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## House of Representatives

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RCW No. 1

### MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

#### CALL TO ORDER

*At 4:25 p.m., the Chairman, Rep. Rolando G. Andaya Jr., called the meeting to order.*

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). The meeting of the Committee of the Whole House is hereby called to order. The Chair would like to address the Body.

Mme. Speaker, distinguished colleagues:

Today, Mme. Speaker, we fulfill our constitutional duty of debating on the National Budget. It is a Bill so vital that no other law is discussed in detail in the Constitution other than how taxes are collected from the people and are returned to them by their Representatives. For that is what appropriations is all about, the systemic rebate of revenues to those from whom they have been systematically collected. As I have always said, taxes are paid in cash but must be reimbursed in kind. The Budget is the thick catalogue of how and in what form the refunds will be made. The duty of preparing this annual catalogue falls upon us, in fact, in our mandate to represent our people, the duty to appropriate funds for and in their behalf ranks among the highest. This is so because, to quote, “worse than taxation without representation is taxation without appropriation.”

Our people—rich and poor, millennials, millenials and the middle age—contribute in paying for the appropriations that we are about to make. Their daily lives are bookends by paying taxes, from the moment they flush that taxed water in their toilets when they wake up, and to the last text message they send at night before they sleep. In between, there is a tax in the 3-in-1 coffee they drink, a tax in every liter of gas in their car, a tax in every noodle they eat for lunch. They cough up taxes from cigarettes they smoke.

The duty to appropriate these taxes falls on us. The rule, when it comes to appropriations, the division of labor is that the Executive proposes and the Congress disposes. But the Executive and Congress are not rivals

for power. They are partners for progress. One checks the other, especially in writing the biggest check in the land, which is the National Budget.

It is in this spirit that we pursue our task of reviewing the Budget. Our intention is not to destroy what the Executive proposes, but to strengthen it—to vet, validate and verify proposed funds, because the Budget is not a document as thin as a bank account, but a massive tome of lines and figures, consisting of more than 10,000 pages, if we include agency submissions; and no person in the bureaucracy can claim that he has perused and parsed every line therein.

So we help the Executive when we spot errors, and discover oversight, when we notice inaccuracies, because these are not the tasks that we do for ourselves but for our people. And because a Representative is embedded in his district, and he is familiar with the lay of his land, oftentimes with Google map-like precision, then he is the best fact-checker on the ground, unlike a deskbound official in central offices who has no idea of what the ledger of names of places he reads in the Budget documents look like.

There are also unforeseen events when the Budget is being discussed in which the House is prompted to make alterations because the budgets are not tablets from Mount Sinai whose contents are chiseled in stone. For example, a powerful typhoon, named “Ompong” which changed the landscape should also lead to some minor modifications in the Budget. If it is impervious to these happenings, then the Budget ceases to be relevant. Why? Because the Budget from the Executive must not be meant to be approved in toto, it is even forbidden to cross the t’s and dot the i’s. There are also man-made developments, some of which are of policy kind, which warrant a coping mechanism through the Budget. If we are about to enter into a rice tariffication regime, then we should not buttress the defenses of our local growers before it takes effect, not after.

There are some intervening events which occur during the Budget execution phase and the Budget, this important document, should not be firewalled against them.

When we spot errors in the course of our review, we serve the President's cause in the people's interest if we correct those. We betray their trust if we remain silent. But having said that, Mme. Speaker, the tradition is we do not stray away from the President's wishes. In the case of the Budget before us, it will ratify and approve the specs as approved from the originator.

Walang kaltas, walang bawas. Kung titimbangin, walang kulang. Ang mangyayari pa ay papalakin ang programa. And as I would explain later, there is an amount equivalent to less than 2 percent of the Budget, a drop in the bucket, which we will move from other presidential programs.

This is to be done in a manner that is transparent, open and compliant with the laws of the land, including Supreme Court decisions on public expenditure.

In this Budget, allow me, Mme. Speaker, to give an overview of the amendments to be made:

An additional amount of P5 billion for the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund, P5.5 billion for typhoon Ompong rehabilitation which hit the cereal and salad bowls of the Philippines. We should remember Cagayan Valley is number one and number two in corn and rice production. The CAR is our salad bowl; Ilocos Region is also an agricultural powerhouse.

The Health Facilities Enhancement Program or the HFEP and the Department of Education, Department of Health—P3 billion. This was reduced to practically nil at P50 million, but hospitals need equipment. With more people getting sick, they should be in the state perpetually upgrading barangay health centers in the negative list.

The Health Human Resource Development Bureau, DOH, P3 billion, to stave off the mass layoff of 6,000 nurses and doctors and dentists as well. The Capital Outlay, P1.2 billion for State Universities and Colleges to complement free public college. As enrollments surge, SUCs need facility expansion. This will be pegged at an average of P10 million per SUC.

For the tech-voc labs in the DepEd, P3 billion. This addresses the missing link in the K to 12. This guarantees that graduates are job-ready, which is the K to 12's unfulfilled main promise. Without these labs, where will our students learn the skills?

The roads to decongest traffic in urban areas, P11 billion. This is to decongest traffic in urban areas in the hope of partially relieving the daily calvary of our commuters.

The roads to be identified under tourism areas—these are intended to boost tourism receipts by easing the access to tourist draws. If you build them, they will come.

The roads to trade areas, economic zones, livelihood centers and markets—P10 billion, because to create jobs, roads through which commerce and workers will pass are indispensable.

The agricultural farm-to-market roads, P5 billion. This partially restores the P5-billion cut in DA and to comply with all the safety nets pledged to our farmers.

*At this juncture, the Chair designates Deputy Speaker Fredenil "Fred" H. Castro as the Acting Floor Leader.*

## ROLL CALL

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). Mr. Chairman, I move that we call the roll of Members of the Committee of the Whole House.

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

The Secretary General will please call the roll of Members.

*The Secretary General called the roll, and the result is reflected in the Journal of the Committee of the Whole House, dated September 18, 2018.\**

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Mr. Chairman, the roll call shows that 198 Members responded to the call.

THE CHAIRMAN. With 198 Members, more than the one-fifth requirement for the convening of a Committee of the Whole House, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). Mr. Chairman, I move that we adopt the ground rules of the Committee of the Whole House, copies of which have been distributed to the Members earlier.

THE CHAIRMAN. Is there any objection to the motion? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the ground rules for the Committee of the Whole House are hereby adopted.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). Mr. Chairman, I move that we amend House Bill No. 8169, contained in Committee Report No. 854, as follows:

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

\* See ANNEX (printed separately)

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). From A. Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH):

NCR

Multi-Purpose Facilities – P30 million  
Flood Control/Drainage – P30 million  
National Roads/Bridges – none  
Local Roads/Bridges – P145 million  
Water Supply – none  
Total – P205 million

REGION I

Flood Control/Drainage – none  
National Roads/Bridges – P252,045,000  
Local Roads/Bridges – P980 million  
Total – P1,232,045,000

CAR

Flood Control/Drainage – P600 million  
National Roads/Bridges – P2,200,000,000  
Local Roads/Bridges – P1,300,000,000  
Total – P4,100,000,000

REGION II

Multi-Purpose Facilities – P20 million  
Flood Control/Drainage – none  
National Roads/Bridges – none  
Local Roads/Bridges – P231 million  
Water Supply – none  
Total – P251 million

REGION III

Multi-Purpose Facilities – P65 million  
Flood Control/Drainage – P2,827,000,000  
National Roads/Bridges – P250 million  
Local Roads/Bridges – P273 million  
Total – 3,415,000,000

REGION IV-A

Multi-Purpose Facilities - P499,500,000  
Flood Control/Drainage - P304 million  
National Roads/Bridges - P2,320,616,000  
Local Roads/Bridges - P1,300,000,000  
Water Supply - P1,500,000  
Total - P4,425,616,000

Region IV-B

Multi-Purpose Facilities - P385 million  
Flood Control/Drainage - P2,939,000,000  
National Roads/Bridges - P4,998,000,000  
Local Roads/Bridges - P2,055,000,000  
Water Supply - P5 million  
Total - P10,382,000,000

Region V

Multi-Purpose Facilities - P215 million

Flood Control/Drainage - P5,965,000,000  
National Roads/Bridges - P1,458,000,000  
Local Roads/Bridges - P1,560,000,000  
Total - P9,198,000,000

Region VI

Flood Control/Drainage - P30 million  
Local Roads/Bridges - P1,148,400,000  
Total - P1,178,400,000

Region VII

Multi-Purpose Facilities, P10 million  
National Roads/Bridges - P400 million  
Local Roads/Bridges - P165 million  
Total - P575 million

Region VIII

Multi-Purpose Facilities - P120 million  
Flood Control/Drainage - P220 million  
National Roads/Bridges - P1,005,164,000  
Local Roads/Bridges - P3,445,000,000  
Water Supply - P20 million  
Total - P4,810,164,000

Region X

Flood Control/Drainage - P200 million  
National Roads/Bridges - P1,450,000,000  
Local Roads/Bridges - P321,907,000  
Total - P1,971,907,000

Region XI

Multi-Purpose Facilities – P437,900,000  
Flood Control/Drainage – P400 million  
National Roads/Bridges – P950,000,000  
Local Roads/Bridges – P3,571,890,000  
Water Supply – P38,100,000  
Total – P5,397,890,000

Region XII

Local Roads/Bridges – P70 million  
Total – P70 million

Region XIII

Multi-Purpose Facilities – P30 million  
Flood Control/Drainage – P1 billion  
National Roads/Bridges – P1,560,000,000  
Local Roads/Bridges – P1,990,000,000  
Total – P4,580,000,000

Total

Multi-Purpose Facilities – P1,812,400,000  
Flood Control/Drainage – P14,515,000,000  
National Roads/Bridges – P16,843,825,000  
Local Roads/Bridges – P18,556,197,000  
Water Supply – P64,600,000  
Overall Total – P51,792,022,000

- To:
- A. Department of Education (DepEd)  
Construction of Tech-Voc Laboratories – P3 billion
  - B. Department of Agriculture (DA)  
Farm-to-Market Roads – P5 billion
  - C. State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)  
Capital Outlays – P1,200,000,000
  - D. Department of Health (DOH)  
Human Resources for Health Deployment – P3 billion  
Health Facilities Enhancement Program – P3 billion
  - E. Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)  
Construction/Improvement of Access Roads Leading to Tourism Destinations – P10,800,000,000  
Construction/Improvement of Access Roads Leading to Trades, Industries, Economic Zones and Livelihood Centers – P10,792,000,000  
Construction of Roads and Bridges to Decongest Traffic – P10 billion
  - F. National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Fund  
Capital Outlays – P5 billion  
Total – P51,792,000,000

I so move, Mr. Chairman.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes. Is that an objection to the motion?

REP. ATIENZA. No, Mr. Chairman. I would like to merely clarify from the Majority Leader, what are these figures that he just read into the records. Are these different from what we have already studied in the books, Proposed Budget for 2019, or are these reductions or additions?

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). These are reductions and the consequent addition to expenditure items contained in the NEP.

REP. ATIENZA. So, ito pong mga binasa ang bagong figures nito ng ating pag-uusapang Budget.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Ito po iyong mga tinanggal.

Ito po ay napapaloob muna sa ating Expenditure Program at nasa loob po niyan ay mayroon tayong mga tinanggal worth P52 billion at, consequently, iyong pinaglaanan po ng P52 billion din na iyan. So, wala pong nabawas sa kabuuang halaga ng ating Budget.

Nagkaroon lang po ng paggalaw sa loob ng ating panukalang batas.

REP. ATIENZA. Samakatuwid, Mr. Chairman, itong mga binasa sa ating records ngayon ang mga bagong figures ...

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Opo.

REP. ATIENZA. ... na ating pag-uusapan sa Appropriations?

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes, po. Totoo po.

REP. ATIENZA. Hindi po binanggit ng ating Majority Leader iyan when we talked about billions and billions and hundreds of millions without really us knowing what it is all about.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes.

REP. ATIENZA. Now, the Chair is about to call for a vote. So, we do not know what we are voting on. I hope the other Members of Congress are as interested as this Representation. We should know what we are going to vote on. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Thank you very much. So, ito pong pagbobotohan natin, ito po iyong magiging basehan ng ating tatalakayin bukas sa pagsimula po natin ng pormal na budget hearing.

This will be the Committee Report which will then be the basis for our budget hearings tomorrow.

REP. ATIENZA. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes.

REP. ATIENZA. Just one minor point.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes, Sir.

REP. ATIENZA. We have a copy of the ground rules.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes, Sir.

REP. ATIENZA. Ito po bang ground rules na ito ay to cover just this particular item ...

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes, Sir.

REP. ATIENZA. ... and will not apply to the discussions of the details of the Appropriation?

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). This is merely the ground rules for our meeting of the Committee of the Whole this afternoon.

REP. ATIENZA. For today.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes, Sir.

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Okay. There is a motion to approve the amendments.

REP. VILLANUEVA. Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). There being no objection, the motion is carried.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. VILLANUEVA. Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes.

REP. VILLANUEVA. Yes, may we be ...

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). You are recognized.

REP. VILLANUEVA. ... furnished a copy of the Report as read by the Majority Leader, ...

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes.

REP. VILLANUEVA. ... so that we can be properly apprised ...

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes.

REP. VILLANUEVA. ... as to the reduction.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). We are about to distribute the copies.

REP. VILLANUEVA. Thank you. When will we receive the copy, Mr. Chairman?

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). In a few minutes. Just allow the...

REP. VILLANUEVA. Thank you, thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). ... Majority Leader to propound the proper motion.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.) Mr. Chairman, I move that we approve the amendments introduced in the Committee Report.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes, there is a motion. Is there no objection? (*Silence*)

REP. ATIENZA. Objection, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). The motion is carried.

REP. TINIO. Mr. Chairman, objection.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Chair.

REP. TINIO. Objection.

REP. ATIENZA. Before we vote on it, we strongly urge the leadership to give us a copy of what has been read. We do not have a copy of whatever was said and we have no basis to vote intelligently.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Okay. Let me fix the situation. Majority Leader, may I have a motion to instruct the Secretary General to prepare the Report of the Committee of the Whole on House Bill No. 8169, as contained in Committee Report No. 854 for the consideration of the Body.

May I have that motion.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). Mr. Chairman, I move that the action of the Committee of the Whole be reported to the Speaker, Mr. Chairman.

I so move, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Okay. The Secretary General ...

REP. TINIO. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Let me finish first.

REP. TINIO. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). What is the inquiry?

REP. TINIO. Mr. Chairman, according to our ground rules which were approved just a few minutes earlier, each Member shall be given a period of five minutes to interpellate, pose clarificatory questions and introduce amendments.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes.

REP. TINIO. So far, it is only the Majority Leader that has propounded amendments and based on my understanding, he is already moving for a reporting out

the proceedings. So, I would like to clarify whether or not a Member like myself will still have an opportunity, as stated in the rules, to interpellate and propose amendments.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes, go ahead.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). Mr. Chairman, I reiterate the motion that we instruct the Secretary General to prepare the report to be submitted to the Speaker.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). For the consideration of the Body, the motion is—any objection to that motion so that anyone—everyone can have a chance to read the Committee Report. No objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is carried.

#### SUSPENSION OF MEETING

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). The meeting is suspended to allow the Secretary General to give the Members a copy of the Committee Report.

The session is suspended.

*It was 5:10 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF MEETING

*At 5:36 p.m., the meeting was resumed.*

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). The meeting of the Committee of the Whole House is now resumed.

Before we proceed, just a clarification, Majority Leader. How much was the amount earmarked for the construction of tech-voc laboratories? For clarity.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). It is P3 billion, Mr. Chairman—P3.22 billion, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). So, P3 billion. For clarity's sake.

Thank you very much.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). With that clarification, Mr. Chairman, ...

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Please proceed, Majority Leader.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). With that clarification, Mr. Chairman, the total amount would be P51,792,022,000.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Okay, thank you for that clarification.

Please proceed, Majority Leader.

#### SUSPENSION OF MEETING

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). Mr. Chairman, may we request for a one-minute suspension of the meeting.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). The meeting is suspended for one minute.

*It was 5:37 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF MEETING

*At 5:37 p.m., the meeting was resumed.*

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). The session is resumed.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). Mr. Chairman, since copies of the report of the Committee of the Whole House containing amendments to House Bill No. 8169, as contained in Committee Report No. 854, prepared by the Secretariat, have been distributed to all Members present, I move that we approve said report, Mr. Chairman.

REP. TINIO. Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). There is a motion to ...

REP. TINIO. Mr. Chairman, if I may be recognized.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). I will allow a manifestation, Congressman Tinio. We are in the process of voting. You have one minute to make a manifestation.

REP. TINIO. Well, Mr. Chairman, the Sponsor is moving for the adoption of amendments totaling P51.7 billion, over P31 billion of which are lump sums in the DPWH's budget under Construction/Improvement of Access Roads Leading to Tourism Destinations, others would be Access Roads Leading to Economic Zones and Livelihood Centers, and the last would be under Roads and Bridges to Decongest Traffic. So, these are lump sums with no details.

So, based on previous experiences with the PDAF and the corruption related to the approval of such lump sums, I am concerned that, at this point, no details are

being provided as to the where and when, the what, the where, in other words, the details of the projects, such as what these projects are, where they will be implemented, and so on, Mr. Chair.

So, that is my main concern with respect to the motion of the Sponsor.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). Thank you very much.

This is really a Committee Report and the details needed by the Honorable Tinio will be filled during the period of actual amendments which is to start—the deliberation will start tomorrow. So, in the process of voting, all those in favor of the Committee Report ...

REP. DEL MAR. Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Sir, if we may just finish first the whole—we are ...

REP. DEL MAR. Just a point of inquiry, Mr. Chairman, on the basis of the division of the P51 billion among the 13 regions and the NCR.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). The division is based on the tier 2 allocations given to the Department of Public Works and Highways. Tier 1, if I may explain, refers to projects and expenses necessary for the yearly conduct of the Department and tier 2 are additional allocations given to the Department by the DBM. I hope this satisfies the query.

REP. DEL MAR. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Let us proceed. Those in favor ...

REP. DEL MAR. Mr. Chairman, just one minute. The highest is P10 billion; the second highest is P9 billion; the third highest is P5 billion. As compared to the first three lowest which are: Region XII, P70 million; second, the NCR, P205 million; and third, Region II with only P251 million; fourth, which is what I am rising on, is that my region, Region VII, is just P575 million, Mr. Chairman. So, I would just like to be elucidated on how the distribution was made so that, perhaps, we can make the necessary adjustments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes. Thank you very much.

REP. ZARATE. Mr. Speaker.

THE CHAIRMAN. We are now...

REP. ZARATE. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). This will be ...

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). We are in the process of voting, Mr. Chairman, which could not be interrupted.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). This will be the last that the Chair will entertain ...

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). ... before we strictly enforce the rules of the House.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Earlier, Mr. Chairman, Congressman Tinio inquired as to our approved ground rules where it was stated that each Member is allowed five minutes to interpellate, pose clarificatory questions and introduce amendments. In fact, we are readying with our clarificatory questions and possibly some amendments, Mr. Chairman. So, where are we now? Can we still pose our clarificatory questions and introduce amendments? For example, in these proposed amendments here, we also want to add that we give P10 billion, for example, to the National Food Authority for their procurement fund of palay with the situation now that we have a rice crisis. So, can we still do that, Mr. Chairman?

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Yes, most definitely in the period of amendments when we tackle the actual Budget. Please be reminded that it is merely a Committee Report which will only serve as the basis of our actual hearing on the Budget for tomorrow. I apologize Congressman Zarate that the inquiry is out of time.

Thank you very much.

#### VIVA VOCE VOTING

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). As many as are in favor of the Committee Report, please say *aye*.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. *Aye*.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). As many as are opposed, please say *nay*.

FEW MEMBERS. *Nay*.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). The *ayes* have it; the motion is approved.

REP. CASTRO (F.H.). Mr. Chairman, pursuant to Section 13, Rule XVIII of the House, the Chairman is instructed to report its action to the House.

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). Noted.

ADJOURNMENT OF COMMITTEE MEETING

THE CHAIRMAN (Rep. Andaya). The meeting of the Committee of the Whole House is now adjourned.

*It was 5:44 p.m.*