Sukarno D. Tanggol, Chancellor, Mindanao State University-Iligan

Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT), transmitting to the House of Representatives the following documents:

1. Masterlist of SUCs Tulong-Dunong Program; and
2. SUCs Tulong-Dunong Program Database.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Letter dated November 9, 2017 of Rolando T. Bangalando, State Auditor III, OIC-Audit Team Leader, Dumaguete City Water District, Office of the Auditor, Commission on Audit, furnishing the House of Representatives with the 2016 Annual Audit Reports on the following water districts:

1. Ayungon Water District, Ayungon, Negros Oriental;
2. Bais City Water District, Bais City, Negros Oriental;
3. Bayawan Water District, Bayawan City, Negros Oriental; and
4. Dumaguete City Water District, Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated November 23, 2017 of Salvador C. Medialdea, Executive Secretary, Office of the President, Malacañang, transmitting two (2) original copies each of the following Republic Acts which were signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte:

1. R.A. No. 10959, entitled:  
“AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY CRISTO REY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CAPAS, PROVINCE OF TARLAC”
2. R.A. No. 10960, entitled:  
“AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY SAN ISIDRO IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TITAY, PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY”
3. R.A. No. 10961, entitled:  
“AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY RIZAL IN THE CITY OF MAKATI”

TO THE ARCHIVES

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report by the Committee on Health and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 496), re H.B. No. 6740, entitled:

“AN ACT UPGRADING THE LABUAN PUBLIC HOSPITAL IN ZAMBOANGA CITY INTO A LEVEL II HOSPITAL TO BE KNOWN AS THE LABUAN GENERAL HOSPITAL,

INCREASING ITS BED CAPACITY FOR GENERAL CARE SERVICES TO ONE HUNDRED (100), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 4875 and 4945

Sponsors: Representatives Tan (A.), Dalipe, Lobregat and Nograles (K.A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Higher and Technical Education, the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Ways and Means (Committee Report No. 497), re H.B. No. 6741, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE ZAMBOANGA CITY STATE POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE INTO A STATE UNIVERSITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 3929

Sponsors: Representatives Hofer, Nograles (K.A.) Cua and Lobregat

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Health and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 498), re H.B. No. 6742, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF THE ZAMBOANGA CITY MEDICAL CENTER IN ZAMBOANGA CITY FROM FIVE HUNDRED (500) TO EIGHT HUNDRED (800) BEDS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7272 AS AMENDED, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT CONVERTING THE ZAMBOANGA REGIONAL HOSPITAL IN ZAMBOANGA CITY INTO ZAMBOANGA CITY MEDICAL CENTER AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR’”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 3361 and 3750

Sponsors: Representatives Tan (A.), Dalipe, Lobregat and Nograles (K.A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on People’s Participation (Committee Report No. 499), re H.B. No. 6743, entitled:

“AN ACT ENCOURAGING VOLUNTEERISM DURING EMERGENCIES BY PROTECTING VOLUNTEERS FROM LIABILITY”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 5842, 6120, 6237 and 6323

Sponsors: Representatives Plaza, Vargas, Nieto, Maceda, Lee and Sy-Alvarado  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

*measure is as follows, per Journal No. 43, dated December 4, 2017:*

*Affirmative*

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

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention the other Representative of SENIOR CITIZENS Party-List, the Hon. Milagros Aquino-Magsaysay, as also one of the hosts of the guests I mentioned a while ago.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). That is noted.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6617  
ON THIRD READING

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6617 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

*Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on November 27, 2017, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.*

*At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abu relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Eric D. Singson.*

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6617, entitled: AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE COMPREHENSIVE POLICY ON HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV) AND ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS) PREVENTION, TREATMENT, CARE AND SUPPORT, AND ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL HIV AND AIDS PLAN AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8504, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "PHILIPPINE AIDS PREVENTION AND CONTROL ACT OF 1998."

*The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid*

Abayon	Catamco
Abellanosa	Cerilles
Abu	Chavez
Abueg	Chipeco
Acharon	Co
Acop	Cojuangco
Acosta-Alba	Cortuna
Adiong	Crisologo
Advincula	Cuaresma
Agarao	Cueva
Aggabao	Dalipe
Alejano	Datol
Almario	Daza
Alvarez (F.)	De Jesus
Alvarez (P.)	De Venecia
Amatong	De Vera
Andaya	Defensor
Angara-Castillo	Del Mar
Antonio	Dimaporo (A.)
Aquino-Magsaysay	Duavit
Aragones	Durano
Arbison	Dy
Arenas	Elago
Atienza	Enverga
Aumentado	Erice
Bag-ao	Eriguel
Bagatsing	Ermita-Buhain
Baguilat	Escudero
Banal	Espino
Barzaga	Evardone
Bataoil	Fernando
Batocabe	Ferrer (J.)
Belaro	Ferrer (L.)
Belmonte (F.)	Ferriol-Pascual
Belmonte (J.C.)	Floirendo
Benitez	Flores
Bertiz	Fortuno
Billones	Garbin
Biron	Garcia (G.)
Bolilia	Garcia (J.E.)
Bondoc	Garin (R.)
Bordado	Gasataya
Bravo (A.)	Geron
Bravo (M.V.)	Go (M.)
Brosas	Gonzaga
Calderon	Gonzales (A.P.)
Caminero	Gonzalez
Campos	Hernandez
Cari	Hofer
Casilao	Kho
Castelo	Labadlabad

Lacson	Ramos
Lagman	Revilla
Lanete	Roa-Puno
Laogan	Rocamora
Lazatin	Rodriguez (I.)
Lee	Roque
Limkaichong	Sahali
Lobregat	Salo
Lopez (B.)	Santos-Recto
Lopez (C.)	Sarmiento (C.)
Macapagal-Arroyo	Sarmiento (E.M.)
Madrona	Savellano
Malapitan	Sema
Manalo	Siao
Mangaoang	Silverio
Marcos	Suansing (E.)
Mariño	Suansing (H.)
Marquez	Sy-Alvarado
Martinez	Tambunting
Matugas	Tan (A.)
Mellana	Tan (M.)
Mending	Tejada
Mercado	Teves
Mirasol	Ting
Montoro	Tinio
Nieto	Tugna
Noel	Umali
Nograla (J.J.)	Unabia
Núñez-Malanyaon	Ungab
Oaminal	Unico
Olivarez	Uy (R.)
Ong (E.)	Velasco
Ortega (P.)	Veloso
Ortega (V.N.)	Vergara
Pacquiao	Villafuerte
Paduano	Villanueva
Palma	Villarica
Panganiban	Violago
Papandayan	Yap (A.)
Pichay	Yap (V.)
Plaza	Yu
Primicias-Agabas	Zarate
Ramirez-Sato	Zubiri

*Negative*

None

*Abstention*

None

REP. BAG-AO. Mr. Speaker, I vote “Yes” to the Philippine HIV and AIDS Policy Act and I reserve my right to explain my vote.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6617  
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson). With 188 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 6617 is approved on Third Reading. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Hon. Kaka J. Bag-ao for her manifestation only on her “Yes” vote. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson). The Honorable Bag-ao is recognized.

REP. BAG-AO EXPLAINS HER VOTE

REP. BAG-AO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, mga kasama, napakahalaga ng araw na ito dahil nagdesisyon ang Kamara na tuluyan nang ipasa ang Philippine HIV and AIDS Policy Bill. Kailangan lang bigyang diin na hindi natin tinalalakay ang panukalang ito ngayon dahil lamang sa World AIDS Day na naganap noong nakaraang linggo, kung hindi dahil linggo-linggo ay tumataas ang bilang ng mga kaso ng HIV sa bansa; dahil araw-araw ay nakakaranas ng diskriminasyon at panghihina ng loob ang mga persons living with HIV o mga PLHIV; at dahil sa bawat araw na dumadaan na hindi tayo nagtatakda ng mas epektibong mga tugon sa isyung ito, araw-araw rin nating hinahayaan na lumaki nang lumaki ang suliraning kinakaharap natin.

Noong una ko pong inihain ang panukalang ito noong Fifteenth Congress, naging masigasig po ang civil society organizations sa pagsama sa ating laban. Sa panahong ito ay nais kong pasalamatang ang mga grupong naging katuwang natin mula noon pa—ang Network to Stop AIDS-Philippines, ACHIEVE, TLF-SHARE, NoBox Transitions, Women Living with HIV, PLCPD at marami pang iba. Gusto ko rin pong bigyan ng pagpupugay si Senator Risa Hontiveros na matagal nang tagapagtaguyod ng karapatan at kapakanan ng mga PLHIVs, lalo na at malaking bahagi ng kanyang legislative agenda ang kalusugan. Ngayon po ay author din siya ng panukalang ito sa Senado. Sa kanya rin po ako humuhugot ng inspirasyon para isulong ang isyung ito.

Nagpapasalamat din po ako sa mga kasalukuyan at dating pinuno ng House Committee on Health—sina Rep. Angelina “Helen” D.L. Tan, MD; dating Rep. Franny Eriguel at dating Rep. Arthur Pingoy. Salamat din sa Committee Secretariat sa pamumuno ni Lourdes Sanchez. Salamat din po kay Congressman Juan Pablo “Rimpy” P. Bondoc sa pagsiguro na pagbobotohan natin ang batas sa araw na ito on Third Reading at dahil po sa sigla ng Komite na isulong ang panukalang ito, mabilis natin itong naipasa. Sana ay ngayon na ang huling beses

na kakailanganin nating talakayin ang batas na ito dahil magiging batas na ito ngayong Seventeenth Congress. Panahon na para palitan ang kasalukuyang batas at sa pamamagitan ng Philippine HIV and AIDS Policy Act, may dagdag na representasyon ang PLHIVs sa Philippine National AIDS Council o PNAC, na bibigyan din ng mas malawak na kapangyarihan at tungkulin ang PNAC upang tunay na magampanan nito ang kanyang mandato.

Sa House Bill No. 6617, na sana ay maging Republic Act na, mas may pinagtibay at pinalakas na mga probisyon na may kinalaman sa confidentiality at right to privacy ng mga Persons Living with HIV. Higit sa lahat, magkakaroon tayo ng isang batas na may kinalaman sa HIV at AIDS na may pagpapahalaga sa karapatang pantao. Nakakatawa at nakakabahala na isang beses lang binabanggit ang salitang “human rights” sa lumang batas. Sa ating panukala na inaaprubahan natin sa araw na ito, di hamak na mas marami at mas makabuluhan ang pagbanggit sa karapatang pantao bilang haligi ng ating polisiya.

Sa dulo ng lahat, ang anumang batas na nagsusulong ng pagpapalawak ng kaalaman at pagkakapantay-pantay ay isang batas na nagsusulong ng pagmamahal sa kapwa tao. Sa mga Persons Living with HIV na nakilala ko sa mga committee hearings at fora, at sa mga pribadong kwentuhan, sa mga nakikita ko sa social media na hindi mailagay ang tunay nilang mukha at pangalan dahil sa takot sa stigma at diskriminasyon, para sa inyo ang batas na ito. Nawa ay maramdaman ninyo na may boses kayo sa loob ng Kongreso.

Sabi nga ng ating hashtag sa Twitter na naging number one trending topic sa buong bansa kanina pang umaga hanggang ngayon, ang #HIVPolicyNOW! I vote “Yes” to House Bill No. 6617.

Salamat po, Mr. Speaker, mga kasama.

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

#### NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 2830 ON THIRD READING

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 2830 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

*Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on November 29, 2017, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.*

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 2830, entitled: AN ACT CREATING FIFTEEN (15) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURTS IN THE WHOLE PROVINCE OF BATANGAS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980,” AS AMENDED.

*The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is as follows, per Journal No. 43, dated December 4, 2017:*

#### *Affirmative*

Abayon	Billones
Abellanos	Biron
Abu	Bolilia
Abueg	Bondoc
Acharon	Bordado
Acop	Bravo (A.)
Acosta-Alba	Bravo (M.V.)
Adiong	Brosas
Advincula	Calderon
Agarao	Caminero
Aggabao	Campos
Alejano	Cari
Almario	Casilao
Alvarez (F.)	Castelo
Alvarez (P.)	Catamco
Amatong	Cerilles
Andaya	Chavez
Angara-Castillo	Chipeco
Antonio	Co
Aquino-Magsaysay	Cojuangco
Aragones	Cortuna
Arbison	Crisologo
Arenas	Cuaresma
Atienza	Cueva
Aumentado	Dalipe
Bag-ao	Datol
Bagatsing	Daza
Baguilat	De Jesus
Banal	De Venecia
Barzaga	De Vera
Bataoil	Defensor
Batocabe	Del Mar
Belaro	Dimaporo (A.)
Belmonte (F.)	Duavit
Belmonte (J.C.)	Durano
Benitez	Dy
Bertiz	Elago



Enverga	Noel	Yap (M.)	Zarate
Erice	Nogralles (J.J.)	Yap (V.)	Zubiri
Eriguel	Nuñez-Malanyaon	Yu	
Ermita-Buhain	Oaminal		
Escudero	Olivarez	<i>Negative</i>	
Espino	Ong (E.)		
Evardone	Ortega (P.)	None	
Fernando	Ortega (V.N.)		
Ferrer (J.)	Pacquiao	<i>Abstention</i>	
Ferrer (L.)	Paduano		
Ferriol-Pascual	Palma	None	
Floirendo	Panganiban		
Flores	Papandayan		APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 2830
Fortuno	Pichay		ON THIRD READING
Garbin	Plaza		
Garcia (G.)	Primicias-Agabas		THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson). With 191
Garcia (J.E.)	Ramirez-Sato		affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention,
Garin (R.)	Ramos		House Bill No. 2830 is approved on Third Reading.
Gasataya	Revilla		The Majority Leader is recognized.
Gatchalian	Roa-Puno		
Geron	Rocamora		NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6690
Go (M.)	Rodriguez (I.)		ON THIRD READING
Gonzaga	Roque		
Gonzales (A.P.)	Sahali		REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote
Gonzalez	Salo		on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6690 and direct
Hernandez	Santos-Recto		the Secretary General to read the title of the measure,
Hofer	Sarmiento (C.)		and call the roll for nominal voting.
Kho	Sarmiento (E.M.)		I so move.
Labadlabad	Savellano		
Lacson	Sema		THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson). Is there
Lagman	Siao		any objection? ( <i>Silence</i> ) The Chair hears none; the
Lanete	Silverio		motion is approved.
Laogan	Suansing (E.)		
Lazatin	Suansing (H.)		<i>Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of</i>
Lee	Sy-Alvarado		<i>the measure, printed copies of which were distributed</i>
Limkaichong	Tambunting		<i>to the Members on November 29, 2017, pursuant to</i>
Lobregat	Tan (A.)		<i>Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.</i>
Lopez (B.)	Tan (M.)		
Lopez (C.)	Tejada		THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6690,
Lopez (M.L.)	Teves		entitled: AN ACT DECLARING MAY 3 OF EVERY
Macapagal-Arroyo	Ting		YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN
Madrona	Tinio		THE MUNICIPALITY OF STA. CRUZ, PROVINCE
Malapitan	Tugna		OF MARINDUQUE, IN COMMEMORATION OF
Manalo	Umali		ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY, TO BE KNOWN
Mangaoang	Unabia		AS "STA. CRUZ DAY."
Marcos	Ungab		
Mariño	Unico		<i>The Chair directed the Secretary General to call</i>
Marquez	Uy (R.)		<i>the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the</i>
Martinez	Velasco		<i>Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The</i>
Matugas	Veloso		<i>result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid</i>
Mellana	Vergara		<i>measure is as follows, per Journal No. 43, dated</i>
Mending	Villafuerte		<i>December 4, 2017:</i>
Mercado	Villanueva		
Mirasol	Villarica		<i>At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Singson</i>
Montoro	Violago		<i>relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Raneon</i>
Nieto	Yap (A.)		<i>"Ranie" E. Abu.</i>

*Affirmative*

Abayon	Co	Limkaichong	Rodriguez (I.)
Abellanosa	Cojuangco	Lobregat	Romero
Abueg	Cortuna	Lopez (B.)	Roque
Acharon	Crisologo	Lopez (C.)	Sahali
Acop	Cuaresma	Lopez (M.L.)	Salo
Acosta-Alba	Cueva	Macapagal-Arroyo	Santos-Recto
Adiong	Dalipe	Madrona	Sarmiento (C.)
Advincula	Datol	Malapitan	Sarmiento (E.M.)
Agarao	Daza	Manalo	Savellano
Aggabao	De Jesus	Mangaoang	Sema
Alejano	De Venecia	Marcos	Siao
Almario	De Vera	Mariño	Silverio
Alvarez (F.)	Defensor	Marquez	Singson
Alvarez (P.)	Del Mar	Martinez	Suansing (E.)
Amatong	Dimaporo (A.)	Matugas	Suansing (H.)
Andaya	Duavit	Mellana	Sy-Alvarado
Angara-Castillo	Durano	Mending	Tambunting
Antonio	Dy	Mercado	Tan (A.)
Aquino-Magsaysay	Elago	Mirasol	Tan (M.)
Aragones	Enverga	Montoro	Tejada
Arbison	Erice	Nieto	Teves
Arenas	Eriguel	Noel	Ting
Atienza	Ermita-Buhain	Nogralas (J.J.)	Tinio
Aumentado	Escudero	Nuñez-Malanyaon	Tugna
Bag-ao	Espino	Oaminal	Umali
Bagatsing	Evardone	Olivarez	Unabia
Baguilat	Fernando	Ong (E.)	Ungab
Banal	Ferrer (J.)	Ortega (P.)	Unico
Barzaga	Ferrer (L.)	Ortega (V.N.)	Uy (R.)
Bataoil	Ferriol-Pascual	Pacquiao	Velasco
Batocabe	Floirendo	Paduano	Veloso
Belaro	Flores	Palma	Vergara
Belmonte (F.)	Fortuno	Panganiban	Villafuerte
Belmonte (J.C.)	Garbin	Papandayan	Villanueva
Benitez	Garcia (G.)	Pichay	Villarica
Bertiz	Garcia (J.E.)	Plaza	Violago
Billones	Garin (R.)	Primicias-Agabas	Yap (A.)
Biron	Gasataya	Ramirez-Sato	Yap (M.)
Bolilia	Gatchalian	Ramos	Yap (V.)
Bondoc	Geron	Revilla	Yu
Bordado	Go (M.)	Roa-Puno	Zarate
Bravo (A.)	Gonzaga	Rocamora	Zubiri
Bravo (M.V.)	Gonzales (A.P.)	<i>Negative</i>	
Brosas	Gonzalez	None	
Calderon	Hernandez	<i>Abstention</i>	
Caminero	Hofer		
Campos	Kho		
Cari	Labadlabad	None	
Casilao	Lacson		
Castelo	Lagman		
Catamco	Lanete		
Cerilles	Laogan		
Chavez	Lazatin		
Chipeco	Lee		

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6690  
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With  
192 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no

abstention, House Bill No. 6690 is approved on Third Reading.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6580  
ON THIRD READING

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6580 and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

*Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on November 29, 2017, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.*

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6580, entitled: AN ACT CREATING FOUR (4) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE NINTH JUDICIAL REGION TO BE STATIONED AT ZAMBOANGA CITY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14, PARAGRAPH (J) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980", AS AMENDED.

*The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is as follows, per Journal No. 43, dated December 4, 2017:*

*Affirmative*

Abayon  
Abellanos  
Abueg  
Acharon  
Acop  
Acosta-Alba  
Adiong  
Advincula  
Agarao  
Aggabao  
Alejano

Almario  
Alvarez (F.)  
Alvarez (P.)  
Amatong  
Andaya  
Angara-Castillo  
Antonio  
Aquino-Magsaysay  
Aragones  
Arbison  
Arenas

Atienza  
Aumentado  
Bag-ao  
Bagatsing  
Baguilat  
Banal  
Barzaga  
Bataoil  
Batocabe  
Belaro  
Belmonte (F.)  
Belmonte (J.C.)  
Benitez  
Bertiz  
Billones  
Biron  
Bolilia  
Bondoc  
Bordado  
Bravo (A.)  
Bravo (M.V.)  
Brosas  
Calderon  
Caminero  
Campos  
Cari  
Casilao  
Castelo  
Catamco  
Cerilles  
Chavez  
Chipeco  
Co  
Cojuangco  
Cortuna  
Crisologo  
Cuaresma  
Cueva  
Dalipe  
Datul  
Daza  
De Jesus  
De Venecia  
De Vera  
Defensor  
Del Mar  
Dimaporo (A.)  
Duavit  
Durano  
Dy  
Elago  
Enverga  
Erice  
Eriguel  
Ermita-Buhain  
Escudero

Espino  
Evardone  
Fernando  
Ferrer (J.)  
Ferrer (L.)  
Ferriol-Pascual  
Floirendo  
Flores  
Fortuno  
Garbin  
Garcia (G.)  
Garcia (J.E.)  
Garin (R.)  
Gasataya  
Gatchalian  
Geron  
Go (M.)  
Gonzaga  
Gonzales (A.P.)  
Gonzalez  
Hernandez  
Hofer  
Kho  
Labadlabad  
Lacson  
Lagman  
Lanete  
Laogan  
Lazatin  
Lee  
Limkaichong  
Lobregat  
Lopez (B.)  
Lopez (C.)  
Lopez (M.L.)  
Macapagal-Arroyo  
Madrona  
Malapitan  
Manalo  
Mangaoang  
Marcos  
Mariño  
Marquez  
Martinez  
Matugas  
Mellana  
Mending  
Mercado  
Mirasol  
Montoro  
Nieto  
Noel  
Nogralas (J.J.)  
Nuñez-Malanyaon  
Oaminal  
Olivarez

Ong (E.)	Suansing (E.)
Ortega (P.)	Suansing (H.)
Ortega (V.N.)	Sy-Alvarado
Pacquiao	Tambunting
Paduano	Tan (A.)
Palma	Tan (M.)
Panganiban	Tejada
Papandayan	Teves
Pichay	Ting
Plaza	Tinio
Primicias-Agabas	Tugna
Ramirez-Sato	Umali
Ramos	Unabia
Revilla	Ungab
Roa-Puno	Unico
Rocamora	Uy (R.)
Rodriguez (I.)	Velasco
Romero	Veloso
Roque	Vergara
Sahali	Villafuerte
Salo	Villanueva
Santos-Recto	Villarica
Sarmiento (C.)	Violago
Sarmiento (E.M.)	Yap (A.)
Savellano	Yap (M.)
Sema	Yap (V.)
Siao	Yu
Silverio	Zarate
Singson	Zubiri

*Negative*

None

*Abstention*

None

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6580  
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With 192 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 6580 is approved on Third Reading. The Majority Floor Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 5262  
ON THIRD READING

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 5262, and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.  
I so move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any

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

*Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on November 29, 2017, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.*

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 5262, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING MAY 22 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF GUIMARAS IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS ANNIVERSARY AS A PROVINCE.

*The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is as follows, per Journal No. 43, dated December 4, 2017:*

*Affirmative*

Abayon	Belmonte (J.C.)
Abellanosa	Benitez
Abueg	Bertiz
Acharon	Billones
Acop	Biron
Acosta-Alba	Bolilia
Adiong	Bondoc
Advincula	Bordado
Agarao	Bravo (A.)
Aggabao	Bravo (M.V.)
Alejano	Brosas
Almario	Calderon
Alvarez (F.)	Caminero
Alvarez (P.)	Campos
Amatong	Cari
Andaya	Casilao
Angara-Castillo	Castelo
Antonio	Catamco
Aquino-Magsaysay	Cerilles
Aragones	Chavez
Arbison	Chipeco
Arenas	Co
Atienza	Cojuangco
Aumentado	Cortuna
Bag-ao	Crisologo
Bagatsing	Cuaresma
Baguilat	Cueva
Banal	Dalipe
Barzaga	Datol
Bataoil	Daza
Batocabe	De Jesus
Belaro	De Venecia
Belmonte (F.)	De Vera

Defensor	Matugas	Uy (R.)	Violago
Del Mar	Mellana	Velasco	Yap (A.)
Dimaporo (A.)	Mending	Veloso	Yap (M.)
Duavit	Mercado	Vergara	Yap (V.)
Durano	Mirasol	Villafuerte	Yu
Dy	Montoro	Villanueva	Zarate
Elago	Nieto	Villarica	Zubiri
Enverga	Noel		
Erice	Nogralas (J.J.)	<i>Negative</i>	
Eriguel	Nuñez-Malanyaon		
Ermita-Buhain	Oaminal	None	
Escudero	Olivarez		
Espino	Ong (E.)	<i>Abstention</i>	
Evardone	Ortega (P.)		
Fernando	Ortega (V.N.)	None	
Ferrer (J.)	Pacquiao		
Ferrer (L.)	Paduano		
Ferriol-Pascual	Palma		
Floirendo	Panganiban		
Flores	Papandayan		
Fortuno	Pichay		
Garbin	Plaza		
Garcia (G.)	Primicias-Agabas		
Garcia (J.E.)	Ramirez-Sato		
Garin (R.)	Ramos		
Gasataya	Revilla		
Gatchalian	Roa-Puno		
Geron	Rocamora		
Go (M.)	Rodriguez (I.)		
Gonzaga	Romero		
Gonzales (A.P.)	Roque		
Gonzalez	Sahali		
Hernandez	Salo		
Hofer	Santos-Recto		
Kho	Sarmiento (C.)		
Labadlabad	Sarmiento (E.M.)		
Lacson	Savellano		
Lagman	Sema		
Lanete	Siao		
Laogan	Silverio		
Lazatin	Singson		
Lee	Suansing (E.)		
Limkaichong	Suansing (H.)		
Lobregat	Sy-Alvarado		
Lopez (B.)	Tambunting		
Lopez (C.)	Tan (A.)		
Lopez (M.L.)	Tan (M.)		
Macapagal-Arroyo	Tejada		
Madrona	Teves		
Malapitan	Ting		
Manalo	Tinio		
Mangaoang	Tugna		
Marcos	Umali		
Mariño	Unabia		
Marquez	Ungab		
Martinez	Unico		

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 5262  
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With 192 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 5262 is approved on Third Reading.

The Majority Floor Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6688  
ON THIRD READING

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6688, and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

*Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on November 29, 2017, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.*

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6688, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING JULY 4 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE ENTIRE PROVINCE OF BOHOL, TO BE KNOWN AS “FRANCISCO DAGOHOY DAY” IN HONOR OF FRANCISCO DAGOHOY, A NATIVE OF BOHOL AND LEADER OF THE LONGEST PHILIPPINE REVOLT ON RECORD THAT LASTED FOR EIGHTY-FIVE (85) YEARS DURING THE SPANISH ERA.

*The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is as follows, per Journal No. 43, dated December 4, 2017:*

*Affirmative*

Abayon	Casilao	Gonzales (A.P.)	Primicias-Agabas
Abellanosa	Castelo	Gonzalez	Ramirez-Sato
Abueg	Catamco	Hernandez	Ramos
Acharon	Cerilles	Hofer	Revilla
Acop	Chavez	Kho	Roa-Puno
Acosta-Alba	Chipeco	Labadlabad	Rocamora
Adiong	Co	Lacson	Rodriguez (I.)
Advincula	Cojuangco	Lagman	Romero
Agarao	Cortuna	Lanete	Roque
Aggabao	Crisologo	Laogan	Sahali
Alejano	Cuaresma	Lazatin	Salo
Almario	Cueva	Lee	Santos-Recto
Alvarez (F.)	Dalipe	Limkaichong	Sarmiento (C.)
Alvarez (P.)	Datol	Lobregat	Sarmiento (E.M.)
Amatong	Daza	Lopez (B.)	Savellano
Andaya	De Jesus	Lopez (C.)	Sema
Angara-Castillo	De Venecia	Lopez (M.L.)	Siao
Antonio	De Vera	Macapagal-Arroyo	Silverio
Aquino-Magsaysay	Defensor	Madrona	Singson
Aragones	Del Mar	Malapitan	Suansing (E.)
Arbison	Dimaporo (A.)	Manalo	Suansing (H.)
Arenas	Duavit	Mangaoang	Sy-Alvarado
Atienza	Durano	Marcos	Tambunting
Aumentado	Dy	Mariño	Tan (A.)
Bag-ao	Elago	Marquez	Tan (M.)
Bagatsing	Enverga	Martinez	Tejada
Baguilat	Erice	Matugas	Teves
Banal	Eriguel	Mellana	Ting
Barzaga	Ermita-Buhain	Mending	Tinio
Bataoil	Escudero	Mercado	Tugna
Batocabe	Espino	Mirasol	Umali
Belaro	Evardone	Montoro	Unabia
Belmonte (F.)	Fernando	Nieto	Ungab
Belmonte (J.C.)	Ferrer (J.)	Noel	Unico
Benitez	Ferrer (L.)	Nogralles (J.J.)	Uy (R.)
Bertiz	Ferriol-Pascual	Nuñez-Malanyaon	Velasco
Billones	Floirendo	Oaminal	Veloso
Biron	Flores	Olivarez	Vergara
Bolilia	Fortuno	Ong (E.)	Villafuerte
Bondoc	Garbin	Ortega (P.)	Villanueva
Bordado	Garcia (G.)	Ortega (V.N.)	Villarica
Bravo (A.)	Garcia (J.E.)	Pacquiao	Violago
Bravo (M.V.)	Garin (R.)	Paduano	Yap (A.)
Brosas	Gasataya	Palma	Yap (M.)
Calderon	Gatchalian	Panganiban	Yap (V.)
Caminero	Geron	Papandayan	Yu
Campos	Go (M.)	Pichay	Zarate
Cari	Gonzaga	Plaza	Zubiri
		<i>Negative</i>	
		None	
		<i>Abstention</i>	
		None	

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6688  
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With 192 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 6688 is approved on Third Reading.

The Majority Floor Leader is recognized.

NOMINAL VOTING ON H.B. NO. 6689  
ON THIRD READING

REP. MATUGAS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we vote on Third Reading on House Bill No. 6689, and direct the Secretary General to read the title of the measure, and call the roll for nominal voting.

I so move.

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

*Thereupon, the Secretary General read the title of the measure, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on November 29, 2017, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the House Rules.*

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 6689, entitled: AN ACT DECLARING JUNE 17 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL SUR IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY.

*The Chair directed the Secretary General to call the roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the Rules of the House, a second roll call was made. The result of the voting on Third Reading on the aforesaid measure is as follows, per Journal No. 43, dated December 4, 2017:*

*Affirmative*

Abayon  
Abellanos  
Abueg  
Acharon  
Acop  
Acosta-Alba  
Adiong  
Advincula  
Agarao  
Aggabao  
Alejano  
Almario  
Alvarez (F.)  
Alvarez (P.)  
Amatong

Andaya  
Angara-Castillo  
Antonio  
Aquino-Magsaysay  
Aragones  
Arbison  
Arenas  
Atienza  
Aumentado  
Bag-ao  
Bagatsing  
Baguilat  
Banal  
Barzaga  
Bataoil

Batocabe  
Belaro  
Belmonte (F.)  
Belmonte (J.C.)  
Benitez  
Bertiz  
Billones  
Biron  
Bolilia  
Bondoc  
Bordado  
Bravo (A.)  
Bravo (M.V.)  
Brosas  
Calderon  
Caminero  
Campos  
Cari  
Casilao  
Castelo  
Catamco  
Cerilles  
Chavez  
Chipeco  
Co  
Cojuangco  
Cortuna  
Crisologo  
Cuaresma  
Cueva  
Dalipe  
Datul  
Daza  
De Jesus  
De Venecia  
De Vera  
Defensor  
Del Mar  
Dimaporo (A.)  
Duavit  
Durano  
Dy  
Elago  
Enverga  
Erice  
Eriguel  
Ermita-Buhain  
Escudero  
Espino  
Evardone  
Fernando  
Ferrer (J.)  
Ferrer (L.)  
Ferriol-Pascual  
Floirendo  
Flores

Fortuno  
Garbin  
Garcia (G.)  
Garcia (J.E.)  
Garin (R.)  
Gasataya  
Gatchalian  
Geron  
Go (M.)  
Gonzaga  
Gonzales (A.P.)  
Gonzalez  
Hernandez  
Hofer  
Kho  
Labadlabad  
Lacson  
Lagman  
Lanete  
Laogan  
Lazatin  
Lee  
Limkaichong  
Lobregat  
Lopez (B.)  
Lopez (C.)  
Lopez (M.L.)  
Macapagal-Arroyo  
Madrona  
Malapitan  
Manalo  
Mangaoang  
Marcos  
Mariño  
Marquez  
Martinez  
Matugas  
Mellana  
Mending  
Mercado  
Mirasol  
Montoro  
Nieto  
Noel  
Nogralas (J.J.)  
Nuñez-Malanyaon  
Oaminal  
Olivarez  
Ong (E.)  
Ortega (P.)  
Ortega (V.N.)  
Pacquiao  
Paduano  
Palma  
Panganiban  
Papandayan

Pichay	Tan (A.)
Plaza	Tan (M.)
Primicias-Agabas	Tejada
Ramirez-Sato	Teves
Ramos	Ting
Revilla	Tinio
Roa-Puno	Tugna
Rocamora	Umali
Rodriguez (I.)	Unabia
Romero	Ungab
Roque	Unico
Sahali	Uy (R.)
Salo	Velasco
Santos-Recto	Veloso
Sarmiento (C.)	Vergara
Sarmiento (E.M.)	Villafuerte
Savellano	Villanueva
Sema	Villarica
Siao	Violago
Silverio	Yap (A.)
Singson	Yap (M.)
Suansing (E.)	Yap (V.)
Suansing (H.)	Yu
Sy-Alvarado	Zarate
Tambunting	Zubiri

*Negative*

None

*Abstention*

None

APPROVAL OF H.B. NO. 6689  
ON THIRD READING

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With 192 affirmative votes, no negative vote and no abstention, House Bill No. 6689 is approved on Third Reading.

The Majority Floor Leader is recognized.

PRIVILEGE HOUR

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, today being a Monday and pursuant to our Rules, I move that we open the Privilege Hour.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List, our Sr. Dep.

Minority Leader, the Hon. Jose "Lito" Atienza Jr., be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Sr. Dep. Minority Leader from BUHAY Party-List, Rep. Jose Atienza Jr., is recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ATIENZA

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Majority Floor Leader, for the opportunity to deliver a message this afternoon to all our Members. I would have delivered this last Monday, November 27, 2017, but I was not given the time, the chance and the opportunity to do so. It would have been more timely to deliver this message on November 27 because that is the exact date of the birthday of Ninoy Aquino.

Everyone is aware of who Ninoy Aquino was, but we should refresh our memories, time and again, because we are still very active in the political world and the political stage of the nation. We are all playing roles in our capacity as Representatives of the people and when we look back and remember Ninoy, we are actually strengthening our resolve to be more steadfast, more courageous and more correct in our direction in crafting laws for our country.

To remind everyone who Ninoy Aquino was, he was the youngest mayor elected then. At the age of 22, he was mayor of Concepcion, Tarlac but before that, he was a scholar in the academe. As a young man pursuing professionalism and because of his patriotic sense to maintain and promote peace, he covered the Korean War. He was a very young man and yet, he joined the frontline of the Korean War to represent the Filipino people in that international issue and conflagration. Doon pa lang po ay nagpakita na po ng tapang ang taong ito, na isinuong niya ang kanyang buhay upang magkaroon ng pagpapahayag na nagmumula doon sa digmaan na nangyayari, kung saan mayroon tayong Philippine contingent, mga sundalong Pilipino na lumalahok sa giyera doon. That was very, very exemplary, outstanding and admirable.

This young man continued on to become the youngest mayor; and then he was elected as the youngest vice governor at the age of 27 in 1959; and, again, became the youngest vice governor and subsequently, the governor of Tarlac. In 1961, he was elected Senator of the country at the age of 34 and as a Senator, no one can dispute the fact that Ninoy Aquino was the star luminary who was always on the side of human rights and the protection of our constitutional rights in the Senate.

Naalala ko po, noong ako ay isang batang mag-aaral, ako ay pumupunta sa Senado upang makinig lamang sa mga salita at aral, at talumpati nitong dakilang



lalaking ito. Doon ko po nakita, first-hand, the qualities of Ninoy Aquino: very, very frontal and very frank in his assessment of what he thinks is good for the country. Then fate had it that Ninoy Aquino would be arrested after the Plaza Miranda bombing—again, that particular incident has a special meaning for me because I was there on stage when it happened. Mahigit 10 ang namatay, mahigit isang daan ang nagkapinsala doon sa pagbobombang iyon ng rally ng Liberal Party sa Plaza Miranda. Ninoy Aquino, after the declaration of martial law in 1972, was one of the first persons arrested by the military and that started his ordeal—personal, because of his family; and the nation as a whole because we, who appreciated what he was doing, were all following the days, months and years that he spent in solitary confinement.

Hindi po nasira ang pag-iisip nitong taong ito. Hindi po rin humina ang kanyang resolusyon na ipagpatuloy niya ang pagtatanggol sa malayang pamamaraan ng pamumuhay. Sinapit po niya ang maraming problema sa loob ng kulungan subalit hindi po nila napasuko ang diwa ni Ninoy Aquino. So, Ninoy maintained his character as a real champion of Philippine democracy. Siya po ay nasentensiyahan ng Military Commission No. 2 under then Major General Syjuco who, in turn, sentenced him to death when he was not defended at all by any lawyer. Ang sabi nga niya noong siya ay sinesentensiyahan, at hindi tumitinag ang tinig at ang kanyang pag-iisip at diwa, sinabi niya, “Tinatanggap ko ang inyong pasya na kitling ang buhay ni Ninoy. Ngayon, kayo ang humuhusga sa akin pero darating ang araw na kayo ang huhusgahan ng taong bayan.” Those words were prophetic because after saying that, many events transpired that catapulted the nation to other bigger challenges in our quest for liberation.

Then, tragedy befell him when he suffered two heart attacks under detention. Kung mayroon pong namang nagmagandang loob na siya ay ipinadala sa Amerika upang maoperahan, kasama natin sana siya ngayon dito. Hindi ko lang malaman kung siya ay physically present, but then, First Lady Imelda Marcos was the one who arranged for his passage and for his operation in Texas. Well, the operation was successful, and he was able to bring his family. Akala namin si Ninoy ay mananahimik na sapagkat siya ay nailigtas sa kamatayan at nagkaroon na siya ng magandang kalusugan habang siya ay nagtuturo sa Amerika—sa Boston, Massachusetts. But, beloved brethren, Ninoy Aquino was a different man because he did not stop at that.

When the opportunity came for him to come home, being the leader of the Liberal Party, he felt he had to be in the Philippines at that particular time, and no amount of persuasion could convince him not to come home even under the threat of death, a sure 100-percent death. He did not shirk from the challenge of leading the nation and those of us seeking liberation. Umuwi po siya at iyon ang naging pagkakataon upang ang isang bala ay

kumitil sa kanyang buhay noong siya ay bumababa sa eroplano, sapagkat siya ay pinatay nang walang awa. To me he was not assassinated, he was murdered—that is the right way to put it—to put a stop to our quest for liberty and liberation from martial rule. That spark—that did not prevent the Filipinos all over the country from hearing the sound of gunshot—one bullet, one gunshot wound, one gunshot—that reverberated all over the corners of the Philippine islands and reawakened the people that, indeed, we must now wake up and resist the military rule prevailing at that time.

Nobody gave Ninoy Aquino a chance. Sabi nila, “Patay na iyan, makakalimutan na iyan” but we did not and the elections of 1984 proved that. When Ninoy Aquino led or rather, when the party of Ninoy Aquino which he founded in 1978, the Lakas ng Bayan or Laban participated together with the Partido Demokratiko ng Pilipino, thus, we have the PDP-Laban. Therefore, the PDP-Laban as we now see it, the supermajority party of the nation, emanated from Ninoy Aquino. Kung hindi po lumaban si Ninoy, wala pong PDP-Laban ngayon. Ito ang bunga ng kanyang buhay na ibinuwis niya upang tayo ay magkaroon ng kalayaan muli because, from 1984, the opposition already started winning and in 1986, we liberated the country in EDSA I.

Kung tayo man ngayon ay malayang nakapagtatalumpati, malayang nakikipagtalakayan, at malayang nakikipag-disagree sa pamunuan, magpasalamat tayo sa taong ito. Kung mayroong mga pagkukulang ang mga sumunod na mga pangyayari—iyong naging Pangulo ang kanyang maybahay, iyong naging Pangulo ang kanyang anak, hindi po si Ninoy Aquino iyon. Si Ninoy Aquino ay isang bayani na kinakailangan nating patuloy na kilanlin.

Hindi natin puwedeng kalimutan ito sapagkat kung kakalimutan natin ito, we might as well forget that tayo ay Pilipino, na tayo ay mayroong sariling direksiyon sa ating buhay sa pagkalikha ng Panginoon ng sanlibutan. Ninoy Aquino, in this Chamber, I am sure, touched the lives of many. Right in front of me, this Gentleman in front of me who was, I think, about 90 years old, he has not forgotten because he knew Ninoy Aquino personally. Suwerte nga siya sapagkat siya, nakadaupang-palad niya at nakasama niya sa kasiyahan, sa kalungkutan. Ang inyong lingkod, ako po naman ay nakiisa lang and one among the great masses of our people who stood up upon hearing the shots at the tarmac, we told ourselves that we will not stop until democracy is restored in the country.

Ngayong mayroon na tayong demokrasya, hindi puwedeng kalimutan si Ninoy Aquino dahil lamang mayroon tayong hinanakit sa mga pangyayari pagkatapos ng kanyang buhay. Hindi natin puwedeng itakwil si Ninoy Aquino. The worst part of it, kayong nabibilang sa supermajority PDP-Laban, hindi ninyo puwedeng

sabihing “Hindi namin kilala iyan.” Para ninyong sinabing hindi natin kilala si Dr. Jose Rizal na nagbigay sa atin ng kalayaan bilang isang bansa. Para ding sinabi nating hindi natin kilala si Andres Bonifacio na namuno sa rebolusyon upang tayo ay mapalaya. Otherwise, we will all be impostors in the drama of Philippine democracy and our search for political freedom if we deny Ninoy Aquino his proper place in our history. If I could only declare Ninoy Aquino a genuine martyr and a hero of the Philippines, I would do so. In my heart and in my soul, I will never forget this man because he had the courage, and as a flicker of light gives inspiration in the dark of the night, andoon siya at siya ay hindi bumigay sa takot at pag-aalinlangan.

So, I urge every one of us who are still active in the Philippine political drama, gamitin natin itong pangalan ni Ninoy at hindi ng sino pa man. Kung pag-uusapan natin ang PDP-Laban, wala ito kung wala si Ninoy. Kung pag-uusapan ang ating demokrasya, wala ang ating demokrasya kung hindi dahil kay Ninoy. Ninoy served as the inspiration to millions of Filipinos who told themselves, “Tama na, sobra na, kami ay lalaban na.” Iyon ang dapat nating isapuso ngayon. Sobra na itong paghihirap natin. Tama na itong pag-aabuso.

Andiyan, naranasan na naman natin ang abuso ng gobyerno sa pamamagitan ng dengue vaccine. Andiyan na naman ang pagkakamali na nakaumang sa atin, ili-legalize natin ang marijuana. Andiyan ang lahat ng paghamon sa ating mga papeles. Gumising tayo sa katotohanan. Ang gusto natin ay isang bansang malaya, masaya at maligaya sa ating pagiging Pilipino at hindi banyaga.

Maraming, maraming salamat po at sana ay nakapagbigay ako sa inyo ng kaunting kaliwanagan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Maraming salamat po, Kinatawang Atienza.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the honorable Sr. Dep. Minority Leader Jose “Lito” L. Atienza Jr. to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Gentleman from the Second District of Sulu, the honorable Rep. Munir M. Arbison, be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the Second District of Sulu, the

Hon. Munir M. Arbison, is recognized to avail his privilege.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ARBISON

REP. ARBISON. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my dear esteemed colleagues, ladies and gentlemen of this august Body, good evening. May peace be with us all.

I took the floor on a particular matter concerning not only this Representation, but the entire Filipino populace as well. It has been nearly four months since I was forced into a situation that none of us should find himself or herself in. None of us or anybody here should find himself and his supporters being compelled to defend his liberty and person from false and malicious accusations that are accepted as forceful and authoritative by the prosecutor and the judge as judicial doctrine where the prosecutor and the judge have conspired, colluded and accepted a bribe from an interested party in order to silence his perceived or imagined enemies. Unfortunately, this is our situation now.

When an ambitious leader, ruling like a dictator, took over the reins of power in the Province of Sulu and, under an illusion of becoming the ultimate uniting Sultan of Sulu, has shamelessly declared himself Zabandar, not only ordinary and fearful persons bowed before him but even our prosecution and judicial officials in our province did.

Early in December, Mr. Speaker, last year, my brother, mayor of our hometown, together with five police officers were ordered to be arrested because my brother was allegedly present when the police officers illegally shot an armed civilian who was demanding for the return of previously seized illegal item in committing direct assault. In February this year, Mr. Speaker, two more leaders opposed to his views were ordered arrested without them being afforded their full rights to preliminary investigation. One of them was here in Congress as certified by his House’s security on the date the crime charged was committed in Jolo. The other, his staunch critic and human rights defender, was charged with the kidnapping of a German reporter after the latter, together with his editor, revealed that he first met his kidnapper at his residence and ransom was admittedly paid and received by Tan at his residence upon his demand and direction. Lately, Colonel Rosario of the Philippine Marine Corps was charged, together with the vice mayor of Omar, simply because his troops engaged in a shoot-out with an ASG sub-leader and arrested some members of a private armed group belonging to a local government official.

Mr. Speaker, his grip over the province has encroached on the national agencies within it, including

our very basic institutions of justice. His control over the prosecution service has degraded the public prosecutor into his mere rubber stamp. His influence over the courts has reduced the judiciary into his kangaroo court. His grip over the police has made his private armed group redundant. The unabated kidnappings in Sulu and the observed rise thereof during his and his son's administration have made people think that he too controls the ASG.

I am not here to air my complaint against him. As a matter of fact, the Ombudsman has already required him to answer the charge that he was responsible for the kidnapping of a German newspaper writer. I am here to seek the help of this Chamber in requesting its coequal body, the Judiciary and the Department of Justice, to separately conduct an investigation of its officials, judges or personnel in the Province of Sulu. I am seeking your help, Mr. Speaker, to ask the Department of Justice to expedite the investigation of the Sulu provincial prosecutor on the already numerous complaints brought to his attention.

Aside from complaints of unprofessionalism, bias, graft and corruption, there are basic questions like: Is it proper for the prosecutor to subscribe to the affidavit-complaint of persons without ascertaining their true identities? Can the prosecutor rely solely on the self-serving statement of the police, on the return of the subpoena, that the accused can no longer be located, thereby justifying the resolution of the complaint against the respondent? As regards the Judiciary, Mr. Speaker, why can a judge, who is not reporting to his station, still collect his salary? Can such judge issue an order from anywhere in the country? Can the court grant bail in drug-related cases without a hearing? Can the court forfeit, for its benefit, the bail bond posted by the accused? These and other questions even prompted the request of the military for the creation of a special court in Sulu.

In my case, Mr. Speaker, two of my alleged accusers have long been dead and three others have been long working as undocumented aliens in Malaysia, but they were, accordingly, represented by another person when their supposed affidavit-complaint was subscribed before the prosecutor. As I said earlier, this is not about myself. In stark contrast to the overzealousness of the provincial government and the provincial prosecutor, together with the courts to prosecute or persecute the political opponents and staunch critics of the Zabandar is their lackluster effort to prosecute lawless bandits, guiltless terrorists, kidnappers and drug pushers. While his political opponents are silenced, the kidnapping activities and smuggling continue unabated.

Despite the resolution of the NAPOLCOM, Mr. Speaker, removing the deputation of the local police from our provincial government, it is common knowledge, the scenario in our province, that local police forces

are still under the control and supervision of the local chief executive, to the extent that they form part of their entourage and their everyday travel around the province. Thus, I call on the DILG to continue its investigation as there has already been a prima facie determined by the NAPOLCOM in its resolution suspending his control and supervision over the PNP. I seek your collegial support for the DOJ to continue and act with dispatch in the investigation of its officials in Sulu, and to be very eager in ensuring the immediate return of the rule of law in the province. I also hope that the Supreme Court and the Court Administrator who was in Jolo recently, will also discipline the irresponsible judge and other court personnel.

Finally, I strongly beseech your help and prayer in putting back in place our criminal justice system in Sulu as well as the rule of law. We may be an island among the more than 7000 others, but it is in our place where the basic principles of the rule of law and an effective justice system are most needed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, my friends.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you, Representative Arbison.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the honorable Rep. Munir M. Arbison from the Second District of Sulu to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Gentleman from the Second District of Caloocan City, Rep. Edgar R. Erice, be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Rep. Edgar Erice from the Second District of Caloocan City is recognized to avail his privilege.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ERICE

REP. ERICE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Majority Leader.

My dear colleagues, good afternoon.

I rise to answer allegations about an article and an opinion piece that came out two weeks ago. In an era when fake news is insulting the intelligence of my fellow Filipinos, I would rather stand up and clear the air than be part of this scornful trend.

Last November 20, 2017, *Philippine Star* columnist

Jarius Bondoc rehashed an opinion article attacking SR Metals, a mining company in Agusan del Norte, apparently making it a habit to revive stale issues that were already answered and resolved. I was the President of SR Metals then and presently, a director of the company. Point by point, Mr. Bondoc seemed to find no new angles. Here are his repeated attempts to taint a company by trying so hard to connect a business to politics but never succeeding.

In February of 2016, he wrote three consecutive columns dated February 12, 15 and 17, singling out the Gutierrez Group's aviation engagement, linking it to a political campaign and focusing his tirades to mining which is an easier target of criticisms. Out of the three columns, not a single line was allotted to the company for its comment. Among his deliberate attacks tackled the small-scale mining operations of the Gutierrez Group, which was a nonissue because it was covered by all the necessary permits and Environmental Compliance Certificates. All our ore shipments are covered by mineral ore transport permits issued by the DENR and the MGB. All taxes, whether with the national or local government, were dutifully paid. In fact, we paid more than what is required by law during those times. The issue was totally put to end in 2007 when SR Metals stopped its operations when it was ordered to, paid the penalty as provided by law, rose and moved forward and got the approvals and permits for a large-scale mining operation.

In his articles, he also questioned the ISO certification of SR Metals and said it was awarded to the company because of its friendship with Malacañang and to then President Aquino and Sec. Mar Roxas.

As a general information, an ISO (International Organization for Standardization) certification is audited and issued by a private entity and has no relation and cannot be influenced by any government agency. In fact, the ISO certification is subject to annual review and if you fail the standards, you will lose it.

More so, SR Metals is the first-ever nickel mining company to subscribe to international standards even before the DENR required it of all mining companies. For these types of companies, there is no need for a Jarius Bondoc to issue a wake-up call, as morality kicks in when someone is not looking and being responsible need not be imposed. Sadly, Mr. Bondoc, a veteran columnist, continues to be the blindsighted man that he is.

The next day, after his GOTCHA column on November 21, 2017, there were apparent media operations about a falsification case tagging me, as well as previous and incumbent officials of the same company, in a news article published in the same newspaper, *Philippine Star*, written by Edu Punay, entitled: "Lawmaker, LP Financier Face Raps." The same news was in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. The

article pertains to baseless testimonies from a certain Rodney Basiana. Again, there was no effort to get the other side of the story, either from me or from the mining company. According to the article, Mr. Basiana asserted that he has rights over the mining claims and presented two-decade-old documents which were, number one, already dismissed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and panel of arbitrators in February 2, 2008. That was during the time of Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. In fact, we got our MPSA not during the time of President Aquino, but during the time of Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and was signed by our distinguished colleague, then Sec. Lito Atienza of the DENR; and number two, the records on the Deeds of Assignment had already proven that SR Metals, a holder of a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement or permit, is the rightful successor to the said area.

Let the records show that on July 31, 1997, Basiana Mining Exploration Corporation filed an application for Mineral Production Sharing Agreement for the mining claims in Tubay, Agusan del Norte; on April 29, 2000, Basiana assigned the mining application to Manila Mining Corporation; and on October 17, 2005, Manila Mining Corporation assigned the same application to SR Metals Incorporated. The latest Deed of Assignment was registered to the DENR-MGB Region 13 on October 24, 2005. As required by law, SRMI resubmitted the application under its name before MGB-Region XIII. This was done on July 7, 2006. After careful evaluation of the application, MGB-Region XIII favorably endorsed our company's mining application to the Central Office with a memorandum dated September 20, 2006 wherein the DENR-MGB clearly recognized that SRMI is the rightful successor of the mining agreement.

In short, Mr. Basiana, just like Jarius Bondoc, ended up beating a dead horse by dragging my name into these issues. I personally chose to remain quiet for a while because I believe the truth will always prevail in the end, but there will always be a time to say "Enough is enough." Mr. Speaker, I have inhibited myself from being a member of the Committee on Natural Resources. In fact, when I became a Congressman in 2013, I wrote then Speaker Sonny Belmonte, disclosing my affiliation with the mining industry and asking to spare me from any committee functions that would relate to natural resources.

The timing of these articles and spurious allegations coincided with the announcement that SR Metals once again made it as the best surface mining company in the country today and bestowed with the Presidential Mineral Industry and Environmental Award (PMIEA), awarded by DENR Sec. Roy Cimatu and Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, Mr. Gerard Brimo, and signed by Pres. Rodrigo Duterte himself.

What constitutes a PMIEA or a presidential award? According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the presidential award recognizes outstanding levels of dedication, initiative and innovation in the pursuit of excellence in environmental management by exploration, mining and other related entities involved in various aspects of mineral utilization. The scope of environmental management includes, among others, programs/projects being implemented for the environmental protection and enhancement of mining areas, development of the host and neighboring communities, land use improvement, exploration and mining site rehabilitation and final decommissioning.

What qualifies a mining company to achieve a presidential award? It must have an Environmental Compliance Certificate, has no unresolved Notice of Violation or Suspension Order, and was not issued by the DENR a Cease and Desist Order during the coverage period. It must secure an approval for the following: Environmental Protection Enhancement Program, Final Mine Rehabilitation or Decommissioning Plan, Social Development and Management Program, and Annual Safety and Health Program. It must get the nomination/endorsement of the Regional Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

On the process of evaluation, the Secretary of the DENR chairs the annual search and selection of the qualified mining companies. This is co-chaired by the President of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines. Other members of the panel include the Secretary of Trade and Industry, the Secretary of Interior and Local Government, the Secretary of Health, the President of the Philippine Mine Safety and Environmental Association, and the President of the Philippine Mineral Exploration Association. At a time when the mining industry was put under intense scrutiny, the criteria imposed by the eight-member evaluation team are just minimum requirements. Mining companies also need to pass through critical public perception and judgment. They must exceed what the law mandates. They must continue to police themselves.

I find it no shame, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, to publicly announce my involvement in a mining company that shines through despite the tirades and malicious intents. The SR Metals, four-time highest pointer in the prestigious industry-wide award with three unbreakable years of being a presidential awardee, is not something we should downplay. The company is actually a Filipino pride, having bested companies owned and operated by foreign mining giants. The SRMI is 100-percent Filipino-owned.

These awards are also contrary to yet another claim of Jarius Bondoc that SR Metals patriarch and Chairman peddled his political influence for the company to be recognized. Unless he wants to insist that he is the truth-bearer and that the Secretary of the DENR, the President of the Chamber of Mines, the other members

of the Selection Committee, and the two Presidents of our country, President Aquino and President Duterte, lied on their judgments.

For everyone's reference, please refer to the latest visuals on the SR Metals mine site taken last October 2017 to show that it is indeed worthy of the trophies to which the Presidents of the Philippines had affixed their signatures. (*Visual presentation*) This is the clear sea located right beside SR Metals operations. Wala po kayong makikita na namumulang tubig dagat diyan. These are some of the areas which the company had rehabilitated, with a total number of 371 hectares where 287,000 trees were planted. As to the equipment they use, the company had invested in Euro 3 compliant trucks that emit less carbon emission and at the same time, are efficient for the daily grind. For example, the articulated water truck that you are seeing now is worth US\$650,000 or P32.5 million, pandilig po. Nagpapatunay na hindi biro-biro ang pagmimina, at hindi rin maliit ang puhunan upang pangalagaan ang kapaligiran.

Even staunch environmentalist and former DENR Sec. Gina Lopez was impressed with how SR Metals manages a mine site. Her visit last March was during the time when she desired to close down all erring mines but tagged SR Metals as one of the very few model companies in the country. In describing SR Metals, she said in one of her Facebook posts,

I was there yesterday and was quite impressed. Their siltation ponds are up where they mine, so, by the time the water reaches the sea, it is clean. The water is sparkingly clean, there is fish, and from the laboratory tests my staff had taken, validate the visuals.

We should also not neglect the contributions of the mining companies in nation-building and the multiplier effect which springs from employment to community empowerment. SR Metals alone provides employment to almost 1,500 Caraga locals, 60 percent of whom is from host communities, and provides P19 million in monthly local salaries. The company had also won the hearts of the Church, from Catholic to all Protestants, around the mine site. To prove my point further, the anti-mining advocate, Alyansa Tigil Mina, has passed and endorsed SR Metals in an audit conducted by all sectors of society in Caraga.

I, for one, have monitored and witnessed how the company fared through the years in terms of environmental protection and social compliance. Sa magkabila po ng bundok na aming minimina, ang tubig na dumadaloy mula sa minahan papunta sa dagat ay dumadaan muna po sa isang swimming pool, kung saan ako mismo ay naliligo doon, upang patunayan na ang tubig na nanggagaling mula sa bundok ay malinis. Sa

kabila naman po ng bundok, dumadaloy po ang tubig patungo sa mga palayan. Mayroon naman pong fish pond at may mga isda doon tulad ng tilapia na akin mismo pong pinananghalian.

Going back to Mr. Jarius Bondoc, I advise that you should move on from the 2010 and 2016 elections and shift your focus to more pressing concerns that we, Filipinos, are worried about. You have the privilege to open the eyes of society in the search for the truth, using your opinion page. For Edu Punay, as far as I understand, the right of reply is an opportunity for you to get your facts straight. We are always open for comments if you seek them. This is a call to set aside partiality and utilize God-given talents in helping this country move forward through responsible journalism.

We already have an idea as to who or what is behind these relentless attacks of Jarius Bondoc and other agents of malicious media propaganda. We are still in the process of gathering stronger evidence to prove that this is nothing political nor environmental but merely a product of business rivalry.

Babalik po akong muli upang ihayag ito sa inyo, mga kasama. Kaya po abangan ang susunod na mga kabanata.

Maraming salamat po.

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

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from Party-List BUHAY, our honorable Sr. Dep. Minority Leader Jose “Lito” L. Atienza Jr, for his interpellation.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Rep. Jose Atienza of BUHAY Party-List is recognized if the distinguished Representative from Caloocan City is amenable ...

REP. ERICE. Yes, of course.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). ... to interpellation.

REP. ERICE. Yes, of course, we are very indebted to ...

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Representative Atienza is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise only to clarify certain matters wherein my name is related to the message of the Gentleman from Caloocan. In defending SR Metals or Mining, he indeed mentioned my name as the one who decided on its issue with the Basiana family. Hindi po totoo iyon sapagkat noong dumating ako sa DENR, mayroon na pong papeles iyong pinagtatalunan nila. Tama naman iyong kanyang sinabi na mayroon nang mga desisyon na nagsasabing sila ang may karapatan sa minahan. I would like him to deny that if that is not correct in my assumption. Mayroon na po kayong papeles noon at iyon ay nasa records ng DENR na noong nagreklamo iyong pamilyang Basiana, iyon po ang aming inilahad. Sila ang nagmamay-ari, according to the records, so we had to support the position of SR Metals. Tama po ba iyon?

REP. ERICE. Tama po iyon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mabuti malinaw iyan dahil ayokong ...

REP. ERICE. Ang nabanggit ko po, kayo po ang—the Gentleman, the distinguished Representative of BUHAY Party-List was the one who signed the approval of our Mineral Production Sharing Agreement...

REP. ATIENZA. That is correct.

REP. ERICE. ...but as far as the Basiana case is concerned, it was the panel of arbitrators of the MGB-DENR which decided in our favor and this decision was affirmed by the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

REP. ATIENZA. Ano po bang taon iyon?

REP. ERICE. Around 2006 po.

REP. ATIENZA. Tama, wala pa po ako sa DENR noon.

REP. ERICE. Wala pa po kayo sa DENR.

REP. ATIENZA. I have nothing to do with the deliberations; I have nothing to do with the decision. They won the favor of the investigating panel.

REP. ERICE. Yes.

REP. ATIENZA. We cannot overrule that when we take over an office; we have to respect that.

REP. ERICE. It was elevated to the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court decided in our favor.

REP. ATIENZA. That is correct. Aminin ninyo na ang inyong lingkod ang nagpasara sa SR Mining thereafter, sapagkat nakita ko small mining permits ang hawak ninyo. Pinasara ko kayo dahil sabi ko hindi puwedeng mag-operate nito ang large-mining company tulad ng SR Metals at na-tsek ko po napakalaki nila—they have heavy equipments, they are well-prepared for their operations. Of course, they were doing it correctly but without any really large mining permit. The permits that they were using were small mining permits given by the local government. Kaya sabi ko, you have to close down and, did you close down when I said you have to close down?

REP. ERICE. We complied.

REP. ATIENZA. Yes, they complied at doon po nag-umpisa ang kanilang ...

REP. ERICE. We rectified our shortcomings by paying the penalty that was imposed ...

REP. ATIENZA. Tama po.

REP. ERICE. ... by the DENR and, as I remember during that time, that was the biggest penalty ever paid by a mining company.

REP. ATIENZA. That is correct. So, they were closed during my administration as a Department Secretary and then, they were forced to comply with every set of rules and provisions of law to qualify as a large mining company. Well, they were doing that already anyway. So, with their compliance to all the requirements without any follow-up, you were not following up...

REP. ERICE. Yes.

REP. ATIENZA. ...your company was not following up, the DENR acted judiciously, granted them a large mining operation permit and an MPSA, and that started them properly in their quest for a business in mining. I would like to congratulate you, you succeeded from then on dahil hindi ko na kayo nabalitaan from then on.

REP. ERICE. Thank you.

REP. ATIENZA. Ngayon, ayoko namang mabanggit iyong pangalan ko na ako ang nagpasiya doon sa claim ng mga Basiana. Iyon po ay gusot nila na inayos po ng gobyerno. Wala po akong kinalaman doon dahil hindi pa ho ako Sekretaryo noon. Noong dumating ako, doon ko nakita iyong mga depekto at inaksiyunan po namin at inaksiyunan nila iyong hinihingi ng batas. So, if they

are now successful, you should thank the government for having allowed you to operate in spite of the fact that you had violations earlier.

You mentioned that you paid the highest penalty ever imposed by the Department of Environment under those conditions that I am recollecting. Malinaw na malinaw po sa isip ko iyon sapagkat nag-iingat tayo kapag tayo ay gumagamit ng kapangyarihan mula sa anumang sangay ng pamahalaan ang ating kinabibilangan.

So, as far as I am concerned, iyon po ang official participation ni Secretary Atienza at the Department of Environment. I had nothing to do with the company. I had nothing to do with the Basiana group. I had nothing to do with their issue. They did it on their own and, for whatever they are now successful in, they should continue without involving names like mine.

Thank you.

REP. ERICE. Thank you. I would like to inform our colleagues that during that time, mining companies were only paying P50,000 per violation, but the good Secretary of the DENR then imposed a P50,000 per day penalty and so, that is why we paid the highest penalty in the history of DENR during that time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the Hon. Edgar Erice of the Second District of Caloocan City and the interpellations thereon to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Lady from the Party-List GABRIELA, Rep. Arlene D. Brosas, be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Rep. Arlene Brosas from Party-List GABRIELA is recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. BROSAS

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, mga kapwa ko Kinatawan, education is the key to success. It is the ladder towards a bright future. This is the reason in the 1987 Constitution, under

Article II, Declaration of Principles and State Policies, that Section 17 states: “The State shall give priority to education, science and technology, arts, culture, and sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development.” The 1987 Constitution sees education and holistic human development as the gateway to intellectual, moral, economic development as well as the cultivation of the struggle for freedom and justice. The same Constitution prescribes the protection and promotion of everyone’s right to education. Article XIV, Section 1 states: “The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.”

Ang Konstitusyon na ito ay hindi lamang nagsusulong sa karapatan sa edukasyon, ito din ay kumikilala sa mga kapatid nating katutubo. Article II, Section 22 states: “The State shall recognize and promote the rights of indigenous cultural communities within the framework of national unity and development.”

Bukod sa mga probisyon sa 1987 Constitution, may mga probisyon din sa International Law na kumikilala at nagpo-protokta sa karapatan ng mga katutubo. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: “All human beings are equal in dignity and rights.” (Article 1); and “ Everyone is entitled to all the rights in this Declaration without distinction of any kind such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. (Article 2)

Ang International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights naman ay gumuhit ng basic civil at political rights ng indibidwal. Sa probisyon sa kolektibong karapatan, that Covenant states: “In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.”

The Convention on the Rights of the Child contains regulations and suggestions relevant to Indigenous Peoples (Article 29) on the non-discrimination of children, the right to education including education on human rights, its own cultural identity, language and values. Article 30 states that children of minorities or indigenous origin shall not be denied the right to their own culture, religion or language.

Napakaraming batas sa proteksiyon at promosyon ng edukasyon at ng karapatan ng mga katutubo. Ngunit sa dinami-dami ng mga kasulatang ito, ganoon din naman ang pag-ulan ng mga pandarahas sa ating mga katutubo at ang pagnakaw sa kanilang karapatan sa edukasyon at sariling pagpapasya. Ang mga batang Lumad na bahagi ng pambansang minority ay mulat sa kahalagahan ng edukasyon upang maprotektahan ang

kanilang lupang ninuno, kultura at paniniwala sa gitna ng patuloy na pandarahas ng pasista armadong puwersa ng gobyerno at ng mga sakim sa kita at tubo na mga minahan at plantasyon.

Noong Hulyo ay nag-bakwit ang mga kabataang Lumad sa Kamaynilaan sa sunod-sunod na pambobomba at militarisasyon sa kanilang komunidad. Ang pagpapalayas sa mga katutubo ay nakatago sa all-out war ng administrasyon sa New People’s Army, ngunit ang all-out war na ito ay laban sa mga sibilyang nasa komunidad. Lumala ang pandarahas noong ideklara ang batas militar sa buong Mindanao. Kamakailan, nagkampo sa harap ng Central Office ng Department of Education ang mga batang Lumad. Simple lang naman ang panawagan ng mga batang ito: Una, ang pagwakas sa militarisasyon, martial law, at pagkakampo ng mga militar sa kanilang mga paaralan at komunidad. Pangalawa, ang pagharap sa kanila ni DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones para personal na maipaabot ang hinaing sa patuloy na pagkaantala at pagpapahirap sa mga paaralan na makuha ang kanilang permit.

Malakas ang panawagan sa mga IP communities ng pagpapalayas sa mga puwersa ng militar. Kapag may militar, may dahas. Iyan po ang nakatatak sa mga utak ng mga katutubo at lalo na sa mga batang Lumad. Matagal na ang panawagan na ito ng mga katutubo, lalo na ng mga Lumad, ngunit ang sagot ng gobyerno ay patuloy na pagdagdag sa puwersa ng Armed Forces. Bilang patunay, last November 23, at around six o’clock in the morning, a peasant leader Vivencio Sahay of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, KMP-Agusan Norte was shot dead in his home in Cabadbaran. He was the fifth farmer killed in Caraga in five months. On that same day, three trucks filled with military troops arrived in Km. 6 Neptune. A checkpoint was then set up in Km. 6 Neptune in the morning of November 24, requiring all who passed by to write their names in a logbook. Military troops were also seen going towards Lumad communities in Km. 16 and Han-ayan yesterday, November 25. A drone was heard and seen flying over the communities. This is after Duterte’s pronouncement of a crackdown against progressive organizations recently and the bomb threat on Lumad schools five months ago.

Noong November 26, 2017, at around 1:00 p.m., 12 Lumad communities in Barangay Diatagon, Lianga and Barangay Buhisan, San Agustin in Surigao del Sur, along with 706 students of nine Lumad schools and 51 teachers of ALCADDEV and TRIFPSS, are currently in evacuation due to military operations. Ito ay para sa panawagan ng kabataang Lumad na personal na makaharap ang DepEd Secretary. Ito ay sinagot ni Secretary Briones ng isang presscon—isang presscon na patuloy na paghuhugas ng kamay ng Departamento sa kasalukuyang pandarahas at



pang-aabuso sa mga Lumad at sa kanilang paaralan. Briones' complicity in human rights violations and Lumad killings in Mindanao is proven by her inaction and silence amidst the continuous attacks on Lumad schools. Hindi puwedeng maghugas kamay ang Secretary of Education dahil ang kanyang Departamento mismo ang nag-legitimize ng pag-ookupa ng mga militar sa DepEd Memo No. 221. Hindi puwedeng sabihin ng Secretary na galing sa militar ang kasulatan dahil and DepEd mismo ang nag-circularize nito.

It is very clear that the Department of Education fed the Lumad children and their future to the fascist AFP and the tyrannical rule of the Duterte administration. As the Secretary of Education, she failed to be sensitive to the plight of the Lumad children. It is her duty to condemn atrocities done to schools and learning institutions and to children, regardless of whether it has permit or not.

Every children's right to education and protection thereof is not based on whether the school has a registration number provided by the Department. It is an inherent right that the Department must protect. Ang karapatan ng kabataan sa edukasyon ay hindi nagsisimula o nagtatapos sa papel o sa numero galing sa Department of Education. Hindi ba dapat na mas maging responsive and DepEd sa kalagayan ng mga batang hindi nila naaabutan ng serbisyo at boluntirismo na lamang ng iilang taong nakakasagot sa dapat ay obligasyon ng Departamento? Hindi ba dapat si Secretary Briones ang mahiya sa mga Lumad students at sa mga volunteer teachers dahil ibang tao ang pumupuno ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With due respect to the distinguished Lady from the GABRIELA Party-List, the Privilege Hour has already expired unless, otherwise, the Majority or any other Member wishes to extend, through a proper motion, the Privilege Hour.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Yes, the Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that the Privilege Hour be extended for another 30 minutes to grant five more Representatives who wish to avail of the Privilege Hour.

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

The Lady from the GABRIELA Party-List may continue.

REP. BROSAS. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hindi ba dapat si Secretary Briones ang mahiya sa mga Lumad students at sa mga volunteer teachers dahil ibang tao ang pumupuno sa kapabayaan ng DepEd at ng gobyernong ito?

The issue should not be a question of jurisdiction. It is a call for basic human decency and compassion to act against the evil done by state agents and the Duterte administration. Briones challenged the media on said presscon to look at the bigger picture. This is the bigger picture: sa dinami-dami ng batas na nagsusulong sa karapatan ng bawat isa sa edukasyon at karapatan ng mga katutubo sa sariling pagpapasya, edukasyon at kultura, patuloy pa din ang pagpatay sa mga karapatang ito ng gobyerno at ng estado. Patuloy ang pagkaiit sa edukasyon sa mga batang Lumad, at patuloy ang pagdedemonyo ng AFP sa mga komunidad nila. Kung pagbabasehan ang dami ng karapatan sa edukasyon at karapatan ng mga katutubo, may isang sobrang laking puwang at kapabayaan ang estado sa pangangalaga sa kanila.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Maraming salamat din po sa pag-extend ng aking time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). You are welcome. Thank you.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the honorable Rep. Arlene Brosas of the Party-List GABRIELA to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Lady from the Party-List KABATAAN, the honorable Rep. Sarah Jane I. Elago, be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Lady from KABATAAN Party-List, the Hon. Sarah Jane Elago, is recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ELAGO

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, colleagues, good afternoon.

Today, we mourn. Every day that passes, while we deliberate on laws and resolutions in the middle of the pomp and seeming normalcy in our lives, another person is killed, or another person gets harassed or intimidated, or another house gets raided, or another person gets arrested for trumped-up charges.

Mr. Speaker, on November 26, human rights worker and Chairperson of Katungod-Sinirangan Bisayas-Catarman Chapter, Sargie Macallan, was strangled by a military officer inside the camp of the 20th Infantry Battalion in Northern Samar. He, among other paralegals, went inside the camp of the military to look for the farmers who were abducted the day prior. Likewise, aid workers from ACCORD, an international non-government organization, were barred by the police and military forces from entering Barangay Diatagon, Lianga, Surigao del Sur to check on the status and situation of internally displaced persons. Lumad students, teachers, leaders and communities were forced to evacuate after additional battalions of military arrived in the area. The NGO workers were denied access despite a thorough explanation of the work they do. Even worse, state forces from the 75th Infantry Battalion have been preventing food aid from reaching at least a thousand indigenous peoples still seeking refuge in the evacuation camp.

On November 28, a fact-finding mission composed of 30 people was attacked by suspected state forces while making their way to Barangay Catalina in Negros Oriental to investigate human rights violations committed by the military. Two members, Elisa Badayos of Karapatan Central Visayas and Elioterio Moises of the local peasant organization Mantapi Ebwan Farmers Association, died. One member of the youth sector, CJ Matarlo, a coordinator of KABATAAN Party-List Cebu, was shot in the shoulder but is now in a stable condition, Mr. Speaker. On November 30, Karapatan-Southern Mindanao Region sounded the alarm on the recent escalation of black propaganda in the region. Pictures of known leaders of progressive organizations tagged “Wanted” were posted along the streets in Davao City. Trumped-up cases were filed against these leaders after they facilitated the evacuation of Lumads in militarized areas, but all cases were already dismissed in July 2016. That was more than a year ago, Mr. Speaker. This is clearly a harassment tactic aimed at endangering their lives. *Narapat lamang at ating mandato na kondenahin ang mga atakeng ito sa mismong tagapagtanggol ng ating karapatang pantao.*

KABATAAN Party-List condemns, in the highest and strongest terms, these wanton moves attacking human rights workers and activists. Armed with nothing but their convictions and principles, human rights defenders, progressives and activists are being attacked daily. This is already a red flag on the President’s increasing tendency to willingly shed blood to prolong his power and retaliate because of his dwindling popularity. More than anything, it is showing what kind of “revolutionary” government he intends to install—a government built on dead bodies of innocent people, human rights defenders.

*At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abu relinquished the Chair to Rep. Arthur R. Defensor Jr.*

Mr. Speaker, fact-finding missions are conducted to investigate human rights violations, especially those committed by state agents. An attack on these missions is a direct attack against the victims of these violations who need to have their voices heard and their situations exposed. What do they have to hide and why are they so scared of having human rights defenders in these areas? Their actions, elicited by fear of being publicly exposed, make the answer obvious. Since the termination of peace talks and the encouragement of US President Donald Trump of Duterte’s counterinsurgency programs, attacks against progressives and human rights defenders have increased and intensified. This, we present, is the kind of “revolutionary” government that the President intends to set up. How much more blood will be spilled for this?

Mr. Speaker, today, we mourn. We are in unspeakable grief but at the same time, we consolidate and broaden our ranks, we heighten our vigilance, and we strengthen our unity to resist a fascist rule. Mr. Speaker, we vow that for every drop of blood spilled, a hundred others grow. For every drop of blood spilled, Mr. Speaker, a hundred others grow stronger and are inspired to resist, to rise and to fight against a savage, corrupt and fascist rule. Together, we must realize that greed for power is the source of fascism and fascism only breeds resistance. This is why fascists always tremble at the face of dissent. Fear, silence and passivity are their trophies, symbols of their success in sowing terror among the people. This is why their downfall has always been successfully brought about by a strong and principled mass movement.

At the outset, this is what the President proudly proclaims to be, a fascist. His violent reactions and threats are only manifestations of his greed for power and public acceptance, a fascist response to losing his political machinery and public approval. The political and social climate may be challenging, but it has been the same for centuries, Mr. Speaker, the same period that the people have fought against oppression and exploitation from the Spaniards to the Americans to the Japanese who occupied our homeland and now, to leaders who stand as puppets of imperialist powers. The times may be challenging, but it has never been so ripe for us to unite and to struggle against systemically ingrained oppression, violence and tyranny.

Let us put an end to the culture of impunity. Let us put an end to tyranny.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Mabuhay ang mga kabataan, ang mamamayan na makabayan at patuloy na lumalaban.

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

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the honorable Rep. Sarah Jane Elago of the Party-List KABATAAN to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). The speech of the Hon. Sarah Jane Elago is referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). At this point, Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Gentleman from the Party-List AKBAYAN, the honorable Rep. Tomasito “Tom” S. Villarín, be recognized to avail of the Privilege Hour.

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

The Honorable Villarín is recognized for his privilege speech.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. VILLARIN

REP. VILLARIN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Majority Leader.

Mr. Speaker, since taking over the reins of government, Pres. Rodrigo Roa Duterte has clamored to be given emergency powers to deal with the transportation crisis in Metro Manila, but emergency powers may not be the solution to such crisis. It sometimes takes political will to go after the powers-that-be who have put into gridlock our transport sector. In other words, there is elite capture of our vital national assets like the transportation sector.

Seaports are vital cogs in national and regional development. It is certainly a major infrastructure that links the country to the rest of the world in terms of trade and the global market. Ports are essential to such function, given that our country is made up of diverse island regions in terms of commodity production. One of the biggest contributors to the rising GDP is the agriculture sector located mostly in Mindanao, a conflict and poverty-stricken region. In order for us to be competitive, we have to modernize our seaports.

Mr. Speaker, one of the major ports in the country is the government-owned Sasa Port in Davao City. I sense that there is elite capture of port operations that should be looked into by the government in one of the country’s vital seaports. Sasa Port is strategically located as a premier hub in southeastern Mindanao where the bulk of our agricultural exports like bananas come from, but its delayed modernization has incurred losses in terms of forgone revenues. Based on a study by the Ateneo de Davao Center for Business Research and Extension, in 2015 alone, approximately P317 million in wharfage fees, port dues and other fees related to port operations

was lost and it is estimated that this loss will balloon to an accumulated P1.84 billion in the next five years. In an Information Memorandum by the Development Bank of the Philippines and the International Finance Corporation submitted to the previous DOTC and the Philippine Ports Authority officials, the Davao Sasa Port is the most important container terminal in Mindanao. The National Economic and Development Authority has been pushing for its immediate modernization since way back in 2007. Then, why are the PPA and the national government dragging its foot on its modernization?

Mr. Speaker, instead of pushing for its modernization, the government has given licenses to operate to two privately owned ports in nearby Sasa Wharf: the Davao International Container Terminal owned by ANFLOCOR and the Hijo Terminal Container—International Container Terminal Services of business tycoon Ricky Razon. In this kind of arrangement, the PPA can only collect 50 percent of the wharfage fee when the port is used—when the port used is a private port. Port dues can only be collected from foreign vessels if they are docked at a government-owned port. Dockage fees from domestic and foreign vessels can only be charged if they berthed at government-owned ports. With container handling, while charged to private entities, the government can also collect shares of 20 percent from foreign-flagged vessels and 10 percent from domestic vessels if, again, these are docked at government ports.

Mr. Speaker, this would not have happened if the PPA exhausted all possible options and not acted with undue haste in granting these private ports licenses to operate as a commercial port. Records show that as early as 2010, the Sasa Port has breached the 500,000 20-footer equivalent units or TEUs, meaning container vans per year, and the projection shows that such volume will double in the coming years. Instead of a strategic solution to modernize the Davao City Sasa Port, the PPA opted to grant commercial licenses to these private ports valid for four years and renewable thereafter with the conditionality that Sasa Port still cannot accommodate the increased volume.

Now, according to the Ateneo de Davao study, there are viable and immediately available options for the Sasa Port modernization. Even the PPA has admitted that this can be done and even gave an option for a PPP arrangement for modernizing the Sasa Port. But the initial bid package was projected at P19 billion for a PPP, very much higher than the actual five billion cost if the PPA undertakes the rehabilitation. Apart from the cost and other parameters, the PPA said there were issues in terms of which agency will implement the project, the concession fee, tariff increases, collection and sharing of port charges, viability and gap funding as well as the presence of competing ports in the area, meaning, the two existing private ports could suffice. Again, this begs the question: Why is the government, again, allowing

the operations of vital seaports to private entities if the government itself can undertake such activity?

Mr. Speaker, the Ateneo de Davao study showed that there are options readily available to the PPA. In the Sasa Port, there is available space of, at least, eight hectares just across the existing port, enough for, at least, 1.3 million TEUs of cargo handling. There is likewise the availability of a custom-bonded container yard and a P250-million X-ray machine lying idle in that part of Sasa Port. While this machine is subject to a court case as well as to that of a contract between a private businessman and the BOC, that businessman is willing to negotiate and this has been discussed with the BOC. In fact, the businessman has won his case against the BOC in our courts.

Now, the issue of traffic congestion in the port can be addressed by the opening-up of a new road that can be expropriated by the PPA or even by the local government unit. Again, what is troubling in this situation? That this elite capture of a vital economic infrastructure supposedly for the whole of Mindanao is done right inside Davao City. In this classic example, we do not need emergency powers for the Davao Sasa Port to operate. It just needs common sense and a dose of political will to go against the powers-that-be.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Magandang hapon po sa ating lahat.

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

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that the speech of our honorable Rep. Tom S. Villarin of Party-List AKBAYAN be referred to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The speech of the Honorable Villarin is referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Gentleman from Party-List BAYAN MUNA, the honorable Rep. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate, be recognized for his privilege speech.

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

The Gentleman from BAYAN MUNA, the Hon. Carlos Zarate, is recognized.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. ZARATE

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat, G. Ispiker.

Magandang hapon ho sa ating lahat.

G. Ispiker, may nakaambang tiraniya sa ating bansa. Sa katunayan, baka nga hindi na lamang ito nakaamba. Nitong nakaraang Oktubre, ang grupong Karapatan ay nakapagtala na ng isang daan at apat na pampulitikalang pamamaslang, mga pagpatay sa mga lider-masa at aktibista sa ilalim ng kasalukuyang administrasyon. Liban pa rito, Mr. Speaker, apat na masaker, dalawampung pagkakataon ng sapilitang paglikas ng mga katutubong Lumad at labing-pitong pabobomba o aerial bombardment rin ang kanilang naitala. Lahat ng mga ito ay naganap sa lampas isang taon pa lamang ng panunungkulan ng administrasyong Duterte. Ang mga matindi, malubha at malalang mga paglabag ng karapatang pantao na ito ay dagdag sa lagim na dulot ng mga pagpaslang sa ngalan ng giyera laban sa droga. Sa pinakamalaking tala o estima, labintalong libong tao na ang napaslang sa ngalan ng giyerang ito. G. Ispiker, labintalong libong mga anak, mga magulang, mga kapatid, pinapula nila ng kanilang mga dugo ang mga lansangan at madidilim na eskinita sa ating bansa.

G. Ispiker at mga kapwa ko Mambabatas, kung hindi pa tayo nahimok na kumilos sa pagdanak ng dugong ito, sa walang-awang pagpatay na ito ng ating mga kababayan, sa tila pagkawala ng pagkatao ng lahat ng mga masipat na mga armas ng mga ahente ng pamahalaan na tinuring silang hayop na pinapangangaso, ay tunay na ngang mabubuwal ang pundasyon ng ating pagtalima at pagrespeto sa mga karapatang pantao.

Sa ika-10 ng Disyembre ay gugunitain na naman nating muli ang Pandaigdigang Araw ng Karapatang Pantao. Hindi na siguro kagulat-gulat na bubuhos ang mamamayan sa kalsada upang kondenahin ang malalang paglabag sa karapatan ng ating mga mamamayan. Ngunit hindi lamang pagkondena ang iminamartsa ng ating mga mamamayan at ng mga aktibista, at ang mga tagapagtaguyod ng karapatang pantao, Mr. Speaker. Sila ay magmamartsa dahil sila mismo, sa ngayon, ay target na rin ng paglabag sa karapatang pantao. Noong inanunsiyo ni Pangulong Duterte na magkakaroon, G. Ispiker, ng “crackdown” sa mga miyembro ng mga ligal na organisasyon, isa itong tila hudyat upang direktang i-target na rin ang mga mamamayang nagtatanggol sa karapatang pantao, at sinu-sino ang magiging biktima nito, G. Ispiker?

Tiyak tayong nakatudla ito sa ating mga magsasaka at tagapagtaguyod sa karapatan ng lupa ng mga nagbubungkal nito. Ito ay nakatudla sa mga manggagawa at mga lider unyon na lumalaban para sa nakabubuhay na sahod. Ito ay nakatudla sa mga maralitang lungsod na iginiit ang karapatan sa panirahan at serbisyong panlipunan. Nakatudla ito sa mga mamamayang Moro at katutubo na ipinaglalaman ang kanilang karapatan sa lupang ninuno at sariling pagpapasiya. Nakatudla ito sa mga dumedepensa sa karapatan ng mga kababaihan, sa karapatan ng mga bata, sa karapatan para sa edukasyon ng mga kabataan at karapatan ng mamamayan para sa

sapat na serbisyong panlipunan. Sila, G. Ispiker, ang mga posibleng pangunahing hahambalusin at tatamaan ng sinasabing “crackdown” na ito ni Pangulong Duterte.

Nito lamang ika-26 ng Nobyembre, G. Ispiker, matapos ang anunsiyong “crackdown” at deklarasyong ihihinto na ang usapang pangkapayapaan sa pagitan ng pamahalaan ng gobyerno ng Pilipinas at ng National Democratic Front of the Philippines, mahigit isang libong Lumad mula sa 14 na pamayanan sa Diatagon at Lianga, Surigao del Sur ang nagsilikas mula sa kanilang mga tahanan dahil sa walang tigil na counterinsurgency operations sa kanilang pamayanan. Mga kapwa Mambabatas, ang pagbakwit mula sa mga malalayong komunidad ng mga Lumad ay isang nakakahilakbot na karanasan. Maaari nating ilarawan sa ating mga isip ang mga daan-daang ina na karay-karay ang kanilang mga anak; libong mga katutubong dala lamang ang kanilang mga iilang damit at mga alagang hayop na hindi maiiwan; mga buntis, matatanda at mga bata na naglakad sa napakahabang pababa ng mga kabundukan, patawid ng mga rumaragasang ilog at malalalim na putik. Isa itong larawan kung gaano na kalala ang krisis sa karapatang pantao sa Pilipinas.

Malala pa, G. Ispiker, nitong mga nakaraang araw, isang food blockade ang iniulat na isinasagawa ng militar sa mga bakwit sa Surigao del Sur. Ayaw papasukin sa mga checkpoint ang mga rasyong pagkain patungo sa mga evacuation center na dala ng mga humanitarian group at kahit na ng local government units. Ang pagbabawal na pumasok sa evacuation centers ay hindi lamang sa mga humanitarian groups at pati na rin ang mga lokal na taga-Lianga at Diatagon, Surigao del Sur ay pinagbabawalan na rin, G. Ispiker, na pumasok sa kanilang komunidad. Halimbawa, noong November 30, ang isang Grade 3 student ng ALCADDEV na nagkasakit at dinala sa kabayanan para ito ay gamutin, noong bumalik na sila sa evacuation center ay hindi na rin sila pinayagan ng militar. Noong nagbalak silang bumalik noong December 2, sila rin ay hinarang at hindi pinayagan ng mga militar. Sa isang kaso naman noong December 1, isang estudyante rin na sinamahan ang kanyang maysakit na kaibigan para magpagamot sa kabayanan at noong sila ay bumalik sa kanilang tirahan doon sa Diatagon, sila ay hinarang din ng militar. May isang insidente na isang guro at ang kanyang co-teacher na nakatira din doon sa komunidad na malapit sa evacuation center ay hinarang din ng militar na bumalik dahil lamang sila ay mga guro daw ng ALCADDEV.

Nakakagalit ang ganitong balita, G. Ispiker, at mariin namin itong kinokondena. Malakas na nananawagan tayo ngayon sa militar na itigil na ang food blockade sa mga pamayanan ng Lumad sa Surigao del Sur. G. Ispiker, tila pinapalakas na pananagasa sa karapatang pantao ang idinulot ng pagsasara ng peace talks at sa utos na paigtingin ang atake sa mga rebeldeng grupo.

Ano ang magiging kahahantungan ng ating bayan?

G. Ispiker, mga kapwa ko Mambabatas, tayo ay nahaharap ngayon sa hamon ng ating panahon. Nawa ay alalahanin tayo ng kasaysayan na hindi naging kimi sa panahon na ang mamamayan ay pinagpapaslang, sa panahon na ang karapatang pantao ng ating mamamayan ay nilalabag. Mailapat sana sa mga libro ng kasaysayan na noong ang karapatan ng ating mga mamamayan ay inaatake, tayo, bilang mga Mambabatas, ay matapang at prinsipyadong tumindig. Sana ay taas-noo nating masasabi sa ating mga sunod na salinlahi, sa mga sunod na Henerasyon, na ginamit natin ang ating pagiging Mambabatas para depensahan ang mamamayang saklot sa pasismo at tiraniya. G. Ispiker, kondenahin natin ang paglabag sa karapatang pantao. Itigil ang mga madugong giyerang inilulunsad ng pamahalaan laban sa ating mga mamamayan. Ituloy ang usapang pangkapayapaan.

Ngunit hindi lagi't laging api ang sambayanan. Bilang panghuli, G. Ispiker, payagan ninyo akong basahin ang mga taludtod na ito na binanggit ni Amado V. Hernandez:

May araw ding ang luha mo'y masasaid,  
matutuyo,  
may araw ding di na luha sa mata mong  
namumugto  
ang dadaloy, kundi apoy, at apoy na kulay  
dugo,  
samantalang ang dugo mo ay aserong  
kumukulo;  
sisigaw kang buong giting sa liyab ng libong  
sulo  
at ang lumang tanikala'y lalagutin mo ng  
punglo!

Magandang hapon po sa atin, G. Ispiker.

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

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the honorable Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate of Party-List BAYAN MUNA to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The speech of the Honorable Zarate is referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.) Mr. Speaker, there is one more who wish to avail of the Privilege Hour. I would again like to request or move that the Privilege Hour be extended for another 10 minutes.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). Is

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

The Privilege Hour is extended for another 10 minutes. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I now move that the Gentleman from KABAYAN Party-List, the honorable Rep. Ron P. Salo, be recognized for his privilege speech.

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

The Gentleman from KABAYAN, the Hon. Ron P. Salo, is recognized.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF REP. SALO

REP. SALO. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, and fellow Filipinos, I rise today to address an issue concerning not only this Representation, but also hundreds of thousands of our public school teachers: personal because it concerns teachers personally known to me, as well as supporters of KABAYAN Party-List. Collective in the sense that these teachers are our second parents. Without them, none of us, I suppose, would be here. None of us would have become what we are today. None of us would have been in a position to effect real and meaningful change in our country's policies.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Department of Education, the current gross salary of our public school teachers is around P19,000 a month. However, they take home far less from the gross amount due to unfortunate and unforeseen financial troubles. Our teachers are saddled with extensive deductions for contributions and obligations as they are forced to fall victims to and borrow money from lenders who entrap them in a vicious cycle of indebtedness.

According to the DepEd data, the current total debt of public school teachers from legitimate private lending institutions has ballooned to unprecedented levels amounting to P178 billion, aside from the already existing P123 billion worth of loans owed to GSIS. This amounts to P301 billion worth of loans, equivalent to 55 percent of the 2018 DepEd proposed budget of P549 billion. In fact, it came to the attention of this Representation that around 23,000 teacher-retirees this year failed to receive their pensions due to unpaid debts.

DepEd Order No. 38, dated July 31, 2017, allowed the GSIS and Pag-IBIG Fund loans to be deducted from teachers' salaries without a cap, leading some to have a meager take-home pay below P4,000. However, the DepEd Order was questioned by this Representation as well as by some teacher groups, and this led to the issuance of DepEd Order No. 55, dated October 26,

2017. The new DepEd Order will prioritize deductions from the GSIS and Pag-IBIG Fund loans without affecting the teachers' mandated net take-home pay. With accrued penalties on their loans from GSIS and an imposed deduction cap, the teachers will have to pay their loans and penalties in a longer period. DepEd Order No. 55 implements the minimum take-home pay of P4,000, consistent with Section 47 of the General Appropriations Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, the basic education system is already confronted with a myriad of problems. Yes, our teachers have had their fair share in contributing to the current dilemma that they are experiencing. However, the onus should not be placed entirely on them. Although the P19,000 current gross salary per month of the teachers is a significant increase compared to the previous years, it was a tad too late for many of them because they had already incurred loans and debts prior to the increase precisely because of their low salaries. Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, we need to immediately take affirmative steps in order to halt the increasing burden being experienced by our public school teachers.

As the People's Representatives, it is within our power to intervene and promote the best interest of the people whose welfare are at stake. As such, I respectfully call on this august Chamber to strongly urge the Government Service Insurance System to immediately waive incurred penalties of public school teachers in the payment of their loans. Certainly, the waived penalties may be miniscule in amount, but this will certainly hasten the payment by our public school teachers of their loans and will go a long way in alleviating the financial burden that they are currently facing.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that education is our way out of poverty. Education is our way out of ignorance. Education is our way toward stability, self-sufficiency and true empowerment. Education is the key to the betterment of our society. We may liken education as our nation's fertilizer. It is the fertilizer that is needed for our nation's development to take root and grow, but without the nurturing hand applying the fertilizer, the soil remains barren, dry and unproductive. Thus, it is essential that as policymakers, we let our teachers focus on their job of educating our youth and worry less about their financial situation. Until the government is able to provide the adequate and necessary resources in order to sufficiently cover all the needs of the education sector, all these remain an optimistic vision.

A take-home pay of P4,000 is unjust, particularly at this day and age, and with the continuing increase in the cost of living in our country, this amount may not even be sufficient to cover their transportation cost in going to and from their schools. As fellow human beings, our teachers still need to live, eat, dress and send their children to school. It is incomprehensible how

one can live with meager amount of P4,000 a month. Certainly, it is unjust for us to allow our teachers to suffer this fate. We must ensure that these teachers are able to provide for themselves and their families with sufficient take-home salaries. We cannot allow our public school teachers to suffer this injustice. Thus, this Representation is elated to note that in the current proposed 2018 General Appropriations Act, this amount is increased to P6,000 but still, P6,000 is still very much insufficient for any family to be able to live decently.

Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, it was said by our national hero, Jose Rizal, that the youth is the hope of our country. *Kabataan ang pag-asa ng bayan*. These teachers are responsible for molding our youth—our country's future. We must not ignore the pleas of the molders of our nation's future. *Kung ang kabataan ang pag-asa ng bayan, ang ating mga guro ang pag-asa ng mga kabataan*.

Mr. Speaker, my dearest colleagues, in this regard, I am calling all the Members of the House of Representatives to strongly urge the Government Service Insurance System to: 1) waive immediately incurred penalties of public school teachers in the payment of their loans; and 2) implement debt forgiveness or condonation for newly retired and retiring public school teachers from 2017 to 2022, including teachers who were deceased before their scheduled retirement so that these teachers and their families will benefit from the value of the retiring teachers' maturing GSIS policy. Further, I respectfully appeal to this august Chamber to strongly urge the DepEd, the Department of Finance, and other government financial institutions to immediately conduct a nationwide financial literacy and enabling training programs to empower public school teachers to manage their personal finances better and get them out of the path to financial ruin. Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, along with this speech is a resolution which I shall be filing to ensure that this call will be immediately realized.

With that, Mr. Speaker, thank you and a pleasant afternoon to all.

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

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we refer the speech of the honorable Rep. Ron P. Salo of KABAYAN Party-List to the Committee on Rules for its appropriate action.

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

The speech of the Honorable Salo is referred to the Committee on Rules.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, there being no more Member who wishes to avail of the Privilege Hour, I move that we terminate the Privilege Hour.

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

The Privilege Hour is terminated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, before we adjourn, I move that the copies of the bills passed today on Third Reading be immediately transmitted to the Senate. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. LOPEZ (B.). Mr. Speaker, there being no more matters to be taken up for the day, I move that we adjourn the session until tomorrow, December 5, Tuesday, at four o'clock in the afternoon. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Defensor). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the session is hereby adjourned until tomorrow, December 5 at four o'clock in the afternoon.

*It was 6:22 p.m.*