Journal of the House of Representatives

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2014 – 2015

JOURNAL NO. 17
Monday to Thursday, September 15 to 18 and
Monday to Friday, September 22 to 26, 2014

Prepared by the
JOURNAL SERVICE
Plenary Affairs Bureau
JOURNAL NO. 17
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CALL TO ORDER

At 10:00 a.m., Monday, September 15, 2014, Deputy Speaker Carlos M. Padilla called the session to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM AND PRAYER

Pursuant to Section 72, Rule XI of the Provisional Rules of the House, the Members sang the National Anthem and thereafter, observed a minute of silent prayer.

DEFERMENT OF THE ROLL CALL

On motion of Representative Juan Pablo “Rimpy” P. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body deferred the calling of the Roll.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Whereupon, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body approved Journal No. 16, dated September 10, 2014.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Reference of Business.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read on First Reading the titles of the following Bills, including the Messages from the Senate, Communications, and Committee Reports, which were referred to the appropriate Committees as hereunder indicated:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 4976, entitled:

“AN ACT EXCLUDING A CERTAIN PORTION OF PARCEL NO. II, FORBES PARK RESERVATION, LOCATED IN BAGUIO CITY, FROM THE OPERATION OF PROCLAMATION NO. 10, DATED 09 FEBRUARY 1924, AND DECLARING THE EXCLUDED PORTION AS RESIDENTIAL LAND OPEN TO DISPOSITION UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 730, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘AN ACT TO PERMIT THE SALE WITHOUT PUBLIC AUCTION OF PUBLIC LANDS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES TO QUALIFIED APPLICANTS UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS’”

By Representative Aliping
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill No. 4977, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN BARANGAY TANONG, CITY OF MARIKINA, TO BE KNOWN AS TANONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Teodoro
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 4978, entitled:

“AN ACT FURTHER AMENDING PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 269, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION DECREES”

By Representative Paduano
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

House Bill No. 4979, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING THE RANKING SYSTEM IN THE HIRING AND SELECTION OF TEACHERS IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Ong
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE
House Bill No. 4980, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING ENABLING MECHANISMS FOR MEANINGFUL YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN NATION BUILDING, STRENGTHENING THE SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN, CREATING THE MUNICIPAL, CITY AND PROVINCIAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Castelo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 4981, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING NOVEMBER 8 OF EVERY YEAR AS THE ‘DAY OF RISING’ - A DAY TO PLANT TREES, TO MEANINGFULLY REMEMBER ARBOR DAY, AND TO REKINDLE THE BAYANIHAN SPIRIT- VENERATING A YEAR OF SURVIVAL AFTER TYPHOON YOLANDA”

By Representative Leachon

TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REFORESTATION

House Bill No. 4982, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL TECHNICAL - VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY NASISI, CITY OF LIGAO, PROVINCE OF ALBAY, TO BE KNOWN AS THE LIGAO CITY NATIONAL TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Gonzalez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 4983, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTION SIX LETTER A AND B OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1169, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CHARTER OF THE PHILIPPINE CHARITY SWEEPSTAKES OFFICE”

By Representatives Bravo (A.) and Paez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

With the permission of the Body, the following Members were made coauthors of the Bills and Resolutions hereunder indicated:

Rep. Michael Angelo C. Rivera for House Bills No. 245, 3925 and 4690 and House Resolution No. 931;

Rep. Cheryl P. Deloso-Montalla for House Bills No. 151, 4114, 4352 and 4714 and House Resolution No. 809;

Rep. Raymond Democrito C. Mendoza for House Bills No. 2484 and 4022 and House Resolution No. 809;

Rep. Emi G. Calixto-Rubiano for House Bill No. 4668;

Rep. Xavier Jesus "XJ" D. Romualdo for House Resolution No. 928;

Rep. Arthur C. Yap for House Bill No. 4724;

Rep. Benjamin C. Agarao Jr. for House Bill No. 4690;

Rep. Belma A. Cabilao for House Bills No. 151, 3511 and 4690 and House Resolution No. 819;

Rep. Anthony G. Del Rosario for House Bill No. 4829;

Rep. Raneo E. Abu for House Resolution No. 1276;

Rep. Deogracias B. Ramos Jr. for House Bills No. 4477 and 4728;

Reps. Maryam Napii Arbison, Mylene J. Garcia-Albano, Noel L. Villameuva, Jim Hataman-Salliman, Neptali M. Gonzales II, Salvio B. Fortuno and Jorge "Bolet" Banal for House Bill No. 4477;


Rep. Gina P. De Venecia for House Bills No. 4714 and 4728;

Rep. Scott Davies S. Lanete, M.D. for House Bill No. 4273;
Reps. Sitti Djalia A. Turabin-Hataman and Jonathan A. Dela Cruz for House Bill No. 4375;

Rep. Reynaldo V. Umali for House Bill No. 4973;

Rep. Michael Angelo C. Rivera for House Bill No. 945;


Rep. Mercedes C. Cagas for House Bill No. 4477;

Rep. Jesulito A. Manalo for House Bills No. 1823 and 4728;

Rep. Eric L. Olivarez for House Bills No. 2835 and 4511;

Reps. Juliette T. Uy and Rene L. Relampagos for House Bill No. 4728;

Reps. Arcadio H. Gorriceta, Franklin P. Bautista, Manuel M. Iway, Juliette T. Uy and Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba for House Bill No. 4777; and


MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

Message dated September 8, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 2055, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING RESULTING THE PRACTICE OF FORESTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES, REPEALING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED SIXTY-TWO HUNDRED THIRTY-NINE, KNOWN AS ‘THE FORESTRY PROFESSION LAW’, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives

TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

Message dated September 8, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 2103, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF METALLURGICAL ENGINEERING IN THE PHILIPPINES, REPEALING FOR THIS PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREES NUMBERED 1536, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE METALLURGICAL ENGINEERING LAW OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives

TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

Message dated September 8, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 2277, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE OPEN HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM IN THE PHILIPPINES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMUNICATIONS

Letters dated 8 September 2014 of Dominador J. Villanueva, Acting Deputy General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, transmitting to the House of Representatives duly certified and authenticated Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas issuances, to wit:

1. Circular No. 845 (corrected copy) dated 15 August 2014;
2. Circular No. 846 dated 22 August 2014;
5. Circular No. 847 dated 28 August 2014;
6. Circular Letter No. CL-2014-045 dated 28 August 2014; and

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES
Memorandum dated September 2, 2014 of the Honorable Speaker Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., re: the Notification of Ms. Rosalinda H. Borja, Director II, Human Resource Management Service, regarding the Subpoena Duces Tecum dated 29 May 2014 issued by Silverio T. Manuel Jr., Director, General Investigation Bureau-A, Office of the Ombudsman in FF-C-14-0095 directing the submission before their office clear and certified true copies of documents pertaining to Ms. Ma. Cristina L. Miranda, Political Affairs Officer III, Office of Hon. Ma. Victoria R. Sy-Alvarado, Representative, 1st District of Bulacan, which has been determined to be consistent with the privileges and rights of the House of Representatives and a proper exercise of jurisdiction by the Office of the Ombudsman.

Memorandum dated September 4, 2014 of the Honorable Speaker Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., re: the Notification of Ms. Rosalinda H. Borja, Director II, Human Resource Management Service, regarding the Subpoena Duces Tecum in CPL-C-08-1426, issued by Ferdinand Q. San Joaquin, Acting Director, Office of the Ombudsman, dated 1 September 2014, directing the submission before their office within five (5) days from receipt, clear and certified true copies of the leave cards, daily time records and return to work orders concerning the following Legislative Security Guards at the House of Representatives:

1. Mario Gene C. Barreto
2. Juanita T. Burce
3. Armulfo C. Delos Santos
4. Ernesto P. Dulay, Jr.
5. Alguideo R. Labastida
6. Ronald C. Pavico
7. Crispo C. Peñamante
8. Antonio Emma A. Ramiro
9. Emmanuel C. Rodriguez
10. Romualdo P. Romualdo
11. May P. Rubete
12. Emmie Zason

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report by the Committee on Housing and Urban Development (Committee Report No. 422), re H. No. 87, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTING REFORMS IN THE GOVERNMENT’S DRIVE AGAINST PROFESSIONAL SQUATTERS AND SQUATTING RACKETEER/S OR SYNDICATES, STRENGTHENING THE MECHANISMS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7279, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

recommending its approval with amendments

Sponsors: Representatives Benitez and Bagatsing

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Public Works and Highways (Committee Report No. 423), re H. No. 4012, entitled:

“AN ACT RENAMING THE GUREL – BOKOD – KABAYAN – ABATAN ROAD IN THE PROVINCE OF BENGUET TO CONG. ANDRES ACOP COSALAN ROAD”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Cosalan and Bulut-Begtang

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Public Works and Highways (Committee Report No. 424), re H. No. 4013, entitled:

“AN ACT RENAMING THE ACOP – TUBLAY, KAPANGAN – KIBUNGAN – BAKUN – SINIPSIP, BUGUIAS SECONDARY NATIONAL ROAD IN THE PROVINCE OF BENGUET TO GOV. BADO DANGWA NATIONAL ROAD”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Cosalan and Bulut-Begtang

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 425), re H. No. 4988, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DELINEATION OF THE SPECIFIC FOREST LIMITS OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill Nos. 1625, 2041 and 3578

Sponsors: Representatives Matugas, Ungab, Rodriguez (R.), Rodriguez (M.), Escudero and Acosta-Alba

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Health (Committee Report No. 426), re H. No. 4989, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING THE EXPLOITATION OF VOLUNTEER REGISTERED NURSES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS,
CLINICS AND HEALTH FACILITIES AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill Nos. 409, 415 and 2145

Sponsors: Representatives Eriguel, Yap (S.), Yap (A.) and De Jesus

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs (Committee Report No. 427), re H. No. 4990, entitled:

“AN ACT GOVERNING THE OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE ADMINISTRATION”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill Nos. 156, 2053 and 3254

Sponsor: Representative Bello (W.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

MOTION OF REP. BONDOC

Thereupon, Rep. Bondoc moved for the consideration on Second Reading of Committee Report No. 421 on House Bill No. 4968, and there being no objection thereto, the Body approved the motion.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Chair suspended the session at 10:05 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

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

BUSINESS FOR THE DAY:

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 421 ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered on Second Reading House Bill No. 4968, as contained in Committee Report No. 421 and submitted by the Committee on Appropriations.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Bill, to wit:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

As copies of the Bill had been distributed to the Members, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the text of the measure without prejudice to its insertion into the Record of the House.


SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. UNGAB

At the outset, Rep. Ungab underscored the importance of enacting a national budget that the Filipino people expect and truly value and that will bring about prosperity, justice and peace and help the Filipinos break away from the perennial economic malaise and poverty. He stated that it is their sworn task and duty as public servants and trustees to ensure the judicious use of public funds in the appropriation of every single centavo that the Filipinos had contributed to the national coffers and in seeing to it that the national budget will not only provide them and the future generations of Filipinos with a better life but also of their share to representative democracy.

Rep. Ungab thereafter explained that House Bill No. 4968 is anchored on the budget theme and premise of “Paggugol na Matuwid: Kaunlaran Para sa Lahat” and is intended to serve as the Administration’s financial blueprint to achieve inclusive and sustained development, immediate relief from poverty, and continued economic progress. He added that the 2015 national budget also seeks to conform to the President’s social contract with the Filipino people, specifically in addressing five priority areas: transparent, accountable and participatory governance; poverty reduction and empowerment of the poor and vulnerable; rapid, inclusive and sustained economic growth; just and lasting peace and the rule of law; and integrity of the environment and climate adaptation and mitigation.

In order to authorize funds for the operations of the government and to implement the Administration’s fiscal, developmental, and socioeconomic programs for 2015, Rep. Ungab underscored that the Committee on Appropriations is sponsoring a 2015 GAB amounting to ₱2.606 trillion, composed of ₱1.740 trillion in programmed new appropriations and
automatic appropriations of ₱866 billion. He also stated that the measure seeks to authorize new general appropriations amounting to ₱1.863 trillion, consisting of ₱1.740 trillion in programmed new appropriations and ₱123 billion in unprogrammed appropriations.

While the total budget appears to be huge at face value, the Sponsor emphasized that only about 36% or ₱937.5 billion thereof may be the subject of congressional debate because the bulk of 64% already goes to mandatory expenditure items, such as the allocations for Personnel Services (PS), Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA), and other automatic appropriations. He thereafter mentioned the breakdown of the budget pie by sector and by expense class before subsequently explaining the sources of financing the GAB and citing several of the priority programs to be funded in 2015.

As he is firmly convinced that the proposed national budget is a budget of and for the Filipino people since it has been defined and designed to advance their interest and bridge the country to an equitable development for all Filipinos, Rep. Ungab requested the Members to support the early passage of the said Bill without sacrificing the objective scrutiny of all its provisions. He then expressed his gratitude to the House leadership, the vice chairpersons and members of the sponsoring Committee, and the representatives from both the Majority and Minority blocs for their active participation in the budget briefings and hearings, as well as to the members of the Committee technical staff and other officials and employees of the House Secretariat for the excellent services they rendered during the Committee meetings.

DEBATE ON THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND PROVISIONS OF THE 2015 GAB

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body opened the Debate on the General Principles and Provisions of the 2015 GAB and subsequently, the Chair recognized Senior Deputy Minority Leader Neri J. Colmenares to interpellate Rep. Ungab.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

Upon recognition by the Chair, Reps. Colmenares and Ungab discussed the one-fund concept which requires all government revenues to accrue to the General Fund. Rep. Colmenares took note of the big number of agencies legally excluded from the one-fund budget concept and said that he would espouse its reduction. He also asked on the funds from 2011 to 2014 of the Malampaya Program, the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (Pagcor), the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), and the Motor Vehicles User’s Charge (MVUC).

The Sponsor replied that the Joint Congressional Oversight Committee on Public Expenditures had been monitoring the implementation and funding of the projects of exempted agencies and would continue to do so. He cited facts and figures on the collections, expenses, balances, and remittances of the aforementioned funds to the Office of the President and the National Treasury.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 10:59 a.m., the Chair motu proprio suspended the session.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:00 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

(Continuation)

After being informed by the Sponsor that the MVUC Fund has a balance of ₱13 billion as of August 2014, Rep. Colmenares next inquired on the total income derived from the MVUC collection.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 11:01 a.m., on motion of Rep. Ungab.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:05 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

(Continuation)

Rep. Ungab clarified that the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) is included in the Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing (BESF), but that it did not submit its 2015 figures to the DBM. He then stressed the need to conduct an oversight check on the matter.

Rep. Colmenares thereafter inquired into the CAAP’s sources of income like its collection of terminal fees.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 11:07 a.m., on motion of Rep. Ungab.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:09 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Thereafter, with the information on the huge income of the CAAP, Rep. Colmenares sought explanation on the sources thereof and its inclusion in the BESF without the corresponding report. He also discussed with Rep. Ungab the item called Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund (MPBF) and why it is given a huge allocation when it always generates savings at the end of a fiscal year. He then questioned the budget allocation for the item Risk Management Program.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 11:18 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:19 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Pursuing his point on the regulatory risk being assumed by the national government in the public-private partnership (PPP) projects, Rep. Colmenares asked why the government appropriates public funds to cover the losses of private corporations involved in PPP projects, and whether said amount should be taken out of the national budget. He also inquired on the proposed budget for the item Support for Infra Projects and Social Programs (SIPSP) which was not included in the previous GABs.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 11:33 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:34 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Reps. Colmenares and Ungab further delved on the P20-billion SIPSP budget which the Sponsor explained provides a buffer for social protection programs that might be needed in the course of the implementation of an infrastructure project. Rep. Ungab further explained that the item is an unprogrammed fund and can be used only under three conditions set forth in the proposed 2015 General Appropriations Act (GAA).

The Members next debated on the amount of ₱53.9 billion allotted under the 2015 GAB for the Equity Value Buy-Out of the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) Corporation for the MRT3 facilities, which the Sponsor said is 80% owned by the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) and the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP).

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Ungab, the Chair suspended the session at 11:43 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:43 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Rep. Colmenares pursued his pending point regarding the equity value buy-out of MRT3.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On another motion of Rep. Ungab, the Chair suspended the session at 11:44 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:50 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Rep. Ungab clarified that technically, the LBP and the DBP own MRT3 but the national government plans to buy it out from the said financial institutions to assume a full takeover of MRT3.

In response to Rep. Colmenares’ query on the legality of a government financial institution (GFI) to own a business enterprise, Rep. Ungab replied that this is not illegal and that the transaction happened during the previous administrations with the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP). He also said that the case of MRT3 is an onerous build-lease-transfer (BLT) deal which must be corrected.

After discussing the ₱800-million appropriation in the General Fund Adjustments for the share of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), the Members next exchanged views on the practice of the national government of coming up with GAAs
where expenditures always exceed revenues thus operating on perennial budget deficits.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Upon request of Rep. Ungab, the Chair suspended the session at 12:17 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 12:22 p.m., the session resumed.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES**

(Continuation)

In reply to the previous query of Rep. Colmenares, Rep. Ungab clarified that the figures cited by Rep. Colmenares as savings in the 2013 National Expenditure Program (NEP) were actually budgetary adjustment transfers for government departments and agencies, and Special Purpose Funds (SPFs), all amounting to ₱330 billion. He added that the supposed “savings” in the NEP were actually budgetary obligations that were carried on to the next two fiscal years. He further stated that the actual deficit in 2013 amounted to ₱164 billion.

Rep. Colmenares further argued against the inherent and skewed budgetary processes that can be gleaned from the practice of the Executive Department of providing in a fiscal year budgetary allocations funded by loans and/or projected revenues that are lesser than the amount of cash disbursements and excluding the use of savings, or unused appropriations, thereby resulting to perennial budgetary deficits. He explained that this perpetuates a situation where the country will not be able to free itself from loans and debts.

He then sought clarification on whether under Section 67 of the NEP, the term “savings” would apply to those funds in the programmed budgetary allocations in the GAA approved by Congress that the Executive Department “has failed to release, and obligate.”

Rep. Ungab replied that the Constitution is explicit in the prohibition on the transfer of funds appropriated by Congress. As regards however to Rep. Colmenares’ question on Section 67 of the NEP, he explained that if a programmed budgetary allocation has been discontinued, in view of justifiable causes, the funds could not be automatically considered as budgetary savings that can be used by their respective departments as there are certain requisites to be observed to consider such funds as savings.

Reps. Colmenares and Ungab continued to discuss about the NEP and how the President can just decide to discontinue a project or program in any district for justifiable cause, and declare savings at any time under the conditions mentioned in the GAA. They also tackled the compliance of agencies with Section 39 of the 2014 GAA regarding the Submission of Financial and Narrative Accomplishment Reports of the different agencies and its posting in their respective websites to fulfill the provision on transparency.

Stressing the need for transparency in view of the huge national budget, Rep. Colmenares held that the websites of different agencies did not contain reports on fund transfer and realignment. He also urged the Members not to redefine the term “savings”.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

At 1:03 p.m., the Chair motu proprio suspended the session until 2:00 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 2:35 p.m.

**REMARKS OF REP. BONDOC**

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Bondoc stated that the parliamentary status of House Bill No. 4968 was that it was still in the debate on the General Principles and Provisions and he thereafter moved to recognize Rep Ungab for his sponsorship of the measure. However, before the Body could act on the motion, the Chair recognized Rep. Terry L. Ridon from Party-List Kabataan on a question of privilege.

**QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. RIDON**

Rep. Ridon spoke to set the record straight on an incident involving him and Senate President Franklin Drilon during a birthday celebration of a House colleague. He related why the Senate President was targeting him personally, citing in particular House Resolution No. 1466 which he had filed to seek an inquiry into the possible cases of corruption and overpricing involving government infrastructure projects contracted with Hilmarc’s Construction Corporation, which included the Iloilo Convention Center.

He explained that he has nothing to apologize for to the Senate President, particularly if he is merely doing his job of putting the proponents of the Iloilo Convention Center to task in view of possible cases of graft and corruption and overpricing of government infrastructure projects. He expressed hope that the requested investigation will commence soon and that
the Committee on Rules will expedite the referral of House Resolution No. 1466 to the Committee on Public Works and Highways.

REFERRAL OF REP. Ridon’S SPEECH

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body referred the speech of Rep. Ridon to the Committee on Rules.

MOTION OF REP. BONDOC

Rep. Bondoc thereafter moved for the recognition of Rep. Ungab to continue with the sponsorship of House Bill No. 4968 or the 2015 GAB.

QUESTION OF QUORUM OF REP. TIANGCO

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Tobias “Toby” M. Tiangco raised a question of quorum.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair suspended the session at 2:45 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:09 p.m.

REMARKS OF REP. BONDOC


INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE

Rep. Zarate’s interpellation centered on the Supreme Court’s decision on the case of Araullo vs. Benigno Aquino III which declared as unconstitutional certain acts and practices under the Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP), as well as National Budget Circular No. 541 and other related issuances, particularly: 1) the withdrawal of unobligated allotments from the implementing agencies and the declaration of such as savings prior to the end of the fiscal year and without complying with the statutory definition of savings embodied in the GAA; 2) the cross-border transfers of the savings of the Executive to augment the appropriations of other offices outside of the Executive; and 3) the funding of projects, activities and programs that were not covered by any appropriation in the GAA.

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Ungab clarified that as of December 2013, the full MRT fund taken from the DAP has amounted to P144 million.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 3:51 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:52 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE (Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Ungab clarified that the last batch of the MRT fund was approved on June 14, 2013. He thereafter explained the funding sources of DAP, like the overall government savings and certain unprogrammed funds.
Subsequently, Rep. Zarate inquired on DAP’s release of funds for the Cordillera People’s Liberation Army (CPLA) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 3:55 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:58 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE
(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Ungab gave the details of the ₱1.82-billion fund released by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) through the Payapa at Masagang Pamayanan (Pamana) program to benefit former CPLA and MNLF members.

Rep. Zarate next asked whether the fund was on top of the ₱1.8 billion given to the ARMM which also benefitted former MNLF rebels.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Ungab, the session was suspended at 4:00 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:00 p.m., the session resumed with Deputy Speaker Henedina R. Abad presiding.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE
(Continuation)

Rep. Ungab clarified that the ARMM Comprehensive Peace and Development Intervention is a different fund and read the details thereof.

On another concern, the Sponsor explained the funding and thrust of the agrarian reform communities (ARC) projects of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR).

Rep. Zarate next sought for a list and status of projects under the DAP. He referred to the Budget Secretary’s statement during the Supreme Court hearing that the program has already served its purpose of pump-priming the economy, and asked why DAP-like mechanisms were still found in the 2015 budget. Finally, he inquired on the itemized list of DAP financing sources which he had previously requested through a letter addressed to the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 4:19 p.m., on motion of Rep. Ungab.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:20 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE
(Continuation)

Rep. Ungab mentioned the consolidated funding sources in the years 2010 to 2013 of the DAP projects. However, Rep. Zarate insisted on getting the details of the sources of funds and also opined that the approval of a new definition of savings and augmentation could pave the way for the Executive to centralize funds without proper accounting. Afterwards, he inquired on the status of the DAP projects which, according to the DBM itself, were fully implemented as of December 31, 2013.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon Rep. Ungab’s motion, the Chair suspended the session at 4:26 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:28 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE
(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Ungab clarified the concerns raised by Rep. Zarate, stating for instance that the 2015 budget was well-prepared, very transparent and available on the Internet for those who would like to question it. He also said that there will be no more dubious budget releases because Congress supports the Executive Department’s decision to strictly implement the budget and expend it immediately to stimulate the economy. He however underscored that there are special cases where augmentation would be an alternative to declaring savings in the GAB.

Rep. Zarate on the other hand pointed out that the redefinition of savings and augmentation institutionalizes a DAP-like mechanism in House Bill No. 4968 which bestows so much power to the Executive to realign, pool funds, and utilize it as they desire. He alleged that the budget now appears to be a huge pork barrel since the discretion for its
disbursements depends on the President, and called on
the Members of Congress to prevent giving such
powers to the Executive.

that the provision to augment savings will be more of
an exception and will be used only when necessary and
will be applied only on items previously approved by
Congress.

SUSPENSION OF THE DEBATE ON
GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND PROVISIONS

Rep. Magtanggol T. Gunigundo I moved for the
suspension of the Debate on the General Principles and
Provisions of House Bill No. 4968.

OBJECTION OF REP. ATIENZA

Rep. Jose L. Atienza Jr. however objected to the
motion.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On subsequent motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the
Chair suspended the session at 4:34 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:38 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION
OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

Whereupon, on motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there
being no objection, the Body suspended the
consideration of House Bill No. 4968.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there
being no objection, the Body proceeded to the
Additional Reference of Business.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General
read on First Reading the titles of the following Bills
which were referred to the appropriate Committees as
hereunder indicated:

House Bill No. 4986, entitled:
“AN ACT PENALIZING THE WRONGFUL
USE OF SIDEWALKS AND PUBLIC
ROADS IN ALL URBAN AREAS AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Bichara

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTA-
TION

House Bill No. 4987, entitled:
“AN ACT GRANTING THE LUNTIAN CABLE
SYSTEMS, INC., A FRANCHISE TO ES-
TABLEISH, CONSTRUCT, INSTALL,
MAINTAIN AND OPERATE FOR COM-
MERCIAL PURPOSES CABLE/COMMU-
NITY ANTENNAE TELEVISION SYS-
TEMS IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Belmonte (J.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE
FRANCHISES

House Bill No. 4991, entitled:
“AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO.
10590, ENTITLED ‘THE OVERSEAS VOT-
ING ACT OF 2013’ ”

By Representatives Manalo and Cosalan

TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND
ELECTORAL REFORM

House Bill No. 4992, entitled:
“AN ACT EXEMPTING THE TAXABLE IN
COME OF AN INDIVIDUAL AMOUNTING
TO P100,000.00 AND LESS, AMENDING
FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 24 (A) (2)
OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVE-
NUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED”

By Representative Del Mar

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND
MEANS

House Bill No. 4993, entitled:
“AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE OFFICE OF
THE OMBUDSMAN, UPGRADE EM-
PLOYEE SKILLS AND AUGMENT COM-
PENSATION AND BENEFITS, ENHANCE
FISCAL AUTONOMY, APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR
THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6770,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE OMBUDS-
MAN ACT OF 1989, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES”

By Representative Del Mar

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE
House Bill No. 4994, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE BASIC LAW FOR THE BANGSAMORO AND ABOLISHING THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9054, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND THE ORGANIC ACT FOR THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO,’ AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6734, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT PROVIDING FOR AN ORGANIC ACT FOR THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO,’ AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Belmonte, (F.), Abad, Aggabao, Apostol, Balindong, Padilla, Puno, Gonzales, Sarmiento (M.), Cojuangco (E.), Mendoza (M.), Madrona, Barzaga, Lagdameo (A.), Andaya, Briones and Mendoza (R.)

TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE BANGSAMORO BASIC LAW

House Bill No. 4995, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A DRUG REHABILITATION CENTER IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PRES. C. P. GARCIA, PROVINCE OF BOHOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Aumentado

TO THE COMMITTEE ON DANGEROUS DRUGS

House Bill No. 4996, entitled:

“AN ACT REDUCING THE CORPORATE INCOME TAX RATE, AMENDING SECTIONS 27 AND 28 OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Aggabao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 4997, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO ABS-CBN CORPORATION (FORMERLY ABS-CBN BROADCASTING CORPORATION) UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7966 OR ‘AN ACT GRANTING ABS-CBN BROADCASTING CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ FOR TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS FROM THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT”

By Representative Aggabao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE FRANCHISES

House Bill No. 4998, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING MAINIT FALLS AND HOT SPRINGS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BROOKE’S POINT, PROVINCE OF PALAWAN AS TOURIST DESTINATION, PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Abueg

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

House Bill No. 4999, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING BAKBAKAN FALLS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BROOKE’S POINT, PROVINCE OF PALAWAN AS TOURIST DESTINATION, PROVIDING FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Abueg

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

ELECTION OF REP. PADUANO TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body elected Rep. Joseph Stephen S. Paduano as additional member of the Committee on Transportation, on the part of Majority.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GUESTS

At this point, Rep. Gina P. De Venecia acknowledged the presence in the Session Hall of guests of Reps. Eric L. Olivarez and Belma A. Cabilao.
SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair suspended the session at 4:43 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:49 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body resumed the consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968, as embodied in Committee Report No. 421 and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations, entitled:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

Rep. Gunigundo stated that the parliamentary status was that the Body was in the period of debate on the General Principles and Provisions of the measure and on his motion, the Chair recognized Reps. Ungab and Antonio L. Tinio for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

Rep. Tinio inquired whether the proposed 2015 GAA includes an appropriation for salary increase for government employees considering that this was already the second year of the implementation of Joint Resolution No. 4 or the Salary Standardization Law III (SSLIII).

Rep. Ungab replied that the study on providing salary increases for government employees was delayed due to the frequent calamities that transpired in 2013. He however stated that in the 2015 GAB, an allocation for the payment of performance enhancement incentive benefits (PEIB) equivalent to a one-month bonus for agencies who can meet their 2014 targets has been included.

Rep. Tinio cited the positive economic impact of another round of salary increases of similar magnitude as SSL III. Rep. Ungab said that they would include the findings of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) as an input to the study being conducted on another round of salary increases for civil servants.

Rep. Tinio further argued on the favorable response to an increase in the salaries of government workers, specifically teachers and non-teaching personnel and cited as an example House Bill No. 245 which he had filed with more than 120 Members as coauthors and which also earned a counterpart measure in the Senate. He opined that only the Executive Department was against the salary increase.

Thereafter, Rep. Tinio adverted to Joint Resolution No. 4 or SSL III and inquired whether the provision in Section 12(a) thereof, earmarking five percent for every P50 billion increase in the programmed new appropriations of the National Budget for the salary increase of government personnel, had been fully implemented. He pointed out that the budgetary allocation for the salary increase would have been sourced from the savings of government agencies and from the GAA.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, the Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 5:05 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:07 p.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO (Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Reps. Ungab and Tinio further debated on the implementation of Section 12(a) of Joint Resolution No. 4, with the former citing the need to study further any proposal to increase the salaries of government workers considering that socio-economic and financial conditions have changed since 2012. Meanwhile, Rep. Tinio proposed for a P12.5-billion salary increase in 2015 to conform with the specific provision of Joint Resolution No. 4, sourced specifically from the P56 billion lump sum appropriations under the “Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund.” He thereafter underscored that the Aquino Administration had deprived government workers of their lawful right to a salary increase.

Rep. Ungab explained that the Committee on Appropriations would consider the proposal at the proper time, or pending the approval of a better compensation package for employees, to include providing a salary increase based on the performance enhancement incentives which is earmarked at eight percent.

Rep. Tinio stressed that he would continue to fight for a salary increase for all government employees in 2015.
SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 5:21 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 5:23 p.m.

REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Upon resumption of session, the Chair requested the guests in the gallery to respect the House and its code of conduct.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO
(Continuation)

Reps. Tinio and Ungab thereafter debated on the use of the Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund (MPBF) in general and funds for unfilled personnel services in particular, as the bulk of the DAP funds. The former cited millions of unpaid salaries, bonuses and allowances of teachers and the proliferation of faculty job orders instead of contractual or regular items positions. The Sponsor affirmed that the government should give priority to said items but remarked that it was best to use unused funds for augmenting productive and economy-boosting projects.

After Rep. Tinio opined that it was bad faith on the part of the PNoy Administration to modify the provision on the priority use of savings so as to include the implementation of priority programs, activities or projects, he and Rep. Ungab debated on the MPBF’s coverage of positions not only in the Executive Branch but also in constitutional offices and the Judiciary.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Pangalian M. Balindong.

They also exchanged opinions on the constitutionality of using the MPBF in augmenting deficiencies in appropriations.

Deputy Speaker Balindong relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Abad.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 6:12 p.m., the Chair motu proprio declared a recess.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 6:17 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO
(Continuation)

Rep. Tinio then said that at the proper time, he would propose to abolish the MPBF and realign it to the personnel services budget of each agency in order to return the control of savings to them. He also suggested to reinstate the 2014 provision “Priority in the Use of Savings,” to which the Sponsor answered that the proposal can be raised during the period of amendments.

He next discussed the 2014 PDAF which he pointed out was realigned to six government agencies and which were also included in the 2015 budget in varying amounts and under different programs, with each Representative having an allocation of almost P95 million in congressional pork. He suggested that at the proper time, the House should introduce special provisions in the budgets of the DPWH, CHED, DOH, DSWD, DOLE and TESDA that prohibit the practice of post-enactment intervention in budget execution by legislators in accordance with the Supreme Court decision on PDAF. He also delved on the request of the DAR to DBM for permission to recalibrate P327.8 million of its current year budget for other purposes.

Rep. Ungab clarified that there was no record that the DBM received such request.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Ungab, the Chair suspended the session at 6:45 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION


INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO
(Continuation)

Reps. Ungab and Tinio discussed the letter which contains the DAR’s request for the “recalibration” or reprioritization of their budget which the DBM approved.

Rep. Tinio then expressed his views on the possible outcome if the House would allow and approve the redefinition of savings and augmentation as proposed by Malacañang; that it could be a precedent in changing the budget in the middle of the year or upon the opinion of government agencies. He also questioned the constitutionality of the term “reprioritization as stated in Section 67 of the General Provisions of House Bill No. 4968.

Rep. Ungab agreed that since the word “reprioritization” is not in the Constitution nor in the
Administrative Code, therefore it must not be permitted.

Rep. Tinio concluded his interpellation by saying that since the Supreme Court decided on certain practices under the DAP as unconstitutional, he called on the Members to reject all redefinition of savings and augmentation as proposed by President Aquino which have found its way into the 2015 GAB. He also called on Congress to respond to the call of the times and of history.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ALEJANO

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair recognized Rep. Gary C. Alejano who initially stated that he fully supports the reform agenda of the President and the 2015 proposed budget. As a neophyte Member, he said that he would like to perform the mandate conferred to him by his constituents to the best of his ability. In this connection, he clarified with Rep. Ungab his following concerns: whether there is a conscious effort on the part of the House leadership to educate the Members regarding the budget process as a whole; whether the budget presentations or briefings of the Executive departments are one and the same as those of the budget deliberations or hearings simultaneously conducted in the House; and whether the DBM prepares and prints the President’s proposed budget while the House Committee on Appropriations prints the GAB and the GAA.

At this juncture, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Henedina R. Abad.

Rep. Alejano then made the following recommendations: a seminar related to the budget be conducted at the House before the start of the budget deliberations next year and every year thereafter; the budget briefings or presentations be conducted separately from the budget deliberations where each department and its attached agencies would present in detail their budget proposals; all the different departments and their regional directors should conduct consultations with the Members during the budget formulation stage; the DBM and the House Committee on Appropriations should print the proposed Executive budget as well as the GAB and the GAA in a font size not smaller than size 11 and with the headings and titles in bold and one font size bigger than its contents; and the House should produce the budget documents in digitized or PDF format.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Ungab, the Chair suspended the session at 7:21 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:30 p.m., the session resumed.

Upon resumption of session, on motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair recognized Rep. Tiangco for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TIANGCO

Rep. Tiangco prefaced his interpellation on the need for an efficient and effective Department of Budget and Management considering its significant responsibility in the preparation of the GAB. He thereafter cited the August 6, 2014 budget briefing given by the DBM before the Committee on Appropriations and inquired from Rep. Ungab whether he could remember the factual events that had transpired during that particular briefing, specifically the questions that he had asked of Secretary Florencio B. Abad and the answers that the latter had provided to him regarding the P144-billion Disbursement Acceleration Program and the DAP funds coursed through the legislators.

Rep. Ungab stated that he will have to ask for a copy of the transcript of said briefing from the Committee secretariat.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, the Chair suspended the session at 7:33 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:36 p.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TIANGCO (Continuation)

In reply to the queries of Rep. Tiangco regarding the issue of DAP, Rep. Ungab cited portions of the transcripts of the aforesaid DBM budget briefing.

Relative to Secretary Abad’s letter to Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. as regards the detailed list of all projects facilitated through the DAP, Rep. Tiangco inquired whether Secretary Abad was willing to certify that the list given him was true and correct.
SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Ungab, the Chair suspended the session at 7:44 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:46 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TIANGCO
(Continuation)

After conferring with Secretary Abad, Rep. Tiangco stated that the former had certified that the copy he was holding was true and correct.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.

Thereafter, Rep. Tiangco inquired on the page where the allocations for legislators were found and asked whether they were holding the same copy of the document since the number of pages they have were different.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 7:49 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:54 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TIANGCO
(Continuation)

Rep. Tiangco stated that for the record, his copy was supposed to be a duplicate of the DBM’s copy and asked how a duplicate can have a different number of pages from the original copy.

Thereafter, Reps. Tiangco and Ungab continued discussing about the DAP projects as listed in a document submitted by Secretary Abad to Speaker Belmonte, along with their Special Allotment Release Order (SARO) numbers and proponents.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 8:07 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 8:09 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TIANGCO
(Continuation)

Rep. Ungab affirmed that the DPWH was the proponent of five more SAROs cited by Rep. Tiangco which lacked the name of any lawmaker.

Whereupon, the latter asked whether they would have to go through the SAROs one by one and total them or there was a faster way to reconcile the P10 billion. Rep. Ungab said that he was giving the breakdown as it appeared in his copy of the document.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio declared a recess at 8:13 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 8:51 p.m.

MOTION OF REP. GUNIGUNDO

Rep. Gunigundo then moved to suspend consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY
OF REP. ATIENZA


SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 8:52 p.m., on motion of Rep. Gunigundo.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:15 p.m.

WITHDRAWAL OF REP. GUNIGUNDO’S MOTION

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Gunigundo withdrew his previous motion to suspend consideration of House Bill No. 4968. He thereafter clarified that the Body was still in the period of sponsorship and debate on the General Principles and Provisions of the 2015 GAB.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. UNGAB

Thereafter, the Chair recognized Rep. Ungab who informed the Body of his agreement with Rep. Tiangco and Secretary Abad that the DBM will submit a new
list of the DAP projects coursed through the lawmakers, which will bear the following information: name of the legislator, SARO number, date of SARO, project amount, and the implementing agency.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. TIANGCO

Rep. Tiangco affirmed the agreement uttered by the Sponsor and thereafter requested that all House Members be furnished with a copy of the new list.

The Chair noted the manifestations of the two Members.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of House Bill No. 4968.

DESIGNATION OF ADDITIONAL HOUSE CONFEREE ON THE DISAGREEING PROVISIONS OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4553 AND SENATE BILL NO. 2274

On a subsequent motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body elected Rep. Celso L. Lobregat as additional House conferee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 4553 and Senate Bill No. 2274, expanding access to educational services by institutionalizing open distance learning in higher education.

DESIGNATION OF ADDITIONAL HOUSE CONFEREE ON THE DISAGREEING PROVISIONS OF HOUSE BILL NO. 3575 AND SENATE BILL NO. 2272

On further motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body also elected Rep. Celso L. Lobregat as additional House conferee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 3575 and Senate Bill No. 2272, strengthening the ladderized interface between technical-vocational education and training and higher education.

DESIGNATION OF HOUSE CONFERENCE ON THE DISAGREEING PROVISIONS OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4860 AND SENATE BILL NO. 2275

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body designated the following as members of the Conference Committee to reconcile the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 4860 and Senate Bill No. 2275, providing scholarship grants to top graduates of all public high schools enrolling for their first year in state universities and colleges: Reps. Roman T. Romulo, Evelina G. Escudero, Celso L. Lobregat, Juliet R. Cortuna, Leah S. Paquiz, and Luzviminda C. Ilagan.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body resumed the consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968, as embodied in Committee Report No. 421 and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations, entitled:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOF AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Finance (DOF) and its attached agencies and corporation.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair suspended the session at 9:21 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:22 p.m.


SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. QUISUMBING

Rep. Quisumbing presented for the Body’s consideration the 2015 proposed budget of the DOF and its attached agencies and corporations in the amount of P14.346 billion.
INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP

Rep. Hicap discussed with Rep. Quisumbing his following concerns: the target collection of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) for 2014-2015 on the implementation of its memorandum order seeking to tax the allowances, benefits and other bonuses of government employees; and its target and actual revenue collections for the period 2011-2014.

He expressed concern on the plight of the government workers with respect to the implementation of the said MO vis-à-vis the continuing increases in the prices of food, water, electricity, tuition fees, and other basic commodities and services.

Rep. Quisumbing stated that the BIR is not unsympathetic to their plight but is merely implementing an existing law that was passed by Congress. He said that he would gladly join Rep. Hicap in reviewing the law on how they can adjust or amend the existing regulations to mitigate the impact of the BIR order.

At this juncture, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Abad.

Rep. Quisumbing explained that the actual collection of taxes from 2011 to 2013 was short of the revenue targets but there was not much discrepancy.

Rep. Hicap further inquired whether the reason for the imposed tax laws to ordinary workers is to source out more tax revenues for the government. He expressed the opinion that prejudicial and stringent tax laws should be the focus of legislative remedial measures to address, in particular, the deleterious effects of the value-added tax (VAT) law. He argued that workers, laborers, and ordinary employees, subject to the automatic deduction of withholding tax, are further marginalized by instances of tax evasion and the nonpayment of correct taxes by corporations and high-income earning individuals.

Rep. Quisumbing, in reply, maintained that the BIR is merely implementing the existing laws and that the implementation is not selectively applicable to only a few, but to all who should be paying correct taxes.

Thereupon, Rep. Hicap asked the chairperson of the Committee on Appropriations to provide him with the requisite data pertaining to the tax revenues that had been generated from corporate taxes, individual income taxes, and VAT.

Rep. Quisumbing replied that the Committee would comply with the request.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair suspended the session at 9:55 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:01 p.m.

REMARKS OF REP. GUNIGUNDO

Rep. Gunigundo stated that the parliamentary status was that the Body was in the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DOF and its attached agencies and corporation. Upon his motion, the Chair recognized Rep. Jonathan A. Dela Cruz for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz initially inquired on the circumstances leading to a DAP-supported funding coursed through the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) for payment of the Societe Generale de Surveillance (SGS) and how it obtained a loan from the Philippine National Bank (PNB).

Thereafter, Rep. Dela Cruz requested that the discussions on the proposed budgets of the DOF and its attached agencies and corporation be deferred in the meantime pending submission of the documents and contracts relative to his inquiry.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair suspended the session at 10:12 p.m. upon Rep. Gunigundo's motion.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:12 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOF AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body suspended the consideration of the proposed budgets of the DOF and its attached agencies and corporation.
SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

Subsequently, on another motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968 or the 2015 GAB.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Likewise, on motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Chair suspended the session until ten o’clock in the morning of Tuesday, September 16, 2014.

It was 10:13 p.m., Monday, September 15, 2014.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, September 16, 2014, the session resumed with Deputy Speaker Roberto V. Puno presiding.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

On motion of Rep. Franz E. Alvarez, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Additional Reference of Business.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read on First Reading the titles of the following Resolutions, including the Message from the President, which were referred to the appropriate Committees hereunder indicated:

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 1482, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT THRU HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT BENIGNO S. AQUINO III TO ISSUE A MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR TO FULLY IMPLEMENT THE MUTUAL RECOGNITION AGREEMENTS/ARRANGEMENTS (MRAs) ENTERED BY THE ASEAN MEMBER STATES SUCH AS THE BRUNEI-DARUSSALAM, INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, PHILIPPINES (BIMP-EAGA) AND OTHER ASEAN MEMBER STATES AFFECTING EIGHT (8) PROFESSIONS IN THE COUNTRY, INCLUDING ENGINEERING SERVICES, NURSING SERVICES, ARCHITECTURE, SURVEYING, MEDICAL PRACTICE, DENTAL PRACTICE, ACCOUNTANCY AND TOURISM SERVICES ENSURING ENHANCEMENT MEASURES AND SAFETY NETS IN THE LIGHT OF THE ASEAN INTEGRATION IN 2015”

By Representative Leonen-Pizarro

TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EAST ASEAN GROWTH AREA

House Resolution No. 1483, entitled:

“PHILIPPINE ARMY DRAGON BOAT FEDERATION (IDBF) CLUB CREWS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN RAVENNA, ITALY”

By Representatives Alejano and Acedillo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 1484, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION, WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS (DOTC) AND THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL RAILWAYS (PNR) AS TO THE FEASIBILITY OF PROVIDING COMMUTER TRAINS TO REGULARLY SERVICE THE LEGAZPI-NAGA ROUTE, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF EASING THE TRAVEL WOES OF THOUSANDS OF BICOLANOS WHO COMMUTE DAILY BETWEEN THESE TWO BUSINESS CENTERS IN THE BICOLANDIA, AS WELL AS IMPROVING THE FLOW OF TRADE AND COMMERCE NOT ONLY IN THE REGION BUT IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY AS WELL”

By Representative Bichara

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1485, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE BASIS OF THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE (BIR) WITH REGARD TO THE DETERMINATION AND IMPOSITION OF ZONAL VALUATION ON REAL PROPERTY, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF PROVIDING A BETTER YARDSTICK FOR A MORE REALISTIC, EQUITABLE AND FAIR ZONAL VALUATION”

By Representative Bichara

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1489, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE ARMY DRAGON BOAT FEDERATION (IDBF) CLUB CREWS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN RAVENNA, ITALY”

By Representatives Alejano and Acedillo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT
DRAGON BOAT TEAM IN THEIR VICTORY AT THE 9TH INTERNATIONAL DRAGON BOAT FEDERATION CLUB CREWS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN RAVENNA, ITALY, HELD ON SEPTEMBER 3-7, 2014”

By Representative Mangudadatu

TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 1490, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE CANOE KAYAK FEDERATION (PCKF) DRAGON BOAT TEAM FOR PARTICIPATING AND WINNING IN THE 2014 INTERNATIONAL CANOE FEDERATION (ICF) DRAGON BOAT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN POZNAN, POLAND LAST AUGUST 28 TO AUGUST 31, 2014”

By Representative Mangudadatu

TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 1491, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON COOPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE CURRENT FINANCIAL STATUTE OF SRT TANDAG AGRI-FISHERY MULTI-PURPOSE COOPERATIVE AND OTHER SRT COOPERATIVES SIMILARLY SITUATED AND THE INTERVENTIONS AND REHABILITATION EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN BY QUEDAN & RURAL CREDIT GUARANTEE CORPORATION (QUEDANCOR)”

By Representatives Paez and Bravo (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

With the permission of the Body, the following Members were made coauthors of the Bills and Resolutions hereunder indicated:


Rep. Joaquin M. Chipeco Jr. for House Bill No. 61;

Rep. Harlin C. Abayon for House Bills No. 4728 and 4896;

Rep. Roy M. Loyola for House Bill No. 4728;


Rep. Marcelino "Marcy" R. Teodoro for House Bill No. 456;

Rep. Winston "Winnie" Castelo for House Bills No. 4714 and 4728;

Rep. Raul V. Del Mar for House Resolutions No. 1467 and 1478;

Rep. Wilfredo S. Caminero for House Bill No. 4728;

Rep. Edgardo R. Masongsong for House Bills No. 4714 and 4728;

Rep. Mel Senen S. Sarmiento for House Bill No. 4714;

Rep. Abraham "Bambol" N. Tolentino for House Bill No. 3971;


Rep. Isidro S. Rodriguez Jr. for House Bills No. 4352 and 4714;

Rep. Nancy A. Catamco for House Bills No. 4477, 4714 and 4896;


Rep. Raden C. Sakaluran for House Bill No. 4714;

Rep. Roy V. Señeres Sr. for House Bills No. 4714 and 4728;

Rep. Raden C. Sakaluran for House Bill No. 4477;

Rep. Leah S. Paquiz for House Bills No. 343, 344, 345 and 4664;

Rep. Rene L. Relampagos for House Bill No. 4714;

Rep. Harlin C. Abayon for House Bill No. 4456;
Rep. Henry S. Oaminal for House Bill No. 4352;

Reps. Rolando "Klarex" A. Uy, Anthony G. Del Rosario and Emilio L. Ong for House Bill No. 4714;

Rep. Victor F. Ortega for House Resolution No. 931;

Rep. Fernando V. Gonzalez for House Bills No. 4352 and 4724;

Rep. Henry S. Oaminal for House Bill No. 4724 and House Resolution No. 931;

Reps. Samuel D. Pagdilao, Guillermo A. Romarate Jr., Jesulito A. Manalo and Lilia Macrophon-Nuño for House Bill No. 4714;


Rep. Jesus "Boying" F. Celeste for House Bills No. 4714 and 4728;


Rep. Sherwin N. Tugna for House Bills No. 151, 4352 and 4714; and

Rep. Leo Rafael M. Cueva for House Bill No. 4946.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

12 September 2014

HON. FELICIANO R. BELMONTE, JR.
Speaker
House of Representatives
Quezon City

Dear Speaker Belmonte:

In accordance with Section 71 of Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the 'Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001,' I hereby seek the immediate enactment of a Joint Resolution authorizing the President to establish additional generating capacity.

The Department of Energy (DOE) reports and projects a critical electricity situation in the summer of 2015 arising from, among others, the expected effects of the El Niño phenomenon, the 2015 Malampaya Turnaround, increased and continuing outages of power plants, and anticipated delays in the commissioning of committed power projects. There is no gainsaying that the imminent electric power shortage during these months is a real threat to the country's growing economy and the general welfare of the people. The speedy enactment of the Joint Resolution will ensure the energy requirements of the country for this critical period – through a specific, focused and targeted acquisition of additional generating capacities for use during the limited periods of time of very tight energy supply.

This authority is needed in order to address the imminent shortage of electric power for the summer of 2015 in Luzon.

I look forward to a favorable response from both Houses.

Very truly yours,

(SGD.) BENIGNO S. AQUINO III

cc: Hon. Franklin M. Drilon
    President
    Philippine Senate
    Pasay City

    Sec. Manuel N. Mamba
    PLLO

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), the Chair declared a recess at 10:03 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:20 a.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 421
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Jorge "Bolet" Banal, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968, as contained in Committee Report No. 421 and submitted by the Committee on Appropriations.
Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Bill, to wit:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF CERTAIN EXECUTIVE OFFICES

On motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the following Executive offices:

1. Games and Amusements Board (GAB)
2. Philippine Racing Commission (Philracom)
3. Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP)

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF CERTAIN EXECUTIVE OFFICES

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Carol Jayne B. Lopez, on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Banal, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the GAB, Philracom, and FDCP.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOLE INCLUDING ATTACHED AGENCIES AND TESDA

On motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Labor and Employment, including its attached agencies and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

Thereafter, on further motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), the Chair recognized Rep. Leopoldo N. Bataoil to sponsor said proposed budgets.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. BATAOIL

Acknowledging the presence in the Session Hall of the DOLE and TESDA leadership, Rep. Bataoil stated that the proposed budget of ₱11.804 billion of the DOLE would help achieve its objective of promoting full, decent and productive employment opportunities for the Filipino workers.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Banal, the Chair recognized Rep. Luzviminda C. Ilagan for her interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ILAGAN

Initially, Rep. Ilagan raised her concern on the following matters: 1) the employment and unemployment rates in the country; 2) the number of jobs that would be generated by the government for 2015, particularly in the formal and informal sectors and the economic propellants for the attainment of the same; and 3) the issue of noninclusive growth because of the poor quality of jobs created and the gap between the minimum wage and the cost of living allowance.

The Members then focused their discussion on the workers’ clamor for a legislated wage increase and the mandate of the regional tripartite wages and productivity boards (RTWPBs); payment of correct minimum wage and provision of security of tenure for workers employed in small- and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs), particularly those in the construction, agriculture and manufacturing sectors; and DOLE’s continuing efforts in implementing the Rules on Labor Laws Compliance System and in ensuring compliance of employers with general labor standards and occupational safety and health standards, specially for workers in the mining, fishing and maritime industries.

At this point, Reps. Bataoil and Ilagan discussed the qualifications of a representative to the regional wage board; and the protection of seafarers’ privileges and rights based on labor laws. The Sponsor welcomed all valid concerns and inputs relevant to the improvement of the selection or appointment system in regional wage boards.

Rep. Ilagan also inquired on the program of DOLE or any relevant government agency that provides for the transition of employees to enjoy security of tenure which they do not have at present.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Bataoil, the Chair suspended the session at 11:03 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:05 a.m.
INTERPELLATION OF REP. ILAGAN
(Continuation)


On a related concern, Rep. Ilagan discussed with the Sponsor the job security issues that impact on Filipino women workers. She also inquired into the monitoring system of DOLE to determine production arrangements and the extent of malpractice in garments factories.

Rep. Bataoil assured Rep. Ilagan that the Committee would furnish her the pertinent data on women workers after the budget deliberations.

The Members then discussed other concerns, such as the action taken by DOLE on foreign companies which violate workers’ security of tenure, engage in unfair labor practices, underpay the minimum wage, and require mandatory overtime work without pay and shortened break; the Government Internship Program (GIP) under the flagship “Tulong Panghanap-buhay sa Ating Disadvantaged Workers” (TUPAD) Program; and the wages of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) particularly, an update on the unclaimed salaries of an OFW beheaded in Saudi Arabia, Mr. Antonio Espares. They then focused on the case of Kaye Lee Fashion Incorporated, with Rep. Bataoil encouraging Rep. Ilagan to submit the list of foreign companies violating the country’s labor laws.

On another issue, Reps. Ilagan and Bataoil debated on the plight of OFWs in the Middle East specifically in Saudi Arabia, who were locked up in a labor dispute with the Mohammad Al-Mojil Group. The Sponsor informed Rep. Ilagan that the Committee would provide her with a copy of the updates on the situation of said migrant workers.

Rep. Bataoil subsequently assured Rep. Ilagan that the DOLE would undertake an investigation of the recruitment agencies responsible for the deployment of the OFWs. He added that the compliance with a three-tier system of equipping, preparing, and ensuring the capabilities of the OFWs would also help them in various situations in the country and abroad.

Finally, Rep. Ilagan reminded Rep. Bataoil of the documents that they were expecting from DOLE which the latter assured will be provided for.


MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz stated that he just wanted to be assured that the agreement the previous night on the submission by the DBM of the listing, in appropriate order, of the P10-billion worth of DAP projects that were supposed to have been given to legislators, would ensue. Rep. Banal replied that it was a commitment made by Rep. Isidro T. Ungab and that he shared Rep. Dela Cruz’s hope that it would take place.

QUERY OF REP. ATIENZA

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Jose L. Atienza Jr. asked why Rep. Dela Cruz still asked for a recommitment of what had already been agreed upon the previous night to which the latter replied that he just wanted to be assured that it was going to happen because he was supposed to interpellate on the proposed budget of the Department of Finance (DOF). He recalled that because of the lack of documents, he had to request for a suspension of the discussion on the DOF budget the previous night.

Rep. Atienza thereafter underscored that whatever transpired between Rep. Dela Cruz and the remaining Members the previous night should not affect the commitment made by Budget Secretary Florencio B. Abad and Rep. Ungab that the Members will get their copies of the list of DAP projects by Wednesday evening.

QUESTION OF QUORUM

At this point, Rep. Atienza asked whether they had enough Members on the floor considering that the Body was tackling the 2015 budget which was a critical instrument of government. He then asked that a Roll Call be made.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 12:05 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 12:25 p.m. and on motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), the Chair recognized Rep. Leah S. Paquiz to ask questions.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ

Rep. Paquiz commended the DOLE for acting on her concerns, namely, the setting of protocols on the repatriation of nurses and the mandated payment for the in-service training of nurses in public and private
institutions. To her queries, Rep. Bataoil then explained the agency’s data warehouse project covering all kinds of professionals; participation in the post-2015 Development Agenda; accomplishments in employment generation; and the proposed budget for Personnel Services.

To her further queries, Rep. Bataoil stated that the DOLE is monitoring the filling up of vacant positions in each agency of the government as part of its performance criteria and that funds are being utilized to address labor and employment issues and concerns under Republic Act (RA) No. 10395 or the Tripartism Law. He stressed that the DOLE is seriously studying the recommendations of the International Labor Organization (ILO) with regard to violations of Filipino workers’ rights and that the Department undertakes appropriate actions and interventions to comply with the country’s international commitments.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Sherwin N. Tugna, the Chair recognized Rep. Fernando “Ka Pando” L. Hicap for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP

Both speaking in Filipino, Reps. Hicap and Bataoil initially delved into the implementation of the Philippine Labor and Employment Plan in order to achieve a decent and productive employment in the country, particularly in the generation of one million jobs per year as part of the inclusive growth policy of the PNoy Administration.

As he stressed the need to determine how the generation of jobs contributes to economic growth, self-sufficiency and stability, Rep. Hicap emphasized the need to focus on agriculture and land distribution program as well as the SMEs to make the country self-reliant.

Agreeing therewith, Rep. Bataoil said that the DOLE and other concerned government agencies throughout the country have pursued the convergence program to allow the promotion of a local product in a specific area and generate employment without displacing the workers and their families.

Subsequently, they tackled the present minimum wage rate that will allow an ordinary Filipino family to live decently; the studies being made by the regional wage boards on this concern; the need to look for ways to improve the lives of Filipino laborers and their families, particularly those living in the National Capital Region (NCR); the continuous increase in the prices of basic commodities and services which are deemed supervening events that could be the bases to raise the salaries of the workers; and the implementation of a uniformed across-the-board salary increase nationwide. Rep. Hicap then called on the House Members to give attention to the plight of the workers and support the proposed P125 across-the-board daily wage increase in their salaries.

Rep. Hicap next dwelled on the contributions of TESDA in reducing unemployment and underemployment in the country as he noted that it seems to function as a training ground to benefit foreign and local industries owned by foreigners.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Puno relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.

Rep. Thelma Z. Almario, to whom Rep. Bataoil yielded the sponsorship of the measure, stressed that TESDA only provides the necessary skills training to supply the manpower requirements of the industries and businesses, and not to create jobs although working abroad helps increase the country’s foreign exchange remittances and the economy to thrive. She informed Rep. Hicap that the TESDA certification required by companies from the applicants certifies to the competence of the prospective employees.


Going back to his questions on the DOLE budget, Rep. Hicap discussed his concerns with the Sponsor regarding the data on employers’ compliance with labor standards for construction and mining workers; a status update and pertinent data on the case of the 10 construction workers who fell and died from the 28th floor of the Eton Residence in Makati; and the effect of DOLE Department Order (DO) No. 18-A on the alarming increase of labor contractualization.

Rep. Hicap echoed the appeal of workers to abolish any and all forms of contracting out of labor under DO No. 18-A to ensure workers’ job security. Rep. Bataoil assured Rep. Hicap that the DOLE is taking care of the welfare and concerns of all workers.

At this juncture, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Puno.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS

Reps. De Jesus and Bataoil discussed the utilization and mechanism of the P294 million
proposed budget under the item “Labor Policy Services,” which includes the publication and dissemination of labor issuances, various labor policies, and wage advisories; and the allocation for the item “Employment Facilitation and Capability Building Services,” which provides ₱6.5 billion budgetary allocation to fund labor market information, technical-vocational education and trainings, employment facilitation services in coordination with the TESDA, and the DOLE Integrated Livelihood Beneficiaries.

In reply to another query, Rep. Almario, to whom Rep. Bataoil yielded the sponsorship of the measure, explained the procedures on how private schools would be able to avail of the budgetary allocation of the TESDA, specifically by registering technical-vocational or skills training programs that conform to the training regulations prescribed by the TESDA. She explained that the budgetary allocation that will be provided to TESDA-accredited private schools would be in the form of a subsidy to students called the Private Education Scholarship Financial Assistance.

Rep. De Jesus subsequently discussed with Rep. Almario the Training for Work Scholarship Program (TWSP) and the Special Training Employment Program (STEP), including the distinctions in the budgetary allocations and procedures required for the utilization of the funds. They discussed further the trainings that TESDA is giving out; the evaluation on the dropout rates under TWSP; the share that TESDA was able to get from the DAP Fund and its current status, as well as the impact of the additional funds on the labor sector with regard to employment capacity building; and the assessment of TESDA graduates on their competency.

Rep. De Jesus then requested that a report on TESDA be provided her, which request Rep. Almario took note of.

At this point, the Chair recognized Rep. Bataoil who answered Rep. De Jesus’ other queries on the proposed DOLE budget, including among others, how informal settlers benefit from the Department’s Employment Facilitation and Capacity Building Services.

Rep. De Jesus concluded her interpellation by asking about employer-employee relations, with Rep. Bataoil saying that all but one of the labor strikes that had been filed in 2013 were resolved through conciliation and settlement. She stressed the value of promoting the workers rights, as well as generating employment in order to alleviate poverty.

On motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), the Chair then recognized Rep. Roy V. Señeres for his interpellation.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), the Chair suspended the session at 2:45 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 2:45 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. SEÑERES

Rep. Señeres questioned the miniscule budget for the protection of OFWs and the use of their contributions as the primary source of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) funds. Even as he said that the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and DOLE had earmarked funds for the OWWA, the Sponsor took note of the suggestion to realign or increase its funds to address the needs of the economic heroes of the country.

Thereupon, Rep. Señeres requested Rep. Bataoil to help the DOLE Secretary lobby for more funds to the DBM Secretary for the protection of the OFWs.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), the Chair recognized Rep. Walden F. Bello for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. BELLO (W.)

Rep. Bello raised his concern regarding the status and the actions taken by the DOLE on the following issues: 1) the implementation of the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) in the Wattle Flowers Case in Angeles, Pampanga; 2) the reinstatement order affecting the workers of Bohol Beach Club, Albay Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Aleco), and Pavilion Hotel; and 3) the cases filed against Labor Attachés Antonio R. Villafuerte and Adam Musa, and Lebanon Welfare Officer Mario R. Antonio.

Rep. Bataoil informed Rep. Bello that the writ of execution for the implementation of the CBA is currently being implemented and that the DOLE is undertaking the necessary measures to address the reinstatement of the workers. The Sponsor also assured Rep. Bello that he would be provided with an updated report thereon. Rep. Bataoil further informed that cases have already been filed against the aforementioned three individuals and that penalties have been meted out.
In closing, Rep. Bello said that he was dissatisfied with the sanctions imposed against the accused, and said that he would closely work with the DOJ to ensure that they would be prosecuted, this as he stressed that the OFWs are the country’s economic pillars and should not be an easy prey to criminal acts.


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO**

Rep. Tinio’s queries focused on the DOLE’s GIP and TUPAD programs, and sought clarification on the following points: 1) the ₱305-million fund for weather and regulatory shocks and internal conflict under the TUPAD Program; 2) the reduction in the 2015 budgets of the two programs as compared to their previous year’s allocations, and the utilization thereof in 2014; 3) the mechanisms for implementation, identification of beneficiaries and determination of allocation; and 4) the role of the Members in the implementation of the programs, as he pointed to the Supreme Court ruling against the Legislature’s intrusion in budget execution.

Rep. Tinio thereafter asked for a status report on the implementation of the GIP and TUPAD Program. This, as he cited a news article released by the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) in February 2014 quoting an interview with the DOLE Region 12 director and an announcement in the DOLE Region 10 website regarding the allotment of ₱3.5 million for each congressional district and the prerogative of each Member to use it either for emergency employment or GIP purposes.

The Sponsor however refuted the allegation by adverting to an affidavit of explanation issued by the PIA that its writer allegedly misquoted from the interview. Reps. Tinio and Bataoil then presented contending opinions on the process of coordination and differences of functions between the Executive officials and legislators as far as public fund disbursement is concerned, including providing assistance to their constituents. Both Representatives however agreed on the issue of separation of powers of the Legislative, Executive and Judiciary.

*At this point, Deputy Speaker Puno relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Pangalian M. Balindong.*

Rep. Bataoil then yielded the sponsorship of the proposed budget of TESDA to Rep. Almario who discussed with Rep. Tinio the latter’s concern on the status of implementation or utilization of TESDA’s Special Training for Employment Program (STEP); the role of legislators in the implementation of said program; and a news report that a certain legislator from the Visayas was able to secure a ₱3.6-million scholarship allocation under the said Program from TESDA.


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

Rep. Dela Cruz discussed with Rep. Almario his concerns regarding the status of the P1.1 billion allotment for TESDA’s training and scholarship programs; the need for TESDA to conduct studies before providing vocational training programs and scholarship funds in the countryside, to aid in the planning of socioeconomic development programs of the local government units (LGUs); the TESDA initiatives to develop a program with the National Housing Authority (NHA) or other government agencies that will provide livelihood and vocational trainings to displaced workers and settlers in government resettlement projects; the discretion of each Member to refer their constituents to TESDA’s Special Training for Employment Program; and the training assistance being extended by the agency to K-12 teachers handling technical vocational courses.

Thereafter, Rep. Dela Cruz sought for an update on the case involving the owners of the Grand Star Bus Corp. and JAC Lucena Liner and which case the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC), he said, had already ruled in favor of the workers. Rep. Bataoil replied that the Committee would provide Rep. Dela Cruz with an update on the case as well as pertinent information on his other NLRC concerns.

Regarding the DOLE’s role to implement the Administration’s effort for inclusive growth, Rep. Bataoil pointed out that the priority beneficiaries for the inclusive growth are the youth, the informal settlers and the vulnerable sector.

Rep. Dela Cruz also tackled with the Sponsor the following: the minimum wage system; job matching activities; economic sectors promoting sustainable employment; and DOLE’S overseas employment program. Rep. Bataoil informed Rep. Dela Cruz that he would be furnished a report that would cover all these concerns.

Reps. Dela Cruz and Bataoil subsequently dwelled on the former’s queries regarding the maritime sector, specifically the rebuilding of the National Maritime
Polytechnic in Tacloban, and the need for more funds for this particular sector. Moreover, the Members discussed the possibility for the DOLE and the National Maritime Polytechnic to forge some partnership arrangements in view of the efforts of stakeholders, including foreign governments that are interested in making the sector more globally competitive.

The Sponsor affirmed that there is already a road map that would address Rep. Dela Cruz’ concern and one that would hopefully maintain and sustain the quality of maritime education. He added that a copy of the road map would be available before the end of the week for Rep. Dela Cruz’ perusal.

The Members next discussed the DOLE Overseas Employment Program and the various proposals to come up with an institution that will handle all matters affecting Filipino migrant workers. As requested by Rep. Dela Cruz, Rep. Bataoil then promised to submit the agency’s position paper on the aforementioned proposal as well as the data on its strategies and funds for the (1) quicker deployment or repatriation of workers; (2) antilabor practices such as contractualization; (3) labor skills upgrading in accordance with international agreements and standards; and (4) modernization of the Professional Regulation Commission’s (PRC) filing system.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GUESTS


INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE

On motion of Rep. Garin (O.), the Chair next recognized Rep. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate who sought information on the DOLE projects under the Grassroots Participatory Budgeting Program (GPBP).

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon Rep. Bataoil’s motion, the Chair declared a recess at 5:11 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:11 p.m., the session resumed with Rep. Banal presiding.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE (Continuation)

Rep. Bataoil replied that he would submit a list of said projects as incorporated in the proposed 2015 GAA. He discussed the mechanics of the GPBP including the consultation with the peoples’ organizations and other stakeholders; project identification by LGUs; and project processing, approval and implementation by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) as the lead agency with the support of the DOLE and the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC).

At this juncture, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Balindong.

With Rep. Bataoil yielding the floor to Rep. Almario, Rep. Zarate next asked about the peace and development projects administered by the TESDA. Rep. Almario stated that such projects were for the regions within the jurisdiction of the Bangsamoro and that the funding was recommended by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) for the livelihood and training of the combatants. She assured Rep. Zarate that he will be furnished with the number of combatants that would benefit from said projects.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOLE, INCLUDING ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND TESDA

Thereafter, on a joint motion of Rep. Florencio T. Flores Jr., M.D., on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Arthur R. Defensor Jr., on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DOLE, including its attached agencies and TESDA.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Defensor, there being no objection, the Body suspended the consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968.

ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE TO THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON CERTAIN HOUSE AND SENATE MEASURES

On an omnibus motion of Rep. Defensor, there being no objection, the Body designated Rep. Monique Yasmin Q. Lagdameo as an additional conferee of Conference Committee to reconcile the disagreeing provisions of the following measures:

1. House Bill No. 3575 and Senate Bill no. 2272, strengthening the ladderized interface between technical-vocational education and training and higher education;
2. House Bill No. 4553 and Senate Bill No. 2274, expanding access to educational services by institutionalizing open distance learning in higher education; and

3. House Bill No. 4860 and Senate Bill No. 2275, providing for scholarship grants to top graduates of all public high schools enrolling for their first year in State universities and colleges.

ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4085 AND SENATE BILL NO. 2277

On motion of Rep. Defensor, there being no objection, the Body designated the following Members as additional conferees to the Conference Committee to reconcile the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 4085 and Senate Bill No. 2277, establishing the open high school system in the Philippines: Reps. Kimi S. Cojuangco, Defensor, Mariano U. Piamonte Jr. and Silvestre “Bebot” H. Bello III.

CHANGE OF REFERRAL OF CERTAIN MEASURES

On a subsequent motion of Rep. Defensor, there being no objection, the Body changed the referral of the following measures:

1. House Bill No. 2077 – from the Committee on Health to the Committees on Government Reorganization, and Health; and

2. House Bill No. 4610 – from the Committee on Civil Service and Professional Regulation to the Committee on Appropriations.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO VARIOUS COMMITTEES

On further motion of Rep. Defensor, there being no objection, the Body elected the following Members as additional members of the various Committees hereunder indicated:

- **Special Committee on Reforestation**
  - Rep. Joseph Stephen S. Paduano as member no. 5

- **Special Committee on Food Security**

- **Committees on Human Rights, and Rural Development**

- **Committees on Human Rights, and Inter-Parliamentary Relations and Diplomacy**
  - Rep. Edcel “Grex” B. Lagman

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 5:32 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Defensor.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 5:38 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Defensor, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and its attached agencies.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Defensor, the Chair recognized Rep. Maria Carmen S. Zamora to sponsor said proposed budgets.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. ZAMORA (M.)

Rep. Zamora discussed to the Body the mandate and battlecry of “Kaya ko ang Pagbabago” of the DSWD in empowering the poor, the vulnerable, and the disadvantageous for an improved quality of life, as well as in providing assistance to LGUs, non-government organizations (NGOs), other government
agencies, people’s organizations (POs) and civil society in implementing programs and projects that alleviate poverty.

Given the previous year’s challenges because of the sheer number of victims and fatalities the country sustained from deadly natural and man-made disasters, she stressed the challenges facing the Department to contribute to poverty reduction, with the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) or Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Program as its flagship social service. She emphasized that complementary to the CCT program are DSWD’s equally important endeavors like the Sustainable Livelihood Program, KALAHICIDSS, Supplementary Feeding Program, Comprehensive Program for Street Children, Recovery and Reintegration Program, Social Pension for Indigent and Senior Citizens, and Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation, among others.

In closing, she said that the DSWD cannot fulfill its mandate of providing social protection programs and services without the necessary budget support.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS**

Recognized by the Chair on motion of Rep. Defensor, Rep. Emmi A. De Jesus asked why given the DSWD’s main thrust of alleviating poverty, the country was still confronted with poverty problem and why the CCT Program was being packaged as a social protection endeavor with a very huge amount of allocation. She sought clarification on the improvement in the lives of the family-beneficiaries and the problems encountered in the implementation of said program along with the solutions taken to address the same.

Rep. Zamora (M.) informed Rep. De Jesus about the allocations for Capital Outlay and Personnel Services of the DSWD in 2015 as well as the data on the number of household beneficiaries from the cities of San Juan, Quezon, Manila and Pasay and other benefits under the modified CCT program which started in the last quarter of 2012.

While Rep. Zamora acknowledged the observation of Rep. De Jesus concerning the lack of health centers, school buildings and facilities in relocation areas, she informed Rep. De Jesus that the Departments of Health (DOH), Education (DepEd), and Budget and Management (DBM) had agreed to prioritize the allocation of funds in these areas.

The Members then discussed the types of beneficiaries, benefits, and implementation mechanisms of the regular and modified components of the CCT program. The Sponsor also expounded on the cash-for-work component of the modified CCT, and the difference in the setup of beneficiaries located in the National Capital Region (NCR) from those belonging to the indigenous communities. She said that she would provide Rep. De Jesus with the list of the target areas under the modified CCT program.

Rep. Zamora (M.) also clarified that the sources of funding for the program in 2015 are still through the old loans sourced from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) which would cover sets 1 to 3 of beneficiaries while the rest of the batches of CCT beneficiaries would come from the general fund of the national government. She stated for the record that the DSWD has not availed of any Unprogrammed Fund for the implementation of the CCT program. She further discussed the role of the DSWD in the implementation of the Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (Pamana) Program upon the identification of the areas by the OPAPP and the time frame on the amount to be utilized for the implementation of the program in 2014.

Rep. De Jesus thereafter clarified her argument regarding the full obligation or utilization of funds, explaining the need for the Committee on Appropriations to have a specific time frame when appropriations for a particular budgetary item, in the case of funds for capacity building, would be terminated or classified as savings to be reverted to the National Treasury. She further underscored the complexity in the current budgetary procedures wherein a particular department that has the mandate and budgetary appropriations for the relocation of illegal settlers, in the case of the DILG, would transfer its appropriations to another department for its implementation. She inquired on the particular budgetary procedures to effect the interdepartmental transfer of appropriations.

In reply, Rep. Zamora adverted to the responsibilities of the DSWD in the implementation of the so-called Interim Shelter Fund for Informal Settler Families (ISF) which includes extending financial assistance to ISFs in partnership with the DILG and which, she stated, is limited only to the disbursement of P18,000 as a start-up cash for every ISF beneficiary.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Balindong relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Carlos M. Padilla.

Rep. Zamora informed Rep. De Jesus that in view of the lengthy contents of the pertinent document on the cash disbursement of donations to Yolanda victims, the Committee would just provide her with the copy of the said document. She subsequently informed Rep.
De Jesus of the definitions of the Emergency Shelter Assistance, the Modified Shelter Assistance, the Core Shelter Assistance Programs and the Cash-for-Work programs that had served as basis for the cash disbursements.

Thereupon, Rep. De Jesus summarized the points that she had argued in her interpellation, to wit: the waste in public funds and resources in a government program that fails to address the country’s poverty problem and the absorptive capability of the DSWD to implement the substantial amount of budgetary appropriations provided to it by Congress.

**MOTION OF REP. DURANO**


**MANIFESTATION OF REP. ATIENZA**

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Atienza raised a question of quorum, stating that there were not enough Members in the Session Hall to deliberate on the 2015 national budget.

** SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair *motu proprio* suspended the session at 6:59 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 7:18 p.m.


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE**

Initially, Rep. Zarate stated that the 2015 allocation of P64.7 billion for CCT is the biggest so far since the program started in 2010. However, he observed that despite the substantial change and increase in the budget of the CCT, statistics showed that poverty rate in the country has remained high. He then questioned the unliquidated accounts of the conduits of the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) through which CCT funds were being channeled as he stressed the need to ensure that CCT beneficiaries were receiving what was due them. The Sponsor discussed the progress of the liquidation process in general and the documentation problems of the Philippine Postal Corporation in particular; and agreed to submit the bank’s criteria on choosing conduits.

Rep. Zarate next discussed with Rep. Zamora (M.) the admission of the DSWD on the existence of P2.8 million worth of spoiled relief goods as reported by the Commission on Audit (COA) in December 2013. The Sponsor said that the DSWD is investigating the matter and gave the assurance that whoever is responsible for the mishandling of the relief goods would be made accountable.

Thereupon, the Members also discussed the issues of 1) unobligated funds in the CCT grants covering the cost of service, expense for trainings, expense item advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, administration cost and bank service fees, with the Sponsor clarifying that the data in the DSWD website is not yet updated but that the DSWD records showed that CCT grants have been fully obligated; and 2) the double entries in the CCT payroll.

Thereafter, expressing hope that the DSWD would confirm the list of duplicate beneficiaries as noted in the 2012 COA audit of Land Bank, Rep. Zarate next focused on the factors that caused the double listing of names and the number of employees assigned to the program, and asked for a complete list thereof.

** SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair *motu proprio* suspended the session at 8:09 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 8:10 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE**

(Continuation)

Pursuing his point, Rep. Zarate inquired on the number of CCT employees under plantilla positions; the overpayment of grants totaling P8.78 million; the undocumented grant disbursements worth P3.435 billion; and the unaccounted amount of P50.151 million given to beneficiaries whose names could not be found in the list of validated and registered beneficiaries as contained in the 2012 COA report.

** SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair again *motu proprio* suspended the session at 8:13 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 8:13 p.m.
INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE
(Continuation)

To the earlier query, Rep. Zamora (M.) clarified that the P50.151 million intended for the beneficiaries whose names were not in the registered list have been found in the National Housing Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTSPR), and belied the allegation that the identification cards were not found therein. She added that said information had already been reported to COA. Furthermore, she explained that the alleged overpayment worth P8.78 million was due to a duplication of entries in the list of 4,443 beneficiaries, with the DSWD delisting the verified duplicate names and now computing the amount to be recovered in compliance with the COA observation.

Rep. Zarate next tackled the issue of the big number of contractual and plantilla personnel involved in the CCT program which required quite a huge budget.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Zamora (M.), the Chair suspended the session at 8:25 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 8:26 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE
(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Zamora (M.) clarified that the CCT program only involves 52 plantilla positions and 9,025 contractual positions which Rep. Zarate said was ironic because the personnel involved in implementing a big-budgeted poverty reduction program do not enjoy security of tenure. Rep. Zarate then called on the Members to review the budget of the DSWD to determine if it is really meeting its goal of reducing poverty.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Durano, the Chair recognized Rep. Luzviminda C. Ilagan for her interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ILAGAN

Initially, Reps. Ilagan and Zamora (M.) debated on the high poverty ranking of the Philippines among the Southeast Asian countries based on the studies conducted by the ADB in 2005 and 2010 and by the Philippine Statistical Authority (PSA) in 2012 and 2013. The former opined that DSWD programs were not effective given that not much has changed in the Philippines while its neighboring countries’ poverty gap has been decreasing. She said that the closing of the poverty gap in the country should have been faster and the poverty incidence should have been lower because of the billions of pesos allotted for poverty alleviation programs.

The Members then exchanged views on the alleged low utilization rate of cash donations received by the Department for the Typhoon Yolanda victims as of December 2013.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Padilla relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Balindong.

After clarifying the remaining balance of funds for the Yolanda victims, Rep. Zamora said that the Department would furnish Rep. Ilagan with a copy of the recent DSWD report on the utilization of the Quick Response Fund (QRF).

Lastly, Reps. Ilagan and Zamora discussed the plan of the DSWD for the Yolanda victims who are still living in camp sites and the victims of the Zamboanga crisis who are still in temporary shelters.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY

Rep. Ty discussed with Rep. Zamora (M.) the budget allocation for the DSWD socialized housing projects for 2014 and 2015 like the Interim Shelter Fund for Informal Settler Families and the estero projects, specifically the Estero de San Miguel-Legarda project; the amount allotted per family under the ISF program; the Community Mortgage Program (CMP) and the role of the National Housing Authority (NHA) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in the implementation thereof.

Rep. Ty thereafter took issue with the transfer of the budgetary appropriations for the housing program of informal settlers from the DILG to the DSWD, particularly in the construction of residential tenements for informal settlers as in the case of the Estero de San Miguel-Legarda tenement. He argued that budgetary allocations pertaining to resettlement programs of informal settlers should be coursed solely and directly to the implementing agency such as the NHA which has the expertise in building housing settlements.

Rep. Zamora explained that in the implementation of housing resettlement programs for informal settlers, the government is using the so-called “convergence strategy” which allows different agencies to participate in the implementation of a program in
accordance with their respective mandates. She then took note of Rep. Ty’s concerns and also informed him that Welfareville has not yet been sold to date.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, the Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 9:18 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:23 p.m.

MOTION OF REP. GARIN (O.)


QUERY OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Before the Body could act on Rep. Garin’s (O.) motion, upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Dela Cruz inquired whether the Sponsor was already exhausted to which Rep. Zamora (M.) replied that while she has been standing and answering interpellations for four hours, she was still willing to answer questions from Rep. Tinio. She however requested a shorter period for his interpellation.

Thereafter, on a previous motion of Rep. Garin (O.), there being no objection, the Chair recognized Rep. Tinio for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

Initially, Rep. Tinio pointed out that the DSWD is a unique agency because among the different government agencies, it is the only one that gives cash to beneficiaries, not like the other agencies which give their services to the needy. He said that because of this, liquidation of billions of pesos of cash annually appropriated for the Department is of prime importance.

Reps. Tinio and Zamora (M.) then focused their discussion on the DSWD’s billions of pesos of unliquidated transfers and disbursements of CCT funds, including its KALAHI-CIDSS program. The Members likewise delved on the unliquidated fund transfers due from national government agencies, the LGUs, government corporations, NGOs and people’s organizations (POs).

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon Rep. Tinio’s motion, the Chair declared a recess at 9:45 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:46 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO (Continuation)

Deputy Speaker Balindong relinquished the Chair to Rep. Juan Pablo “Rimpy” P. Bondoc at this point.

Rep. Tinio subsequently asked what the DSWD was doing about the problem of unliquidated funds and whether its head of office, based on COA Circular No. 2012-04, could be presumed to be guilty of malversation of public funds. The Sponsor stressed that the agency has been continuing the liquidation process and had issued notice and settlement demands to all accountable officials and employees; and opined that it was not proper to raise issues of criminal liability in the House.

At this juncture, Rep. Bondoc relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Balindong.

Thereupon, Rep. Tinio requested for a list of the DSWD officers who are accountable for the unliquidated P4.4 billion in cash advances.

Rep. Zamora (M.) stated that the DSWD had manifested that funds have been utilized and basic services have been delivered to the poor and calamity–stricken areas.

When asked to cite specific evidence, Rep. Zamora pointed out that delivery and liquidation are two different things. As an example, she stated that she does not believe that the funds allocated by Gabriela Party-List are not delivered to its intended beneficiaries in spite of the fact that it remains to be unliquidated.

Out of courtesy to their colleagues, Rep. Tinio stated that Rep. Zamora should refrain from naming names considering that he too could cite several unliquidated accounts of the Members.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, the Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 10:08 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:17 p.m., with Deputy Speaker Padilla presiding.
SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair then *motu proprio* suspended the session at 10:17 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:23 p.m., with Deputy Speaker Balindong presiding.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DSWD AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the proposed budgets of the DSWD and its attached agencies.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On further motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Chair suspended the session until ten o’clock in the morning of Wednesday, September 17, 2014.

It was 10:24 p.m., Tuesday, September 16, 2014.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:00 a.m. of Wednesday, September 17, 2014, the session resumed with Deputy Speaker Sergio A.F. Apostol presiding.

NATIONAL ANTHEM AND PRAYER

Pursuant to Section 72, Rule XI of the Provisional Rules of the House, the Members sang the National Anthem and thereafter observed a minute of silent prayer.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

On motion of Representative Francisco Emmanuel R. Ortega III, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Additional Reference of Business.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read on First Reading the titles of the following Bills and Resolutions, which were referred to the appropriate Committees as hereunder indicated:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 5000, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE SALE OF PRE-PAID SUBSCRIBER IDENTIFICATION MODULE (SIM) CARDS AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF”

By Representatives Romualdez, Macapagal-Arroyo, Suarez, Atienza, Dela Cruz, Ortega (V.), Pichay, Mercado-Revilla and Tiangco

TO THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

House Bill No. 5001, entitled:

“AN ACT RENAMING THE MASBATE INSTITUTE OF FISHERIES AND TECHNOLOGY (KNOWN AS MASBATE SCHOOL OF FISHERIES-TESDA), IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF MILAGROS, PROVINCE OF MASBATE INTO MASBATE INSTITUTE OF FISHERIES AND TECHNOLOGY”

By Representative Kho

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 5002, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE MUNICIPALITY OF PATEROS INTO A CITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE CITY OF PATEROS AND MAKING IT ITS OWN LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT”

By Representative Cerafica

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5003, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY APAD IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF JOMALIG, PROVINCE OF QUEZON”

By Representative Enverga

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5004, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING DISCOUNTS ON BASIC AND EDUCATION SERVICES TO UNDERPRIVILEGED STUDENTS IN ALL LEVELS, INCLUDING THOSE ENROLLED IN TECHNICAL- VOCATIONAL (TECH-VOC) INSTITUTIONS”

By Representative Angara-Castillo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5005, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING BENEFITS TO BARANGAY VOLUNTEER WORKERS”

By Representatives Gerona-Robredo, Bagao, Banal and Acosta-Alba

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT
RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 1492, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE RECENTLY RELEASED COMMISSION ON AUDIT (COA) REPORT WHICH REVEALED THAT ₱2.8 MILLION WORTH OF RELIEF GOODS INTENDED FOR VICTIMS OF TYPHOOON YOLANDA WERE SPOILED WHILE RELIEF GOODS WORTH MILLIONS REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR, POSSIBLY DUE TO INEFLICIENCY AND CRIMINAL NEGLECT OF GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND AGENCIES MANDATED TO DO SO”

By Representative Ridon

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1493, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE DEMISE OF GERALDINE HERNANDEZ-FORTUN, MOTHER OF THE HONORABLE REPRESENTATIVE LAWRENCE LEMUEL HERNANDEZ FORTUN”

By Representative Olivarez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1494, entitled:

“RESOLUTION COMMENDING HONORABLE ADOLFO S. AZCUNA, RETIRED SUPREME COURT ASSOCIATE JUSTICE, FOR BEING THE FIRST FILIPINO TO BE ELECTED AS COMMISSIONER IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS (ICJ)”

By Representatives Labadlabad and Amatong (I.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Resolution No. 1495, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS SERVICE OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE AND ITS ROLE IN PREVENTING POLICE INVOLVEMENT IN VARIOUS CRIMINALITIES”

By Representative Benitez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1496, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT TO SUSPEND IMPLEMENTATION OF LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING AND REGULATORY BOARD MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR 2014-015 BANNING PROVINCIAL BUSES FROM NORTH AND SOUTH OF METRO MANILA TO ENTER THE METROPOLITAN AREA”

By Representatives Rivera and Batocabe

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Resolution No. 1497, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE GILAS PILIPINAS NATIONAL BASKETBALL TEAM FOR ITS EXCELLENT AND WORLD CLASS PERFORMANCE DURING THE 17TH EDITION OF FIBA BASKETBALL WORLD CUP HELD IN SEVILLE, SPAIN”

By Representatives Romualdez, Macapagal-Arroyo, Atienza, Dela Cruz, Ortega (V.), Pichay, Mercado-Revilla, Suarez and Tiangco

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1498, entitled:


By Representatives Romualdez, Macapagal-Arroyo, Atienza, Dela Cruz, Ortega (V.), Pichay, Mercado-Revilla, Suarez and Tiangco

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES
By Representatives Romualdez, Macapagal-Arroyo, Mercado-Revilla, Atienza, Dela Cruz, Ortega (V.), Pichay, Suarez and Tiangco

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1499, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE COMMITTEE ON METRO MANILA DEVELOPMENT TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE POSSIBLE IRREGULARITIES ON THE BIDDING AND AWARDING OF THE LRT 1 CAVITE EXTENSION PROJECT TO THE LIGHT RAIL MANILA CONSORTIUM (LRMC), WHICH WAS DONE WITHOUT PROPER PUBLIC BIDDING AND DESPITE THE EXISTING SUPREME COURT INJUNCTION ON THE LRT-MRT COMMON STATION WHICH IS PART OF THE AWARDED CONTRACT”

By Representative Ridon

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1500, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING WARMEST FELICITATIONS AND CONGRATULATIONS AND CONFERMENT OF CONGRESSIONAL COMMENDATION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE PHILIPPINE DANCE GROUP A-TEAM FOR WINNING 2014 WORLD HIP HOP DANCE COMPETITION”

By Representative Olivarez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

With the permission of the Body, the following Members were made coauthors of the Bills and Resolutions hereunder indicated:


Rep. Winston "Winnie" Castelo for House Bill No. 5006;

Rep. Leopoldo N. Bataoil for House Bill No. 4896;


Rep. Raul V. Del Mar for House Resolution No. 1469;

Reps. Jim Hataman-Salliman and Maximo B. Dalog for House Bill No. 4896;

Reps. Maryam Napii Arbison, Thelma Z. Almario and Franklin P. Bautista for House Bills No. 4751 and 4763;


UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 421
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

Whereupon, on motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered on Second Reading House Bill No. 4968, as embodied in Committee Report No. 421 and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Bill, to wit:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF
At this point, Rep. Ortega (F.) stated that the parliamentary status was that the 2015 General Appropriations Bill (GAB) was still under the period of sponsorship and debate.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DFA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

On another motion of Rep. Ortega (F), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and its attached agencies and thereafter, the Chair recognized Rep. Emil L. Ong to sponsor said budget and Rep. Luzviminda C. Ilagan to interpellate thereon.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. ONG

Rep. Ong justified the DFA request for P12.869 billion as its budget for 2015 and stated that the request is a strategic investment in the country’s foreign policy of promoting national security, enhancing economic diplomacy, and protecting the rights and welfare of the Filipinos overseas.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ILAGAN

Reps. Ilagan and Ong discussed, among others, the following points: 1) safeguarding of the country’s maritime boundaries through the filing of an arbitration case before the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) seeking nonviolent settlement of the country’s maritime dispute; 2) pursuit of multipositive economic diplomacy programs; 3) actions of the DFA on overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who were caught in the middle of war-torn countries; 4) number of OFWs who were alerted and repatriated from war-torn countries; and 5) provision of assistance to Filipinos in distress, and to those who face criminal and labor-related problems.

Rep. Ong agreed to furnish Rep. Ilagan with a copy of the list of Filipinos repatriated by the DFA. Thereafter, they discussed the DFA budget for the repatriation of OFWs, the problems besetting the repatriation process, and the status of the salaries due to a beheaded OFW.

Rep. Ilagan expressed concern on the number of Filipinos affected by the implementation of the program on the correction of fake passports in Osaka, Japan and discussed with the Sponsor the plan of the DFA to establish permanent foreign service missions in Nagoya, Japan as well as in Calgary and Winnipeg in Canada.

Rep. Ilagan thereafter adverted to the P43 million Overseas Absentee Voting (OAV) Program and interpellated on several issues pertaining to the utilization of the program budget, the percentage of absentee voters’ turnout in recent elections, the estimated target for registration of additional absentee voters for 2015, and the study undertaken by the DFA on the insignificant absentee voters’ turnout estimated at only 16%. She mainly argued that in providing for the P43 million budgetary appropriations for the OAV Program, the Department should have considered the importance of the budgetary appropriations to address and prioritize the results of its study to encourage wider and increased participation of absentee voters in Philippine political exercises.

In reply, Rep. Ong explained that the DFA had consistently implemented its program to ensure the participation of more overseas Filipinos to vote; however, the turnout of absentee voters had not increased due to the aforementioned constraints. He informed Rep. Ilagan that the DFA would be providing its recommendations to the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

On the issues pertaining to the P100 million Legal Assistance Fund, Rep. Ilagan interpellated on the number of Filipino detainees with pending cases abroad and underscored the insignificant amount of budgetary allocation to provide sufficient and appropriate legal assistance to such Filipinos. She argued, in particular, for additional budgetary assistance to hire lawyers with the required skills considering the absence of lawyers with the requisite legal knowledge of foreign laws to represent and defend the legal interests of overseas Filipinos.

In reply, Rep. Ong explained that the DFA had resorted to hiring “local” lawyers to represent the OFWs using the Legal Assistance Fund. He concurred however with the proposal to increase its P100 million budgetary allocation and explained that it was only due to a budgetary cap that the DBM had not proposed for any additional funding.

Reps. Ilagan and Ong further discussed the cap on the legal assistance amount which should be removed considering the increase of Filipinos who land in jails abroad. Both agreed that aside from the contingency fund, the DFA should also be the recipient of funds
available from the other departments if the PNoy Administration keeps on talking about convergence, cooperation, and interdepartmental support.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), the Chair recognized Rep. Walden F. Bello for his interpellation.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. BELLO (W.)**

In his interpellation, Rep. Bello discussed with Rep. Ong the following issues: 1) the status of the Filipino workers who were trapped in Libya, and those in Kurdistan and Erbil who are threatened by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS); 2) the steps being taken to bring them out of said places; and 3) Filipino officials being caught flatfooted considering the critical situation in said places.

Rep. Ong stated that continuing efforts are being done by the DFA to assist the OFWs in Libya, Kurdistan and Erbil. He said that although the DFA had issued a level-two warning which disallowed new workers to Libya, OFWs therein did not want to go home because their salaries were high and they did not consider the situation that risky.

Subsequently, Rep. Bello examined the cases of sexual molestation and trafficking involving the DFA officials and employees to which the Sponsor promised a status report.

**RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DFA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DFA and its attached agencies and recognized Reps. Ong and Jonathan A. Dela Cruz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

Rep. Dela Cruz’ issues were on the difficulties of OFWs in problematic countries and increased funding for the Assistance to Nationals program; scheduling of an executive session on the West Philippine Sea; and the real estate properties owned or rented abroad by the DFA and the continuous funding for the same. The Sponsor made a commitment to coordinate with his colleague and give him the data thereon.


**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DFA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

On motion of Majority Leader Neptali M. Gonzales II, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the proposed budgets of the DFA and its attached agencies.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN**

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Carol Jayne B. Lopez on behalf of the Minority and Gonzales on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman.

**RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DFA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DFA and its attached agencies and recognized Reps. Ong and Jonathan A. Dela Cruz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

Rep. Dela Cruz’ issues were on the difficulties of OFWs in problematic countries and increased funding for the Assistance to Nationals program; scheduling of an executive session on the West Philippine Sea; and the real estate properties owned or rented abroad by the DFA and the continuous funding for the same. The Sponsor made a commitment to coordinate with his colleague and give him the data thereon.


**RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DFA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DFA and its attached agencies and recognized Reps. Ong and Jonathan A. Dela Cruz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN**

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Carol Jayne B. Lopez on behalf of the Minority and Gonzales on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman.

**RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DFA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DFA and its attached agencies and recognized Reps. Ong and Jonathan A. Dela Cruz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN**

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Carol Jayne B. Lopez on behalf of the Minority and Gonzales on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman.

**RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DFA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DFA and its attached agencies and recognized Reps. Ong and Jonathan A. Dela Cruz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN**

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Carol Jayne B. Lopez on behalf of the Minority and Gonzales on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman.

**RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DFA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DFA and its attached agencies and recognized Reps. Ong and Jonathan A. Dela Cruz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN**

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Carol Jayne B. Lopez on behalf of the Minority and Gonzales on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman.

**RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DFA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DFA and its attached agencies and recognized Reps. Ong and Jonathan A. Dela Cruz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN**

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Carol Jayne B. Lopez on behalf of the Minority and Gonzales on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman.
like autonomy, economic provisions and investment policies of the constitutions of other countries and the GCC-Approved Medical Clinics Association (GAMCA). He then focused on the government’s efforts and policies with respect to its Sabah claim, and asked whether this has a connection with the Malaysian government’s aggressive efforts to participate in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) peace process. He opined that the Department has not been as keen as its claim in the West Philippine Sea as the approach to the Sabah claim has been very anemic.

QUERY FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair inquired whether Rep. Dela Cruz would still be long in his interpellation as he would like to suspend the session to allow the Members to have their lunch.

REMARKS OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz answered that he would raise three more questions, but he would not mind having the session suspended.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 12:07 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 12:08 p.m. with Rep. Banal presiding.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

(Continuation)

Reiterating his previous query, Rep. Dela Cruz asked for a position paper from the DFA, this as he stressed that the Sabah claim has a bearing on the proposed Basic Law for the Bangsamoro. He also asked on the status of Filipino citizens who were being detained or killed in Sabah.

Rep. Ong assured that the DFA took note of Rep. Dela Cruz’ request.

Reps. Ong and Dela Cruz subsequently discussed the DFA’s policy with respect to the US-led war against the ISIS, given the fact that three million Filipinos are based in the Middle East and need protection from the Philippine government, and with the latter asking for an information on the whereabouts of the Filipinos who are scattered in different countries therein, including the data about Filipinos in UN-supported agencies.

The Members also exchanged views on the subject of possible United States (US) assistance to Philippine troops and other support personnel so that the Philippines can reclaim some regions in the West Philippine Sea. Rep. Ong promised to comply with Rep. Dela Cruz’ request for a comprehensive study on the viable arrangements with the US to protect the Philippine contested areas.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

Rep. Colmenares sought clarification regarding the Special Allotment Release Orders (SARO) covering the payment of terminal leave benefits of certain DFA retirees, the performance bonuses of its employees, and the delay in the processing and issuance of E-passports.

At this juncture, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Apostol.

He further discussed with Rep. Ong his following concerns about the passport processing fees, the amounts collected and remitted by the DFA to the National Treasury, and the passport revolving fund which the Sponsor said is being used for payment, among others, of salaries, allowances, overtime pay, year-end bonuses and other remuneration of DFA’s contractual employees.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE

Recognized by the Chair, Reps. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate and Ong discussed the amount allocated for the repatriation of and support for OFWs especially in war-torn countries like Syria and Libya. The latter assured the former that the DFA will comply with his request for a detailed list of how the amount was expended and the countries and the number of OFWs repatriated in 2014. They further discussed the other forms of assistance aside from repatriation and legal assistance provided by the DFA to affected OFWs especially in war-torn areas and those maltreated by their employees in the Middle East.

Subsequently, the Members debated on the status of the sexual harassment case filed against certain DFA officials; the budgetary allocations for supplies and materials used in the production of DFA passports, and for the payment of Compensation and Insurance
Premium contributions; issues relating to the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement; the Philippine government’s stand on the Itu Aba issue in the disputed Spratly Islands; and the Philippines’ claim over Sabah.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair *motu proprio* suspended the session as 1:33 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 1:36 p.m., with Rep. Francisco Emmanuel R. Ortega III presiding.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS**

Upon recognition by the Chair, on motion of Rep. Gerald Anthony V. Gullas Jr., Rep. Emmi A. De Jesus initially mentioned her concern on the issue of migrant workers. She then referred to the Filipino workers who are in four job sites of the Mohammad Al-Mojil Group. During the DFA budget briefing, Rep. De Jesus underscored that some officials of the DFA committed to 1) send DFA officials to the four job sites of the Mohammad Al-Mojil Group designating Consul Winston Almeda and two others on that day; 2) send lawyers for the OFWs at least before the end of September; and 3) provide medical and food assistance to OFWs. She also enumerated the other commitments of the DFA, namely, temporary working visas, waiver for penalties for overstaying OFWs, and a trip by the DFA Secretary himself to Saudi Arabia. She then expressed concern about the possible implication of the OFWs’ involvement in violent activities being planned by other foreign workers in said company.

*At this point, Rep. Ortega (F.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Apostol.*

Saying that the DFA had initially sent US$500,000 for assistance to OFWs, Rep. Ong stressed that the agency would fulfill its promises and was willing to discuss its timeline of activities with Migrante’s representatives and the OFWs’ families.


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON**

Rep. Ridon’s concerns were on the DFA budget cuts, new passports, the International Commitment Fund (ICF), and recruitment of Filipinos by the ISIS. The Sponsor said that the DFA suffered a 50% cut in Capital Outlay but this did not involve critical infrastructure, had no program to reduce passport fees, needed a mandatory obligation every year for the ICF, and could not confirm the aforesaid membership activity.

To his other queries, Rep. Ong gave a breakdown on the use of the Building Fund which was intended for the amortization, acquisition, construction and renovation of chanceries and offices of the DFA around the world. He stated however that he had already explained in detail the Passport Revolving Fund and the ongoing conflict between the Philippines and China in the West Philippine Sea to the other interpellators. He said that the DFA, through the Philippine government, has opposed the atrocities and conflicts happening around the world as the Department adheres to peaceful negotiation and diplomatic solution to the problem.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Francis Gerald A. Abaya, the Chair recognized Rep. Roy V. Señeres Sr. for his interpellation.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. SEÑERES**

Rep. Señeres focused on the number of OFWs abroad and the proposed budget allocated for their protection and assistance. He wondered why the DFA was only asking ₱350 million for the protection of the OFWs considering that it is the highest priority concern of the DFA under Republic Act No. 8042 or the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act. He then inquired on the source of the budget of the DFA for purposes of maintaining foreign embassies and salaries of its personnel abroad.

In reply, Rep. Ong stated that despite the meager budgetary allocation, the DFA is making full use of its budget on what they call “strategic spending” in order to comply with their mandated task among which is the protection of the OFWs. He clarified that the proposed amount of ₱350 million would be used only as the need arises and that the DFA could request for additional funding.

In closing, Rep. Señeres manifested that the government should provide its own money to protect the OFWs instead of using the money that the OFWs are required to pay for various fees.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DFA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

There being no other interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Lopez (C.J.) on behalf of the Minority
and Ortega (F.) on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DFA and its attached agencies.

**MOTION OF REP. ORTEGA (F.)**

Rep. Ortega (F.) moved that the Body suspend consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 2:23 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 2:24 p.m.

**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968**

On a previous motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968.

**REFERRAL OF HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 964**

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body referred House Resolution No. 964 to the Committee on Agrarian Reform.

**RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968**

Whereupon, on motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968, as embodied in Committee Report No. 421, and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Bill, to wit:

"AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 2:26 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 2:26 p.m.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE COMELEC**

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and the Chair recognized Reps. Cua and Ridon for their sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON**

Rep. Ridon first discussed with the Sponsor the date of the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) election and its synchronization with the forthcoming barangay elections in October 2016 which Congress will have to authorize by passing a law.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Apostol relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.

They also delved on the Comelec’s preparedness to proceed with the SK elections in the event that no law is passed postponing the election initially set for February 2015; the use of precinct counting optical scan (PCOS) machines for the 2016 national elections; and the deletion and need for restoration of the fund for the People’s Initiative, which Rep. Ridon manifested would be a subject of his proposed amendments at the proper time.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. BELLO (W.)**

Recognized by the Chair on motion of Rep. Abaya, Rep. Bello inquired whether the Comelec is determined to have the budget for overseas absentee voting restored in the 2015 GAB.

Rep. Cua said that with Rep. Bello’s support, he would ensure the restoration of the OAV fund during the period of amendments.

At this point, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Apostol.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Abaya, the session was suspended at 2:43 p.m.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 2:46 p.m., with the Chair recognizing Rep. Dela Cruz to interpellate Rep. Cua.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Reps. Dela Cruz and Rep. Cua delved on the provision of funds for the Bangsamoro plebiscite that would be conducted in a regional and possibly nationwide basis and which would be covered by the proposed Bangsamoro law; the noninclusion by the Comelec of money for the conduct of a plebiscite on the proposed amendments to the 1987 Constitution; the possibility of Congress passing a supplemental budget for any government activity like the Bangsamoro and Charter change (Cha-cha) plebiscites instead of getting them from the unexpended funds of the Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP); and the agency’s confirmation that no DAP funds were given to it.

At this point, Rep. Dela Cruz noted that the Comelec was not even advised by the DBM that some of its funds were taken from the DAP. In response, Rep. Cua stated that the funding of the plebiscites and elections for 2011-2013 did not come from the DAP but from the savings of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

They also discussed the date and the source of the funding of the SK elections; whether the budget for the continuing registration has been included in the 2015 GAB; the Comelec’s preparation for the 2016 presidential elections; and whether the Comelec has allotted a budget for the replacement or enhancement of the PCOS machines.

With regard to the Comelec’s predicament on zero allocation for the continuing registration of voters for 2015, Rep. Cua said that the discussion on the amendments would be proper during the period of amendments.

On the suggestion of election experts to have a manual count at the level of the precinct and the electronic transmission, Rep. Cua explained that the law no longer provides for manual elections however, should the law be amended, the Comelec assures Congress that they would execute it to the full extent possible.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ABAYON

Recognized by the Chair, Rep. Harlin C. Abayon initially stated that since the Chair had said that he belongs to the Majority, he would be very brief with his interpellation. He thereafter brought to the attention of the Body a case wherein the present Comelec chairperson was the lawyer of a disqualification case he participated in and whose argument was similar to the decision promulgated. He then asked why he did not inhibit himself from the case. Rep. Cua replied that the Comelec chairperson cannot recall said instance.

MOTION OF REP. ABAYON

At this juncture, Rep. Abayon moved for the suspension of consideration of the proposed budget of the Comelec to allow him to bring all the pertinent records to the plenary.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), the Chair suspended the session at 3:14 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:18 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE COMELEC

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the proposed budget of the Comelec.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE CHR

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR). Subsequently, the Chair recognized Reps. Cua and Dela Cruz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz manifested however to the Presiding Officer that he will withdraw his interpellation and yield to Rep. Ridon who, he said, was scheduled first to interpellate the Sponsor.

The Chair noted the manifestation of Rep. Dela Cruz.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Ridon interpellated on a number of concerns pertaining to the prosecution of human rights cases, specifically the
number of human rights cases that had been filed for prosecution by the CHR, the number of days it takes to resolve a human rights case, and number of human rights victims that had been provided assistance by the CHR.

Rep. Cua replied that a report on these concerns will be furnished by the CHR to Rep. Ridon.

With regard to the status of the compensation package for martial law victims, Rep. Cua replied that there is still an ongoing evaluation and processing of the claims for compensation that had now reached 14,000 applicants. He stated that the CHR expects to commence payments to the human rights victims in November of this year.

Rep. Ridon thereafter inquired on the disbursement of the CHR of the ₱1.6 million budgetary allocation for Extraordinary and Miscellaneous Expense, to which Rep. Cua replied that the CHR will provide a report to Rep. Ridon at the appropriate time.

Thereupon, Rep. Ridon adverted to the declassified documents that were provided by the Department of National Defense (DND) to the CHR and inquired when these documents will be made public.

Rep. Cua replied that of the declassified documents given to the CHR, the Commission had already processed and analyzed 5,500 cases and is planning to make the declassified documents available for public consumption on September 22, 2014 in time for the anniversary of the declaration of martial law. He informed Rep. Ridon that the CHR is inviting him to attend its activities on this date.

Rep. Ridon thereafter brought to the attention of the Sponsor the arrest of two UP students by the military and police in Nueva Ecija for alleged possession of illegal explosives and firearms. He inquired whether the CHR had motu proprio intervened on behalf of the detained UP students.

Rep. Cua replied in the affirmative and informed Rep. Ridon that the CHR will provide him with a status report of its investigation of this case.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE COMELEC

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budget of the Comelec.

REMARKS OF REP. CUA

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Cua stated that the Committee was ready to answer questions on the proposed Comelec budget.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair suspended the session at 3:31 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:32 p.m., the session resumed.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE COMELEC

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the proposed budget of the Comelec.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE CHR

Whereupon, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budget of the CHR.

The Chair thereafter recognized Rep. Cua to resume sponsorship of the proposed budget of the CHR and Rep. Dela Cruz for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz raised the issue of the killings of journalists in the country. He informed the Sponsor that the Philippines had already been ranked No. 3 in the world in the number of journalists killed. He inquired whether the CHR has a list of the number of cases of unresolved killings of journalists in the country; and to provide him with an update of these cases, to include the processes involved in resolving these cases. He pointed out that a report by the CHR and its corresponding action on the matter will be of great help to media practitioners and media organizations.
Rep. Cua assured Rep. Dela Cruz that he would be furnished copies of reports relative to his concerns namely: 1) list of cases with regard to the killing of journalists, and those involving indigenous peoples; 2) validation of human rights cases involving security forces, private individuals or individuals associated with security forces such as paramilitary forces; and 3) a status report on human rights violations of certain companies in Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino.

In the course of their discussion, Rep. Dela Cruz asked Rep. Cua to agree that at the proper time, they will request that the proposed budget of ₱584 million be afforded the CHR. Likewise, the Members talked of the establishment of a museum exhibiting all the human rights violations under martial law, how much funding it would need, and the exact location of such museum.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Gullas, the Chair recognized Rep. Colmenares for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

Reps. Colmenares and Cua dwelled on the reparations for human rights victims during martial law, and how the chairperson and the other members of the Human Rights Victims’ Claims Board (HRVCB) were nominated.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 3:59 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:00 p.m., with Deputy Speaker Carlos M. Padilla presiding.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

(Continuation)

To Rep. Colmenares’ concerns, Rep. Cua stated that aside from establishing sub-offices, the HRVCB also conducts caravans in some regions where they process applications of claimants. He said however that applications should be filed personally by the claimants as filing by mail may possibly damage the integrity of the application and be susceptible to fraud.

Rep. Colmenares pointed out however that the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the CHR cannot go beyond the requirement of the law which does not require a claimant to file the application personally. He then suggested that the CHR should be sympathetic and understand the plight of human rights victims and simplify the application procedures and leave it to the Compensation Board’s discretion whether to accept the application or not.

Rep. Cua stated that the CHR has expressed willingness to support the suggestions of Rep. Colmenares and would elevate the matter to the compensation Board.

Considering that the budget of the Compensation Board for 2014 has not yet been fully utilized, Rep. Colmenares inquired on the proposed budget of the said Board for 2015.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 4:40 p.m.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:40 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

To Rep. Cua’s clarification that the budget of the HRVCB for 2015 amounting to ₱50 million would be taken from the ₱10 billion trust fund held in trust by the Bureau of Treasury and that the interest earned stays intact with the Memorial Commission as provided by the law, Rep. Colmenares asked for the specific legal provision thereon.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 4:42 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:42 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

To the previous query of Rep. Colmenares, the Sponsor disclosed that said provision is contained in Section 14 of RA No. 10368 and assured that Rep. Colmenares’ recommendation will be relayed to the Board.

Rep. Colmenares next inquired on the number of human rights violations committed the previous year.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 4:47 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:47 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Rep. Cua answered that 3,660 complaints were documented in 2013, and thereafter checked the records with regard to the case of Mr. Jefferson Custodio who was shot dead on August 23, 2013 in Leyte.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 4:49 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:50 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Given Rep. Cua’s verification that said case is still under investigation by the regional office, Rep. Colmenares observed how the victims of human rights violations have suffered and asked the Board to ensure the judicious and efficient compensation due them.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE


After a discussion on the specific massacre cases, Rep. Zarate then referred to the occupation and encampment of military troops in public structures like schools and multipurpose buildings. He also manifested his personal observations on the decrease of percentage of targets in human rights protection services, human rights violation cases, number of participants who completed human rights education activities, and other major financial outputs (MFOs) of the Commission.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE CHR

There being no further interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Lopez (C.J.) and Monique Yazmin Q. Lagdameo, on the part of the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the CHR.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NSC

On motion of Rep. Lagdameo (M.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the National Security Council (NSC).
Thereafter, the Chair recognized Rep. Leopoldo N. Bataoil to sponsor the same.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NSC

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.) on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Lagdameo (M.) on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the NSC.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NICA

On another motion of Rep. Lagdameo (M.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA).

Thereafter, the Chair recognized Rep. Bataoil to sponsor the measure.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. BATAOIL

Rep. Bataoil thanked his colleagues for the approval of the NSC budget proposal and thereafter acknowledged the presence in the Session Hall of NICA Director General Ager Ontog, Deputy Director General Maria Concepcion Clamor, and their respective staff.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON (Continuation)

Rep. Bataoil said that he would furnish Rep. Ridon with copies of the following: 1) Memorandum Circular Nos. 78 and 196 regarding declassification of intelligence reports; 2) an in-depth report on the utilization of the intelligence funds and memorandum circular on the judicious utilization of intelligence fund; and 3) the DBM circular on budgeting and auditing procedures governing intelligence funds.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NICA

There being no other interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Lopez (C.J.) and Lagdameo (M.), on behalf of the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the NICA.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE COMELEC

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Lagdameo (M.), there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budget of the Comelec.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ABAYON (Continuation)

In continuing his interpellation, Rep. Abayon presented the argument that the Comelec Resolution disqualifying a party-list organization was a direct contravention of the House of Representatives Electoral
Tribunal (HRET) decision and the Comelec’s own decision to sustain several petitions for accreditation, cancellation, and the petition to annul a proclamation which are in effect a recognition and compliance of the requirements of a bonafide party-list organization. He maintained that the Comelec’s *motu proprio* disqualification had no lawful basis and expressed reservations on its discretion to review a bonafide party-list’s qualifications.

Rep. Abayon further pointed out that had the Comelec chairperson not voted, the party-list would not have been disqualified and that his grounds for petitions when he was still the lawyer of the aforementioned case were similar with that of the concurring opinion he had written as the current Comelec Chair disqualifying the party-list organization. He thereafter underscored his plea to the new breed of Comelec Commissioners to exercise due diligence and to be more circumspect in writing their decisions so that justice will be equitably served to all the litigants.

In reply, Rep. Cua argued that the cases that had been referred to by Rep. Abayon involve the Comelec’s decisions in the 2010 elections; while the review and disqualification of certain party-lists was done for the 2013 elections. Nonetheless, the Sponsor remarked that the Commission had taken note of Rep. Abayon’s concerns.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE COMELEC**

There being no other interpellations, Rep. Lopez (C.J.) moved to terminate the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the Comelec on the part of the Minority. Rep. Lagdameo (M.) adopted the motion on the part of the Majority, and there being no objection, the Body approved the motion.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOJ AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

On motion of Rep. Lagdameo (M.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and its attached agencies and the Chair recognized Rep. Mercedes K. Alvarez to sponsor the DOJ budget proposal.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Lagdameo (M.), the Chair suspended the session at 6:01 p.m.
many have been resolved or are still pending with the DOJ and with the IACAT.

Thereafter, Rep. Ilagan sought clarification on the following: 1) how Isidro Rodriguez, accused of trafficking teachers to the United States, had been released, as reports had it, despite the fact that he was still facing charges filed by his victims; and 2) whether the interagency committee on extra legal killings, enforced disappearances, torture and other grave violations of human rights, liberty and security of persons, still exists.

After the Sponsor had explained the mandate of the said committee and had promised to provide data on cases it had processed and validated, Rep. Ilagan adverted to the Supreme Court’s decision on the case of the so-called Batasan Six which stressed the need for impartiality among prosecutors. She thereafter gave the details on several cases of trumped-up charges which the military had filed against certain activists.

Rep. Alvarez (M.) said that the DOJ will investigate complaints against its prosecutors and that she will submit updates on the cases mentioned. She also assured Rep. Ilagan that she would personally follow up the cases of the two women languishing in Cadiz City jail who are the Sponsor’s provincemates. With regard to the case of Father Pops Tentorio, she stated that on account of the conflicting testimonies of the two witnesses, the case has been reinvestigated.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Padilla relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Balindong.

In closing her interpellation, Rep. Ilagan acknowledged the support given by the DOJ to the women sector especially in cases of domestic violence and other forms of violence against women.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Romualdo, the Chair recognized Gus S. Tambunting for his interpellation. 

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TAMBUNTING

To Rep. Tambunting’s initial query, Rep. Alvarez (M.) replied that approximately 39,000 prisoners are targeted to benefit from the budget for subsistence allowance of the DOJ for 2015.

He then inquired on the amount allocated for subsistence allowance in 2014.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 6:45 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Alvarez (M.).

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 6:46 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TAMBUNTING (Continuation)

In response to the previous query, Rep. Alvarez (M.) replied that P724 million was fully utilized and allocated for subsistence allowance of the prisoners.

Thereupon, Rep. Tambunting raised his concern to the Sponsor regarding the following issues: 1) the programs and projects lined up under the maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE) of the DOJ; 2) the status of the Witness Protection Program (WPP) in relation to its proposed allocation, the number of witnesses currently under the said program, and the requirements and conditions needed to be admitted to the program; and 3) the status of the Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) cases pending with the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Recognized by the Chair on motion of Rep. Romualdo, Rep. Dela Cruz inquired on the number of witnesses in the Ampatuan case admitted under the DOJ Witness Protection Program (WPP) and expressed hope that the families of the victims from media would see the light of day during the term of President Benigno S. Aquino III. He thereafter inquired on the amount allocated for the program.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Balindong relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Padilla.

After discussing the number of personnel employed under the WPP and the proposal to regularize them through Congress’ amendment of the law, Rep. Dela Cruz asked for an update on the infrastructure program for the halls of justice.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 7:14 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:15 p.m.
After being informed of the number of halls of justice constructed and repaired as of June 2013, Rep. Dela Cruz then asked on the amount being requested to fund the construction projects for the years 2015 and 2016.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 7:15 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:16 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

The Sponsor clarified that there is a request for 82 new halls of justice to be funded by the DOJ, and not under the DAP.

Rep. Dela Cruz subsequently asked whether there were DOJ activities that were funded by the DAP.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair suspended the session at 7:18 p.m., on motion of Rep. Alvarez (M.).

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:19 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

Rep. Alvarez (M.) disclosed that the DOJ received ₱11.2 million from the DAP funds.

At this point, Rep. Dela Cruz inquired on the possibility that the Supreme Court would take charge of the construction of the halls of justice since it is the lead agency of the Judiciary. He further asked on the position of Congress and the DOJ on the request of the Supreme Court.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 7:21 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:22 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

According to Rep. Alvarez (M.), the request of the Supreme Court was not possible because of its fiscal autonomy, and that its allotment for the previous year cannot be reduced by the Legislature. She emphasized that Administrative Order No. 99 requires an inter-agency committee tasked to improve the infrastructure of the justice system which in this case is chaired by the DOJ.

On further queries, the Sponsor elaborated on the specific functions of the Office of the General Corporate Counsel (OGCC) and the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) and likewise relayed the commitment of the OGCC to furnish Rep. Dela Cruz with pertinent data on the alleged anomalous concession agreement between the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System-Regulatory Office (MWSS-RO) and its two concessionaires.

Concerning the DOJ’s issuance of two resolutions regarding the conflict among the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), Land Transportation Office (LTO), and DBM over the Motor Vehicles’ Plates Program, Rep. Alvarez clarified that it has been settled because according to the DBM the funds have been fully utilized for the purpose, to which Rep. Dela Cruz expressed total disagreement.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Alvarez (M.), the Chair suspended the session at 7:35 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:37 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

Upon resumption, Rep. Alvarez (M.) made clear with Rep. Dela Cruz that the DOJ simply dismissed the issue because of the settlement between the two agencies. Rep. Dela Cruz on the other hand opined that he was questioning the settlement because of previous resolutions issued by the DOJ that were not in consonance with existing laws, and underscored that the DOTC and LTO cannot enter into any agreement because there was no obligational authority for the Motor Vehicles’ Plates Program.

Rep. Dela Cruz further noted that the DOJ was blindsided by the DOTC in this regard. He then asked Rep. Alvarez to educate the Body on why the DOJ had
made a ruling to close the particular case when the Procurement Act provides that no procurement shall be undertaken unless it is in accordance with the approved Annual Procurement Plan (APP) of the procuring entity and it has to be reflected in the GAA.

Rep. Alvarez assured Rep. Dela Cruz that the DBM will furnish the answer to his query. She added that the contract was entered the following year when the funds were already present.

Rep. Dela Cruz opined that Rep. Alvarez was being misled and asked that she review the GAA and the LTO APPs for 2013 and 2014. He said that he did not appreciate the Sponsor’s response for this was not what he was asking for. He informed her that he would be forced to request for a suspension of the consideration of the proposed budget of the DOJ if she continues to give him this kind of replies.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 7:41 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:54 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

With the understanding that the Committee would submit the following day the documents on the Motor Vehicles’ Plates Program of the DOTC and LTO, Rep. Dela Cruz proceeded with his question on whether the proposed budget of the Prosecution Services of ₱2.644 billion was correct.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon request of Rep. Alvarez (M.), the Chair suspended the session at 7:56 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:56 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

In response, Rep. Alvarez (M.) said that the Prosecution Services which is included in the Law Enforcement Services has a proposed budget of ₱2.9 billion.

The Members thereafter discussed the number of prosecutors and the nonlegal personnel under the Prosecution Services; whether the DOJ has enough prosecutors to service the requirements of justice in the country; and the Department’s recruitment problems.

Rep. Alvarez replied that the completion of plantilla positions for prosecutorial personnel is hampered by the lack of applicants due to security situation in certain areas of the country. She added that under the new law RA No. 10071, prosecutors would be receiving fairly reasonable and competitive salaries and benefits.

On further clarification on the extent of work and services rendered by government prosecutors, Rep. Dela Cruz inquired on the number of cases that had been subject to appeal or subject to motion for reconsideration to the Office of the Justice Secretary, to include the number of rulings or decisions that had been rendered by prosecutors.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, the Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 8:03 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 8:03 p.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

After he was informed on the statistics relevant to his previous query, Rep. Dela Cruz subsequently inquired on the number of cases that were appealed directly to the Office of the Secretary of Justice.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Alvarez (M.), the Chair suspended the session at 8:04 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 8:06 p.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

In response to Rep. Dela Cruz’ query, Rep. Alvarez (M.) explained that about 1,000 of the 388,255 cases handled by the DOJ prosecutors in 2013 were appealed to the DOJ Secretary.
REP. TIANGCO’S MOTION TO ADJOURN

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Tobias “Toby” M. Tiangco thereafter moved for the adjournment of the session.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 8:06 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 8:16 p.m., the session resumed.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Banal, there being no objection, the Chair suspended the session until ten o’clock in the morning of Thursday, September 18, 2014.

It was 8:17 p.m., Wednesday, September 17, 2014.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, September 18, 2014, with Deputy Speaker Ronaldo V. Puno presiding.

REMARKS OF REP. GUNIGUNDO

Upon recognition by the Chair, Representative Magtanggol T. Gunigundo stated that the parliamentary status was that the Body was in the period of sponsorship and debate on House Bill No. 4968, the General Appropriations Bill (GAB) for fiscal year 2015.

QUERY OF REP. TIANGCO

On Rep. Tobias “Toby” M. Tiangco’s query as to why the previous day’s session was suspended when he had a pending motion to adjourn, Rep. Gunigundo replied that immediately after the former filed his motion, the Chair motu proprio suspended the session. He added that when the session resumed and Rep. Tiangco did not pursue his motion to adjourn, the Majority Leader moved to suspend the session until ten o’clock the next day.

Rep. Tiangco stated for the record that he merely answered the call of nature when the session was suspended after he had filed a motion to adjourn. He recalled that when he returned to the Session Hall, the session was already suspended until the following day.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 10:02 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 1:30 p.m., the session resumed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 421
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968, as contained in Committee Report No. 421, and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Bill, to wit:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE AFAB, APEZA, CIC AND PCED

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan (AFAB), Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority (APEZA), Credit Information Corporation (CIC) and Philippine Center for Economic Development (PCED).

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE AFAB, APEZA, CIC AND PCED

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Carol Jayne B. Lopez, on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Gunigundo, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the AFAB, APEZA, CIC, and PCED.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the session was suspended at 1:32 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 2:27 p.m., the session resumed.

After informing his colleagues that they were still in the period of sponsorship and debate on the 2015 GAB, Rep. Gunigundo sought the recognition by the Chair of Rep. Tiangco.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF REP. TIANGCO

Recognized by the Chair, Rep. Tiangco adverted to the previous day’s proceedings pertinent to his motion to adjourn and inquired on the failure of the Chair to act on his motion. He informed the Body that after his motion to adjourn, the Chair suspended the session, and it was during the said suspension that he had to attend to the call of nature. He pointed out that without acting on his motion upon the resumption of session, the Chair subsequently suspended the session until the next day.
RULING OF THE CHAIR

Deputy Speaker Puno, in his ruling, explained that he deemed the absence of the movant in the Plenary Hall upon resumption of session that Rep. Tiangco had abandoned his motion. Thus, the Chair sustained the motion to suspend the session until the next day considering that said motion was in order.

Rep. Tiangco however pointed out that the Ruling of the Chair did not conform to the equal application of the Rules, fairness, and humane consideration, to consider his need to attend to a personal necessity. He stressed that he cannot compromise physical comfort without the necessity of going out of the Session Hall.

The Chair reiterated the reason for his ruling.

Thereupon, Rep. Tiangco sought recognition on a question of personal and collective privilege pertinent to the issue of raising a question of quorum.

The Chair thereafter recognized Rep. Tiangco for his speech.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. TIANGCO

Rep. Tiangco informed the Body that his raising a question of quorum during the September 15, and 17, 2014 sessions was brought about by the repeated failure of DBM Secretary Florencio B. Abad to provide him on said dates the requested list of legislators who had availed of the ₱10 billion Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP) funds. This as he relayed to the Body the chronological details of Secretary Abad’s commitment to provide him with the said list.

He then adverted to the list posted by the DBM in its website which he cited as incomplete, with columns that were lacking in some data. He also explained the importance of requesting the DAP list which was to make a public and full accounting of the budgetary allocations of Congress, to include the names of Congress’ Members who had availed of the presidential pork barrel funds and those that had been merely used as dummies to cover up for the spending of the DAP funds.

Rep. Tiangco thereafter stated that he would yield to the continuation of the plenary budget deliberations, so that the budget proposal of the Judiciary could be tackled, and that he would not question the quorum anymore. He however emphasized that Secretary Abad be given until twelve o’clock midnight to post in the website the accurate, complete, and detailed list of the DAP allocations. He then urged his peers to show support to his cause and invited everyone to check out the DBM website to verify his allegations on the DAP list.

REFERRAL OF REP. TIANGCO’S SPEECH

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body referred Rep. Tiangco’s speech to the Committee on Rules.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair suspended the session at 2:40 p.m., upon Rep. Gunigundo’s motion.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 2:41 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968, as contained in Committee Report No. 421 and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations, entitled:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE AMLC

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC).

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. TEVES

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Pryde Henry A. Teves stated that he was prepared to answer queries on the proposed budget of the AMLC.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE AMLC

In the absence of interpellators, Reps. Tiangco and Lopez (C.J.) moved to terminate the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the AMLC.
CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE PRRC

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) and the Chair recognized Rep. Ben P. Evardone to sponsor said budget.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. EVARDONE

Rep. Evardone stated that the Committee was ready to answer questions on the budget of the PRRC.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE PRRC

There being no interpellations, Reps. Tiangco and Lopez (C.J.) moved to terminate the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the PRRC on behalf of the Minority. Rep. Gunigundo, on behalf of the Majority, adopted said motion of the Minority, and there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the PRRC.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE JUDICIARY

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Judiciary.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair recognized Rep. Dakila Carlo E. Cua for his sponsorship of the judiciary budget.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. TINIO

Recognized by the Chair, upon motion of Rep. Gunigundo, Rep. Tinio made a manifestation on several important matters pertaining to the budget of the Judiciary.

Speaking in Filipino, Rep. Tinio opined that the inability of the government to even provide for the most basic needs of the Judiciary, such as court sala and offices, personnel and basic infrastructure, could account for the slow justice system in the Philippines. He expressed concern over the downward trend in the Judiciary’s proposed budgets over the years and as such, he said that he will support its proposed P32.66 billion budget as against the P20.28 billion that the President had submitted to Congress.

Moreover, Rep. Tinio underscored that at the proper time, he would move for the transfer of the P120 million Capital Outlay fund for the construction, completion and/or repair, rehabilitation of the halls of justice nationwide from the Department of Justice (DOJ) budget to that of the Judiciary.

Likewise, Rep. Tinio expressed his support on the following: 1) to increase the Judiciary funds for personnel services, particularly the proposal for an additional P3.029 billion for the creation of additional positions in the Supreme Court, the Lower Courts, the Sandiganbayan, Court of Appeals, and Court of Tax Appeals; and 2) an additional P4.433 billion to address the deficiencies in the personnel services budget of the Judiciary for the unpaid Magna Carta benefits of workers, salaries and wages, pensions, survivor benefits and other personnel benefits of employees in the Judiciary. He added that in approving his amendments, Congress can take significant steps at improving the judicial branch of government.

Furthermore, Rep. Tinio stated that at the proper time, he would move for the deletion of Special Provision No. 6 under the proposed budget of the Supreme Court, as well as in the other agencies and branches of government. He then reiterated his support for additional funding for the Judiciary and that he will propose his amendments in due time.


MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Initially, Rep. Dela Cruz noted that most of the proposals made for the Judiciary in the previous year’s budget were carried out and said that he would like the proposals to be continued in the 2015 budget. Particularly, he mentioned the provision of coterminal researchers for judges and members of the Judiciary.

He expressed hope that this will be considered in due time since this has been one of the most important considerations for purposes of accelerating the delivery of justice especially in the lower courts. He likewise said that he would support Rep. Tinio on the transfer of the Judiciary Infrastructure Fund from the DOJ to the Supreme Court.
Rep. Dela Cruz then said that at the proper time, he would propose to add funds for the justice-on-wheels program and special allowances for the members of the Judiciary as well as to delete provisions in the 2015 National Expenditure Program that were a bane to judicial independence.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE JUDICIARY

There being no other interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Tiangco and Lopez (C.J.), on behalf of the Minority and of Rep. Gunigundo, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the Judiciary.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair declared a recess at 3:03 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:06 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE HUDCC AND HLURB

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) and Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB).

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE HUDCC AND HLURB

On a joint motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.) on behalf of the Minority and of Rep. Gunigundo on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the HUDCC and HLURB.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair declared a recess at 3:07 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:08 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE DAR

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) and the Chair recognized Reps. Teves and Fernando “Ka Pando” L. Hicap for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP

Reminding the Body of the plight of the valuable farming sector, Rep. Hicap asked why the land acquisition and distribution program still received funding whereas the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Extension with Reforms (CARPER) Act had expired on June 30, 2014. The Sponsor explained that the DAR had to finish processing lands that had been issued notices of coverage as of said date.

Per request of Rep. Hicap, Rep. Teves promised to furnish the former with a detailed breakdown of the proposed DAR budget.

The Sponsor underscored that it is the prerogative of the House whether or not to enact laws that will improve agrarian reform in the country, to include the consideration of the Genuine Agrarian Reform Bill as filed by Rep. Hicap.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Puno relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Sergio A.F. Apostol.

The Sponsor underscored that it is the prerogative of the House whether or not to enact laws that will improve agrarian reform in the country, to include the consideration of the Genuine Agrarian Reform Bill as filed by Rep. Hicap.

Reps. Hicap and Teves also exchanged views regarding the 358 hectares of HLI land which was only given notice of CARPER coverage in December 2013 and 200 hectares of which was being intended by the Cojuangco family to be covered into an economic zone.
REMINDER FROM THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair reminded the Members on the floor that they had been discussing the same subject matter repeatedly and extensively and asked at what point it would stop.

Rep. Hicap said that it was important to fully discuss the matter considering that the lives of the Hacienda Luisita farmers were at stake due to a pending case in the Supreme Court and the plan of converting their land into an economic zone.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP
(Continuation)

Rep. Teves assured Rep. Hicap that a copy of the application for conversion would be furnished to him once the DAR officially receives a copy.

Thereafter, they tackled the issue on the actual number of cancelled certificates of land ownership award (CLOAs) and the percentage that was cancelled due to nonpayment by the beneficiaries; and the illegal survey on the Araneta estate in Tungkong Mangga, San Jose del Monte, Bulacan and the petition for revocation of claimant to convert the land for use by the MRT-7 project.

Rep. Teves said that he would furnish Rep. Hicap with a copy of the list of cancelled CLOAs as well as a copy of the complete details on the petition for revocation of the conversion order, for his guidance.

Rep. Hicap interpellated thereafter on the action of the DAR pertinent to: 1) Hacienda Dolores, Pampanga with regard to the exemption from the coverage of DAR, the conversion from agricultural to industrial land, and reverting the classification to agricultural land, and the rights of the farmers to reclaim their rights to the agricultural lands; 2) Busuanga Breeding Experimental Station pertinent to the exemption from land acquisition and distribution, and distribution of lands to farmers; 3) the distribution of farmlands implementing the SDO system; 4) the possible coverage under the DAR of farmlands in Coron, and Bugsuk in Palawan; 5) the convergence strategy program involving DAR and several other agencies, that aimed to implement agricultural development programs; and 6) the 2014 rationalization program of the DAR that had resulted in the termination of 9,486 DAR employees.

Rep. Teves assured Rep. Hicap that he will be furnished a copy of the detailed list of joint venture agreements and lease-back agreements that are officially enrolled with the agency, together with the existing rules and regulations under such agreements.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Recognized by the Chair, upon motion of Rep. Juan Pablo “Rimpy” P. Bondoc, Rep. Dela Cruz discussed with Rep. Teves the following: 1) the present funding situation as far as land acquisition for agrarian reform is concerned; 2) the Philippine Center for Economic Development; and 3) the kind of performance report the DAR has come up with.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Apostol relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Henedina R. Abad.

Rep. Teves assured Rep. Dela Cruz that he would be furnished copies of partial reports on the successful agrarian reform communities (ARCs) as well as those that have significantly failed considering that the latter mentioned that he was in the process of crafting a new bill that would replace the CARPER Law which had already expired.

The Members then discussed the Commission on Audit (COA) report dated June 27, 2011, and the ₱900 million released from the Malampaya Funds. Rep. Dela Cruz thereafter asked for a copy of the listing of the local government units (LGUs), as well as the foundations and other partners of the DAR which availed of the said amount.

The Sponsor promised to submit the data on (1) the DAP funds and the use thereof for support services to agrarian reform beneficiaries, and (2) the farm implements and equipment which the DAR promised to buy before the authority to use a ₱2-billion procurement fund expires. To other questions, he said that the agency used the State colleges and universities to help implement its mandate; was finishing a rationalization plan; and allowed the recovery of lands whose approval for conversion was based on misrepresentation.

Thereupon, Rep. Dela Cruz raised his concern regarding the timeline for the conversion from the CARP coverage of specific parcels of land, and the role of the Center for Land Use Policy Planning (CLUPP) in the policy-making of the DAR.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Apostol.

Rep. Teves promised to furnish Rep. Dela Cruz the following week with the pertinent data he had requested.
SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE DAR

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body suspended the consideration of the proposed budget of the DAR.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GUESTS

Rep. Bondoc then acknowledged the presence in the Session Hall of guests of Rep. Tinio.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE MMDA

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) and thereafter, the Chair recognized Rep. Evardone to sponsor said budget.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. EVARDONE

Rep. Evardone stated that he was ready to sponsor the proposed budget of the MMDA.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Dela Cruz for his manifestation.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz thanked the MMDA for reconsidering the proposition of the Members from the Bicol region for the establishment of an integrated terminal for buses coming from the south. He then requested the MMDA to advise the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) and the Land Transportation Office (LTO) regarding the said terminal.

TERMINATION OF THE Period OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE MMDA

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Rodolfo T. Albano III, on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Bondoc, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the MMDA.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 5:48 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Bondoc.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 5:49 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE DAR

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budget of the DAR and thereafter, the Chair recognized anew Rep. Teves to sponsor said budget and Rep. Tinio for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

To the initial query of Rep. Tinio, Rep. Teves assured of the Committee on Appropriations’ commitment that Special Provision No. 3 in the proposed budget of the DAR, undertaking a transition process for the implementation of the Program Beneficiaries Development (PBD) component of the CARP by the DA and other agencies of the government would be deleted as the DBM had committed an erratum.

Thereupon, Rep. Tinio sought clarification from the Sponsor with regard to the letter of DAR Undersecretary Felix Perry A. Villanueva requesting the DBM to recalibrate ₱300 million from their 2014 budget.

Then adverting to the CARP, particularly the fund for Landowners’ Compensation, Rep. Tinio asked on the additional allocation of ₱100 million being sought therefore. He opined that the existing appropriation of ₱18.9 billion is sufficient enough and expressed his desire to propose an amendment at the proper time.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

Recognized by the Chair on motion of Rep. Bondoc, Rep. Terry L. Ridon discussed with Rep. Teves Section 30 of Republic Act (RA) No. 9700 providing that those that were already covered by CARP should be allowed to proceed to its finality; the commitment of the Committee on Appropriations to delete Section 3 on the transition process for the implementation of the PBD component of the CARP by the DA and other concerned agencies; the details of the Tulay ng Pangulo and the commitment to give a list of bridges that were built under the said program; the provision of legal and technical services, as well as the release of individual certificates in 2013 and 2014 with the assurance that a detailed report on the number of collective CLOAs that were divided into individual CLOAs would be furnished to farmer beneficiaries; and details
of the proposed funds for training and scholarship, extraordinary and miscellaneous expenses, and representation expenses.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE DAR

There being no further interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Arnel U. Ty, on the part of the Minority, and Rep. Bondoc, on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of DAR.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On a subsequent motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair suspended the session at 6:20 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 6:23 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF PHILPOST

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to consider the proposed budget of the Philippine Postal Corporation (Philpost). Thereafter, on further motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Joseph Gilbert F. Violago for his sponsorship remarks.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. VIOLAGO

Speaking in Filipino, Rep. Violago presented the adverse effects of the closure of 500 postal offices nationwide which would have been handy in the delivery of parcel packages. He lamented over the proposed ₱4.836 billion budget of Philpost which he deemed inadequate to meet the requirements of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who send remittances and packages to their families. He then requested for the support of the Members so that Philpost will improve and continue its services and maintain the integrity of the postal system.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

On the request of Rep. Colmenares, Rep. Violago said that Philpost will furnish him with a certification stating that they did not receive the letters from the US Court intended for the human rights victims against the estate of the late President Ferdinand E. Marcos.

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Dela Cruz for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Reps. Dela Cruz and Violago tackled the issue of the ₱5 billion unliquidated Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) program funds which was coursed through Philpost by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for CCT beneficiaries. The latter assured Rep. Dela Cruz that Philpost will furnish him with a copy of a report thereon.

On behalf of Philpost employees, Rep. Dela Cruz appealed to its leadership to help and show compassion to their fellow workers who were due to retire or who already retired, those with pending cases, and those who are old and sick by giving them the salaries and other benefits due them. He also expressed the request of the employees and their families for a dialogue with the Philpost management.
Rep. Violago assured Rep. Dela Cruz that the top priorities of the agency are the welfare and immediate needs of their employees.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF PHILPOST**

There being no further interpellations, on joint motion of Reps. Ty and Bondoc, on the part of the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the Philpost.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair suspended the session at 6:51 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 6:55 p.m.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NTC**

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC).

The Chair then recognized Rep. Violago to sponsor the said proposed budget.

**REMARKS OF REP. VIOLAGO**

Rep. Violago said that he will submit a copy of his sponsorship speech on the proposed budget of the NTC to the Office of the Secretary General.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Colmenares for his interpellation.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES**

In his debate with Rep. Violago, Rep. Colmenares inquired into the status of the implementation of RA No. 10369 or the Free Mobile Disaster Alerts Act mandating telecommunications service providers to send free mobile alerts in the event of natural and man-made disasters and calamities. He also adverted to the main issue of NTC’s regulation of telecommunications companies (telcos) especially vis-à-vis their possible abuses and substantive financial gains given that simple text messages in the country, according to the Sponsor himself, average about two billion a day.

Even as he asked for copies of written reports regarding his concerns, Rep. Colmenares discussed further with Rep. Violago the following: 1) the interconnection rates charged by the NTC to consumers especially with regard to text messaging, the refund that the agency should give and how it would be given to consumers once the Supreme Court decides in favor of the consumers; 2) the regulatory powers of the NTC over telcos; 3) the implementation of a 2009 NTC memorandum circular with regard to the maximum unit of billing on cellular mobile phone calls pending the Supreme Court decision on a related court case; and 4) how drop calls are monitored by NTC’s benchmarking equipment.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair suspended the session at 7:37 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 7:39 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES**

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Violago explained how the benchmarking equipment of NTC monitors drop calls.

Committing to give pertinent data on the poor quality of service of telcos, Rep. Violago said that the NTC had already issued a memorandum circular on six-second-pulse dropped calls.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair then declared a recess at 7:46 p.m. upon Rep. Violago’s motion.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 7:48 p.m., the session resumed.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES**

(Continuation)

On poor Internet connection, the Sponsor explained the mechanics of domestic peering and said that he would submit a copy of the NTC’s proposal for more infrastructure. He reiterated the need for funds for benchmarking machines that would enable the agency to check if telcos were improving facilities and fulfilling promises of fast service, and to regulate and sanction them if they were not.

Noting that the country was reaping the evils of
privatization of government entities, Rep. Colmenares nonetheless expressed hope that Congress will help the NTC in providing sanctions against companies that violate their mandate and the requirements of the law.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Dela Cruz for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

To the initial query of Rep. Dela Cruz, Rep. Violago replied that the NTC has no knowledge on the use of the country’s military radio frequency by the United States (US) military forces as part of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). He added that the NTC would coordinate with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) regarding the matter.

Rep. Dela Cruz then inquired on the categorization of local, regional, and national franchises of telcos.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 8:05 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Violago.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 8:06 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ (Continuation)

In reply, Rep. Violago stated that the national franchises of telcos operate nationwide while the local franchises operate only within limited areas. He then promised Rep. Dela Cruz that he will be provided with a list of national and local telcos and government-owned broadcasting stations operating in the country.

Thereupon, Reps. Violago and Dela Cruz discussed the rationalization program of the NTC especially on the need for a road map to enhance the country’s global competitiveness in telecommunications. They also tackled the issue of whether the defunct NBN-ZTE project would still be implemented.

Rep. Violago then assured Rep. Dela Cruz that he would be furnished with the pertinent data thereon.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Ridon for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

Rep. Ridon raised his concern with the Sponsor on the following issues: 1) the use of the country’s military radio frequency under the EDCA; 2) the number of government-owned and-controlled telcos; 3) the quasijudicial powers of the NTC; and 4) the implementation of free broadband Internet in all barangays and municipalities in 2015.

Thereafter, the Members discussed 1) the role of telcos disaster-preparedness; 2) the allegation that the Philippines is being used as a listening post by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA); and 3) how the NTC could increase its broadband speed without passing the cost to the consumers.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Violago, the session was suspended at 8:23 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 8:24 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON (Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, the Sponsor further clarified issues like the regularization of long-term evolution (LTE) services, provision of rebate mechanisms in cases of power failure or poor services, reduction of interconnection fees, and removal of expiration date for prepaid cellphone load.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 8:31 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 8:36 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON (Continuation)

In reference to the last query, Rep. Violago cited NTC’s conditions for the removal of expiry dates for prepaid load.

After giving comment on telcos’ fair use policy, Rep. Ridon thanked the NTC officials for their efforts to fight the giants of the telecommunications industry particularly in fighting the high rates of text messaging. He expressed hope that the NTC will honor its commitment to protect the general welfare as it pursues the court case against the telcos.
TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NTC

On a joint motion of Reps. Ty and Bondoc, on behalf of the Minority and Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the NTC.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair suspended the session at 8:42 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 8:43 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE GCG

On another motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Governance Commission for GOCCs (GCG).

Thereafter, on further motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Gabriel Luis R. Quisumbing to defend the proposed budget of the GCG.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. QUISUMBING

Rep. Quisumbing signified his intent to respond to questions on the proposed budget of GCG.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

The Chair then recognized Rep. Colmenares who exchanged opinions with Rep. Quisumbing on the actions taken by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) in response to a Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) memorandum imposing corporate income tax on PAGCOR operations.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Apostol relinquished the Chair to Rep. Jorge “Bolet” Banal.

Among others, the Members discussed the issue on PAGCOR’s exemption from paying income tax as sub judice in view of the motion for clarification it had filed before the Supreme Court, and the GCG’s no-comment on the issue pending the high court’s resolution thereof.

At this juncture, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Apostol.

They further tackled the status of the compensation plan created by the GCG that will rationalize and standardize the benefits and salaries of the officials and employees of government-owned and-controlled corporations (GOCCs) amid the issue of their huge bonuses and salaries; the reason for the delay in its implementation; the composition of an inter-agency task force that will oversee its implementation; and when the compensation plan will be officially promulgated.

Rep. Colmenares said that he would demand the presence of PAGCOR officials once the Body considers the proposed budgets of the Office of the President (OP) and the Department of Finance (DOF).

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Dela Cruz for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz asked for a copy of the list of the top 10 GOCCs and their classification in terms of capitalization to which Rep. Quisumbing said that they would gladly comply with the request. They next discussed the huge difference in the budgetary support for the GOCCs for 2011 to 2013 against their actual disbursements. Rep. Dela Cruz maintained that the GCG was established not only to ensure the responsible stewardship of public funds, but also to enhance the corporate sector of government and strengthen its global competitiveness.

On the need to take new perspectives of the policy directions of GOCCs, Rep. Dela Cruz discussed with the Sponsor whether the GCG has come up with a roadmap of guidelines, initiatives and measures relevant to restructuring and focusing the policy directions of the GOCCs. They also dealt with the compliance of the country’s 116 GOCCs with the disclosure requirements provided for under the Code of Governance for GOCCs.

The Sponsor then assured Rep. Dela Cruz that the Committee will comply with his request for certain data, except for the disclosure requirements for the SBMA which, the former stated, is not under the jurisdiction of the GCG.

Rep. Dela Cruz further inquired into the GCG’s report on the compensation package of all GOCCs; the performance evaluation of government financial institutions (GFIs), to include their local and foreign borrowings; and a report on government guarantees to GFIs that comprised about 29 percent of the total expenditures or obligations under the NEP. He also sought clarification on the one-year fixed term for the executives and directors of GOCCs, citing that the
limit in tenure would compromise the effective management of the GOCCs and the implementation of efficient public service. He also inquired whether the members of the GCG are also subject to a fixed term which is a disincentive in the effective management of the GOCCs.

Rep. Quisumbing replied that the Committee will comply with a report and then clarified that a one-year fixed term is a good motivator for the executives and directors of GOCCs and GFIs considering that their reappointment is subject to their record of performance. With regard to the membership of the GCG, he said that while there are pros and cons to provide a fixed term for GCG officials, it is for Congress to determine whether or not the law needs to be amended. He then stated that Rep. Dela Cruz will be furnished a copy of the list of abolished, dissolved, inactive or nonoperational GOCCs; as well as copies of the findings of the GCG and their recommendations with regard to the Technology Resource Center, Zamboanga Rubber Corporation and the National Livelihood Development Corporation, among others. Moreover, Rep. Quisumbing explained that the records of financial transactions made by said corporations are currently in the possession of the Commission on Audit (COA).

Thereafter, Rep. Dela Cruz underscored that he wanted to put on record that with regard to reports provided him, the annual audit reports of the National Agribusiness Corporation’s (NABCOR) and the Zamboanga Del Norte Rubber State Corporation which did not mention any misuse and/or receipt of kickbacks from the PDAFs by certain Members of both Houses of Congress, run contrary to the opinion of the COA leadership.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. CUA

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Cua stated that the Committee was prepared to answer queries on the pending measure.

The Chair then recognized Rep. Tinio for his interpellation, upon motion of Rep. Bondoc.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

Reps. Tinio and Cua delved on the former’s concern regarding 1) the provision on Printing and Publication Expenditures of the National Printing Office (NPO) which was not included in the 2015 GAB; 2) the proposed budget of ₱6,000 for the Personnel Services of the NPO; and 3) the NPO being covered by the Salary Standardization Law.

Rep. Tinio subsequently proposed a ₱150.79 million increase for the NPO’s Personnel Services to ensure compliance with existing salary laws; and the Sponsor said that he will personally appeal for it.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE PCOO AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATION

There being no other interpellations, on joint motion of Rep. Ty, on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Bondoc, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the PCOO and its attached agencies and corporation.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE SHFC

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC) and the Chair recognized Reps. Teves and Dela Cruz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz asked on the assets and functions of the SHFC and what he called the extravagant compensation package of its officers. The Sponsor explained that the corporation grew due to the annual subsidies for the Community Mortgage Program and Abot Kaya Pabahay Fund; provided housing loans to
organizations of informal settlers in urban or high density areas especially along waterways; and complied with the requirements of the Salary Standardization Law and Civil Service Commission.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Apostol relinquished the Chair to Rep. Bondoc.

In closing, Rep. Dela Cruz requested the Sponsor to furnish him with information regarding the compensation package of the personnel of the SHFC as compared with the other GOCCs as well as the performance report of said agency. He expressed hope that the SHFC will be able to fulfill its mandate that is responsive to the needs of the informal settlers.

Rep. Teves stated that he would submit the requested information to Rep. Dela Cruz the following week.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE SHFC

There being no other interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Ty, on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Edcel “Grex” B. Lagman, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the SHFC.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 10:23 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Lagman.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:24 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NHMFC

On motion of Rep. Lagman, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC).

Thereafter, on further motion of Rep. Franz E. Alvarez, the Chair recognized Rep. Teves to sponsor said budget and Rep. Dela Cruz for his manifestation.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz requested the Sponsor to furnish him with a report on the compensation package of the officers and members of the board of the NHMFC as well as the agency’s performance report for the past four years.

Rep. Teves assured that he would submit the report to Rep. Dela Cruz the following week.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NHMFC

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Ty, on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Lagman, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the NHMFC.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 10:26 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Lagman.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:27 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NHA

On motion of Rep. Lagman, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the National Housing Authority (NHA).

Thereafter, on further motion of Rep. Lagman, the Chair recognized anew Rep. Teves to sponsor said budget and Rep. Emme A. De Jesus for her manifestation.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. DE JESUS

Speaking in Filipino and focusing on the proposed budget of the NHA and its mandate of providing socialized housing to the people, Rep. De Jesus requested the leadership of the NHA to give a detailed account on the utilization of its budget for the following programs: 1) housing program for informal settler families (ISF) residing in danger areas; 2) emergency housing assistance for calamity victims; 3) resettlement programs for ISF; 4) socioeconomic intervention programs in the resettlement areas; and 5) the number of hospitals in NHA resettlement areas.

At this juncture, Rep. Bondoc relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Apostol.

Rep. Teves assured Rep. De Jesus that he would submit to the latter the required information the following week.
Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Lagman, the Chair recognized Rep. Hicap for his interpellation.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP**

Reps. Hicap and Teves discussed the case of the remaining informal settlers near Agham Road who could be relocated in the provinces of Bulacan or Rizal, or other parts of the National Capital Region (NCR); their harassments by security guards of the Ayala Corporation; and their inclusion in the NHA’s housing program. They also dwelled on the help being given by the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) to people living in danger zones; NHA’s plans to address the problems of relocatees by providing transport cooperative services and training and skills development for employment purposes; and the need to file a complaint against the housing developers for their failure to provide basic facilities like electricity and water.

In addition, the Members discussed the payment scheme of NHA relocatees, retention rate in relocation sites, the available facilities therein, and the courses of action taken on delinquent housing beneficiaries. Rep. Teves opined that it is necessary to discuss with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) a holistic approach and the plans that would address the problems of the homeless or those without permanent houses.

Rep. Hicap then concluded his interpellation requesting data on the following matters, among others: the clearing of ISF in Quezon City, a complete list of relocation sites nationwide including contracts and contractors, number of relocatees, feasibility studies conducted in resettlement sites in Rizal, Laguna, Cavite, Bulacan, and Camarin in Caloocan City, and the government’s partner NGOs in these projects. Rep. Teves affirmatively responded and promised to provide Rep. Colmenares the data by Tuesday of the following week.


**MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

Rep. Dela Cruz requested for the submission of an inventory of NHA assets to determine its neglected assets due to the many problems that beset the agency so that actions can be done to optimize the utilization of these assets and possibly provide livelihood and services to neglected relocatees. He also suggested on turning the resettlement areas into a social enterprise zone and grant incentives to the livelihood activities providers. He also sought clarification on the organization of homeowners in resettlement areas and the initiatives being undertaken by other agencies to the housing sector.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Romualdo, the Chair recognized Rep. Ana Cristina Siquian Go for her interpellation.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. GO (A.C.)**

Rep. Go thanked the NHA for its good performance in her district and asked if there is a continuity of those projects since there are still municipalities in need of these programs.

Rep. Teves replied in the affirmative and assured Rep. Go that the NHA will submit the proposal as soon as possible. The Members also dwelled on the status of the NHA request for budget of ₱6 billion from the DBM. Rep. Go then joined the Majority in support of the NHA budget.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NHA**

There being no other interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Ty and Romualdo, on the part of the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the NHA.

**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968**

On another motion of Rep. Romualdo, there being no objection, the Chair suspended the consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968.

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

Thereupon, on further motion of Rep. Romualdo, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Additional Reference of Business and the Chair directed the Secretary General to read on First Reading the titles of the following Bills and Resolutions, including the Committee Reports which were referred to the appropriate Committees hereunder indicated:

**BILL ON FIRST READING**

House Bill No. 5006, entitled:

“AN ACT TO POSTPONE THE SANGGUNI-ANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS ON FEBRUARY 21, 2015, AMENDING FOR THE
PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT 10632, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Del Rosario (A.G.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND ELECTORAL REFORMS

House Bill No. 5007, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE PANLAYAAN TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOL IN BARANGAY PANLAYAAN, SORSOGON CITY INTO PANLAYAAN NATIONAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOL IN SORSOGON CITY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Escudero

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5008, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE PLACEMENT AND CONTENT OF BILLBOARDS INCLUDING THEIR SUPPORT STRUCTURES”

By Representative Gatchalian (S.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 5009, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE NEW NONGNONGAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL – SAN NICOLAS ANNEX IN BARANGAY SAN NICOLAS, MUNICIPALITY OF DON CARLOS, PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON, FROM THE NEW NONGNONGAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS SAN NICOLAS NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Zubiri

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5010, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A BRANCH OFFICE OF THE REGISTRY OF DEEDS IN THE CITY OF TANJAY, PROVINCE OF ORIENTAL NEGROS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Arnaiz

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 5011, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN BUILDING STANDARD FOR PLANNING, DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION OR MAINTENANCE PRACTICES, RENOVATION, EXPANSION AND RETROFITTING OF GOVERNMENT BUILDING PROJECTS IN THE COUNTRY”

By Representatives Bondoc and Nograles

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 5012, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY PHILHEALTH COVERAGE FOR ALL INDIGENT, ABANDONED AND ORPHANED PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (PWDs) AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 5013, entitled:

“AN ACT TO PREVENT YOUTH ACCESS TO TOBACCO BY MANDATING A MINIMUM CIGARETTE PRICE”

By Representative Madrona

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 1501, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE MEMBERS OF THE JOINT FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE-RE-
GIONAL OFFICE-CENTRAL LUZON UNDER CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT RAUL PETRASANTA, THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE’S ILLEGAL DRUG SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK FORCE (AIDSOTF) AND THE PHILIPPINE DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY (PDEA) HEADED BY UNDERSECRETARY ARTURO CACDAC ON THEIR RELENTLESS CAMPAIGN AGAINST DANGEROUS DRUGS WHICH LED TO THE APPREHENSION OF FOUR (4) CHINESE NATIONALS AND THE SEIZURE OF METHAMPHETAMINE HYDROCHLORIDE OR SHABU WITH AN ESTIMATED STREET VALUE OF FOUR BILLION PESOS (P4B) IN THE PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA”

By Representative Villanueva

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY

House Resolution No. 1502, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO CONGRATULATE CAPTAIN FRANKLYN M. DESIDERIO OF MEYCAUAYAN CITY, 4TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, PROVINCE OF BULACAN FOR BEING THE FIRST FILIPINO PILOT TO FLY THE AIRBUS A380, THE WORLD’S LARGEST COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT”

By Representative Villarica

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1503, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (NU) PEP SQUAD FOR EMERGING AS GRAND CHAMPION IN THE UAAP CHEERDANCE COMPETITION FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE SEASON HELD AT THE ARANETA COLISEUM ON SEPTEMBER 14, 2014”

By Representative Castelo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 1504, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING REGIE RAMIREZ, 21-YEAR-OLD FRESHMAN EDUCATION STUDENT OF THE EASTERN VISAYAS STATE UNIVERSITY-OR-MOC CAMPUS, FOR PLACING SECOND OVERALL IN THE JUNIORS CATEGORY OF THE WORLD POWERLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIP HELD IN ORASHAZA, HUNGARY EARLY SEPTEMBER, 2014”

By Representative Castelo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

House Resolution No. 1505, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ILLEGAL CLOSURE OF HOYA GLASS DISK PHILS. IN TANAUAN, BATANGAS AND THE SUBSEQUENT DISMISSAL OF THE COMPANY’S 2,600 WORKFORCE”

By Representative Hicap

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1506, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE EFFECTS AND IMPACT OF MEMORANDUM ORDER NO. 23-2014 ISSUED BY THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE (BIR) ON THE LIVELIHOOD AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES”

By Representative Hicap

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1507, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION URGING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DISCIPLINARY, RELIEF AND DISMISSAL SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES IN THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE”

By Representative Gatchalian (S.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES
ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

With the permission of the Body, the following Members were made coauthors of the Bills and Resolutions hereunder indicated:

Rep. Gus S. Tambunting for House Bills No. 945 and 4860;

Rep. Cinchona Cruz-Gonzales for House Bill No. 456;

Rep. Jose Christopher Y. Belmonte for House Bill No. 5005;

Rep. Leah S. Paquiz for House Bill No. 3971;

Rep. Rico B. Geron for House Bills No. 3511, 3971 and 4728;

Rep. Franklin P. Bautista for House Bills No. 4352 and 4724;

Rep. Arnulfo F. Go for House Bills No. 3925, 4352 and 4724;

Rep. Ronald M. Cosalan for House Bills No. 151, 4352 and 4724;

Rep. Emil L. Ong for House Bill No. 4114;

Rep. Maximo B. Dalog for House Bill No. 4777;


Rep. Frederick "Erick" F. Abueg for House Bill No. 1239;

Reps. Mylene J. Garcia-Albano, Lucy T. Gomez, Joseller "Yeng" M. Guiao and Sherwin T. Gatchalian for House Bill No. 4906;

Reps. Edgar R. Erice and Mylene J. Garcia-Albano for House Bill No. 5006;

Rep. Evelina G. Escudero for House Bills No. 4714 and 4913;

Rep. Raden C. Sakaluran for House Bill No. 4994;

Rep. Isidro S. Rodriguez Jr. for House Bills No. 4114 and 4728;

Rep. Cesar V. Sarmiento for House Bill No. 4728;


Rep. Walden F. Bello for House Bills No. 4911 and 5005;

Rep. Cinchona Cruz-Gonzales for House Bill No. 87;

Rep. Carlo V. Lopez for House Bills No. 596, 4352, 4714, 4728, 4477 and 4690 and House Resolution No. 931;

Reps. Erico Aristotle C. Aumentado and Marcelino "Marcy" R. Teodoro for House Bill No. 4690;

Rep. Raul V. Del Mar for House Resolutions No. 844 and 1477; and


COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report by the Committee on Civil Service and Professional Regulation (Committee Report No. 428), re H. No. 5014, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF METALLURGICAL ENGINEERING IN THE PHILIPPINES, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1536, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE METALLURGICAL ENGINEERING LAW OF THE PHILIPPINES”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1823

Sponsors: Representatives Salvacion and Yu

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Civil Service and Professional Regulation (Committee Report No. 429), re H. No. 5015, entitled:


recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1822

Sponsors: Representatives Salvacion and Yu

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2014

Report by the Committee on Civil Service and Professional Regulation (Committee Report No. 430), re H. No. 5016, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING AND MODERNIZING THE PRACTICE OF CHEMISTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY FOUR (R.A. NO. 754), OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CHEMISTRY LAW OF THE PHILIPPINES”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1706

Sponsors: Representatives Salvacion and Noel

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Health (Committee Report No. 431), re H. No. 5018, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO INDICATE THE BLOOD TYPE OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE IDENTIFICATION CARDS, CERTIFICATES AND LICENSES”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill Nos. 403, 1057 and 3607

Sponsors: Representatives Eriguel, Yap (S.), Gonzales and Villar

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Local Government (Committee Report No. 432), re H. No. 5021, entitled:

“AN ACT RATIONALIZING THE INCOME REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CREATION OF A MUNICIPALITY, THE DECLARATION OF HIGHLY URBANIZED STATUS IN THE CASE OF COMPONENT CITIES AND THE CREATION OF A PROVINCE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 442 (a), 452 (a), 453 AND 461 (a) AND (c) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160 AS AMENDED OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill Nos. 1251, 2954 and 3362

Sponsors: Representatives Acharon, Garcia (G.), Cojuangco (E.), Yap (S.) and Rodriguez (O.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization (Committee Report No. 433), re H. No. 5023, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING THE PHILIPPINE POSTAL CORPORATION TO ISSUE POSTAGE STAMPS DEPICTING PHILIPPINE TOURIST SPOTS, TO BE AFFIXED ON ALL INTERNATIONAL MAIL TO ATTRACT FOREIGN TOURIST”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2417

Sponsors: Representatives Olivarez and Sacdalan

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization (Committee Report No. 434), re H. No. 5024, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION (PCIC), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1467, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CHARTER OF THE PHILIPPINE CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill Nos. 418, 469, 2074 and 3226

Sponsors: Representatives Sacdalan, Ungab, Yap (A.), Guanlao, De Venecia, Teves, Bravo (A.) and Paez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Romualdo, there being no objection, the Chair suspended the session until ten o’clock in the morning of Friday, September 19, 2014.

It was 11:24 p.m., Thursday, September 18, 2014.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

Deputy Speaker Pangalian M. Balindong resumed the session at 10:00 a.m., Monday, September 22, 2014.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Representative Monique Yazmin Q. Lagdameo, the Chair suspended the session at 10:00 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:19 a.m., the session resumed.

MOTION OF REP. LAGDAMEO (M.)

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Lagdameo moved that the Body proceed with the Additional Reference of Business.

OBJECTION OF REP. ATIENZA

Rep. Jose L. Atienza Jr. however objected to the motion.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. COLMENARES


SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Mar-Len Abigail S. Binay, the Chair suspended the session at 10:19 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

On motion of Rep. Binay and upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General called the Roll and the following Members were present:

Abad
Abaya
Abayon
Acedillo
Acharon
Aocop
Adiong
Advincula
Agarao
Agyao
Albano
Alejano
Almaro
Almonte
Alvarez (F.)
Amatong (I.)
Angping
Antonino-Nadres
Apostol
Aragon
Arens
Arnaiz
Arroyo
Asilo
Atienza
Bag-Ao
Bagatsing
Balan
Barcelona-Reyes
Bataoil
Batocabe
Bello (S.)
Bello (W.)
Belmonte (F.)
Belmonte (J.)
Belmonte (V.)
Benitez
Biazon
Bichara
Binay
Bondoc
Bravo (A.)
Bravo (M.)
Bulut-Begtang
Cabilao
Calalay
Caminero
Castelo
Castro
Catamco
Cayetano
Celeste
Cerafica
Cerilles
Chipeco
Co
Cojuangco (E.)
Collantes
Colmenares
Cortuna
Cua
Cueva
Dalog
De Jesus
De Venecia
Defensor
With 201 Members responding to the Call, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum. (See also Appendix 1)

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF REP. COLMENARES

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Colmenares inquired on recent allegations that there would be a reenacted budget if the 2015 General Appropriations Bill (GAB) would not be approved on September 26, 2014. He said that if this would be the case, the Minority would be against it considering that the previous year’s budget contained allocations for pork barrel funds. He further inquired why a time is set for the approval of the proposed 2015 national budget and whether under the Rules, the Members can still tackle the measure beyond September 26, 2014 or on October 19, 2014 when the Members come back after a congressional break.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Binay, the Chair suspended the session at 3:16 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:19 p.m.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF REP. COLMENARES

Rep. Colmenares mentioned that the deadline that had been set by the Constitution was December 31st.

While affirming Rep. Colmenares’ points, Majority Leader Neptali M. Gonzales II explained that the measure had to be approved as soon as possible in order to be signed by the President and to take effect by the first day of 2015. He said that the speed of the budget process depended on the Executive’s submission of the GAB; the House’s and Senate’s separate as well as joint deliberations thereon; and technical matters such as the engrossment of amendments and printing of updated versions of the measure. As his colleague reiterated that interpellations should not be stopped by deadlines, he thanked the Minority for its consistent and active participation in the budget sessions.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF REP. TIANGCO

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Tobias “Toby” M. Tiangco asked whether the Committee had received the list of legislator-coursed Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP) projects which Budget Secretary Florencio B. Abad had promised to submit by September 17, 2014.

MOTION OF REP. TIANGCO

When Rep. Binay replied in the negative, Rep. Tiangco moved to defer consideration of the proposed 2015 General Appropriations Bill (GAB) until his request for said data would have been submitted.

OBJECTION OF REP. GONZALES


MOTION OF REP. TIANGCO

(Continuation)

With the Chair’s permission to avail of the five-minute rule, Rep. Tiangco stressed that he had made his request countless times starting from the budget briefings at the Committee level. He said that in the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) website that the Secretary advised him to look at, the names of proponents in the list entitled “DAP Coursed Through Legislators” were lacking or were amended.

VIVA VOCE VOTING ON REP. TIANGCO’S MOTION

The Chair called for viva voce voting on Rep. Tiangco’s motion, and with majority of the Members voting against it, the same was lost.

MOTION OF REP. ATIENZA

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Atienza moved for nominal voting on the motion as he stressed that a huge amount was involved.
MANIFESTATION OF REP. CASTRO


SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, the Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 3:36 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:37 p.m.

QUERY OF REP. GONZALES

Citing the nominal voting requirement of one-fifth of the Members present, Rep. Gonzales asked the Secretary General on the number of Members who had responded to the Roll Call.

REMARKS OF REP. CASTRO

Rep. Castro said that he was withdrawing his earlier manifestation.

QUERY OF REP. GONZALES

The session resumed at 3:37 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF MINDA

On motion of Rep. Atienza, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA).

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. SEMA

Rep. Sema discussed the mandate of MinDA of bringing socioeconomic growth to Mindanao and upholding one of the key result areas prioritized by the President. She also delved into the key banner programs of MinDA such as the Mindanao Development Corridors; Mindanao Nurturing Our Waters Program (MindaNOW) and Mindanao Power Development Program.

In closing, she stated that she is submitting the proposed budget of MinDA amounting to P19.942 million for the approval of the Body.
MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz requested the Sponsor to furnish him with a listing of all the assets and the valuation of said assets of MinDA, to which the Sponsor acceded to.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF MINDA

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Binay, on behalf of the Majority, and Rep. Carol Jayne B. Lopez, on behalf of the Minority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of MinDA.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF NCMF, SPDA AND ZCSEZA

On successive motions of Rep. Binay, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF); Southern Philippines Development Authority (SPDA); and Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority (ZCSEZA).

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. SEMA

On successive motions of Rep. Binay, the Chair recognized Rep. Sema who gave brief sponsorship remarks on the following government agencies which the Body tackled one after the other:

1. NCMF was created by virtue of Republic Act (RA) No. 9987 and has a proposed budget of ₱436.779 million for 2015. The Sponsor informed the Body of the appeal of the NCMF for an increase in its budget considering that the Halal industry is now one of the dollar-earning industries of Malaysia;
2. SPDA has a proposed budget of ₱42 million that was geared towards the maintenance and administrative and operational requirements of the SPDA; and
3. ZCSEZA has a proposed budget of ₱246.863 million that will be in the form of subsidy and equity which will be spent for the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) and Capital Outlay (CO) of said government corporation.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz requested the Sponsor to furnish him with the listing of all the assets as well as the valuation of the assets of the NCMF and SPDA, to which Rep. Sema acceded to.

APPEAL OF REP. LOBREGAT

Considering that the ZCSEZA is located in his district, Rep. Celso L. Lobregat appealed to the Body to terminate the period of sponsorship and debate on its proposed budget.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF NCMF, SPDA AND ZCSEZA

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Lopez (CJ.), on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Binay, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the NCMF, SPDA and ZCSEZA.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE SUCS (NCR, REGIONS I TO CARAGA REGION)

On motion of Rep. Binay, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)-(NCR, Regions I to CARAGA Region).


SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. PIAMONTE

Rep. Piamonte stated that the proposed budget of the 113 SUCs amounting to ₱43,342 billion represent a 13.8% increase over the previous year’s allocation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ

Rep. Paquiz first inquired whether an analysis of an SUC’s structure against the number of hired personnel has been made, and asked for a copy thereof, to which Rep. Piamonte replied that the sponsoring Committee will comply with the request.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Balindong relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Giorgidi B. Aggabao.
Rep. Paquiz next focused on the case of lecturers and professors who were hired through contracts of service— their number and their percentage distribution against regular and casual lecturers; the percentage of 2015 MOOE allocated for them; and the need to allocate regular funds for them. She also asked for the rationale in seeking a budget for all the plantilla positions when some of the items have remained vacant, and why these were not given to contracts of service and job orders; and the previous years’ unreleased appropriations under Personnel Services (PS).

Finally, Rep. Paquiz urged that in filling up vacant items, the SUCs concerned should prioritize lecturers who are already in the service but do not enjoy security of tenure.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

Recognized by the Chair, on motion of Rep. Francis Gerald A. Abaya, Rep. Terry L. Ridon focused on Section 1 of the Special Provisions for SUCs, and initially asked on the percentage of the total operating budget sourced from tuition fees and other fees collected from students.

The Sponsor, in reply, gave the assurance of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to provide Rep. Ridon with his requested information.

Reps. Piamonte and Ridon also discussed the income generated from the operations of hospitals under the SUCs, like the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) and the Western Visayas State University Hospital, which Rep. Ridon opined should receive bigger financial support from the government due to the nature of public health services that they provide to the needy. He also mentioned that Section 2 of the Special Provisions under the SUCs budget appears to force the State hospitals to generate income to sustain their operations but would eventually lead to an increase in the payment of hospital services and affect the State hospital workers.

The Sponsor further promised to provide Rep. Ridon pertinent documents relative to his concerns on the maintenance of laboratory classes in SUCs and the per capita spending of the State for public tertiary education as compared to the country’s Asian neighbors. He also emphasized that it is only the DBM which can explain why it only approved one-third of the funding requests of the SUCs in the 2015 GAB.

The Members next discussed the budget approved by the DBM for the University of the Philippines (UP) System which showed a cut in its budgets for PS, MOOE and CO. Rep. Ridon pointed out the need for Congress to appropriate more funds for the SUCs so they do not have to increase their tuition and other school fees to the detriment of the students.

Rep. Ridon next asked for a list of the PGH programs that will not be funded due to their budget cut. He also asked why a similar cut was made on the proposed budgets of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP), Rizal Technological University (RTU) and the Technological University of the Philippines (TUP), and inquired whether in the case of the TUP, the reason was its recent round of tuition fee increase.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 4:56 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:57 p.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Piamonte clarified the budget allocation of TUP before explaining that the tuition and other school fees in the SUCs follow a socialized scheme wherein those who can afford are charged with higher fees as against those who cannot thus indicating a preferential option for the poor.

Reps. Ridon and Piamonte also exchanged views on the reason the Philippine Normal University which is the country’s national center for teacher education was allocated a very low percentage of its original budget proposal which was similarly experienced by the Mindanao State University (MSU) and MSU Tawi-Tawi.

In terminating his interpellation on the proposed budgets of the SUCs, Rep. Ridon informed the Sponsor that he would be submitting his proposed amendments to revert the budgetary cutbacks of these SUCs at the appropriate time.

Thereupon, Rep. Ridon read for the record the unity statement made by 21 Members that emphasized the imperatives of government’s responsibility to its citizens for substantial additional budgetary funding for SUCs to sustain quality, inexpensive, obtainable, and sufficiently-more-peso-equivalent-funded public higher education. He called on the Members to support this initiative that would redound to national progress and development.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz initially inquired whether the CHED has undertaken any study with regard to the so-called “sunrise” and “sunset” curriculum courses for purposes of determining which educational programs will be subject to enhancement and downgrading. He explained that his query was also to determine whether budgetary allocations for the Commission can be specifically provided to courses or programs on aeronautics, maritime services, and research in mathematics and sciences. He maintained that these are considered educational programs of the “future.”

Rep. Piamonte replied that the Commission is currently undertaking a study on the course programs and curriculums of different higher education institutions to determine which courses are in demand, relevant, and necessary for national development, particularly educational programs concentrated on sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics. He informed Rep. Dela Cruz that the CHED is providing budgetary subsidies to courses that are also undersubscribed but are considered important to national development.

Rep. Dela Cruz thereafter interpellated on the number of students enrolled in a particular education program on a per regional and per SUC basis. He explained that this is pertinent to determining the effectiveness of these programs and the employment of students who had graduated from these specific programs.

Rep. Piamonte replied that the CHED would provide the required statistics at the appropriate time.

Thereupon, Rep. Dela Cruz inquired into the status of the so-called “Study Now, Pay Later” Program and the plans of the CHED to sustain the same.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Piamonte, the Chair suspended the session at 5:19 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 5:21 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

Thereafter, Reps. Dela Cruz and Piamonte discussed the need to revisit the “Study Now, Pay Later” Program and how it can be expanded to include the private sector, with the former requesting for a regular update from the CHED on the matter.

They further debated on several other issues, such as 1) imposing a moratorium in the establishment of SUCs; 2) the role of CHED in the supervision and accreditation of local colleges and universities (LCUs), with the Sponsor promising to submit a list of CHED-accredited LCUs and courses and programs therein, as requested by his colleague; 3) how SUCs generate and use income from their landholdings, with the Sponsor committing to give a copy of the CHED’s asset inventory management study; 4) the status of the K-12 program as well as its implications on faculty development and retention, cost, availability of facilities and teachers, and enrollment; 5) the number of SUCs and private higher education institutions (HEIs) offering medical courses and with base hospitals; 6) the donations and endowments as well as grants and trust funds received by UP-PGH, the UP-PGH Medical Foundation and the SUCs; 7) the guidelines for the establishment of review centers and classes by the SUCs; and 8) the CHED special programs and activities being funded by the government.

Rep. Piamonte thereafter assured Rep. Dela Cruz that he would be furnished with all the data and information on the aforecited matters.

Subsequently, on motion of Rep. Abaya, the Chair recognized Rep. Antonio L. Tinio for his interpellation.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Henedina R. Abad.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

Focusing on the Tulong sa Dunong Scholarship Program, Rep. Tinio asked for its budget breakdown and the parameters used by Congress in approving it. He also inquired whether Special Provision No. 5 applies both to the SUCs and the CHED, this as he pointed out that there is no special provision governing the P988 million allocated for the SUCs and proposed the introduction of such provision.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aggabao.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Tinio, the session was suspended at 6:29 p.m.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 6:30 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO
(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, the Sponsor committed that at the proper time, he would study Rep. Tinio’s proposed amendment to Special Provision No. 5 prohibiting legislators from interfering in the implementation of the Tulong sa Tulong Program, in accordance with the Supreme Court ruling on the Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) in the case of Belgica vs Ochoa.

Reps. Tinio and Piamonte next talked about the former’s concern of whether the proposed budgets for the MOOE and CO were increased, as he noted the lack of facilities and classrooms in Isabela State University, Cagayan State University-Lasam and Nueva Vizcaya State University; why there was no budget allocation for the hiring of additional faculty members in the SUCs for 2015 notwithstanding the increase in student enrollment; and the provisions of the 2015 GAA pertaining to service contracts and job order options done by the national government, agencies, SUCs, and local government units (LGUs).

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 6:58 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:00 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO
(Continuation)

Reps. Tinio and Piamonte discussed the legal basis for the widespread practice of the SUCs in hiring faculty members performing regular functions but under contracts of service or job orders; and the difference between Section 25 of the 2015 GAB on the hiring of agency personnel through contract of service or job order and Section 26 in the employment of contractual personnel. They both agreed that the legal basis for hiring SUC faculty is Section 26 and therefore it is illegal for SUCs to hire faculty members using contracts of service or job orders.

They next discussed the issue of promotion, in particular the funding requirements for the implementation of DBM National Budget Circular No. 461 in the promotion of SUC faculty members; and the legal basis for allowing portions of salaries of faculty members to be funded out of the incomes generated by SUCs.

In view of his argument on the DBM’s authorizing the use of savings and income generated by the SUCs to fund the salaries of their faculties and his contention that this is in violation of the Salary Standardization Law, Rep. Tinio thereafter proposed to authorize the SUCs to provide for a budgetary allocation for the regularization of qualified job order and contract of service faculty personnel to be sourced out from the MPBF, specifically the P3 billion budget for unfilled positions. He explained that the proposal conforms with Section 26 of the 2015 GAB; and further, that the proposal would prevent the budgetary allocation from being further used as a source of presidential pork barrel fund in similar manner that the DBM had used the appropriations for unfilled positions in the 2011, 2012, and 2013 national budgets. He opined that the regularization of contractual employees would benefit the more than 14,000 job order and contract of service faculty personnel of the SUCs.

Rep. Piamonte however explained that contractual employees, for purposes of employment, also have employee-employer relationship. He pointed out thereafter that the SUCs should be given the responsibility to decide on the use of the P3 billion budget for unfilled positions.

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Abaya, the Chair recognized Rep. Colmenares for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

Reps. Colmenares and Piamonte discussed the following matters: 1) Class D patients who are entitled to free services in UP-PGH and the kind of laboratory tests that are charged and not charged to them; 2) quantification of rates for reimbursement by PhilHealth; 3) the evaluation of indigent patients to ensure that they are really entitled to free hospital services; 4) the number of contractual nurses employed presently at PGH as well as the number of job-order nurses; and 5) the negotiations for plantilla positions at PGH.

Rep. Colmenares asked for a copy of the 2012 PGH report to include the number of Class D patients who were not given free services, as well as the number of contractual and job-order nurses. The Sponsor said the hospital will provide the requested document later.
On adding funds to hire more nurses, the Sponsor said that the proposal of Rep. Colmenares was his prerogative.

The latter subsequently asked why the UP-PGH was using its revolving fund for PS, MOOE and CO or why its patients and not the government was bearing the burden for the same. He requested criteria on determining patients as Class A, B, C or D.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

At 8:12 p.m., the Chair motu proprio suspended the session.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 8:13 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES**

(Continuation)

To Rep. Colmenares’ succeeding questions on PDAF funds in UP-PGH, Rep. Piamonte said the first tranche was used up before the Supreme Court declared the PDAF as unconstitutional and the second tranche was considered obligated as long as it was supported by notices of cash allocation (NCAs).

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

At 8:15 p.m., the Chair motu proprio suspended the session.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 8:18 p.m., the session resumed.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES**

(Continuation)

In closing, Rep. Colmenares stated that he would just wait for the report of the UP-PGH management on the usage of the P150 million revolving fund as well as on the other issues he had earlier inquired on.


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. BAGATSING**

Focusing on the 2013 performance report on hospital services of the UP-PGH, Reps. Bagatsing and Piamonte debated on the following issues: 1) the number of in-patients and out-patients admitted to the hospital; 2) the percentage of patients who rate the hospital services as satisfactory or better and who were medically attended to within two hours after registration; 3) the waiting period for elective surgery; and 4) the source of funding for the treatment of out-patients.

Rep. Bagatsing pointed out that substantially, the previous PDAF allocations of Members of Congress did help the UP-PGH in providing hospital and medical assistance to its patients, unlike at present when he has to refer his patient-constituents to far-flung areas just to get medicines. He stated that the UP-PGH should really sign a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Department of Health (DOH) in order to address the issue.

When informed that the UP-PGH had already signed a MOA with the DOH, Rep. Bagatsing then inquired whether such MOA could sustain the treatment of out-patients by the UP-PGH because he felt that the PDAF allotment really contributed to the betterment of the patients. Finally, he suggested to disengage PGH from UP to give it easier access to DOH funds, this as he pointed out that it is the number one public hospital. On a personal note, he inquired about the P4 million PDAF intended for his constituents’ health services through PGH but which has become a case that is now with the Ombudsman.

The Sponsor clarified that said fund had already been restored to Rep. Bagatsing’s district.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE SUCS (NCR, REGIONS I TO CARAGA REGION)**

On a joint motion of Reps. Silvestre H. Bello III and Francisco Emmanuel R. Ortega III, representing the Minority and the Majority, respectively, and there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the SUCs (NCR, Regions I to CARAGA Region).

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE ARGMM**

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Autonomous Regional Government in Muslim Mindanao (ARGMM), and the Chair recognized Rep. Sema to sponsor the same.
SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. SEMA

Rep. Sema stated that she was honored to sponsor the proposed budget of the ARGMM, and submitted the same for the Members’ approval.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE

Recognized by the Chair, on motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), Rep. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate noted that in the last three years, the ARMM has been receiving huge amounts of public funds but has remained one of the poorest regions in the country. He then tackled together with Rep. Sema the breakdown of the proposed ARMM budget for 2015; the implementation of the Transition Investment Support Plan (TISP) for ARMM as funded by the DAP funds particularly the rehabilitation of the Jolo seaport and Sanga-Sanga Airport; and the prospects awaiting the employees of the ARMM government once Congress enacts the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law.

Rep. Zarate ended his interpellation by saying that there were still unresolved questions on DAP-implemented projects not only in the ARMM but also in other agencies. He sought to find out the origin of the DAP fund and requested for documents relative to the TISP funded-projects.

Afterwards, on motion of Rep. Franz E. Alvarez, the Chair recognized Rep. Lobregat for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. LOBREGAT

Reps. Lobregat and Sema discussed the implementation status of a proviso in the Transitory Provisions of RA No. 9054 or the ARMM Organic Act, directing the government to purchase the properties in areas that voted against the Organic Act during the 2001 plebiscite and to sell the same to willing LGUs. Rep. Lobregat centered the discussion on the desire of the Zamboanga City government to purchase the Cabatangan properties.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Aggabao relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.

Rep. Lobregat expressed apprehension that all properties and receivables of the ARMM shall be transferred to the new Bangsamoro entity, as he warned that the repeal of RA No. 9054 shall forfeit the rights of Zamboanga City to purchase the Cabatangan properties.

Whereupon, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aggabao.

Rep. Sema assured Rep. Lobregat that he will be furnished with copies of all the records of the assets, liabilities and other properties of the ARMM which will be needed in the deliberation of the Bangsamoro Basic Law and the data on the ARMM’s sources of revenue, to include the national tax revenues collected by ARMM provinces and cities.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF ARGMM

There being no other interpellations, on joint motion of Reps. Lopez (C.J.) and Abaya, on the part of the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the ARGMM.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE CHED

On motion of Rep. Abaya, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), the Chair recognized Reps. Thelma Z. Almario and Tinio for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO


At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Aggabao relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.

To Rep. Tinio’s next queries, Rep. Almario said that the CHED had submitted the accomplishment report required by the House Committee on Appropriations and Senate Committee on Finance, while the complete list of the beneficiaries of the Tulong sa Dunong scholarship fund will be posted on the CHED website as soon as the data have been accurately validated. She also assured Rep. Tinio that the Committee will furnish him with a copy of said data, organized according to congressional district, the amount utilized, number of beneficiaries and amount given to scholar beneficiaries per congressional district.

Their discussion thereafter focused on the distribution and utilization of the P1.471-billion Tulong Dunong allocation provided under Special Provision No. 3 of the 2015 GAB and the P2.5-billion scholarship fund provided to the SUCs.
At this juncture, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aggabao.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Almario, the Chair suspended the session at 9:47 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 9:50 p.m., the session resumed.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO**

(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Almario clarified the P1.471-billion budgetary allocation of the CHED and explained that the Committee would conform to the provisions of Special Provision No. 3, instead of considering the DBM’s opinion that the beneficiaries of the fund should only be limited to SUCs and private HEIs and will not include the local colleges and universities.

Rep. Tinio thereafter proposed specific provisions in Special Provision No. 3, to wit: 1) to provide the budgetary allocations directly to the SUCs; 2) to specify the beneficiary agencies to avail of the budgetary allocations for scholarship funds; and 3) to insulate the scholarship fund from any intervention of the legislators or from the CHED itself, by providing a penal sanction in the aforementioned Special Provision No. 3. He explained that the last proposal was to conform to the Supreme Court’s ruling against the PDAF and against any postenactment intervention from the Members of Congress.

Rep. Almario however clarified that the word “intervention” connotes a different meaning from the words “referral” and “recommendation” that would now be more applicable to the required action of Members of Congress when they are requested by their constituents for scholarship assistance.

Agreeing with Rep. Tinio’s point that it is the responsibility of Congress to define the exact meaning of formal or informal postenactment intervention, Rep. Almario stated that she would await the former’s recommended amendment for an additional special provision.

In closing, Rep. Tinio said that at the proper time, he would submit some proposals that he thought would make the budget comply with the Supreme Court’s decision with regard to postenactment intervention in the budget process.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), the Chair recognized Rep. Ridon for his interpellation.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON**

Rep. Almario gave assurance to Rep. Ridon that the latter will be furnished copies of reports pertaining to his concerns, specifically: 1) the status of the Higher Education Development Fund (HEDF) under CHED and the number of projects and beneficiaries that benefited from said fund, including the use of the HEDF, and quarterly reports on its financial and physical accomplishments; 2) CHED’s compliance with the requirement of furnishing the Finance Committees of the House and the Senate and publishing the same in the website; 3) the guidelines pertaining to the *Tulong sa Dunong* Scholarship Program of CHED; 4) the *Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanang* (PAMANA) Program under the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP); 5) CHED’s explanation with regard to Special Provision No. 7 on the rationalization policy that has affected the course offerings at UP Los Baños, and whether it would also affect the curricular offerings in other schools; and 6) the general provisions of the CHED budget pertaining to the payment of honoraria to faculty personnel with extra teaching load.

To other concerns of Rep. Ridon, the Sponsor took note of the request to review the agency’s policies on innovative financing, tuition fees, and the revised general education curriculum. She clarified that the CHED had phased out development fees and said that Rep. Ridon could directly confer with CHED about schools that raised tuition fees despite pending administrative cases filed against them. She committed to give a report on how the DAP funds were used and liquidated by the agency.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE CHED**

There being no other interpellations, on joint motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.), on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Abaya on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the CHED.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOE AND THE ATTACHED CORPORATIONS**

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Energy (DOE) and the attached corporations and the Chair recognized Reps. Lobregat and Colmenares for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.
INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

Initially, Rep. Colmenares raised his concern on the following matters: 1) the number of power plant shutdowns and the megawatts lost due to the scheduled and forced outages during the Malampaya plant shutdown in 2013; and 2) the status of the investigation of the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) on the possible collusion among the power plants during said shutdown. Rep. Lobregat assured Rep. Colmenares that he would be provided with the information he had requested on Friday before the adjournment of session.

Rep. Colmenares then inquired on the number of dependable capacity and peak demand on electricity during the Malampaya shutdown in 2013.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 10:54 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Lobregat.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:55 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES (Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Lobregat cited statistics to answer Rep. Colmenares’ pending query and then committed to give the latter the list of penalties paid by the power plants for breach of contract.

Rep. Colmenares next inquired into the power supply and demand situation for 2015. As he noted that several other plants also shut down during the Malampaya turnaround, he said that the delay in the implementation of numerous projects had lowered the supply of power and caused the people to become suspicious. He subsequently referred to the data submitted by the ERC and DOE to the Supreme Court claiming that the estimated dependable power capacity for 2015 would be sufficient for the country’s supply requirement, and asked why the Malampaya power plant has to stop operating in May 2015.

The discussion between the two Members then moved on to the rehabilitation requirements of Malampaya; its planned shutdown schedule every three years during summertime when there is a peak demand for power; the shutdown’s effects on the economy; and the failed bidding in the privatization of the Sucat thermal power plant.

In addition, Rep. Colmenares also raised the following concerns: the government’s plan on the demand side with regard to the energy supply problem in 2015 based on the DOE projections; the DOE’s opinion regarding the Makati Business Club proposal on the demand side to save energy; the total supply shortfall projected by the DOE; and the nature of the DOE’s proposal to grant emergency powers to the President.

Rep. Lobregat agreed to provide Rep. Colmenares a copy of the DOE’s plan on the demand side on how to save energy.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Lobregat, the Chair suspended the session at 11:54 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:57 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES (Continuation)

After conferring with their other colleagues, Reps. Lobregat and Colmenares agreed to allow the DOE to conduct a one-hour thorough presentation on the technical aspects of the energy supply and demand and the type of emergency powers that Congress will grant to the President.

They then debated on the essence of Section 71 of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) which provides that upon determination by the President of the Philippines of an imminent shortage of supply of electricity, Congress may authorize, through a joint resolution, the establishment of additional generating capacity under such terms and conditions as it may be approved and that no mention of emergency power shall be granted to the President. Rep. Colmenares argued that the EPIRA Law should be amended to allow the government to address emergency situation in power generation while the Sponsor admitted that Section 47(J) of the EPIRA specifically prohibits the government from engaging in the generation of power and agreed that this hampers government efforts during a power crisis.

Subsequently, Rep. Colmenares adverted to the issue of prepayment of the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) to the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management (PSALM) Corp., which prepayment had cost foregone interests to the government amounting to P32 billion. Rep. Lobregat replied that the PSALM already prepared and submitted a position paper to the chairperson of the Committee on Energy, a copy of which shall be given to Rep. Colmenares.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 12:29 a.m., on motion of Rep. Lobregat.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 12:29 a.m.

Reps. Colmenares and Lobregat then exchanged opinions on the loans incurred by the National Power Corporation (NPC) when the EPIRA was enacted in 2001; the P62-billion case for back wages filed by the Drivers and Mechanics Association (DAMA) whose members were among the retrenched employees not rehired by the NPC when it began the implementation of the EPIRA; and whether the NPC is allowed under the EPIRA to pass on its obligations, including the P62 billion, to power consumers.

The two Members also discussed the impact of a Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) on the entire Mindanao region, as it grants exclusive jurisdiction in power generation, transmission and distribution to a new Bangsamoro entity.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOE AND THE ATTACHED CORPORATIONS

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the proposed budgets of the DOE and the attached corporations.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE CSC AND CESB

On another motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and the Career Executive Service Board (CESB) and recognized Rep. Dakila Carlo E. Cua to sponsor the same.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE CSC AND CESB

There being no interpellations, on motion of Reps. Lopez (C.J.), on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Ortega (F.), on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the CSC and CESB.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body declared a recess at 12:47 a.m., Tuesday, September 23, 2014.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 12:49 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOE AND THE ATTACHED CORPORATIONS

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DOE and attached corporations and the Chair recognized Reps. Lobregat and Walden F. Bello for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. BELLO (W.)

So as not to subject his colleagues and the DOE to cruel and unusual punishment, Rep Bello said that he would just submit questions to the DOE Secretary and to the ERC chief for which he requested the written answers to be given before the end of that week. He expressed support in giving emergency powers to the President so that the government could resolve the power crisis and manage the energy situation anew.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY

Rep. Ty asked for more funds for the Oil Industry Management Bureau (OIMB); free electrical connection and facility installation for informal settler communities in Bulacan; and subsidies for areas struck by Typhoon Glenda. After Rep. Lobregat’s favorable response, he thereafter asked about the status of the Shell Tabangao facility in Batangas.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Lobregat, the Chair declared a recess at 12:59 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 1:00 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY

(Continuation)

In reply to the previous query, Rep. Lobregat stated that the DOE has promised to give a complete report to Rep. Ty on the decommissioned Shell plant.

Thereupon, Rep. Ty raised his concern with the Sponsor on the following issues: 1) the policy of putting a price cap and a secondary cap mechanism on diesel-running power plants; 2) the plan of the DOE to buy or lease power generators to address the 300-megawatts supply shortfall; 3) the cost to the consumers of said plan and invitation to other existing power companies in the country in the procurement of power generators; and 4) the status of the submarine cable to Luzon of the NGCP.
Rep. Ty then inquired whether the DOE can mandate the NGCP to procure on their ancillary services as part of the Ancillary Service Procurement Plan.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The session was suspended at 1:17 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 1:19 a.m., with Deputy Speaker Abad presiding.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY**

(Continuation)

In closing, Rep. Ty stated that he would just wait for the results on the actions of the DOE.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**


The Sponsor clarified that a huge amount was intended for the E-Trikes Program that was not taken off from the budget in the last three years because it was in the form of a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and said amount cannot be realigned. He committed to give the details of the loan before Friday, September 26, 2014.

Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aggabao.

They subsequently discussed the financial status and role of the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC) in the energy sector, after which Rep. Lobregat committed to give Rep. Dela Cruz a list of PNOC’s subsidiaries and their functions as well as the projected 2015 income from the Malampaya plant and PNOC operations; and the earmarked activities of the DOE through the PNOC like coal production, geothermal operations and oil and wind production.

Rep. Dela Cruz’ next concerns were the consultation of the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) with the DOE on the issuance of franchises for all kinds of energy-efficient vehicles; the Department’s updated and long-term studies on oil supply, given the volatile situation in major oil exporting countries; and the pending applications for the establishment of power plants or power sales agreements.

Rep. Lobregat agreed to provide Rep. Dela Cruz the list of companies and penalties imposed upon firms that do not have valid certificates of compliance including the list of assets still under the control of the government; the NPC properties yet to be privatized; and the government-owned assets under the control of the PSALM Corp., including the list of sold or non-public properties of the National Transmission Corporation (TransCo) which was taken over by the NGCP.

The Members then dwelled on the 1) status of the city electrification program of the National Electrification Administration (NEA), 2) the number of cooperatives under the NEA and the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) and the reason why the electric cooperatives sued the former, and 3) NEA’s loan portfolio or funding assistance to electric cooperatives amounting to P8 billion, including the guidelines governing loan condonation and extension of loan payment, among others.


**MANIFESTATION OF REP. OAMINAL**

Rep. Oaminal at the outset expressed his support for the DOE energy program, justified Secretary Jericho Petilla’s request for Congress to grant emergency powers to the President to engage in contracts for additional generating capacity, and praised the Secretary for his outstanding performance. He proposed the inclusion of a special provision in the DOE 2015 budget, granting emergency powers to the President and to use any available funds of the DOE, the Malampaya funds, and/or the Office of the President to achieve the purpose.

Rep. Oaminal said he filed House Bill No. 4763, seeking to grant such emergency powers to the President by way of amending the EPIRA. He also requested Secretary Petilla to study and recommend to Congress the transfer of duties and responsibilities of TransCo to the NPC to generate savings that can be used to establish additional generating capacity. He then read an excerpt from the letter-reply of the NPC president to his query during its budget briefing, wherein its head admitted that if Congress so desires to return the transmission function to the NPC, the corporation has the technical expertise in carrying out the duty although it said so with deep regard to TransCo.

The Chair noted the manifestation of Rep. Oaminal.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), the Chair recognized Rep. Ridon for his interpellation.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON**

To Rep. Ridon’s queries, Rep. Lobregat assured the former that the Committee will furnish him with a
copy of the following: a report on the PAMANA Program particularly the Household Electrification Program in off-grid areas using renewable energy; a general description on the status of NEA’s electrification project for 2015 to include the number of additional sitios that will be having electricity by 2015; and the ERC’s response to a COA report. He also assured the latter that the Committee will set up a meeting with the DOE.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. CAYETANO

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), the Chair recognized Rep. Lino S. Cayetano who asked whether the DOE has been consulted by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) regarding the issuance of franchises on electric vehicles, to which Rep. Lobregat replied in the negative.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOE INCLUDING THE ATTACHED CORPORATIONS

There being no further interpellations, on joint motion of Reps. Cayetano and Ortega (F.), on the part of the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DOE including the attached corporations.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE ERC

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) and the Chair recognized Rep. Lobregat to sponsor the same.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE ERC

There being no interpellations, on joint motion of Reps. Cayetano and Ortega (F.), on the part of the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the ERC.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body suspended further consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

On a subsequent motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Additional Reference of Business.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read on First Reading the titles of the following Bills and Resolutions, including the Messages from the Senate and Committee Report, which were referred to the appropriate Committees hereunder indicated:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 5017, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8049 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ANTI-HAZING ACT OF 1995”

By Representative Barcelona-Reyes

TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 5019, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PUBLIC ASSETS MANAGEMENT CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Del Mar

TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION

House Bill No. 5020, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING ADDITIONAL BENEFITS TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENTS, SUPPORTING AGING PARENTS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES”

By Representative Binay

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 5022, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING CASUAL OR REGULAR EMPLOYEES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS FROM PERFORMING OFFICE FUNCTIONS IN COMELEC FIELD
OFFICES, PROVIDING FOR ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL IN COMELEC FIELD OFFICES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Alejano and Acedillo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND ELECTORAL REFORMS

House Bill No. 5025, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO HE YINGYU ZENG, ALSO KNOWN AS WILLY HO”

By Representative Pagdilao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 5026, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING RETIREMENT BENEFIT TO ELECTED BARANGAY OFFICIALS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 393 (b) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160 AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991”

By Representative Oaminal

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 5027, entitled:

“AN ACT TO PROMOTE CONSUMER CHOICE AND WIRELESS COMPETITION BY ALLOWING CONSUMERS TO UNLOCK MOBILE WIRELESS DEVICES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Abaya

TO THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 1508, entitled:


By Representative Castelo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1509, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING THE菲利普荒龙船队Claude BOAT TEAM FOR WINNING 5 GOLD MEDALS, 3 SILVER MEDALS, AND 3 BRONZE MEDALS AT THE ICF DRAGON BOAT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN POZNAN, POLAND”

By Representative Castelo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

House Resolution No. 1510, entitled:

“RESOLUTION TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE REPORTED DEMORALIZATION OF PEOPLE’S TELEVISION NETWORK EMPLOYEES”

By Representative Bataoil

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1511, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE SPATE OF POLITICAL KILLINGS AND EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO PROMOTE GENUINE FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY IN THE COUNTRY”

By Representative Masongsong

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

House Resolution No. 1512, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY AND THE ENTIRE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES,
TO THE FAMILIES OF THE GIRLS ABDUCTED BY BOKO HARAM IN CHIBOK TOWN IN BORNO, NIGERIA AND URGENCY THEIR SAFE AND IMMEDIATE RETURN

By Representative Villarica

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

With the permission of the Body, the following Members were made coauthors of the Bills hereunder indicated:

Rep. Salvio B. Fortuno for House Bill No. 4375;
Rep. Jose T. Panganiban Jr. for House Bills No. 4714 and 4477;
Rep. Florencio C. Garay for House Bills No. 4728, 4751, 4763 and 4777;
Rep. Marilyn L. Primicias-Agabas for House Bills No. 4785, 4801 and 4866;
Rep. Magnolia Rosa C. Antonino-Nadres for House Bill No. 5005;
Reps. Jorge "Bolet" Banal and Kaka J. Bag-ao for House Bill No. 4911;
Reps. Anthony M. Bravo and Henedina R. Abad for House Bills No. 4911 and 5005;
Rep. Wilfredo S. Caminero for House Bills No. 4114, 4714 and 4896;
Rep. Evelina G. Escudero for House Bill No. 4728;
Rep. Frederick "Erick" F. Abueg for House Bills No. 4630 and 4970;
Rep. Delph Gan Lee for House Bill No. 4896;
Rep. Rene L. Relampagos for House Bill No. 4352;
Rep. Juliette T. Uy for House Bill No. 4456; and

MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Message dated September 15, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 914, entitled:

“AN ACT TO REGULATE AND MODERNIZE THE PRACTICE OF CHEMISTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”
in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Message dated September 15, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed without amendment House Bill No. 694, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE BURIAL ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS FROM TEN THOUSAND PESOS (P10,000.00) TO TWENTY THOUSAND PESOS (P20,000.00), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6948, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘AN ACT STANDARDIZING AND UPGRADING THE BENEFITS FOR MILITARY VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR’”

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES
Message dated September 16, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date designated Senators Juan Edgardo “Sonny” Angara and Alan Peter “Compañero” S. Cayetano as additional conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 2272 and House Bill No. 3575, both entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE LADDERIZED INTERFACE BETWEEN TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION”

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Message dated September 16, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date requested for a conference and designated Senators Pia S. Cayetano, Cynthia A. Villar, Alan Peter “Compañero” S. Cayetano, Juan Edgardo “Sonny” Angara and Vicente C. Sotto III as conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 2275, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING ALL STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO ANNULLY CONFER AUTOMATIC ADMISSION AND PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS TO THE TOP TEN (10) PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THEIR GRADUATING CLASS, AND ALLOCATE FUNDS THEREFOR”

and House Bill No. 4860, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS TO TOP GRADUATES OF ALL PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS ENROLLING FOR THEIR FIRST YEAR IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Message dated September 16, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date designated Senators Juan Edgardo “Sonny” Angara and Alan Peter “Compañero” S. Cayetano as additional conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 2274, entitled:

“AN ACT TO EXPAND ACCESS TO EDUCATION THROUGH OPEN LEARNING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION IN TERTIARY

LEVELS OF EDUCATION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

and House Bill No. 4553, entitled:

“AN ACT EXPANDING ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BY INSTITUTIONALIZING OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMITTEE REPORT

Report by the Committee on Agriculture and Food and the Special Committee on Food Security (Committee Report No. 435), re H. R. No. 1515, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE PRESIDENT TO PROVIDE IMMEDIATE RELIEF TO CONSUMERS BY DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (DTI), DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (DA), NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) AND OTHER CONCERNED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO SET A SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE (SRP) ON BASIC AND PRIME AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES”

recommending its adoption, pursuant to their findings and recommendations, following the inquiry conducted, motu proprio, on the matter of the rising prices of agricultural products

Sponsors: Representatives Mendoza (M.) and Guanlao

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Chair suspended the session until 10 o’clock in the morning of Tuesday, September 23, 2014.

It was 2:10 a.m., Tuesday, September 23, 2014.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, September 23, 2014, the session resumed with Deputy Speaker Giorgidi B. Aggabao presiding.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Representative Juan Pablo “Rimpy” P. Bondoc, the Chair suspended the session at 10:00 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:01 a.m., the session resumed.

MOTION OF REP. BONDOC

Whereupon, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Additional Reference of Business.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the titles of the Bills and Resolutions, to include the Messages from the Senate and Communication which were referred to the appropriate Committees as hereunder indicated:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 5028, entitled:

“AN ACT PRESCRIBING ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY FOR SURVIVING SPOUSE PENSION THEREBY AMENDING SECTION 11 OF RA 6948, AS AMENDED BY RA 7696”

By Representative Roman

TO THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND WELFARE

House Bill No. 5029, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE FILIPINO ACADEMY OF ARTS, LETTERS AND PHILOSOPHY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Escudero

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 5030, entitled:

“AN ACT ORDAINING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOWNSTREAM NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY, CONSOLIDATING FOR THE PURPOSE ALL LAWS RELATING TO THE TRANSMISSION, DISTRIBUTION AND SUPPLY OF NATURAL GAS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Escudero

TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

House Bill No. 5031, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 25 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1638 ‘ESTABLISHING A NEW SYSTEM OF RETIREMENT AND SEPARATION FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ ”

By Representatives Rodriguez (R.) and Rodriguez (M.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

House Bill No. 5032, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 28 OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE CITY OF TANGUB, 2ND DISTRICT, PROVINCE OF MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL TO BE KNOWN AS ‘TANGUB DAY’ ”

By Representative Oaminal

TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 1513, entitled:

“RESOLUTION STRONGLY CONDEMNING THE BRUTAL EXECUTION OF BRITISH AID WORKER DAVID HAINES BY ISLAMIC STATE MILITANTS IN SYRIA, URGING THE GOVERNMENT TO INTENSIFY FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM”

By Representative Relampagos

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY
House Resolution No. 1514, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE AD HOC COMMITTEE TO EXCLUDE THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN AND THE CITY OF PUERTO PRINCESA IN THE PROPOSED BANGSAMORO ENTITY AND TO INCLUDE THE THREE REPRESENTATIVES OF PALAWAN AS REGULAR MEMBERS WITH VOTING RIGHTS IN THE HOUSE AD HOC COMMITTEE”

By Representative Abueg

TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE BANGSAMORO BASIC LAW

House Resolution No. 1516, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE PHILHEALTH TO FAVORABLY CONSIDER THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF DIALYSIS TREATMENT COVERAGE FOR PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM KIDNEY FAILURE FROM 45 TO 90 SESSIONS PER year”

By Representative Bataoil

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Joint Resolution No. 16, entitled:


By Representatives Gutierrez and Bello (W.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

With the permission of the Body, the following Members were made coauthors of the Bills and Resolution hereunder indicated:

Reps. Christopher S. Co and Rodel M. Batocabe for House Bill No. 155;

Rep. Marlyn L. Primicias-Agabas for House Bills No. 945 and 4924;

Rep. Nicasio M. Aliping Jr. for House Bills No. 4714 and 4728;

Rep. Ferdinand Hernandez for House Bill No. 4728;

Rep. Emil L. Ong for House Bills No. 4352 and 4724;

Rep. Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez for House Bills No. 4352 and 4724 and House Resolution No. 931;

Reps. Arthur R. Defensor Jr., Dan S. Fernandez and Napoleon S. Dy for House Bills No. 151, 3925 and 4352;


Rep. Gina P. De Venecia for House Bill No. 86;

Rep. Mel Senen S. Sarmiento for House Bills No. 4911 and 5005;

Rep. Rogelio Neil Pepito Roque for House Bills No. 4477 and 4728;

Rep. Raul V. Del Mar for House Bill No. 2994;


Rep. Noel L. Villanueva for House Bill No. 4360;

Rep. Frederick "Erick" F. Abueg for House Bill No. 4114;

Rep. Angelina "Helen" D.L. Tan, M.D. for House Bill No. 4946;


Reps. Rodel M. Batocabe and Victor F. Ortega for House Bill No. 4477;

Reps. Barry Gutierrez and Edgar R. Erice for House Bills No. 4911 and 5005;

Rep. Rufus B. Rodriguez for House Bills No. 4888 and 4889; and

MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Message dated September 17, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed Senate Bill No. 2278, entitled:


in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Message dated September 22, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date passed the following Senate Bills:

Senate Bill No. 712, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY PHILHEALTH COVERAGE FOR ALL SENIOR CITIZENS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9994, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘EXPANDED SENIOR CITIZENS ACT OF 2010’”; and

Senate Bill No. 2161, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE QUEZON CITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (QCDA), DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, PROVIDING FOR ITS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CAPITALIZATION”

in which it requests the concurrence of the House of Representatives

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMUNICATION


REMARKS OF REP. TIANGCO

Rep. Tobias “Toby” M. Tiangco, at this point, sought recognition from the Chair.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon Rep. Bondoc’s motion, the Chair suspended the session at 10:04 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:54 a.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 421
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Jorge “Bolet” Banal, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968, as contained in Committee Report No. 421, and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Bill, to wit:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF SEVERAL EXECUTIVE OFFICES AND GOVERNMENT CORPORATIONS

On an omnibus motion of Rep. Banal, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the following Executive offices and government corporations:

1. National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA)
2. National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) (Proper)
3. National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP)
4. National Library of the Philippines (NLP)
TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF SEVERAL EXECUTIVE OFFICES AND GOVERNMENT CORPORATIONS

There being no interpellations, on joint motion of Rep. Silvestre H. Bello III, on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Banal, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the aforementioned Executive offices and government corporations.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair declared a recess at 10:57 a.m., upon Rep. Banal’s motion.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:19 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body suspended the consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968.

ADOPTION OF SENATE BILL NO. 2161 AS AN AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL NO. 3899

With the concurrence of the Bill’s Sponsor, Rep. Jose Christopher Y. Belmonte and the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body adopted Senate Bill No. 2161 as an amendment to House Bill No. 3899, creating the Quezon City Development Authority, defining its powers and functions, and providing for its organizational structure and capitalization.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968, as contained in Committee Report No. 421 and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations, entitled: “AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 11:21 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Bondoc.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 2:47 p.m., the session resumed.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS

After informing the Members that House Bill No. 4968 or the 2015 General Appropriations Bill (GAB) was on the floor for sponsorship and debate, Rep. Bondoc moved for the Body to consider the proposed budgets of the Department of Agriculture, including its attached agencies and corporations. There being no objection, the motion was carried.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. SUAREZ

Rep. Suarez exchanged views with Rep. Singson (E.) on the following matters affecting the proposed DA budget: 1) whether the Department effectively utilizes its budget to carry out its mandate to generate income and work opportunities for farmers, fisherfolk, and rural farm workers; 2) why the poverty incidence
among these members of the agriculture sector continues to be on top of the national average; 3) the other sources of budgetary allocations as well as projects and programs of the Department; 4) the track record of the DA in implementing foreign-assisted projects, as in the case of the Philippine Rural Development Project (PDRP) which has a P7-billion counterpart funding from the government to establish a modern and competitive agri-fishery sector; 5) the unused appropriations of the DA in 2013 and the first half of 2014; and 6) status of the 2012 DA Self-Sufficiency Program.

In addition, Rep. Singson (E.) assured Rep. Suarez of a copy of a detailed status report on the actual accomplishments of the DA as far as farm-to-market roads are concerned.

Meanwhile, Rep. Suarez said that she just wanted an assurance that the concept of grassroots participatory budgeting will not be used for political purposes considering that 2015 is a pre-election year.

**MOTION OF REP. BONDOC**


**ROLL CALL**

At this point, on motion of Rep. Tiangco and seconded by Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Chair directed the Secretary General to call the Roll and the following Members were present:

Abad
Abaya
Abayan
Abellanosa
Abueg
Acedillo
Acharon
Acop
Advincula
Agarao
Aggabao
Aglipay
Agyao
Albano
Alcala
Alejano
Aliping
Almario
Almonte
Alvarez (F.)
Alvarez (M.)
Amatong (L.)
Angping

Antonino-Nadres
Apostol
Aragones
Arbison
Arenas
Arnaiz
Asilo
Atienza
Bag-Ao
Balindong
Banal
Barcelona-Reyes
Bataoil
Batocabe
Bello (S.)
Bello (W.)
Belmonte (F.)
Belmonte (J.)
Belmonte (V.)
Bondoc
Bravo (A.)
Bravo (M.)
Bulut-Begtang
Cabilao
Cagas
Calalay
Calixto-Rubiano
Castelo
Catamco
Cayetano
Celeste
Cerafica
Cerilles
Chipeco
Cojuangco (E.)
Collantes
Colmenares
Cortuna
Cosalan
Cruz-Gonzales
Dalog
Duyanghirang
De Jesus
De Venecia
Defensor
Del Mar
Dela Cruz
Dimaporo (L.)
Duran
Enverga
Erice
Eriguel
Espina
Evardone
Fariñas
Ferrer (J.)
Ferriol
Flores
With 192 Members responding to the Call, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum. (See also Appendix 1)

MANIFESTATION OF REP. ATIENZA

Rep. Atienza said that for the Roll Call, the Body should follow the procedure the previous night where the Members were made to sit down for an accurate count of those who supported a motion for nominal voting.

Majority Leader Neptali M. Gonzales explained that in the aforesaid instance, the Body had to come up with a specific number of Members (one-fifth of the Members present) in accordance with the House Rules. In a Roll Call, it merely had to trust the Secretariat and the Secretary General whose task was to ensure the accuracy of the results and of the Chair’s certification on the presence of the Members who responded to the Call.

Rep. Atienza said he was not able to count 198 Members in the Session Hall; and also cited the Rules in stressing the need for a quorum to discuss any matter on the floor.

RULING OF THE CHAIR

Thereupon, the Chair ruled that the Body proceed with its business.

APPEAL OF REP. ATIENZA

Rep. Atienza appealed the same.

Rep. Gonzales subsequently pointed out that the Chair-certified quorum includes the Members not only physically present in the Session Hall but also in the lounge and in their respective rooms doing their duties, all in accordance with the past rulings of the Chair.

RULING OF THE CHAIR

Thereafter, the Chair reiterated its ruling.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 3:37 p.m., the Chair motu proprio suspended the session.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:37 p.m., with the Chair recognizing Rep. Hicap for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP

Speaking in Filipino, Reps. Hicap and Singson (E.) initially discussed the number of nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and cooperatives being accredited by the DA and the basis for such accreditation; and whether the Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP) funds were allocated to the DA. Rep. Singson then stated that he would furnish Rep. Hicap with a list of DA-accredited NGOs.

Rep. Hicap then inquired whether funds appropriated to the DA were coursed through the DAP.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At this point, the Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 3:48 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:49 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP

(Continuation)

In reply to the previous query, Rep. Singson (E.) stated that no portion of the DA budget in the past was converted into the DAP funds although such funds were used to finance the implementation of several DA projects. The Members then delved into the DAP-funded projects of the DA, such as the Mindanao Rural Development Project, Payapa at Masaganang Pamayan (PAMANA) Program, and Jalaur River Multipurpose Project, among others; and the issue of whether a comprehensive assessment was done in relation to the development of the agricultural sector. The Sponsor also stated that the remaining balance of the DAP-funded projects amounting to P636 million was reverted to the National Treasury. He assured Rep. Hicap that he would be furnished with all the information he had requested, and committed that the people's money will be used accordingly by the DA.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Aggabao relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Hedeneda R. Abad.

On another concern, the Sponsor assured that a report on the collection, utilization, and requirements of the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF) will be provided to Rep. Hicap, who subsequently inquired into the increasing rate of poverty, the spiralling cost and continued importation of rice, and the food security situation in the country. This, as he underscored that genuine land reform is the key to agricultural productivity.
Reps. Singson and Hicap also talked about the scholarship program funded under the ACEF, as well as the breakdown of the Grassroots Participatory Budgeting (GPB) fund for the DA. The Sponsor assured Rep. Hicap of a copy of the GPB DA projects.

Rep. Hicap then asked for the amount and the exact location of the various Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and irrigation projects of the DA in San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 4:46 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:51 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP
(Continuation)

To Rep. Hicap’s pending query, Rep. Singson (E.) affirmed the P1.5 million allocation for an irrigation project in San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan and asked that the DA be given ample time to locate the exact place of the project.

They further discussed the damages caused by Typhoons Glenda, Luis and Mario to the agricultural sector and the immediate and concrete steps undertaken by the DA in providing assistance to the affected areas, especially the rice and corn farmers. Rep. Hicap suggested that the DA should consider the proposal to grant a moratorium on loan payments or write off loans of farmers adversely affected by said typhoons.

Rep. Hicap thereafter adverted to the P5.985-billion budgetary appropriations for the BFAR and inquired into the concrete program of action of the DA and the BFAR on the following matters: 1) the continued commercial fishing activities in municipal fishing areas; 2) the issue of land conversion or reclamation of aquaculture areas restricting the areas for marine and freshwater aquaculture and fish farming; and 3) the case of demolition of about 600 families of fishermen and farmers in Barangay Laiya, San Juan, Batangas in July 2014. He also inquired on the areas, kind of projects, and beneficiaries of the PAMANA projects of the DA and BFAR. He maintained that these projects should be intended for the benefit of the farmers, fishermen, and agricultural farm workers and should not be allocated to promote the government’s antiinsurgency campaign.

In reply, Rep. Singson maintained that the BFAR had already provided various forms of livelihood programs to help the affected sectors and stated that the Department would provide the latter with a status report on its PAMANA projects.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. ATIENZA

Initially, Reps. Atienza and Singson (E.) delved into an itemization of the P88-billion budget of the DA pertinent to food and agricultural production.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Singson (E.), the Chair suspended the session at 5:15 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:17 p.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ATIENZA
(Continuation)

Rep. Singson (E.) stated that of the total DA budget for 2015, P38 billion will be allotted to the Office of the Presidential Assistant for Food Security and Agricultural Modernization (PAFSAM).

Thereupon, Rep. Atienza requested the Committee to provide him with the correct and consolidated budgetary appropriations for fisheries and aquaculture production, livestock and poultry production, and rice production that would include personnel expenses, operating expenses, and other programs and projects pertinent to these concerns. He expressed the opinion that the DA’s P88-billion proposed budget should be broken down according to the various major responsibilities of the Department.

Rep. Atienza also discussed with Rep. Singson the grouping together of the different programs and projects of the DA including its functions and personnel requirements. The Members also talked about the present leadership of the DA and the functions of the PAFSAM, Secretary Francis Pangilinan as overseer of the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA), the National Food Authority (NFA), the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), and the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA). Rep. Atienza stressed that the people should know to whom they will air their concerns, such as the continuing rise in the prices of basic commodities.
Moreover, Reps. Atienza and Singson delved on the President’s promise that the country would be exporting rice by December 2013; and on how much would be allotted for the modernization of agriculture, as well as the amount to be given to fisheries modernization. Thereupon, the Sponsor clarified that the funds for the agriculture and fisheries modernization program were found in the budgets of the different departments; and promised to give a comprehensive report on it.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

At 5:43 p.m., the Chair *motu proprio* declared a recess.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 5:47 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. ATIENZA**

(Continuation)

Then citing the pitiable plight of simple fishermen in a country that could satisfy the world’s fish requirements, Rep. Atienza asked why the BFAR was seemingly helpless about water pollution and fishing monopolies.

Rep. Singson stated that political will is needed in addressing the protection of the country’s fisheries and aquatic resources and that both DA Secretary Proceso Alcala and Presidential Adviser Pangilinan should be given a chance to show their worth in solving the food sufficiency problem of the country.

For his part, Rep. Atienza stated that the reality is that the government has to wake up and address the lamentable state of food security in the country.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GUESTS**

At this juncture, Rep. Gina P. De Venecia acknowledged the presence in the Session Hall of guests of Rep. Evelio “Bing” Leonardia.


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS**

Speaking in Filipino, Reps. De Jesus and Singson (E.) initially delved into the status of the ₱1.7 billion Unprogrammed Funds for 2013 part of which was released by the DA to the BFAR to cover the funding requirements for the implementation of the rehabilitation plan for Typhoon Yolanda-affected fisherfolks. Both Members then discussed the implementation of said Fund by the BFAR and the number of affected fisherfolks that benefited from the same. They also discussed the obligated and unobligated funds of the PCA rehabilitation program for the Yolanda victims as well as the unused portion of the supplemental budget intended for them.

*At this point, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.*

Furthermore, the Members tackled the slow action of the DA in the cleaning and clearing operations required in the typhoon-hit areas and its sluggish provision of assistance in the form of planting seeds, fingerlings, and other agricultural inputs to typhoon victims from the agriculture and fisheries sector. Rep. De Jesus specifically questioned the releases of the quick response fund (QRF) to Typhoon Glenda victims and the nonobligation and implementation of the Task Force Pablo Rehabilitation Plan in Davao Oriental and Compostela Valley.

In closing, Rep. De Jesus requested for the reports of the Commission on Audit (COA) on the DA’s utilization of its calamity fund allocation.


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

Rep. Dela Cruz inquired into the balance of the QRF allocation for Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur, and then proposed for the possible adoption by the DA of pre-disaster mitigating measures, to include for instance the problem of El Niño. Rep. Singson (E.) agreed thereto and advised his colleague to propose an amendment to the QRF provision in the GAB.

At this juncture, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Abad.

Reps. Dela Cruz and Singson next discussed the 2015 appropriation for the DA modernization program particularly the Mechanization and Post-Harvest Equipment and Facilities. The latter said that a copy of the master plan which includes the list of beneficiaries who can avail of the program, will be furnished to the former.

Rep. Dela Cruz also lauded the continuing effort of the DA in the creation of integrated trading centers to help solve the storage problems of the farmers and requested for a copy of the guidelines on how the farmers could avail themselves of the trading center services and facilities. Rep. Singson said that the plan
includes training on the proper use of trading centers and that he will provide Rep. Dela Cruz with a copy thereof.

With regard to the documents he requested during the preplenary budget hearings, Rep. Singson sought the indulgence of Rep. Dela Cruz to give Secretary Pangilinan ample time to prepare on the matter.

The Members also discussed the following concerns: the mishandling of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund (CIIF) assets by the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG); whether a study has been conducted on the implementation of the devolution of agricultural and fisheries services to the local government units (LGUs); the status, allocated budget and training program for the DA’s extension workers; an updated report on the extortion case filed against the NFA administrator as well as the charges filed by Secretary Pangilinan against certain NFA officials; and the plan of the agency to import more rice to replenish its buffer stock of 1.7 million metric tons.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Singson (E.), the Chair suspended the session at 7:20 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 7:21 p.m., the session resumed.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ (Continuation)**

To the other concerns of Rep. Dela Cruz, Rep. Singson (E.) made the following replies: 1) the Committee will provide him with a report on the total cost of rice to be imported by the NFA and the corresponding tariff that it will pay for it; and 2) the NIA already came up with a solution to address a request to the NIA Administrator for a supply of 15 cubic meters per second (CMS) of irrigation water from Angat Dam, for Bulacan and Pampanga farmers. Thereafter, Rep. Dela Cruz aired his concern on the DA’s program of action on the: 1) rubber production industry; 2) expansion of resources and facilities of the Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) to other regions in the country; and 3) availability to farmers of the P1.495 billion budgetary allocation for Small-Scale Irrigation Projects. He also reiterated his previous request for the DA to provide him with a report on the use of the DAP funds that had been allocated to the DA and the NIA.

Thereupon, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Sergio A.F. Apostol.

Rep. Singson replied that the Department has taken utmost cognizance of the issues that had been raised by Rep. Dela Cruz and that it would also comply with the requested data on the use of the DAP funds that had been coursed through the DA.

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair recognized Rep. Antonio L. Tinio for his interpellation.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO**

Rep. Tinio debated with Rep. Singson (E.) on the issue of the unprecedented increase in the price of garlic in the past several months and the actions taken by DA thereon, specifically in its capacity as a member of the National Price Coordinating Council (NPCC) which Rep. Tinio opined should have imposed a price ceiling on garlic.

The Sponsor also conveyed that during the garlic crisis, the President ordered the Department of Justice (DOJ) to investigate what he deemed was an abnormal situation. He however admitted that it was the DA’s representative to the NPCC, Assistant Secretary Leandro Gazmin, who had proposed for market intervention rather than implementing a mandated price ceiling on garlic.

After a discussion on the functions of the private-sector led National Garlic Action Team (NGAT), Rep. Singson cited an ongoing investigation by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on the possible collusion between government agencies and private traders which might have caused the increase in the price of garlic. He added that in view of the NBI inquiry, the DA was not consulting with NGAT at the moment with regard to garlic importation.

Rep. Tinio’s next question was on the proposed appropriations for farm-to-market roads. Rep. Singson said he would submit copies of the detailed lists of projects referred to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for validation and posted in the DA website.


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. CAGAS**

Rep. Cagas asked about agri-tourism which, she said, promotes tourism, agriculture, labor, and business sectors. The Sponsor said that even if the DA did not have specific appropriations for the same, it would give technical support to private investors.
At this point, Deputy Speaker Apostol relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Abad.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

Reps. Ridon and Singson (E.) initially discussed the role of the DA in the use of the ACEF in the implementation of the Comprehensive Scholarship Program for poor and deserving students.

Rep. Ridon then inquired into the kind of products and services that will be provided to Filipino farmers and the identification of beneficiaries under the RP-Japan Increased Food Production Program grant.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 8:24 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Singson (E.).

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 8:28 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

(Continuation)

In reply to the previous query, Rep. Singson (E.) stated that the amount of P2 million under the Japanese grant would be allocated for the rehabilitation of Small-Scale Irrigation Projects. Rep. Ridon then requested that he be furnished with the information and the mechanism that will be used by the DA in the implementation thereof.

Reps. Ridon and Singson next discussed the implementation of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Program in relation to its programs and activities; and the status of the national programs for rice, corn, high-value commercial crops, livestock, and organic agriculture, among others. The Members also delved into the case of the anomalous memorandum of agreement (MOA) entered into by the DA and several LGUs under the Organic Agriculture Program, as well as the mechanism used in implementing the Registry System for Basic Sectors of Agriculture (RSBSA).

Rep. Ridon also inquired whether Congress has a hand in identifying the beneficiaries of the National Programs budget, and then sought assurance that under Special Provision No. 5 of the DA budget, there would be no post-enactment intervention in the implementation of the fund for farm-to-market roads (FMRs).

The Members then proceeded to tackle Special Provision No. 6 of the DA budget on the proposed Small-Scale Irrigation Projects; Special Provision No. 7 on the GPB projects under the LGUs which are covered by lump sum funds; and Special Provisions No. 9 and 11 on the allocation of the DA funds for the PAMANA Program and the socioeconomic component of the normalization process in the proposed Bangsamoro entity, respectively. The Sponsor thereafter committed to give the requested reports on the aforesaid concerns.

With regard to the PAFSAM’s action on the price increase of garlic, Rep. Singson disclosed that the case is under investigation by the NBI, and that the National Garlic Action Team (NGAT) is not under the DA as it is a private organization.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Carlos M. Padilla.

Subsequently, they delved into the case against NFA Administrator Arthur Juan for alleged extortion and which decision by the court the DA is still awaiting.

REMARKS OF REP. SINGSON (E.)

Whereupon, Rep. Singson clarified a response he gave during Rep. Tinio’s interpellation that a list of FMR projects will be submitted to said Member. He explained that they still have to wait for DBM to release first the list before it will be posted in the DA website.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF DA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES/CORPORATIONS

There being no other interpellations, Rep. Lopez (C.J.) moved to terminate the period of sponsorship and debate on the part of the Minority. Rep. Gunigundo joined the motion on behalf of the Majority, and there being no objection, the motion was carried.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereafter, on motion of Gunigundo, the Chair suspended the session at 9:06 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:09 p.m.
CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE OFFICE OF THE PAFSAM

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Food Security and Agricultural Modernization (PAFSAM) and the Chair recognized Rep. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE

Rep. Zarate’s interpellation of Rep. Singson (E.) centered on the following matters: 1) the President’s appointment of a PAFSAM despite the existence of the DA, and the prospect awaiting the PAFSAM after 2016; 2) the thrust and status of the implementation of the Integrated Pests and Management Control Project under the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) and how the PCA has been addressing the “cocolisap” outbreak in coconut-producing provinces; 3) the allocated budget for FMRs under the PAFSAM and its regional distribution; 4) the correction in due time of the P9.9 billion budget of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) for the National Capital Region (NCR) which shall be realigned to regional NIA offices for irrigation projects and various other locally funded projects; 5) the draft executive order on the utilization of coco levy funds and the plans of the PCA regarding the distribution of the funds to coconut farmers; 6) the rationale behind the budget for the Program Beneficiaries Development Component of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP); and 7) why the lump sum appropriations for climate change adaptation under the NIA was only limited to the 10 regions in the country.

In the course of the debate, the Sponsor promised to provide Rep. Zarate with a copy of the list of provinces and their corresponding FMR allocations under the PCA budget, information on how the NIA allocation for the NCR will be distributed to the regional NIA offices and various local irrigation projects, and a copy of the draft executive order on the utilization of coco levy funds.

In closing, Rep. Zarate reiterated his concern over the fact that two Cabinet secretaries are overseeing the agriculture sector, which he said is only creating confusion among stakeholders.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Jose Christopher Y. Belmonte, the Chair recognized Rep. Neri J. Colmenares for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

Rep. Colmenares initially exchanged views with Rep. Singson (E.) on the possibility of the NIA stopping its collection of irrigation fees from the farmers, which matter the Sponsor noted had to be studied. They then discussed the status of the Jalaur mega dam project in Iloilo, its funding sources, and its impact on climate change and on the siltation of shorelines. The Sponsor stressed that all the technicalities and risks were studied and promised to give a copy of the NIA study thereon.

Next, Rep. Colmenares asked on rice self-sufficiency; and the Sponsor explained that current rice stocks fell short of the ideal target of 13 million metric tons (MTs) inclusive of a 30-day buffer stock for calamities.

To related queries of Rep. Colmenares, Rep. Singson stated that the PAFSAM has deputized the NBI and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) to enforce the law and go after irresponsible traders who are switching broken rice into well-milled rice and assured the former of a list of arrested rice hoarders. He also added that the issue of overpriced cargo handling has been forwarded to the DOJ for investigation.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Padilla relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Abad.

Thereupon, Reps. Colmenares and Singson (E.) discussed the policy of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) with regard to the bidding process of confiscated rice; the initiatives taken by the NIA and the NFA in acquiring the confiscated rice; and the actions taken by the NFA in monitoring the rice traders that won the bid and identifying the rice smugglers and hoarders that joined the bidding-out process.

Rep. Colmenares expressed his disappointment on the NFA as he opined that the agency is saddled with corruption and conspiracy. He then inquired on the number of smugglers or unscrupulous traders who were convicted by the court; the government’s failure to address the problem of increasing price of rice; the employment profile of former NFA Administrator Juan; and the COA audit report on rice smuggling during his term of office. He stressed the importance of Administrator Juan’s presence in the Session Hall, and subsequently moved to defer the deliberations on the NFA budget.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 11:13 p.m.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:13 p.m.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE OFFICE OF THE PAFSAM, EXCEPT NFA

There being no further interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.) on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo on behalf of the Majority, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the Office of the PAFSAM, except the NFA.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the session was suspended at 11:15 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:15 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DND INCLUDING THE ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS

On another motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of National Defense, (DND) including the attached agencies.

On further motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair recognized Rep. Zenaida B. Angping to sponsor the said budgets.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the session was suspended at 11:19 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:20 p.m.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY

Rep. Ty’s initial question was on the allocation of P1 billion for the housing project of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) personnel.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 11:23 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:25 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY

(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Angping clarified that the budget for the AFP housing project can build 45,720 housing units amounting to P250,000 each, and at present, 8,931 were already constructed.
REMINDER FROM THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair reminded the Members to address the Chair when speaking.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY
(Continuation)

Rep. Angping said 10,900 units were allocated for Phase 1 of the housing project, 15,162 for Phase 2, and none yet for Phase 3.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 11:29 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:33 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY
(Continuation)

Thereupon, Rep. Angping clarified that the expected number of housing units for the one-billion peso budget is 25,000. Rep. Ty then requested for information about the sources and amount of the AFP housing fund, the projected years of housing construction, and the housing beneficiaries. In reply, Rep. Angping said that it is a National Housing Authority (NHA) project but the funds did not come from the NHA.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 11:35 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:35 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY
(Continuation)

Upon recognition of the Chair, Rep. Ty withdrew his previous question on funding source and then tackled together with Rep. Angping the reason why only about 800 units out of the 25,000 units have been occupied.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 11:38 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:39 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY
(Continuation)

Continuing with his interpellation, Rep. Ty focused on why the housing units intended for the AFP and Philippine National Police (PNP) uniformed and civilian personnel which were built three or four years ago and cost billions of pesos have not been occupied or awarded to its beneficiaries. While he lauded the President for coming up with a project that aims to address the housing needs of the AFP and PNP personnel, he noted that no study or consultation was conducted before the project was implemented. He suggested that if ever the 25,000 units will not be occupied by next year, these should be awarded to the informal settlers. He expressed hope that whatever problem the program is facing would be resolved as soon as possible so that the funds allocated therein would not be wasted.

Rep. Angping agreed to the suggestion of Rep. Ty and that the DND and the AFP have committed that at least 90% of the units would be occupied by next year. She then promised to follow up this concern with them.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP

At the outset, Rep. Hicap asked about the deployment of the Philippine Army (PA) personnel.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 11:47 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:54 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP
(Continuation)

To Rep. Hicap’s pending question, Rep. Angping committed to submit to her colleague in the afternoon of the next day the pertinent data regarding the deployment of Army personnel.
Rep. Hicap inquired whether the extrajudicial killings of farmers and members of Anakpawis allegedly committed by the AFP under the PNoy Administration were valid and justifiable. This, as he pointed out that the mandate of the Armed Forces and law enforcement authorities is to protect the people and defend the poor.

Deputy Speaker Padilla thereafter relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Abad.

Rep. Angping replied that the Committee would act accordingly if Rep. Hicap would provide them with cases of human rights violations, extrajudicial killings, and instances of black propaganda declaring the KMP and Anakpawis as enemies of the State.

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair recognized Rep. De Jesus for her interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS

Rep. De Jesus focused on the advocacy of Party-List Gabriela for the protection of the rights of children. She exchanged views with Rep. Angping regarding the possible adverse effects to children of the unprecedented presence of military personnel in premises which children regularly visit. She enumerated to the Sponsor the various documented incidents of military encampment in the elementary and high school premises, day care centers, community learning centers, churches, barangay halls, and barangay gyms and the harassment of students and school teachers in various places in North Cotabato, Davao City, Compostela Valley, Davao Oriental, and Davao del Norte. She also showed a short video clip detailing the concern of the administrators of a community learning center on the adverse social and psychological effects of the so-called culture of war, disruption of classes, and endangerment to the health and public safety of the children, caused by the military’s presence therein.

As she expressed her thanks to Rep. De Jesus for the report and the video she shared to her colleagues, Rep. Angping, in response, provided the assurance that the AFP would investigate the aforesaid incidents.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair recognized Rep. Dela Cruz for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Initially, Rep. Dela Cruz asked about the list of all the assets, landholdings and military reservations that he requested during the start of the Committee hearings on the proposed budget of the DND. He then discussed with Rep. Angping the value or share from the sale of such assets and properties that had been remitted to the AFP Modernization Act Trust Fund.

Rep. Angping committed to provide Rep. Dela Cruz copies of the inventory and valuation of all the assets, landholdings and military reservations, as well as plans, if any, of the AFP and the DND with regard to the same.

To Rep. Dela Cruz’ concern for a stable pension and benefit program for the military, Rep. Angping said that a technical working group was crafting a bill on a new pension system to which the AFP Retirement, Savings and Benefits System (RSBS) funds would go sometime in 2016.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon the Sponsor’s motion, the Chair declared a recess at 12:46 a.m. of Wednesday, September 24, 2014.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 12:47 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

(Continuation)

To Rep. Dela Cruz’ questions on protecting the interests of war veterans, Rep. Angping promised to submit the data by September 26, 2014 on the Philippine Veterans Bank’s (PVB) assets as well as the contributions or remittances to the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), if any.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Angping, the Chair declared a recess anew at 12:53 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 12:55 a.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

(Continuation)

To her colleague’s questions on the DND’s personnel complement, Rep. Angping mentioned data on civilians, troops, and force multipliers such as the Citizens’ Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGUs).

Thereupon, Reps. Dela Cruz and Angping discussed the preparedness of the AFP in providing
safety and security to the people in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and the impact of establishing another armed forces outside of the AFP once the Bangsamoro Basic Law becomes a law.

Rep. Dela Cruz then inquired into the capability of the various Muslim armed groups, such as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front ( MILF), the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF).

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 1:05 a.m., upon motion of Rep. Angping.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 1:07 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ (Continuation)

Continuing with their debate, Reps. Dela Cruz and Angping discussed the position of the AFP with regard to the armed strength and integration of the various Muslim groups as well as an assessment of the country’s conflict with China and the procurement of weapons from other countries in relation to said conflict.

Rep. Dela Cruz then inquired into the status of the equipment and weapons bought from Israel.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 1:16 a.m., upon motion of Rep. Angping.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 1:17 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ (Continuation)

In reply, Rep. Angping stated that the AFP was still in the process of procuring the equipment and weapons.

Continuing with their debate, Reps. Dela Cruz and Angping tackled the process of procurement on a government-to-government basis in relation to a COA report that the DND and the AFP had violated certain provisions of the General Accounting Systems Manual. He asked why several contracts were awarded when their Special Allotment Release Orders (SAROs) had already expired, and how they were undertaken in accordance with accounting and auditing procedures.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.

Thereafter, with the Sponsor’s assurance that a copy of the COA report would be given him, Rep. Dela Cruz discussed the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC)’s responsibilities, resources and personnel. Finally, the Sponsor committed to comply with the request of Rep. Dela Cruz for a comprehensive report on the DAP allocation received by the Presidential Security Group (PSG).

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE

Recognized by the Chair on motion of Rep. Bondoc, Rep. Zarate asked for 1) a report on the AFP’s acquisition of USS Cyclone or PC-1 that was renamed BRP Mariano Alvarez, which the Philippine Navy acquired in 2004, and 2) data on 14 units of M11382 armored personnel carriers (APCs) acquired by the Department also in 2004.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Angping, the session was suspended at 1:39 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 1:40 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE (Continuation)

After seeking the confirmation of the Sponsor on certain military equipment and vehicles that the DND-AFP had purchased from the United States (US), Rep. Zarate debated with the Sponsor on the following issues: 1) whether the agencies had violated the AFP Modernization Act and its revised version for procuring military equipment and weapons barred under Philippine laws; 2) whether the DND-AFP juggled public funds when they funded several expenditures out of their quick response fund (QRF) allocation, which should have been otherwise properly funded by the AFP Modernization Fund; 3) the COA special audit on the AFP Modernization Program; and 4) the alleged pork barrel fund of the AFP Chief of Staff as contained in Special Provision No. 7 of the DND budget.
Rep. Angping gave the assurance that the Committee will look into the issues raised by Rep. Zarate that all his requested information, including a copy of the COA post audit report, will be provided to him. She also welcomed his proposed amendment to delete Special Provision No. 7.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair suspended the session at 2:10 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 2:10 a.m.


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON**

At the outset, Rep. Ridon requested for a detailed report on the manner that the DND had spent its QRF allocation for 2013, to which Rep. Angping acceded. The Sponsor also informed him that aside from the QRF, NDRRMC funds can also be used for programs, activities or projects promoting disaster preparedness. Rep. Ridon next inquired whether the DND observe certain standards in the use of confidential and intelligence funds.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 2:16 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 2:18 a.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON**

(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Angping replied that the DND uses its intelligence funds to collect information to address threats that have a direct impact on national security and that an oversight committee monitors its expenditures and accomplishments. She added that the Committee will provide Rep. Ridon with a copy of a general report on the spending of the DND’s confidential and intelligence funds.

The Members then delved into the following concerns of Rep. Ridon: 1) how the DND used its budget for extraordinary expenses in 2012 and 2013, and how it intends to spend the same in 2015; 2) whether the DND was able to resolve the COA findings regarding unliquidated cash advances and the hiring of DND consultants; 3) the budgetary allocation for AFP Modernization Program in the 2015 national budget; and 4) the 2012 COA Audit Report regarding the unreliable recording and reporting of monthly petroleum, oil, and lubricants issuance reports.

Rep. Angping replied that the Committee would provide him with the required information, to include DND reports on the unliquidated cash advances and the utilization of the Ph15 billion for the AFP Modernization Program. She added that Rep. Ridon will just be provided with a summary of all the management responses to all COA reports pertaining to the latter’s queries. However, Rep. Ridon said that he wanted it on record that the DND was not prepared to give adequate answers to questions on the COA reports during their budget hearing. He added that the DND should at least have an initial understanding on what the COA report was all about.

Thereafter, Rep. Ridon inquired on the COA report regarding the negotiated procurement for the repair and rehabilitation of a memorial museum that was not in accordance with the Procurement Law, its project cost, and how the bidding was conducted.

*At this juncture, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Abad.*

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Angping, the Chair suspended the session at 2:43 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 2:46 a.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON**

(Continuation)

While Rep. Angping stated that she would ask the DND-AFP to submit a report on all COA reports that they were unable to answer, Rep. Ridon underscored the need for a deferment of the budget of the DND considering that no adequate response can be provided by those concerned.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 2:49 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 2:49 a.m.
INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON 
(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Ridon pointed out the unpreparedness of the DND. He then discussed with Rep. Angping the issue of government vehicles that were registered under the name of private persons, personnel of the Philippine Army (PA) and a private company, as well as the persons responsible for the registration of said public vehicles in the name of private persons and whether they have already been punished for the act.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 2:53 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:01 a.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON 
(Continuation)

Rep. Angping promised a report on the registration of Army vehicles in the name of private persons.

To Rep. Ridon’s next question on the DND’s position about continuing rights violations by military forces, Rep. Angping cited Administrative Order No. 5 establishing an interagency team to investigate the same.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 3:07 a.m., the Chair motu proprio suspended the session.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:07 a.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON 
(Continuation)

Rep. Ridon subsequently observed that alleged human rights violators in the person of General Jovito S. Palparan and two co-accused were being given special treatment as they were being kept in the Philippine Army Detention Center despite not being court-martialed.

Thereupon, Reps. Ridon and Angping discussed the case of the two members of Party-List Kabataan who were allegedly abducted by the AFP in Nueva Ecija and have been unjustly detained at the PNP provincial jail due to trumped-up charges. Rep. Angping stated that based on the records of the AFP, the two youth organizers were legally arrested for illegal possession of firearms and explosives and as such, cases were filed before the courts.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.

Rep. Ridon, on the other hand, pointed out that he cannot accept the explanation that it was up to the courts to decide on the case considering that the AFP was the one who had filed the complaint. He then opined that the Body had to defer the consideration of the proposed budgets of the DND, including its attached agencies, unless he can get a firm commitment from the DND and the AFP that the two youth organizers would be set free.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 3:07 a.m., the Chair motu proprio suspended the session.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:40 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON 
(Continuation)

After being informed by the Sponsor that the matter of the two detained youths was already out of the hands of the AFP and had to be resolved by the courts, Rep. Ridon asked for the specific infantry battalion responsible for their arrest, and the names of the battalion commander and the arresting police officers. In closing, he manifested his lifelong commitment to ensure that said officers will never be promoted until their retirement for as long as the trumped-up charges against the two Party-List Kabataan members remain in place.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

Rep. Tinio asked for the required submission of quarterly reports on the 2014 utilization of the QRF by the DND to the NDRRMC, DBM, House Committee on Appropriations and Senate Committee on Finance, and its posting in the DND official website. The Sponsor said that a copy of the 2013 reports will be provided to Rep. Tinio as no reports for 2014 were available yet.

He next inquired into the posting of the audited 2013 financial statements of the DND-Government
Arsenal, particularly referring to its hospital income, in the website of said agency.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair _motu proprio_ suspended the session at 4:00 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 4:03 a.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO**

(Continuation)

Rep. Tinio then tackled with Rep. Angping the noncompliance of the Office of the Defense Secretary and Office of Civil Defense with the requirements on submission of quarterly reports and website postings on the utilization of their QRF allocations in 2014. They also talked about the compliance with said requirements of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO), the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC), and other DND attached agencies as far as hospital income was concerned.

In addition, Rep. Tinio discussed with Rep. Angping his other concerns including, among others: the status and the total number of CAFGU members as well as the provision for their compensation and separation benefits; the differences between the Special CAFGU Armed Auxiliary (SCAA) and CAFGU; the legal basis for the creation of SCAA; the combat expenses under the budgets of the Philippine Army, Philippine Air Force and the Philippine Navy and the amount released to each unit per quarter; and the examples of incidental and necessary expenses during operational exigencies.

The Sponsor stated that the Committee will provide Rep. Tinio with a full report on the allocation of budgetary support for combat expenses of the different units in the Navy and Army.

Thereupon, Rep. Tinio adverted to previous interpellations detailing the impunity of human rights violations, extrajudicial killings, militarization, illegal and undue occupation of school premises by the military, and the illegal and warrantless arrests that had been committed by the AFP and other law enforcement agencies. He inquired whether the Committee would accept an additional provision to the Special Provision on Combat Expenses in the 2015 GAB that would ensure the full compliance to human rights by the AFP. He pointed out that such provision would put a stop to human rights violations committed by the military.

Rep. Angping replied that the Committee would study the proposal.

Rep. Tinio subsequently inquired on the status of the liquidation of combat expenses by the major branches of the AFP, to which Rep. Angping replied that the Committee will provide him with the report before Friday.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Thereupon, the Chair suspended the session at 4:48 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 4:48 a.m., the session resumed.

Upon resumption of session, on motion of Rep. Belmonte (J.), the Chair recognized Rep. Luzviminda C. Ilagan for her interpellation.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. ILAGAN**

Rep. Ilagan initially informed the Sponsor that her office had submitted a list of human rights violations to DND Secretary Voltaire Gazmin on September 18, 2014, to comply with the agreement made last week in a Committee meeting. She explained that the document was faxed to the Office of the Defense Secretary and received by a certain Arnold Mendoza. She subsequently inquired as to when she could expect a reply.

Rep. Angping replied that according to the DND, an initial report was forthcoming within 15 days and that any additional information that can be gathered by the DND regarding the stated human rights violations cases would be sent to the office of Rep. Ilagan within a month.

Rep. Ilagan thereafter acknowledged the communications sent by the DND to her office, to include the documentary submissions and the explanations of the DND Secretary on the legal basis of the special civilian armed auxiliary, and on the support given to CAFGU Active Auxiliaries (CAA) and SCAA; on the alleged violations of the rights of children; and an update on the Zamboanga siege.

To Rep. Ilagan’s queries, Rep. Angping gave the assurance that the sponsoring Committee will provide her with a status report on the incident in Abra involving the military and members of the New People’s Army (NPA).

Focusing her interpellation on cases of human rights violations by the military particularly the 41
Infantry Battalion (IB), Rep. Ilagan relayed the details of torture, harassment, and extrajudicial killing committed by the military forces in the Cordilleras and in Cagayan Province. She asked the House to ensure that the DND will not use its budget for violating human rights and international humanitarian law and will address the allegations against them.

The Sponsor clarified that the AFP did not have a “target list” or order of battle and requested Rep. Ilagan to submit reports on the aforecited incidents so that the AFP could investigate or validate them.

MOTION OF REP. ILAGAN

At this point, Rep. Ilagan moved to defer the approval of the DND budget pending the (1) submission of a report by the Philippine Army on a recent military operation in Abra during which one Ms. Recca Noelle Monte died of torture and (2) appearance in the Session Hall of 2nd Lt. Jose Mari Landicho and Lt. Col. Rogelio Noora of the 41st IB of the 5th Infantry Division in order to explain said death.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 5:32 a.m., the Chair motu proprio declared a recess.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:33 a.m, the session resumed.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DND AND THE ATTACHED AGENCIES

On motion of Rep. Belmonte (J.), there being no objection, the Body suspended the consideration of the proposed budgets of the DND and the attached agencies.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Belmonte (J.), there being no objection, the Body suspended the consideration of House Bill No. 4968.

ELECTION OF ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

On motion of Rep. Belmonte (J.), there being no objection, the Body approved the election of the following Members from the Majority to the Committees hereunder indicated:

1. Rep. Mylene J. Garcia-Albano - Committee on Energy;
2. Rep. Edcel “Grex” B. Lagman - Committee on Housing and Urban Development; and

ADOPTION OF SENATE BILL NO. 712 AS AN AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL NO. 4593

With the concurrence of the authors of House Bill No. 4593 and the chairperson of the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, on motion of Rep. Belmonte (J.), there being no objection, the Body adopted Senate Bill No. 712 as an amendment to said House Bill, on the mandatory Philhealth coverage for all senior citizens.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Belmonte (J.), there being no objection, the Body suspended the session until 10 o’clock in the morning of Wednesday, September 24, 2014.

It was 5:36 a.m., Wednesday, September 24, 2014.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 24, 2014, with Deputy Speaker Roberto V. Puno presiding.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

On motion of Representative Franz E. Alvarez, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Additional Reference of Business.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the titles of the Bills and Resolutions, including the Committee Report which were referred to the appropriate Committees as hereunder indicated.

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 5033, entitled:

“AN ACT BANNING THE USE OF CELLULAR PHONES OR SIMILAR DEVICES INSIDE BANKS AND PROVIDING PENALTY FOR VIOLATION THEREOF”

By Representative Pancho

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY

House Bill No. 5034, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING BENEFITS TO LONG TIME CONTRACTUAL TEACHERS AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Pancho

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 5035, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING ALL PEDESTRIAN OVERPASSES TO BE MADE CLIMATE CHANGE FRIENDLY, AND PROVIDING PENALTY FOR VIOLATION THEREOF”

By Representative Pancho

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 5036, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING ALL BANKING INSTITUTIONS TO OFFER AN AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINE THEFT INSURANCE TO ALL CLIENTS, PROHIBITING FRAUDULENT CLAIMS RELATIVE THERETO, PROVIDING PENALTIES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Romulo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

House Bill No. 5037, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING PILIS FALLS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAMAL, PROVINCE OF BATAAN AS AN ECO-TOURISM SITE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Roman

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

House Bill No. 5038, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING SUBDIVISION AND CONDOMINIUM OWNERS AND DEVELOPERS TO PROVIDE RAINWATER WELLS AND COLLECTORS IN THEIR SUBDIVISION OR CONDOMINIUM PROJECTS AS PART OF FLOOD MITIGATION MEASURE”

By Representative Ocampo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 1517, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE FILIPINO PEACEKEEPING CONTINGENT TO THE UNITED NATIONS DISENGAGEMENT OBSERVER FORCE (UNDOF) STATIONED AT THE GOLAN HEIGHTS REGION FOR EXHIBITING UNPARALLELED VALOUR AND FIRM COMMITMENT TO THE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE AREA EVEN UNDER HEAVY FIRE”
By Representative Evardone

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

House Resolution No. 1518, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOOD GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE EXACT ACCOUNTING OF COCO LEVY FUNDS INCLUDING THE AMOUNTS HELD IN ESCRROW, ACQUIRED ASSETS, DIVIDENDS AND INTERESTS EARNED OVER THE YEARS IN LIGHT OF THE NATURE OF THE FUNDS AS PUBLIC, AND ENSURE THAT THESE FUNDS WILL BE USED FOR THE BENEFIT OF POOR COCONUT FARMERS”

By Representative Garin (S.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1519, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SERVICES TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORT ON THE DSWD’S SEEMING MISHANDLING OF RELIEF GOODS FOR YOLANDA VICTIMS AS COULD BE GLEANED FROM THE REPORT ON THE AUDIT OF TYFHOON YOLANDA RELIEF OPERATIONS' OF THE COMMISSION ON AUDIT”

By Representative Castelo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

With the permission of the Body, the following Members were made coauthors of the Bills and Resolution hereunder indicated:

Reps. Roman T. Romulo, Evelina G. Escudero and Anthony G. Del Rosario for House Bill No. 4832;


Rep. Roy V. Seneres Sr. for House Bill No. 4114;

Reps. Eric L. Olivarez and Abraham “Bambol” N. Tolentino for House Bill No. 4906;


Rep. Francisco Ashley L. Acedillo for House Bill No. 4114;


Rep. Walden F. Bello for House Bills No. 4022, 4714 and 4765;

Rep. Jose Christopher Y. Belmonte for House Bill No. 4911;

Rep. Enrique M. Cojuangco for House Bill No. 4714;

Rep. Barry Gutierrez for House Bill No. 4994;

Rep. Michael Angelo C. Rivera for House Bills No. 4714 and 4728;

Rep. Arcadio H. Gorriceta for House Bills No. 4352 and 4724;

Rep. Noel L. Villanueva for House Bills No. 3511, 4352 and 4724; and


COMMITTEE REPORT

Report by the Committee on Health (Committee Report No. 436), re H. No. 5042, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A COMPREHENSIVE PHILIPPINE PLAN OF ACTION TO ELIMINATE TUBERCULOSIS AS A PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill Nos. 259, 299 and 3178

Sponsors: Representatives Eriguel, Tan (A.) and Magsaysay

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES
SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, the session was suspended at 10:02 a.m., upon motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.).

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:52 a.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 421
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Jorge “Bolet” Banal, there being no objection, the Body considered on Second Reading House Bill No. 4968, as contained in Committee Report No. 421 and submitted by the Committee on Appropriations.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Bill, to wit:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE PCUP

On motion of Rep. Banal, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP). The Chair then recognized Rep. Maria Carmen S. Zamora to sponsor the measure.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE PCUP

In the absence of interpellations, Rep. Lino S. Cayetano, on behalf of the Minority, moved to terminate the period of sponsorship and debate on the budget of the PCUP. Rep. Banal adopted the motion, on behalf of the Majority, and there being no objection, the Body approved the same.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Banal, the Chair suspended the session at 10:54 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:02 a.m., the session resumed.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE PLLO

On motion of Rep. Victoria G. Noel, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office (PLLO).

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE PLLO

There being no interpellations, on joint motion of Reps. Cayetano and Noel, representing the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the PLLO.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Noel, the Chair suspended the session at 11:03 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:34 a.m., the session resumed.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DDB AND THE PDEA

On motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

On further motion of Rep. Alvarez, the Chair recognized Rep. JC Rahman A. Nava, M.D. to sponsor the said budgets.

REMARKS OF REP. NAVA (J.C.)

Rep. Nava presented the proposed budgets of the DDB and the PDEA and said that he was ready to answer any questions thereon.

Subsequently, on motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), the Chair recognized Rep. Jose L. Atienza Jr. for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ATIENZA

Rep. Atienza clarified from Rep. Nava the primary functions of the DDB and its difference from the PDEA, to which the Sponsor replied that the DDB deals with the policymaking on drug prevention and control while the PDEA handles the implementation. He mentioned that the DDB chairperson was on leave
but all the DDB executive directors were in the Session Hall at that moment.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Atienza, the Chair suspended the session at 11:42 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 11:46 a.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. ATIENZA**  
(Continuation)

Following a discussion on the mandate of the PDEA, Reps. Atienza and Nava (J.C.) continued to talk about the agency and its stand on the drug problem in the country with the agency admitting that illegal drugs continue to flourish and remains a problem in the country, thus needing the cooperation of other law enforcement agencies to address the problem. Rep. Atienza opined that the proposed budget for the PDEA was not enough for it to be effective in its antidrug campaign.

After the Sponsor had talked about the plans to upgrade the PDEA facilities and the personnel, Rep. Atienza surmised that the PDEA and DDB would not be able to perform effectively even if their budgets were increased. He cited the seeming lack of interest of their officials, their disorganized systems, and distorted data. He proposed that they ask the police, the local governments, and the local communities to help them perform their functions because of the pervasive effects of the drug menace.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), the Chair declared a recess at 12:17 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 12:19 p.m., the session resumed and the Chair recognized Rep. Cayetano upon Rep. Sherwin N. Tugna’s motion.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DDB AND THE PDEA**

On a joint motion of Rep. Cayetano, on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Tugna, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DDB and the PDEA.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Tugna, the Chair suspended the session at 12:20 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 12:34 p.m.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOH AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS**

On motion of Rep. Tugna, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Health (DOH), including its attached agencies and corporations.

On further motion of Rep. Tugna, the Chair recognized Rep. Nava (J.C.) to sponsor the said measure and Rep. Leah S. Paquiz for her interpellation.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ**  
(Continuation)

At the outset, Rep. Paquiz reiterated her request for the pending documents which she had raised during the DOH budget briefing last September 4, 2014. She stressed that of her seven requests, only one report was given to her, and asked whether the Body should defer consideration of the DOH budget pending the submission thereof.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Nava, the session was suspended at 12:42 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 12:45 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ**  
(Continuation)

Pending the submission of her requested reports, Rep. Paquiz sought clarification on the increasing budget of the DOH since 2013. She stressed that the allocation for the Office of the Secretary has the highest growth rate, and asked on the details of the automatic appropriations included in its budgets for 2014 and 2015.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Tugna, the session was suspended at 12:52 p.m.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 2:03 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ
(Continuation)

Reps. Paquiz and Nava (J.C.) thereafter discussed the budget allocations of the DOH for its Personnel Services (PS), Maintenance and other Operating Expenses (MOOE); Doctors to the Barrios Program, Nurse Deployment Program, and Midwives to the Barrios Program.

Rep. Paquiz then expressed her concern over the health workers who are under contract of service only because they do not enjoy the benefits from the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), PhilHealth and Home Development Mutual Fund or Pag-IBIG Fund, saying that this is a violation of human rights. She opined that converting health workers from contract of service to regular employment status will promote sustainable human development, greatly contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and strengthen primary health care through proper implementation of health promotion programs. Moreover, she said that this would give quality health services to the Filipino people, which is the mandate of the DOH.

On Rep. Paquiz’ concerns regarding rural health workers and allowances and monies given under the Magna Carta for Public Health Workers, Rep. Nava said that the DOH will look into the additional funding for regular positions and submit data on said benefits. On filling up plantilla positions in public hospitals so as to comply with the personnel requirements and to effectively deliver health services to the public, he pointed out that the DOH’s rationalization plan would be fully implemented by 2015.

Thereupon, Rep. Paquiz raised her concern with the Sponsor on the following matters: 1) the components, indicators and outputs of the incremental revenue sourced from the imposition of “sin taxes,” as determined by the DOH; 2) whether the “sin tax” revenues constitute automatic appropriations to the DOH; 3) the allotment and operational guidelines of the “sin tax” revenues for the DOH programs and projects; 4) the guidelines for determining, attaining and retaining the ideal number of skilled health professionals needed to deliver health care services; 5) the budget and program components of the National Center for Health Promotion; 6) request for a list of realigned projects under the DOH Health Facilities Enhancement Program (HFEP) pursuant to Special Provision No. 5; 7) the increase in the budget of the Philippine Children’s Medical Center (PCMC), particularly on the money needed for purchase of the land where the hospital is located; and 8) the DOH programs, projects and activities for the welfare of children and adolescents.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 3:12 p.m., on motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.).

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:12 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. BAGATSING

Recognized by the Chair, on motion of Rep. Alvarez (F.), Rep. Amado S. Bagatsing debated with Rep. Nava (J.C.) on whether the DOH can fully support the requirements of the PGH as a premiere public hospital and on the possibility that the Department will manage the PGH and the West Visayas State University Medical Center.

The Members also dealt with issues, such as the time frame and budget requirements that will enable the DOH to provide universal health coverage to Filipinos; the return of the Botika sa Barangay project in every congressional district; the expansion of PhilHealth’s services in 2015, to include primary healthcare benefit packages to address the needs of poor outpatients; the allocated budget for Health Facilities Enhancement Program, with Rep. Bagatsing suggesting that the DOH team up with the local government units so they could put up dialysis centers in first class municipalities for easier access by the poor, and Rep. Nava committing to provide him with a copy of the list of municipalities with dialysis centers; and the capability of the DOH to address the hospital needs of the poor given the abolition of the lawmakers’ Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF).

Rep. Bagatsing thereafter argued that the DOH, with the help of the House of Representatives, should make its presence felt to poor Filipinos and suggested that the Committee should consider providing additional assistance of P500 monthly medical assistance to indigents which is estimated to cost P15 billion a year. He expressed the hope that the Committee would consider this proposal.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Arthur R. Defensor Jr., the Chair suspended the session at 4:02 p.m.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:03 p.m., the session resumed with Deputy Speaker Carlos M. Padilla presiding.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

Initially, Rep. Colmenares argued that the insubstantial amount of budgetary funding to hospitals would further prejudice the poor. This, as he discussed with Rep. Nava (J.C.) the rationale behind the disparity between said budgetary item and the budgetary allocations for PhilHealth and the HFEP.

Subsequently, Rep. Colmenares sought further clarification on several issues pertaining to the: 1) commitment of the DOH to provide him with a copy of the contract between the DOH and the Megawide Consortium pertinent to the privatization of the Philippine Orthopedic Center (POC), which the Sponsor affirmed; 2) the final decision on the planned transfer of the Philippine Children’s Medical Center (PCMC); 3) the planned privatization of the Baguio General Hospital (BGH); and 4) the continued decrease in the Department’s funding of government hospitals.

Reps. Colmenares and Nava next propounded on the HFEP and as to who decides, how and to whom funds from the said program would be allocated. Rep. Nava said that the Department can provide Rep. Colmenares with a list of the program beneficiaries for 2015 and agreed to the latter’s request for a copy of the memorandum of agreement between the BGH and Makati Medical Center Foundation (MMCF). The Members also tackled the authority of the Health Secretary to realign the HFEP funds, which Rep. Colmenares noted was unconstitutional; and the implementation of the DOH Point of Care Program, National Health Insurance Program, and medical assistance programs of several hospitals as a source of welfare funds for indigent patients that may require much needed assistance from government.

Rep. Colmenares proposed to release funds directly to the hospitals because they know what equipment, facilities, services and personnel they and their patients need, instead of centralizing them under lump sums. The Sponsor surmised that the DBM did not give the DOH the entire budget it requested in view of the revenues it could generate on its own.

As regards PhilHealth access and coverage, Rep. Nava (J.C.) said that it was improving. He cited the Point-of-Care Program for automatic enrolment in PhilHealth, which the Committee wants to be specified in the Special Provisions of the GAA.

Rep. Colmenares then asked for a breakdown on the staffing pattern of the DOH in relation to the number of filled and unfilled positions.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 5:08 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Nava.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 5:13 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

(Continuation)

With the indulgence of Rep. Colmenares, Rep. Nava (J.C.) stated that he would furnish the former the list of the filled and unfilled positions in the DOH the following week.

Thereupon, Reps. Colmenares and Nava discussed the funds earmarked for the Personnel Services of the DOH especially those allotted for the unfilled positions. Rep. Colmenares then inquired on the allocation for the PS of the DOH in 2013.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 5:18 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 5:18 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Colmenares asked whether the proposed PS budgets of certain public hospitals were diminished because of the termination of some employees; whether the unused fund would revert to the DOH instead of being placed under the Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund (MPBF); and whether the Department supports the centralization of funds under the MPBF.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Padilla relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Giorgidi B. Aggabao.
Rep. Colmenares further discussed with the Sponsor the coverage of the MPBF, which he considered as a pork barrel fund of the Executive that undermines Congress’ power of the purse; and the provision of benefits under the Magna Carta for Public Health Workers to the DOH personnel and the devolved health workers under the LGUs.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Defensor, the Chair suspended the session at 5:47 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 5:51 p.m., with Deputy Speaker Padilla presiding.

On motion of Rep. Garin (O.), the Chair recognized Rep. Jonathan A. Dela Cruz for his interpellation

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

Rep. Dela Cruz initially asked for a listing of the accredited medical clinics that render medical testing services for OFWs and the fees that they charge.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 5:54 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 5:57 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

(Continuation)

Rep. Nava promised to provide Rep. Dela Cruz the list of accredited clinics before the end of the session but manifested that the DOH was still reviewing the fee structure of the clinics.

Rep. Dela Cruz then voiced his concern over the exorbitant testing fees charged by the medical clinics to the OFWs, and then urged the DOH, together with the DOLE and the DFA to immediately look into the matter.

He next exchanged opinions with Rep. Nava (J.C.) as to the budgets for the Philippine Anti-Tuberculosis Society and the DOH anti-TB campaign. He also asked whether a portion of the proposed budget for anti-TB campaign was collected from the sin tax.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 6:04 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 6:04 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Nava (J.C.) informed Rep. Dela Cruz that tuberculosis and other communicable diseases are funded under the earmarked “sin tax” revenues. They subsequently discussed the budget allotment for White Cross Incorporated, an orphanage supported by the national government through the DOH and other orphanages supported by the DOH or the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); provision for allowances of daycare workers, volunteers allied to health, barangay health workers and barangay tanods and the possibility of providing them with PhilHealth coverage; and the total funds under the control of PhilHealth as well as the amount of subsidies it receives and the OFWs’ contributions to its funds.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 6:13 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 6:14 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

(Continuation)

After Rep. Nava enumerated the contributions and subsidies to the PhilHealth of the different sectors in 2013, Rep. Dela Cruz asked for the amount of hospital income collected in 2012 and 2013, and the public hospitals provided with the most funds.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 6:18 p.m.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:25 p.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ (Continuation)

In reply to the previous query, Rep. Nava said that for 2013, the total generated gross income from the country’s 74 public hospitals nationwide, including the four corporate government hospitals - National Kidney Transplant Institute, Philippine Heart Center, Lung Center of the Philippines, and Philippine Children’s Medical Center - was ₱11.2 billion. He explained that these hospitals retain their generated incomes.


SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereupon, the Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 6:29 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:29 p.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ (Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Dela Cruz averred that he still had several questions on the generated income of each public hospital which would take the Committee and the DOH much time in digging the detailed information.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOH AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Joseph “Ace” H. Durano, there being no objection, the Body temporarily suspended further consideration of the proposed budgets of the DOH and its attached agencies and corporations.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE DPWH

On motion of Rep. Durano, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the consideration of the proposed budget of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GUESTS

While awaiting for the technical staff of the DPWH to gain access to the Session Hall, and with the permission of the Chair, Rep. Garin (O.) acknowledged the presence in the Session Hall of guests of Reps. Kaka J. Bag-ao and Nancy A. Catamco from the Vietnam Ministry of Justice and supporters of Justice Sector Reforms in Vietnam.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Garin (O.), the Chair suspended the session at 6:34 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:34 p.m., the session resumed.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. UNGAB

On subsequent motion of Rep. Garin (O.), the Chair recognized Rep. Isidro T. Ungab, chairperson of the Committee on Appropriations, who stated that the Committee was ready to answer interpellations on the proposed budget of the DPWH.

The Chair subsequently recognized Rep. De Jesus for her interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS

Rep. De Jesus centered on the mandate of the DPWH to undertake, among other engineering interventions, the planning and design, construction and maintenance of major flood control systems, as well as on the ₱351-billion budget to implement a flood control master plan. She inquired whether the Committee can provide her with a status report, cost-benefit analysis and other details of the aforesaid master plan.

In response, Rep. Ungab stated that there was indeed a flood management master plan for Metro Manila and surrounding areas which was conducted in 2012 and funded by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). He said that Rep. De Jesus will be provided a copy of the flood management master plan together with the 11 recommended structural measures.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 6:47 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 6:47 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON
(Continuation)

In reply to Rep. Ridon’s queries, Rep. Ungab cited the funding sources of the ICC project and gave assurance that it did not receive any allocation from the Disbursement Acceleration Program. In discussing the cost of the ICC project, the Sponsor underscored that it was hard to compare the construction of a government building with that of a private construction such as the SMX Convention Center, in view of government accounting rules and procedures; and government rules on bidding that have to be followed unlike in the private sector. He said that Rep. Ridon will be furnished a copy of the details of the expenditures of the ICC.

Thereafter, Reps. Ridon and Ungab talked about the bidding and procurement processes involved in the ICC, the qualifications for participating bidders, and the reasons for a bidder’s disqualification, with the latter promising to give a full documentation report thereon. As also requested by Rep. Ridon, he said he will give a list of the DPWH projects undertaken in the last 10 years by Hilmarc’s Construction Corporation.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE DPWH

There being no more interpellations, on joint motion of Rep. Carol Jayne B. Lopez, on the part of the Minority and Rep. Juan Pablo “Rimpy” P. Bondoc, on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the DPWH.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOH AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DOH and its attached agencies and corporations.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair declared a recess at 7:12 p.m., upon Rep. Bondoc’s motion.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:13 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Banal, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of House Bill No. 4968.

RATIFICATION OF CERTAIN CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORTS

On successive motions of Rep. Banal, there being no objection, the Body ratified the Conference Committee Reports on the disagreeing provisions of the following measures:

1. House Bill No. 4553 and Senate Bill No. 2274, expanding access to educational services by institutionalizing open distance learning in levels of tertiary education;

2. House Bill No. 3575 and Senate Bill No. 2272, strengthening the ladderized interface between technical-vocational education and training and higher education; and

3. House Bill No. 4860 and Senate Bill No. 2275, providing scholarship grants to top graduates of all public high schools in State universities and colleges.

REFERRAL OF HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 816

On motion of Rep. Banal, there being no objection, the Body referred House Resolution No. 816 to the Committee on Energy.

CONTINUATION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Francisco Emmanuel R. Ortega III, there being no objection, the Body then resumed consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968, as embodied in Committee Report No. 421 and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations, entitled:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE
OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER
THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND
FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair suspended
the session at 7:17 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:20 p.m.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair
recognized anew Rep. Nava (J.C.) to sponsor the pro-
posed budget of the DOH and Rep. Atienza for his in-
terpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ATIENZA

Rep. Atienza raised his concern with the Sponsor
regarding the implementation of the Reproductive
Health (RH) Law in relation to 1) the difference be-
tween responsible parenthood and birth control; 2) the
use of contraceptive substances as cleared by the Food
and Drug Administration; 3) the DOH population con-
trol program; and 4) the crafting of the implementing
rules and regulations (IRR) pertaining to the RH Law.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Padilla relin-
quished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Sergio A. F.
Apostol.

Rep. Nava stated that the DOH already released
the IRR for the RH Law and upon Rep. Atienza’s re-
quest, gave the latter a copy thereof.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 7:37 p.m., upon mo-

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 7:38 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ATIENZA

(Continuation)

Rep. Atienza stated that what Rep. Nava showed
him was only a set of rules issued by the DOH before
the Supreme Court ruled on the constitutionality of the
RH Law. He however pointed out that while the DOH
claimed that the IRR was released on March 15, 2013,
the Supreme Court made the decision only on April 8,
2014 and for which reason the Department should
come out with a new IRR to protect the intent of the
High Court.

Then focusing on the massive DOH vaccination
whether the vaccines, especially those coming from
foreign foundations, were approved by the FDA and
asked for samples thereof so he can have them checked
to ensure that they have no adverse effects.

On motion of Rep. Durano, the Chair recognized

INTERPELLATION OF REP. BELLO (W.)

Rep. Bello took note of the commitment and reaf-
firmation of the DOH to phase out the referral decking
system of the Gulf Cooperation Council-(GCC) Ac-
credited Medical Clinics Association (GAMCA), as
agreed upon during a hearing last April of the Com-
mittee on Overseas Workers Affairs chaired by him.

On subsequent motion of Rep. Durano, the Chair
recognized Rep. De Jesus for her interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS

Rep. De Jesus initially questioned the big amount
allotted for the National Health Insurance Program
(NHIP) as implemented by PhilHealth and argued that
rather than allocating the money for insurance, it might
as well be directly put to the public hospitals for easier
access by indigent patients.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Apostol relinquished
the Chair to Rep. Banal.

Rep. De Jesus and Nava then dwelled on the health
insurance coverage of indigent beneficiaries identified
by the DSWD’s National Household Targeting System
for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) and how the DOH
will implement its P1.7-billion budget granting assis-
tance to indigent patients.

Whereupon, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to
Deputy Speaker Padilla.

The Members next discussed the concerns of Rep.
De Jesus on the mechanics of the National Govern-
ment Subsidy Program and the “No Balance Billing”
Program of the DOH and PhilHealth; and the role of
the DOH in the implementation of the budgetary item
Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA) Pro-
gram under Special Provision No. 9 of the DOH
budget.
Rep. De Jesus thereafter inquired about Special Provision No. 10, on the Socioeconomic Component of the Normalization Process under PAMANA Program.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair *motu proprio* suspended the session at 8:26 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 8:26 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS**

(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Reps De Jesus and Nava dwelt on the differences between Special Provisions No. 9 and 10 of the DOH budget.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair *motu proprio* suspended the session at 8:29 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 8:31 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS**

(Continuation)

Rep. Nava pointed out the intended beneficiaries of Special Provisions No. 9, 10 and 11, adding that all these were allocations for health premium subsidy.


**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair *motu proprio* suspended the session at 8:33 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 8:36 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS**

(Continuation)

In reply, Rep. Nava cited the breakdown of the Department’s QRF allocation for 2014 after which he explained that the DOH intervention to alleviate the conditions of the poor comprised of PhilHealth premium subsidies, the Health Facilities Enhancement Program, the primary health packages from PhilHealth in 2015, medicines to various LGUs, and medical assistance and support to even those outside of the NHTS-PR list.

Rep. De Jesus subsequently inquired on the nature and purpose of the P12-million budget for “Assistance to Private Sector Health Centers.” The Sponsor replied that it was for the Central Luzon Rehabilitation Center.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Thereupon, the Chair *motu proprio* suspended the session at 8:44 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 8:45 p.m., the session resumed.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS**

(Continuation)

After being clarified that said rehabilitation center used to be under the Office of the President before it was turned over to a foundation and had received budgetary support from the DOH since 2004, Rep. De Jesus next inquired into the implementation status of the DOH administrative order implementing health reforms for a rapid reduction of maternal and neo-natal mortality, specifically pertinent to “traditional-birth attendant assisted” childbirth delivery.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair thereafter *motu proprio* suspended the session at 8:48 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 8:48 p.m., the session resumed.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DE JESUS**

(Continuation)

Rep. De Jesus opined that instead of providing help to mothers during childbirth, the DOH order would further aggravate their situation because of the additional medical costs that would have to be defrayed in case of childbirth in municipal health centers,
in addition to the reality that these are not easily accessible to residents in remote barangays.

Rep. Nava (J.C.) explained that it is the current policy of the DOH to encourage childbirths in proper birthing facilities; however, he pointed out that the DOH Secretary is open to reviewing the said administrative order.

In closing her interpellation, Rep. De Jesus reiterated her concern for the direct intervention through budgetary support to the poor and indigent patients instead of couring such appropriations to health insurance institutions.

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Defensor, the Chair recognized Rep. Antonio L. Tinio for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

Rep. Tinio explained that his interpellation would center on three major issues, one of which concerned the issue of transparency in the use of public funds. He initially asked on whether the DOH already submitted its audited financial statements and other reports on fund utilization to the DBM, and whether the same were already posted on the DOH website.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 9:06 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:07 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

(Continuation)

In reply to Rep. Tinio’s query, Rep. Nava stated that while the hospital concerned is the one that complies with the posting requirement, posting is usually not prompt; and that even if there are publications posted in the websites of the various public hospitals, nothing is still posted on the DOH official website.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair again motu proprio suspended the session at 9:08 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:09 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

(Continuation)

In response to Rep. Tinio’s concern with regard to audited financial statements, Rep. Nava said that the control thereon lies with the COA which does not usually release its audit reports on time. He however gave assurance that the DOH will strive to comply with the requirements for reporting and posting to the official DOH website of its financial reports, including the quarterly reports on the physical and financial accomplishments of the income of the Bureau of Quarantine and International Health Surveillance (BQIHS) and the HFEP.

At this point, Rep. Tinio stressed that the DOH should publicize the details of its programs as he cited the realignment of HFEP funds.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio declared a recess at 9:26 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:26 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

(Continuation)

As he mentioned other DOH programs, Rep. Tinio opined that several agencies held a cavalier attitude about the legal requirement to submit reports to several agencies and post them on the Web.

Rep. Nava (J.C.) gave an update on reports about the HFEP as well as other DOH programs, such as Assistance to Indigent Patients, PAMANA Program, Purchase and Allocation of Drugs, Medicines and Vaccines, Pinoy MD Scholarship Program, and QRF for Relief and Rehabilitation Services. He relayed the agency’s assurance to complete its data uploading by the year’s end.

Next focusing on the Lump Sum Funds identified in the 2015 General Appropriations Bill (GAB) as well as in the Special Provisions of the GAB, Rep. Tinio discussed with the Sponsor the implementation of the funds for the HFEP, Assistance to Indigent Patients, Purchase and Allocation of Drugs, Medicines and Vaccines, and the QRF for Relief and Rehabilitation Services. Rep. Tinio stated that he would propose, at the proper time, that a breakdown of the different programs and projects of the DOH under the Lump Sum Funds should be made and be included as an annex to the 2015 GAB.
After noting the delay in the release of funds for the victims of Typhoon Glenda, Rep. Tinio recommended the reduction in the QRF appropriations for the DOH. He also pointed out that the purchase of thermal scanners needed for the incoming passengers in the airport terminals should not be funded out of the QRF.

To a subsequent concern, Rep. Tinio focused on the P3.1 billion PDAF allocation that was realigned to six government agencies, including the DOH, in light of the Supreme Court ruling that the approval of the budget and its execution is mandated to the Legislature and the Executive, respectively. He then recalled that Undersecretary Janette Garin called for a meeting of the House Members to discuss the guidelines that would be used in the implementation of the DOH’s Medical Assistance Program (MAP), this as he related that the Undersecretary explained that the program would be funded from the aforestated amount and that the Members would be given the discretion to identify the program beneficiaries.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Padilla relinquished the Chair to Rep. Bondoc.

In response to Rep. Tinio’s opinion that the statements of DOH Undersecretary Garin concerning the personal approval of the Congressman in giving assistance to indigents is a direct violation of the Supreme Court prohibition on the post-enactment intervention of legislators over lump sum funds like the DOH-MAP, Rep. Nava stressed that the statements cannot be taken as the official statements of the DOH. He added that the MAP guidelines issued in July 2014 will govern the implementation of the program.

Rep. Tinio then manifested his intent to propose an amendment inserting a special provision in the DOH budget on its assistance to indigent patients, requiring all public officials to comply with the Supreme Court ruling on the PDAF and including a penal provision against any form of post-enactment intervention by lawmakers. The Sponsor said that the Committee will consider the proposed amendment at the proper time.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:34 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY

Focusing on the procedure being followed in the crafting of the IRR of the Food Safety Act, Rep. Ty opined that said procedure should be corrected and that the DA and the FDA should conduct an open invitation and gather the opinions and inputs of all concerned stakeholders.

To his next question, Rep. Nava (J.C.) replied that the DOH Secretary can guarantee that the IRR on the Food Safety Act would be approved and implemented by 2015.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. BELLO (S.)

Recognized by the Chair, Rep. Silvestre H. Bello III called the attention of the Body to Amai Pakpak Medical Center, a very neglected and deprived hospital in the South. Relative thereto, he asked whether Rep. Nava was conversant with RA No. 7943, which aimed to convert the Amai Pakpak General Hospital in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, into a medical center.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Nava, the Chair suspended the session at 10:48 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:50 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. BELLO (S.)
(Continuation)

Rep. Bello (S.) stated that RA No. 7943 was enacted 10 years ago but that its IRR was issued only on September 8, 2014 thus indicating a clear case of criminal negligence. He said that he informed the DOH Secretary of the hospital’s deplorable condition and lack of beds and medical equipment. In this connection, he said that the Secretary should be charged with criminal negligence considering that many of their Muslim brothers died due to negligence. It is for this reason that he moved to defer the deliberations on the proposed budget of the DOH.

MOTION OF REP. DURANO

Thereafter, Rep. Durano moved to suspend consideration of the proposed budget of the DOH.
Before acting on the motion, the Chair recognized Rep. Bello (S.).

**REMARKS OF REP. BELLO (S.)**


**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOH AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS**

On a previous motion of Rep. Durano, there being no objection, the Body suspended the consideration of the proposed budgets of the DOH, including its attached agencies and corporations.

**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968**

On a subsequent motion of Rep. Durano, there being no objection, the Body suspended the consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Durano, there being no objection, the Chair suspended the session until 10 o’clock in the morning of Thursday, September 25, 2014.

It was 10:56 p.m., Wednesday, September 24, 2014.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:00 a.m., Thursday, September 25, 2014, the session resumed with Deputy Speaker Sergio A.F. Apostol presiding.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

On motion of Representative Francisco Emmanuel R. Ortega III, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Additional Reference of Business.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the titles of Bills and Resolutions on First Reading, including the Committee Reports which were referred to the appropriate Committees hereunder indicated:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 5039, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE DANCALAN - STA. CRUZ, DONSOL, SORSOGON - BUE-NAVISTA, PIO DURAN, ALBAY ROAD INTO A NATIONAL ROAD”

By Representatives Escudero and Gonzalez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 5040, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE BANUANG GU- RANG, DONSOL, SORSOGON - JOVEL-LAR, ALBAY ROAD INTO A NATIONAL ROAD”

By Representatives Escudero and Gonzalez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 5041, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE LIDLIDDA - BANAYOYO LANDSCAPE LOCATED IN THE PROVINCE OF ILOCOS SUR AS A PROTECTED AREA, PROVIDING FOR ITS MANAGEMENT AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Singson (E.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Bill No. 5043, entitled:

“AN ACT POSTPONING THE SANGGUNI-ANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS TO OCTOBER 31, 2016, FURTHER AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘AN ACT PROVIDING FOR SYNCHRONIZED BARANGAY AND SANGGUNI-ANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS’”

By Representatives Aliping and Primicias-Agabas

TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND ELECTORAL REFORMS

House Bill No. 5044, entitled:


By Representative Primicias-Agabas

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 5045, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PUBLIC ASSETS MANAGEMENT CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Primicias-Agabas

TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION

House Bill No. 5046, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE FORFEITURE POWERS OF THE STATE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1379, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ‘AN ACT DECLARING FORFEITURE IN FAVOR OF THE STATE ANY PROPERTY FOUND TO HAVE BEEN UNLAWFULLY ACQUIRED BY ANY PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE AND PROVIDING FOR THE PROCEEDING THEREFOR’”
By Representative Primicias-Agabas

TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 5047, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO JUVENAL SANSO”

By Representative Gonzales

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 5048, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ‘DAANG KALIKASAN’ AS AN ECO-TOURISM HIGHWAY CONNECTING THE PROVINCES OF PANGASINAN AND ZAMBALES”

By Representative Bataoil

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 5049, entitled:

“AN ACT INTRODUCING REFORMS AND STRENGTHENING THE SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN, CREATING THE MUNICIPAL, CITY AND PROVINCIAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Del Rosario (A.G.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 1520, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD TO INQUIRE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE STATUS OF THE CACAO AND CHOCOLATE INDUSTRY OF THE COUNTRY AND MAXIMIZE ITS FULL POTENTIALS WITH THE END IN VIEW OF RECOMMENDING MEASURES TO BOOST LOCAL PRODUCTION AND PROVIDE LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES IN THE RURAL AREAS IN LIGHT OF A PROJECTED WORLD DEFICIT IN CACAO SUPPLY”

By Representative Tan (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1521, entitled:

“RESOLUTION COMMENDING MRS. EVANGELINE V. SEVIDAL, A PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE PANGASINAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (PNHS), LINGAYEN, PANGASINAN FOR HER HEROIC ROLE IN THE SHOOTING INCIDENT INVOLVING PO3 DOMINO Z. ALIPIO, JR. OF THE ANDA POLICE STATION THAT RESULTED IN THE DEATH OF THREE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND ONE CIVILIAN AND THE WOUNDING OF THREE OTHER PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS INSIDE THE PREMISES OF THE PNHS ON SEPTEMBER 01, 2014”

By Representatives Ferrer (J.), Bataoil, Acop, Pagdilao, Ting, Garcia (G.), Alejano, Acedillo and Oaminal

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY

House Resolution No. 1522, entitled:

“RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WITH RESPECT TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF TORRE DE MANILA THAT IS BEING BUILT WITHIN THE VISUAL CORRIDOR OF THE RIZAL NATIONAL MONUMENT THAT DENIGRATE ITS HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE”

By Representative Ridon

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Resolution No. 1523, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY AND THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, BUSINESSES THAT MANUFACTURE, DISPLAY, ADVERTISE AND SELL MERCHANDISE THAT COMMODOITIZE AND DEGRADE WOMEN; AND THAT PEDDLE COMMODITIES AND SERVICES TO THE EXTENT OF CONTRAVING
LEGAL DEFINITIONS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND RAPE”

By Representatives De Jesus and Ilagan

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

With the permission of the Body, the following Members were made coauthors of the Bills and Resolutions hereunder indicated:

- Rep. Frederick "Erick" F. Abueg for House Bill No. 1266;
- Rep. Josephine Ramirez-Sato for House Bills No. 3925 and 4690;
- Rep. Leah S. Paquiz for House Bill No. 4553;
- Rep. Monique Yazmin Q. Lagdameo for House Bills No. 4553 and 4860;
- Rep. Luzviminda C. Ilagan for House Bills No. 3575 and 4553;
- Rep. Susan A. Yap for House Bill No. 4988;
- Rep. Herminia B. Roman for House Bill No. 4714;
- Rep. Marlyn L. Primicias-Agabas for House Bills No. 5005, 5012, 5014, 5015, 5016, 5026, 5029 and 5042;
- Rep. Carlos M. Padilla for House Bill No. 4114;
- Rep. Arturo B. Robes for House Bills No. 151, 4114 and 4352;
- Rep. Lani Mercado-Revilla for House Bill No. 4724;
- Reps. Juliet R. Cortuna and Josephine Ramirez-Sato for House Bill No. 4994;
- Rep. Harlin C. Abayon for House Bills No. 829, 1650, 4464 and 4849;
- Rep. Crescencio C. Paez for House Bills No. 4714, 4911 and 5005;
- Rep. Frederick "Erick" F. Abueg for House Bills No. 1190, 1194, 1205, 1210, 2122, 2124, 2127 and 2129;
- Rep. Jesulito A. Manalo for House Bill No. 4464;
- Rep. Benjamin D. Asilo for House Bills No. 151, 3511, 3971 and 4022 and House Resolutions No. 809 and 931; and

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 437), re H. No. 5050, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 19 OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA AND IN THE CITY OF ANGELES TO BE KNOWN AS ‘ABAD SANTOS DAY’, THEREBY AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7752, AS AMENDED, ENTITLED, ‘AN ACT DECLARING MAY SEVEN OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA’”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2237

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Rodriguez (O.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 438), re H. No. 5051, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JUNE 19 OF EVERY
YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF LAGUNA IN HONOR OF THE BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR NATIONAL HERO DR. JOSE P. RIZAL, TO BE KNOWN AS "THE NATIONAL HERO’S DAY”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2779

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Chipeco

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), the Chair suspended the session at 10:04 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:25 p.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 421
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Francis Gerald A. Abaya, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968, as embodied in Committee Report No. 421 and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations.

Upon direction by the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Bill, to wit:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES

On motion of Rep. Abaya, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Congress of the Philippines, and the Chair recognized Rep. Isidro T. Ungab, chairperson of the Committee on Appropriations, to sponsor the same.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. UNGAB

Rep. Ungab stated that he was ready to answer questions on the proposed P11.090-billion budget of the Congress of the Philippines.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. ALBANO

In questioning the lower budget allocation of the House as compared to the Senate’s under the 2015 General Appropriations Bill, Rep. Albano delved into the disparity in the budget allocations between the two Houses considering that the House has 290 Members at present while the Senate has only 24; occupies a bigger office space thus needing higher maintenance costs; and lacks personnel and office equipment that prevents the Members from performing their legislative tasks more effectively. He suggested that the House also use the grassroots participatory budgeting (GPB) or the bottom-up budgeting approach in coming up with its budget proposal by consulting with the individual Members all the way up to the chairperson of the Committee on Accounts. He further emphasized that all tax and appropriations bills emanate from the House so the Body should be able to submit a more realistic and decent budget proposal for its own purposes.

Rep. Ungab explained that the 2015 budget of Congress was just based on its previous budgets with incremental increase. He however agreed with Rep. Albano that the Committee should be flexible in estimating the budgetary requirements of the House.

Rep. Albano stated that at the proper time, he will propose to increase the House budget.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

The Sponsor clarified Congress’ role in the budget process, upon the request of Rep. Dela Cruz. The latter said that the House should not allow the DBM to cut its budget as it holds the power of the purse; had no power to examine the special purpose and automatic appropriation funds in the 2015 GAB amounting to over P1 trillion; and had a hard time getting data requested from the DBM such as the details on the SAROs of the DAP projects, which SAROs the Commission on Audit had identified as either missing, unauthenticated or double-numbered.

On his opinion relative to the country’s economic growth rate as projected by the DBM, the Sponsor said that it was attainable.
Both Members then agreed to review the automatic appropriation provision in the budget especially on debt service allocation. They also agreed to require the Department of Finance and the DBM to formulate certain arrangements for the rescheduling of the country’s debt service payments.

On another point, Rep. Dela Cruz reiterated his request to the Sponsor to pursue the DBM to furnish the Members with a list of the DAP beneficiaries and copies of the missing, unauthenticated and double numbered SAROs because the issue has unduly tinged the integrity of Congress. He also asked for the commitment of the chairperson of the Committee on Accounts that the necessary amendments will be presented at the proper time to restore the original proposed budget of the House. Lastly, he urged the House leadership to restore the Committee on Oversight in order to address the important issues affecting the country.

Rep. Ungab stated that he was willing to sit down and discuss the matter with Rep. Dela Cruz.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Abaya, the Chair recognized Rep. Walden F. Bello for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. BELLO (W.)

At the outset, Rep. Bello expressed support to the efforts of the chairpersons of the Committees on Accounts, and Appropriations to restore the 2015 original proposed budget of Congress and asked for the commitment of the Sponsor to take the initiative in the repeal of the Automatic Appropriations Law.

Rep. Bello thereafter noted the absence of a constitutional restriction that prevents the House from taking an active role in the drafting of the budget, and suggested that the Members participate therein and not completely leave the task of budget preparation to Malacañang. He also opined that the DBM was not sensitive to legislation because it did not allocate any budget for overseas absentee voting.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ATIENZA

Recognized by the Chair on motion of Rep. Abaya, Rep. Jose L. Atienza Jr. initially inquired whether the House was prepared to support the Members in performing quality legislative work. He expressed hope that the 2015 budget for Congress will be sufficient for their needs and allow them to perform credibly their tasks. He stressed the need for oversight committees to review the expenditure process of the Executive, prevent abuses in the use of the word “savings,” and address the problem of DAP disbursement.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ

Rep. Paquiz emphasized the need to fully implement the projects and programs that would be funded by the 2015 GAB. She noted the several provisions of the proposed General Appropriations Act (GAA) that would make inutile Congress’ power of the purse, like Section 49 on the magna carta benefits of government employees which authorizes the DBM to prioritize and approve the use of its fund. As she stressed the need to strengthen the oversight powers of Congress, she asked whether the departments are required to submit quarterly reports on their financial and physical accomplishments. She concluded that at the proper time, she would propose amendments to the 2015 GAB provisions on service contracts, human resource development programs, and magna carta benefits and hazard duty pay of government employees.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. BELLO (S.)

On motion of Rep. Abaya, the Chair recognized Rep. Silvestre “Bebot” H. Bello III who manifested that the Minority had no further questions.

TERMINATION ON THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES

There being no other Members who wished to interpellate, on a joint motion of Rep. Bello (S.) on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Abaya on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the Congress of the Philippines.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On subsequent motion of Rep. Abaya, the session was suspended at 11:40 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:44 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OVP

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Office of the Vice President (OVP).

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. UNGAB

Rep. Ungab informed the Body that the proposed OVP budget of P222.632 million covers the budget for Personnel Services (PS), Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) as well as Capital Outlay (CO); and said that he was ready to sponsor the same.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OVP

In the absence of interpellations, on a joint motion of Reps. Bello (S.) on behalf of the Minority and Ortega (F.) on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the OVP.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On another motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), the Chair suspended the session at 11:48 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION


CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOST AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

On motion of Rep. Abaya, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and its attached agencies. The Chair then recognized Rep. Harlin C. Abayon to sponsor the same.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. ABAYON

Rep. Abayon said that the 2015 DOST budget was P19.173 billion and he was prepared to answer interpellations thereon.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Upon recognition by the Chair, Reps. Dela Cruz and Abayon discussed the reasons for the DBM’s reduction by P11 billion of the original proposed budget of the DOST. They agreed that science and technology is a sector that has been neglected for quite a long time and yet, the DOST has performed its tasks to the best of its ability. They also shared the view that the DBM should look into and reconsider the DOST budget because its invention and innovation could boost the economic growth and development of the country.

Rep. Dela Cruz voiced his concern that by reducing the DOST’s original budget, the DBM had shown its lack of understanding on the importance of providing the necessary budget to the science and technology sector. Rep. Abayon assured Rep. Dela Cruz that the DOST would still be able to carry out its functions effectively within its limited budget although with an increased budget, the Department could function more and conduct more researches.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. ATIENZA

On motion of Rep. Abaya, the Chair recognized Rep. Atienza who expressed his disappointment on the inadequate support for the budget of the DOST which he opined could provide huge service to the country in the face of climate change phenomenon that causes destructive natural calamities. He disagreed with the budgeting process of the DBM as it does not reflect the collective wisdom and experience of the Body. He pointed out that the problem is not with the Filipino inventors but on the lack of government support for science and technology development. He said that he looks forward to the day when the DOST will be able to encourage Filipino ingenuity to develop and solve all the nation’s needs. He expressed belief that Filipino inventors can succeed if they have sufficient funds. Considering its measly budget allocation, he moved for the approval of the proposed budget of the DOST without further interpellations.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOST AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

There being no further interpellations, on joint motion of Reps. Bello (S.) and Abaya, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DOST, including its attached agencies.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Abaya, the Chair suspended the session at 12:13 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 1:07 p.m., the session resumed, with Deputy Speaker Apostol presiding.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE COA

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of
the Commission on Audit (COA) and the Chair recognized Reps. Dakila Carlo E. Cua and Paquiz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ

Rep. Paquiz stressed her concern about the hiring of employees under contracts of service and job orders instead of filling up existing plantilla positions. She said that in public hospitals, such practice of doing away with an employer-employee relationship worked against the interest of patients as well as nurses.

Even as he explained that this was due to the lack of funds, Rep. Cua expressed support for his colleague’s sentiments. He affirmed that the Civil Service Commission (CSC) is the central personnel agency of the government while the task of auditing and examining accounts and expenditures on the salaries and wages of contractual and job order personnel rests with the COA.

Rep. Paquiz then appealed to the COA to solve the problem of qualified government workers who are not given decent salaries and jobs.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 1:24 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Monique Yazmin Q. Lagdameo.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 1:35 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE COA

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body suspended the consideration of the proposed budget of the COA.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DILG AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

On motion of Rep. Ortega (F.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and its attached agencies.

Thereafter, on further motion of Rep. Ortega, the Chair recognized Rep. Ben P. Evardone for his sponsorship remarks.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. EVARDONE

Rep. Evardone stated that he was ready to defend the 2015 proposed DILG budget of P104.571 billion.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ

After clarifying the issues on the devolution of health services to LGUs, Reps. Paquiz and Evardone then exchanged views on 1) the implementation status of two hospitals in Aklan as funded by the DOH, which the Sponsor clarified that the DILG had no knowledge of; 2) the DILG programs on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction management (DRRM) framework; 3) its endeavors under the Grassroots Participatory Budgeting (GPB) Process, particularly on the provision of potable water supply; 4) the mechanics of the Seal of Good Local Governance; 5) the need to evaluate the country’s preparedness in case of calamities; 6) the lack of funds to cover the PhilHealth membership of barangay officials and allied volunteers like barangay health workers; and 7) the proposal to revise the unequal distribution formula of the internal revenue allotment (IRA) so as to help the poor LGUs.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE

Reps. Zarate and Evardone initially discussed the inconsistencies between the COA findings and the reports of the Performance Challenge Fund (PCF) regarding the PCF completed projects, fund releases to LGUs, and DAP allocations.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Abaya, the Chair suspended the session at 2:06 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 2:15 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ZARATE (Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Reps. Zarate and Evardone continued their discussion on the issues concerning the Performance Challenge Fund as well as the status of the 2012 DILG Salintubig project and the total DAP funds received by the DILG for 2011 and 2012.
Rep. Zarate expressed his concern on the slow implementation of said DILG projects even if they were well-funded and had congressional approval. He asked whether this could be due to the DILG’s lack of absorptive capacity to do such tasks.

Rep. Evardone assured Rep. Zarate that the DILG will furnish him a detailed copy of the implementation status and amount of the DILG’s DAP-funded projects.

Rep. Zarate inquired thereafter on the 2015 budgetary allocation of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) for the purchase of firetrucks. In his reply, the Sponsor revealed, among others, that in 2013, the BFP acquired 76 units of Rosenbauer firetrucks through an Official Development Assistance (ODA) package.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Padilla relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Apostol.

On the specifics of the loan agreement for the procurement of the Rosenbauer firetrucks, Rep. Zarate inquired on the reason why the loan rate was pegged at P65 to a Euro, considering that in January 2012 when the loan agreement was signed, the prevailing exchange rate was only P56.16 to a Euro. He pointed out that the discrepancy in the exchange rates would thereby increase the price of the firetruck per unit and impose additional costs to public funds.


Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Abaya, the Chair recognized Rep. Mercedes C. Cagas for her interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. CAGAS

In her interpellation, Rep. Cagas recommended that the: 1) DILG Secretary give instructions to all Philippine National Police (PNP) provincial directors nationwide to always remain apolitical in situations that call for the neutrality of the PNP, considering that the 2016 election is forthcoming; 2) DILG/PNP fast track the implementation of the housing program for PNP personnel in the First District of Davao del Sur; and 3) DILG Secretary submit to her a proposed legislation that will increase the salaries and wages of PNP personnel for the betterment of the police force.

In closing, Rep. Cagas expressed her unwavering support for the proposed DILG budget.

Rep. Evardone expressed his appreciation for Rep. Cagas’ comments especially with regard to ensuring that uniformed policemen remain apolitical during election period.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Reps. Dela Cruz and Evardone discussed the former’s concerns on the following: 1) the status of the LGUs’ share in the national revenues as provided for under the Constitution; and 2) the government’s definition of the term “national revenues,” whether it includes customs fees and duties.

As to the LGU’s share with regard to Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) collections, Rep. Evardone
pointed out that the formula is prescribed in the Local Government Code but the actual details are included in the DBM document Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing (BESF).

Reps. Dela Cruz and Evardone thereafter discussed the other forms of budgetary assistance extended by the DILG to the LGUs and how these are allocated and prioritized among the LGUs.

With Rep. Dela Cruz then asking about DAP funds given to the Cordillera People’s Liberation Army, Rep. Evardone stressed that it was only the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) that was involved in 2011. He however enumerated the releases that the DILG made when it became involved the following year.

The two Members subsequently examined the DILG’s use of its budget and of calamity funds to repair and rehabilitate local infrastructure.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Evardone, the Chair declared a recess at 3:29 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:31 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

Thereupon, the Sponsor promised to submit data on the following day about calamity-fund beneficiaries; while Rep. Dela Cruz reiterated a previous request for a list of the DILG’s infrastructure needs, including police and fire station buildings.

Rep. Dela Cruz next raised his concern with Rep. Evardone regarding the proposed construction of 871 police stations in the different LGUs in the country where the latter lamented that only ₱100 million out of the requested P1.1 billion was allotted for the construction thereof. Rep. Dela Cruz stressed that the matter was unacceptable considering the importance of the police force in battling criminality. He then inquired whether the budget of the DILG could be realigned in order to fund the construction of police stations and asked where the ₱100 million would be spent.

Rep. Evardone stated that the DILG is following a criterion as to where a police station should be constructed and promised to furnish Rep. Dela Cruz with a list thereof.

Rep. Dela Cruz stated that he would request for a suspension of the consideration of the proposed budget of the DILG if they could not furnish him at that moment the list of LGUs without police stations.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 3:52 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:56 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

Continuing with their debate, Reps. Dela Cruz and Evardone further discussed the allotment and source of funds for the construction of police and fire stations in the country.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 4:00 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:01 p.m., with Deputy Speaker Giorgidi B. Aggabao presiding.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

The Members further discussed the lack of funds to sustain the basic services needed by the LGUs given the DBM’s thinking that under the Local Government Code, they have the financial capability to generate income because of their fiscal autonomy. They also discussed the proposed Bangsamoro entity in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) which would have to undertake certain public services, like the maintenance of a police force. Furthermore, they debated on the appropriations for and the requirements of LGUs to be able to avail themselves of the Performance Challenge Fund, the Local Government Performance Management Program, and the LGU Public Financial Management Improvement Program.

Thereafter, Rep. Dela Cruz inquired on the activities under the budgetary item “Building Friendly and Competitive LGUs.”

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Dela Cruz, the Chair suspended the session at 4:21 p.m.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:25 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ
(Continuation)

After answering Rep. Dela Cruz’s pending query, Rep. Evardone informed his colleague about 1) the implementation of DILG budgetary items, such as the Protection of Biodiversity and Landscape Program and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and People’s Partnership Program; 2) the similarity between the DILG and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) guidelines on the accreditation of CSOs, with the Sponsor promising to give Rep. Dela Cruz a copy of the DILG guidelines the following day; and 3) the disbursement of the Empowerment Fund.

Rep. Evardone also assured Rep. Dela Cruz that the Committee will furnish him copies of the following documents before the end of session the following day: report on the program for pension and benefit system of the uniformed police, fire and jail personnel; list of police, fire and jail stations; list of Bohol earthquake and Typhoon Yolanda victims beneficiaries of the DILG-constructed public infrastructures; report clarifying the PAMANA Fund for the Cordillera People’s Liberation Army (CPLA) and the DILG participation in said ₱261-million fund; report on Building Business Friendly and Competitive LGUs Program, Protection of Diversity and Landscape, Civil Society Organizations Standards and Programs, and support for the Bottom-up Budgeting Process Empowerment Fund.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

Rep. Ridon discussed with Rep. Evardone his following concerns: 1) the DILG’s explanation regarding the COA findings on the delay in the completion of the projects funded by the Performance Challenge Fund; causes of the slow implementation and completion of said projects; whether the delays in the implementation were still happening at the moment; whether the public bidder can assure the transparency in the use and dispensation of said Fund; and the current status of the BFP modernization plan, with Rep. Ridon asking for an itemized allocation of its ₱800-million budget.

Rep. Evardone assured Rep. Ridon that the Department will furnish a copy of the achievements of the PCF for 2013 and a comprehensive report on the modernization plan of the BFP.

The Members’ discussion next focused on the utilization of the Fire Code revenues, and the Special Provisions of the budget of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) for the use of the MOOE for payment of damages arising from lawful operations and providing budgetary allocation of subsistence and medicine allowances of prisoners. They dwelled on the specific case of Ms. Andrea Rosal and the premature death of her infant child, with Rep. Evardone stating that the BJMP will comply with the requested documents on all medical assistance extended to Ms. Rosal.

In addition, they delved into the 1) special provision of the budget of the Local Government Academy (LGA) disallowing budgetary allocations for Lakbay Aral and similar activities of LGU officials and employees; 2) payment of police benefits, as embodied in the special provisions of the budget of the National Police Commission (Napolcom); and 3) police fees and charges as embodied in the special provisions of the PNP budget.

With the assurance of the Sponsor that he shall be furnished with the list of projects and programs funded by police fees and charges, Rep. Ridon then sought clarification on the COA finding for 2012 on the unliquidated cash advances of PNP’s central office and five regional offices.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Evardone, the Chair suspended the session at 5:28 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 5:31 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON
(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Reps. Ridon and Evardone continued their discussion about the COA findings on unliquidated cash advances of certain PNP offices for 2012 as well as the funds that have been donated to the DILG for typhoon victims. Rep. Ridon subsequently stressed that he was concerned about the DILG’s policy on using donated funds to quickly and adequately address the needs of victims of calamities.

On another matter, Rep. Ridon observed that the lack of identification and itemized costing of projects submitted for the reduced appropriations under the Grassroots Participatory Budgeting Program (GPBP) could result in their overpricing, cancellation, and replacement. The Sponsor cited some projects which had been modified and promised data on those which had not yet been detailed.
To another concern of Rep. Ridon, Rep. Evardone stated that the DILG is cognizant of the prohibition on postenactment intervention and at the proper time, they will consider Rep. Ridon’s recommendation to revise Special Provision No. 6 of the DILG proposed budget.

Thereupon, Rep. Ridon raised his concern to the Sponsor on the following issues: 1) whether the PNP has conducted its own internal investigation on the alleged unexplained wealth of PNP Director General Alan Purisima and whether they would ask the latter to file a leave of absence; and 2) the case of the two youth organizers of the Kabataan Party-List who were illegally arrested by a composite team from the PNP and who were later detained at the PNP provincial jail in Nueva Ecija. As he asked for the presence of the arresting PNP officers, he stated that he will move for the deferment of the proposed budget of the PNP if the arresting officers will not show up in the deliberations.

As Rep. Ridon narrated to the Body the background of the two youth organizers and the chain of events that led to their arrest, Rep. Evardone clarified that the PNP Director for Comptrollership just adopted the spot report and did not intend to tag the two as communist-terrorists.

Rep. Ridon pointed out however that the two organizers were never taken by the police and the military in pursuit of an encounter but were arrested while they were in a house watching television. The Sponsor thereafter relayed the commitment of the DILG to review the case.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Xavier Jesus “XJ” D. Romualdo, the Chair suspended the session at 6:22 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 6:24 p.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. ATIENZA**

Recognized by the Chair on motion of Rep. Romualdo, Rep. Atienza first inquired on the main function of the DILG and the person in command of ensuring the country’s peace and order.

*At this point, Deputy Speaker Aggabao relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.*

Rep. Atienza thereafter referred to the DILG’s constitutional mandate and asked whether it is addressing the problem of security and order, particularly in cases involving the duties of the PNP.

*Whereupon, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aggabao.*

Furthermore, Reps. Atienza and Evardone discussed the need for the DILG Secretary to spend the Department’s budget to fight criminality in the country, the mandate of the DILG under Executive Order (EO) No. 262 to spearhead the transfer of informal settlers to decent housing sites, and the purpose of the DILG’s ₱5.6-billion budget request under its GPBP. Rep. Atienza then called on his colleagues to fight together against the country’s illegal drugs problem.


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. TY**

Rep. Ty asked why the DILG had an annual allocation for informal settlers’ housing when it was not directly involved therein. The Sponsor said that the Committee will consider his proposal to transfer the fund to other agencies which could better implement the program.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO**


Thereafter, Rep. Tinio asked if it was true that civil society organizations (CSOs) and people’s organizations (POs) were not given projects under the GPBP as he enumerated arguments against the program and pointed out its adverse political, and socioeconomic net effects. He emphasized that the GPBP does not have any long-term developmental effect, similar to the Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) and the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Program, to make any substantial inroads to reduce poverty.

Then debating on the nature and concept of the GPBP, the Sponsor pointed out that the GPBP is principally intended as a venue for public consultation and involves the nationwide identification of propoor projects. He also said that at the proper time, the Committee will consider Rep. Tinio’s proposal to delete the ₱20-billion budget for GPBP.

Rep. Tinio stressed that the GPBP was actually a political ploy with limited grassroots participation, measly funding, and unverified effectiveness; and proposed its abolition in favor of other priority projects.
MOTION OF REP. TINIO

Thereupon, Rep. Tinio moved to defer consideration of the proposed budget of the DILG.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 7:54 p.m., the Chair motu proprio declared a recess.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:55 p.m., the session resumed.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DILG AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

Upon Rep. Romualdo’s motion, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the proposed budgets of the DILG and its attached agencies.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE COA

Upon Rep. Romualdo’s successive motions, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budget of the COA; and the Chair recognized Reps. Cua and Dela Cruz for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

At this point, Rep. Dela Cruz asked and gave his views about the following: DAP, PDAF and Malampaya Fund projects; SAROs allegedly faked, spoiled or lost; DBM reporting and monitoring system; Land Transportation Office (LTO) motor vehicles’ license plates project; multi-year obligational authorities given to several agencies; AFP Modernization Project; COA asset inventory system; abolished agencies including the National Agribusiness Corporation (NABCOR) and Technology Resource Center (TRC); and a performance audit on the DBM.

The Sponsor took note of his colleague’s opinions and committed to submit those reports that the COA had not yet given.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

On motion of Rep. Lagdameo (M.), the Chair recognized Rep. Ridon who requested data on the following: 31 government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) obligated to return bonuses that they had received; unliquidated Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) grants in 2013; alleged nonliquidation by the PhilPost of DSWD-4Ps funds; liquidation by the current President of alleged irresponsible disbursements by his predecessors; alleged misuse of the CHED-Student Financial Assistance Program (STuFAP); and special audits on DAP projects and on the AFP Modernization Program.

The Sponsor likewise gave his commitment to give Rep. Ridon a copy of COA’s report on his concerns.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE COA

On joint motion of Rep. Albano, on the part of the Minority and Rep. Lagdameo (M.), on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the COA.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 8:17 p.m., the Chair declared a recess, upon Rep. Lagdameo’s (M.) motion.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 8:23 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OPAPP

On motion of Rep. Lagdameo (M.), there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP).

Thereafter, on further motion of Rep. Lagdameo, the Chair recognized Rep. Evardone to sponsor the measure and Rep. Fernando “Ka Pando” L. Hicap for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. HICAP

Reps. Hicap and Evardone initially discussed the objectives and implementation status of the PAMANA program, the assessment made by the OPAPP thereon, the projects being implemented and the intended beneficiaries thereof, the areas it covered, and the criteria and requirements needed to be included in the said program.

Rep. Evardone stated that the OPAPP has no budget allocation for the implementation of the PAMANA program considering its proposed budget for 2015 is only P582 million and that the bulk of the funds for the implementation of said Program is provided to different agencies of the government.
They thereafter discussed the PAMANA budgets of various agencies, with the DILG, the Department of Agriculture and DSWD, according to the Sponsor, receiving the biggest allocations upon consultation with and based on the decision of the local peace and order councils. They also delved into the OPAPP’s role in the resumption of peace talks between the Philippine government and the National Democratic Front (NDF).

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Lagdameo (M.), the Chair recognized Rep. Ronald M. Cosalan for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COSALAN

Rep. Cosalan’s interpellation centered on the Cordillera People’s Liberation Army (CPLA), specifically its legal status, various factions, closure agreements with the government, and the infrastructure and livelihood funds given to CPLA in 2011.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Evardone, the Chair suspended the session at 9:15 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:16 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COSALAN (Continuation)

Rep. Cosalan and Evardone continued to discuss the monitoring system of the OPAPP to determine the implementation and operation of the CPLA livelihood projects and beneficiaries. The Sponsor promised to comply with Rep. Cosalan’s request for an update on all on-going CPLA livelihood projects.

Adverting to infrastructure projects downloaded to LGUs, Rep. Cosalan inquired whether the municipality of Sadanga which is a mere third or fourth class municipality has the capacity to implement the construction of Betwagan bridge with a budget amounting to P46 million. He pointed out the standard practice of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) even before 2011 that if an LGU has no capacity to implement projects of this kind, the Department would implement them.

Rep. Evardone replied that the DILG’s policy at that time was to download infrastructure projects to the concerned LGUs.

Disagreeing with Rep. Evardone, Rep. Cosalan maintained that even during his time when he was the Chairperson of the Committee on Public Works, the policy was that the DPWH implements projects of this size. Moreover, he stated that even two years ago, the President already had made a clear pronouncement that the DPWH should implement all infrastructure projects and that each of the respective agencies would have to focus on its own mandate.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Evardone, the Chair suspended the session at 9:31 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:36 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COSALAN (Continuation)

Further expounding on Rep. Cosalan’s concern, Rep. Evardone replied that the additional funding for the Phase 2 project was downloaded to Mt. Province which was then downloaded to the LGU. Rep. Cosalan maintained that the Province has the capacity to implement it in case this has to be implemented.

On motion of Rep. Romualdo, the Chair recognized Rep. Dela Cruz for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz discussed with Rep. Evardone the issues relating to the budget allocation of the OPAPP for the PAMANA Program; the other implementing agencies involved and the status of their actual performances in the implementation of said Program, particularly in 47 provinces categorized as conflict-affected areas.

Rep. Dela Cruz subsequently inquired on the projects implemented by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) under the PAMANA program.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 9:42 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 9:44 p.m., the session resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ (Continuation)

After getting a reply from Rep. Evardone to his query on the NIA projects under the PAMANA Program, Rep. Dela Cruz subsequently requested from the
Sponsor to provide him with a complete report on the PAMANA projects that had been implemented by various government agencies, to which Rep. Evardone agreed.

On the issue of the government’s peace process in Mindanao, Rep. Dela Cruz inquired on the initiatives of the OPAPP, specifically with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and its various factions pertinent to the Zamboanga siege and the disbursement of the ₱8.7-billion DAP funds in the MNLF communities in the ARMM and whether the various developmental projects had been successfully implemented. He inquired whether the Committee can provide him with a report on the specific areas where these projects had been implemented and which particular factions of the MNLF the government agencies were able to work with to implement these projects.

Rep. Evardone explained that this would take time to provide Rep. Dela Cruz with the requested information. He expressed agreement with the proposal to suspend further consideration of the OPAPP’s budget.

**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OPAPP**

On motion of Rep. Mar-Len Abigail S. Binay, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the proposed budget of the OPAPP.

**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968**

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Binay, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration on Second Reading of House Bill No. 4968 or the 2015 GAB.

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

On another motion of Rep. Binay, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Additional Reference of Business.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read on First Reading the titles of the following Resolutions which were referred to the appropriate Committees hereunder indicated:

**RESOLUTIONS**

House Resolution No. 1524, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN THE EXERCISE OF ITS OVERSIGHT FUNCTION TO DETERMINE THE MEASURES TAKEN BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ADMINISTRATION, OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE ADMINISTRATION, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO PROTECT AND UPLIFT THE RIGHTS AND INTEREST OF FILIPINO MIGRANT WORKERS FROM ILLEGAL RECRUITERS AND ABUSIVE EMPLOYERS”

By Representative Padilla

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1525, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE UNLAWFUL IMPORTATION OF FIFTY CONTAINER VANS FILLED WITH MIXED WASTES AND GARBAGE FROM CANADA”

By Representative Paquiz

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1526, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) TO ESTABLISH A CITIZEN’S VIGILANCE DESK BY CREATING AN APPROPRIATE AND DEDICATED WEB PORTAL SOLELY FOR THE UPLOADING AND STORAGE, FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME, OF RECORDED PHOTOS AND/OR VIDEOS BY CONCERNED CITIZENS, WHICH MAY NOT BE ALTERED OR EDITED, OF CRIMINAL ACTS AND OTHER QUESTIONABLE BEHAVIOR PERPETUATED BY MEMBERS OF THE PNP”

By Representatives Alejano and Acedillo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY

House Resolution No. 1527, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING PRESIDENT BENIGNO SIMEON AQUINO III TO HENCEFORTH APPOINT A QUALIFIED CIVILIAN HEAD OF THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS SERVICE (IAS) OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) AS MANDATED
BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8551 IN ORDER TO INSTILL PROFESSIONALISM AMONG THE RANKS OF THE PNP PERSONNEL AND THUS REGAIN THE TRUST OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE ON THE PNP ORGANIZATION AS A WHOLE”

By Representatives Alejano and Acedillo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY

House Resolution No. 1528, entitled:

“RESOLUTION COMMENDING MASTER SERGEANT ALADIN DACAYANAN OF CAMILING TARLAC FOR BEING ONE OF THE Awardees of 2014 THE OUTSTANDING PHILIPPINE SOLDIERS (TOPS) OF THE METROBANK FOUNDATION AND THE ROTARY CLUB OF MAKATI’

By Representative Cojuangco (E.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1529, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES URGING PRESIDENT BENIGNO SIMEON AQUINO III THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH), TO IMMEDIATELY FINALIZE THE ACQUISITION OF THE LAND PRESENTLY OCCUPIED BY THE PHILIPPINE CHILDREN’S MEDICAL CENTER (PCMC) FROM THE NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY (NHA) PURSUANT TO THE ORIGINAL MANDATE OF PD 1631 FOR PCMC TO OWN THE LAND ON WHICH IT STANDS AND TO CONTINUE TO STAY IN ITS CURRENT LOCATION”

By Representatives De Jesus, Ilagan, Colmenares and Tinio

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Resolution No. 1530, entitled:


By Representatives Bello (W.) and Gutierrez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1531, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE POLICY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PROHIBITING CHILDBIRTH DELIVERIES ASSISTED BY TRADITIONAL BIRTH ATTENDANTS (TBA) DUBBED AS THE ‘NO HOME-BIRTHING POLICY’ AND THE SUBSEQUENT ISSUANCE OF MUNICIPAL AND CITY ORDINANCES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE SAID POLICY, AND RECOMMEND MEASURES THAT WOULD TRULY ADDRESS THE HIGH MATERNAL AND INFANT MORTALITY RATES IN THE COUNTRY WITHOUT VIOLATING THE RIGHTS OF MOTHERS”

By Representatives Ilagan and De Jesus

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1532, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, TO DETERMINE THE PROPER COMPLIANCE WITH THE AGRI-AGRA LAW (PD 717) AND THE AFMA LAW (RA 8435) IN PROVIDING AGRICULTURAL LOAN OR AGRI CREDIT TO THE AGRICULTURE AND AGRARIAN SECTOR”

By Representative Hagedorn

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1533, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE NEED TO ESTABLISH ADDITIONAL GENERATING CAPACITY TO ENSURE THE ENERGY REQUIREMENTS OF THE COUNTRY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 71 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9136, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY REFORM ACT OF 2001"

By Representatives Belmonte (F.) and Gonzales

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

APPROVAL ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILLS UNDER THE BUSINESS FOR THE DAY

On successive motions of Rep. Binay, there being no objection, the Body considered on Second Reading the following House Bills calendared under the Business for the Day, as contained in various Committee Reports and submitted by the Committees concerned; dispensed with the reading of the texts of the measures without prejudice to their insertion into the Record of the House; adopted the Explanatory Notes as the sponsorship remarks on the measures; terminated the period of sponsorship and debate thereon; approved the amendments as contained in the Committee Reports, if any; terminated the period of amendments; and approved the same on Second Reading through viva voce voting:

1. House Bill No. 4985, as contained in Committee Report No. 416 and submitted by the Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs, establishing a credit assistance program for overseas Filipino workers;

2. House Bill No. 4988, as contained in Committee Report No. 425 and submitted by the Committees on Natural Resources, and Appropriations, providing for the delineation of the specific forest limits of the public domain;

3. House Bill No. 4990, as contained in Committee Report No. 427 and submitted by the Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs, governing the operations and administration of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration;

4. House Bill No. 5014, as contained in Committee Report No. 428 and submitted by the Committee on Civil Service and Professional Regulation, regulating the practice of metallurgical engineering in the Philippines;

5. House Bill No. 5015, as contained in Committee Report No. 429 and submitted by the Committee on Civil Service and Professional Regulation, regulating the practice of mining engineering in the Philippines;

6. House Bill No. 5016, as contained in Committee Report No. 430 and submitted by the Committee on Civil Service and Professional Regulation, regulating and modernizing the practice of chemistry in the Philippines;

7. House Bill No. 5018, as contained in Committee Report No. 431 and submitted by the Committee on Health, requiring government agencies to indicate the blood type of individuals in identification cards, certificates and licenses;

8. House Bill No. 5021, as contained in Committee Report No. 432 and submitted by the Committee on Local Government, rationalizing the income requirements for the creation of a municipality, the declaration of highly urbanized status in the case of component cities and the creation of a province;

9. House Bill No. 5023, as contained in Committee Report No. 433 and submitted by the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, requiring the Philippine Postal Corporation to issue postage stamps depicting Philippine Tourist Spots, to be affixed on all international mail to attract foreign tourists; and

10. House Bill No. 5024, as contained in Committee Report No. 434 and submitted by the Committees on Government Enterprises and Privatization, and Appropriations, strengthening the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC).

APPROVAL ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILLS UNDER THE BUSINESS FOR THURSDAY AND FRIDAY

Thereafter, on an omnibus motion of Rep. Binay, there being no objection, the Body considered on Second Reading the following House Bills under the Business for Thursday and Friday, as contained in various Committee Reports submitted by the Committees concerned; dispensed with the reading of the texts of the measures without prejudice to their insertion into the Record of the House; considered the Explanatory Notes thereof as the sponsorship remarks on the measures; terminated the period of sponsorship and debate; approved the amendments as contained in the Committee Reports, if any; terminated the period of
amendments; and approved the same on Second Reading:

1. House Bill No. 4984, as contained in Committee Report No. 415 and submitted by the Committee on Revision of Laws, declaring January 6 of every year a special nonworking holiday in Toledo, Cebu in commemoration of its charter day anniversary;

2. House Bill No. 2360, as contained in Committee Report No. 420 and submitted by the Committee on Banks and Financial Intermediaries, establishing a Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) office in Bacolod City and appropriating funds therefor;

3. House Bill No. 4012, as contained in Committee Report No. 423 and submitted by the Committee on Public Works and Highways, renaming the Guzel – Bokod – Kabayan – Abatan road in Benguet to Cong. Andres Acop Cosalan Road; and


ADOPTION OF CERTAIN HOUSE RESOLUTIONS UNDER THE BUSINESS FOR THE DAY

On successive motions of Rep. Binay, there being no objection, the Body considered the following House Resolutions calendared under the Business for the Day, as contained in various Committee Reports submitted by the Committees concerned; dispensed with the reading of the texts thereof without prejudice to their insertion into the Record of the House, and unanimously adopted the same:

1. House Resolution No. 1486, as contained in Committee Report No. 417 and submitted by the Committee on Youth and Sports Development, congratulating and commending Miko Eala and Alexandra Eala for qualifying and winning in the Little Mo International Tennis Grand Slam Championship 2013 held at the PGA Resort and Spa in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, U.S.A. in December 2013;

2. House Resolution No. 1487, as contained in Committee Report No. 418 and submitted by the Committee on Youth and Sports Development, congratulating and commending the two Philippine Basketball teams, the Team Walang Iwanan and Team Bounce Back, and the Samahang Basketball ng Pilipinas (SBP) Organizing Committee for setting the new Guinness World Record for the Longest Basketball Game;

3. House Resolution No. 1488, as contained in Committee Report No. 419 and submitted by the Committee on Youth and Sports Development, congratulating and commending Marvin Sonsona for winning the World Boxing Organization (WBO) International Featherweight Title at the Cotai Arena, Venetian Hotel, Macau, China, on February 22, 2014; and

4. House Resolution No. 1515, as contained in Committee Report No. 435 submitted by the Committee on Agriculture and Food and Special Committee on Food Security, urging the President to provide immediate relief to consumers by directing the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Agriculture (DA), National Food Authority (NFA) and other concerned government agencies to set a suggested retail price (SRP) on basic and prime agricultural commodities.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Binay, there being no objection, the Chair suspended the session until ten o’clock in the morning of Friday, September 26, 2014.

It was 10:17 p.m., Thursday, September 25, 2014.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:00 a.m., Friday, September 26, 2014, with Deputy Speaker Carlos M. Padilla presiding.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

On motion of Representative Magtanggol T. Gunigundo I, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Additional Reference of Business.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read on First Reading the titles of the following Bills on First Reading including the Messages from the Senate, Communications and Committee Reports which the Chair referred to the appropriate Committees as hereunder indicated:

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 5052, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND VETERINARY SERVICES IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Garin (S.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 5053, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION, PROMOTION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR ENERGY SECURITY, PROVIDING GUIDELINES AND GRANTING INCENTIVES TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION PROJECTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Abad

TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

With the permission of the Body, the following Members were made coauthors of the Bills hereunder indicated:

Rep. Gina P. De Venecia for House Bill No. 1650;

Rep. Evelina G. Escudero for House Bill No. 2207;

Rep. Emmanuel D. Pacquiao for House Bill No. 2949;

Rep. Philip A. Pichay for House Bills No. 3839 and 3840;


Rep. Jorge "Bolet" Banal for House Bill No. 4610;

Rep. Mel Senen S. Sarmiento for House Bill No. 4610;

Reps. Aleta C. Suarez and Alejandro Y. Mirasol for House Bill No. 4477;

Rep. Evelina G. Escudero for House Bill No. 4973;

Rep. Fernando "Ka Pando" L. Hicap for House Bill No. 4908;

Rep. Aleta C. Suarez for House Bill No. 4973;

Rep. Ruby M. Sahali for House Bills No. 3925, 4352 and 4724;

Rep. Kaka J. Bagao for House Bill No. 4610; and


MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Message dated September 23, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date approved the Conference Committee Report of the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 2274, entitled:

“AN ACT TO EXPAND ACCESS TO EDUCATION THROUGH OPEN LEARNING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION IN TERTIARY LEVELS OF EDUCATION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

and House Bill No. 4553, entitled:

“AN ACT EXPANDING ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BY INSTITUTIONALIZING OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING IN
HIGHER EDUCATION AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Message dated September 23, 2014 informing the House of Representatives that the Senate on even date approved the Conference Committee Report of the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 2275, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING ALL STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO ANNUALLY CONFER AUTOMATIC ADMISSION AND PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS TO THE TOP TEN (10) PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THEIR GRADUATING CLASS, AND ALLOCATE FUNDS THEREFOR”

and House Bill No. 4860, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS TO TOP GRADUATES OF ALL PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS ENROLLING FOR THEIR FIRST YEAR IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMUNICATIONS


TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Letter dated 18 September 2014 of Vincent Z. Bolivar, Deputy General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, furnishing the House of Representatives with duly certified and authenticated Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas issuances, to wit:

1. Circular No. 848 dated 08 September 2014; and

2. Circular No. 849 dated 08 September 2014.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report by the Committee on Higher and Technical Education (Committee Report No. 439), re H. No. 4832, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION TO INCLUDE A SUBJECT OF MORO HISTORY, CULTURE AND IDENTITY AS AN ELECTIVE IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM”

recommending its approval with amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Romulo and Balindong

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Basic Education and Culture (Committee Report No. 440), re H. No. 5054, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE TUBLAY SCHOOL OF HOME INDUSTRIES – CENTRAL EXTENSION IN BARANGAY TUBLAY CENTRAL, MUNICIPALITY OF TUBLAY, PROVINCE OF BENGUET FROM THE TUBLAY SCHOOL OF HOME INDUSTRIES, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS TUBLAY NATIONAL TRADE HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2724

Sponsors: Representatives Cojuangco (K.) and Cosalan

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Basic Education and Culture (Committee Report No. 441), re H. No. 5055, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE SAN JOSE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL – DANIEL C. MANTOS ANNEX IN BARANGAY DANIEL C. MANTOS, MUNICIPALITY OF MAHAYAG, PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR FROM THE SAN JOSE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING
IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS DANIEL C. MANTOS NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 2220

Sponsors: Representatives Cojuangco (K.) and Yu

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report by the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 442), re H. No. 5060, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE FILIPINO IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill Nos. 11, 489, 2243 and 2249

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Bichara

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 10:02 a.m., the Chair suspended the session.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:05 a.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 421
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered on Second Reading House Bill No. 4968, as embodied in Committee Report No. 421 and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations.

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Bill, to wit:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

At this point, Rep. Gunigundo stated that the Bill was still in the period of sponsorship and debate.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DTI AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS

On successive motions of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and its attached agencies and corporations; and the Chair recognized Reps. Josephine Veronique R. Lacson-Noel and Lino S. Cayetano for sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. CAYETANO

Rep. Cayetano said that he wanted the DTI to be involved in building industries such as the manufacture of Filipino jeepneys.

The Sponsor stated that the DTI has always been in close coordination with the DOTC and the LTFRB regarding the concern of Rep. Cayetano. As regards the port congestion, the agency had asked the DOTC to suspend the moratorium on the issuance of franchises for trucks serving the ports and had been holding meetings with it in this regard.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 10:15 a.m., the Chair motu proprio suspended the session.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 10:15 a.m. and the Chair recognized Rep. Leah S. Paquiz, upon Rep. Gunigundo’s motion.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ

Rep. Paquiz expressed concern about the interest of the Philippines to be a member of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and asked the DTI to study its impact on cheap generic medicines. Rep. Lacson-Noel clarified that the TPP has still to be formed and that the DTI will conduct public consultations thereon. She said that the Department will submit a report on its study on the matter.

To the subsequent queries of Rep. Paquiz, Rep. Lacson-Noel pointed out that the DTI would study the provisions on medicines of the proposed TPP Agreement and informed the Body that Australia and New Zealand are strongly against the US proposal because of their public procurement systems for medicines.
Rep. Paquiz then inquired whether there are any provisions in the TPP Agreement that would restrict tobacco and alcohol control in the country.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair *motu proprio* suspended the session at 10:24 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 10:24 a.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ**

(Continuation)

In reply, Rep. Lacson-Noel stated that the DTI is still awaiting the conclusion of the negotiations of the 12-member countries of the TPP.

Thereupon, Reps. Paquiz and Lacson-Noel continued their discussion on the provisions in the TPP Agreement that would restrict the Philippines to 1) implement health laws, such as banning dangerous chemicals and prohibiting toxic waste dumps; and 2) require mandatory labeling on products that have genetically-modified organisms (GMOs).

The Sponsor relayed the DTI’s assurance on studying these issues as well. She also affirmed that negotiations for the inclusion of the Philippines in the TPP will undergo public consultations.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DTI AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS**

There being no other interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Carol Jayne B. Lopez, on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DTI and its attached agencies and corporations.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair suspended the session at 10:36 a.m., to allow the DTI family to exit the Session Hall.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 10:36 a.m.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE NAPC AND LEDAC**

On successive motions of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) and the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC).

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE NAPC AND LEDAC**

There being no interpellations, on successive joint motions of Rep. Lopez (C.J.) on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the NAPC and LEDAC.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE CCC**

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Climate Change Commission (CCC).

**MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

At this point, Rep. Jonathan A. Dela Cruz sought recognition from the Chair.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The Chair *motu proprio* suspended the session at 10:36 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 10:36 a.m.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE CCC**

There being no interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.), on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the CCC.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE PCDSPO**

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of
the Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office (PCDSPO).

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE PCDSPO**

In the absence of interpellations, on a joint motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.), representing the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo, representing the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the PCDSPO.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NCIP**

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and the Chair thereafter recognized Rep. Eric D. Singson to sponsor said measure.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The session was suspended at 10:39 a.m., upon motion of Rep. Singson (E.).

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 10:40 a.m.


**MANIFESTATION OF REP. ALIPING**

Rep. Aliping manifested that in lieu of an interpellation, he would propose amendments at the proper time on issues concerning scholarship grants, dubious issuances of Certificates of Ancestral Land Title (CALTs) and Certificates of Ancestral Domain Title (CADTs), questionable appointments, and the proposed Bangsa Cordillera Autonomous Regon.

Rep. Singson (E.) suggested that Rep. Aliping submit his proposed amendments to the Committee on Appropriations so it can study the same.

The Chair noted Rep. Aliping’s manifestation.

**MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

Recognized by the Chair, Rep. Dela Cruz manifested his intent to increase the proposed NCIP budget to ensure the survey of all the lands and resources belonging to the indigenous peoples (IPs) within the term of office of President Aquino, and for the inclusion of said survey in the agency’s budget during the period of amendments. He also stated that the NCIP should come up with the rules, procedures and processes on joint ventures that it would undertake with other organizations.

The Sponsor took note of Rep. Dela Cruz’ manifestation, and assured that the NCIP would study his concerns.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE NCIP**

On a joint motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.), representing the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo, representing the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the NCIP.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOTC, INCLUDING ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS**

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) and its attached agencies and corporations, and the Chair recognized Rep. Joseph Gilbert F. Violago and Cayetano for their sponsorship and interpellation, respectively.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. CAYETANO**

Rep. Cayetano was first granted assurance that the letter he sent to the DOTC Secretary the previous week would be responded to during the day or the following week. He then inquired on the commitment made during the deliberations on the 2014 budget for the LTFRB on the nongranting of exemptions in the issuance of franchises to public utility vehicles (PUVs).

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

The session was suspended at 10:52 a.m., on motion of Rep. Violago.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 10:56 a.m.
INTERPELLATION OF REP. CAYETANO
(Continuation)

Pursuing his point, Rep. Cayetano said that in 2014, no franchise was issued by the LTFRB for PUVs based on a green exemption, and after citing cases of electronic or E-jeepneys plying Metro Manila without the required franchise, inquired on the franchise exemption of PUVs.

The Sponsor said that the LTFRB made exemptions although for trucks only. He then advised Rep. Cayetano to report the colorum E-jeepneys to the DOTC or LTFRB.

Reps. Cayetano and Violago also discussed the sustainability of E-vehicles in terms of availability of power sources and supply parts. They also talked about the untimeliness of the entry of E-vehicles given that the country is in the midst of a power crisis.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 11:06 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:07 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. CAYETANO
(Continuation)

Rep. Violago informed Rep. Cayetano that only the E-vehicles in Makati were granted LTFRB franchise and that the DOTC was not aware of E-vehicles operating in other areas. He then expressed inclination to investigate the competence of the LTFRB and the DOTC in apprehending the violators of the franchise requirement and colorum buses.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Reps. Colmenares and Violago discussed the background of the controversial common station of the Metro Rail Transit-3 (MRT), particularly the filing of a case by the SM Prime Holdings, Inc. against the DOTC.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair suspended the session at 11:12 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:13 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Violago narrated the history of the MRT-3 common station controversy, starting with the DOTC decision in 2006 to build a TriNoma common station of MRT-3, MRT-7 and Light Rail Transit-1 (LRT) before it decided years later to enter into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with SM Prime to build said station in front of SM North, with the latter paying P200 million for naming rights and right of walkway. He said that after a National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) study had recommended to build the station back to TriNoma as it will be more cost-efficient and conducive to commerce, SM filed a case against the DOTC for the transfer.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair suspended the session at 11:15 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:15 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Reps. Colmenares and Violago discussed the cost-efficiency of choosing TriNoma over SM as the location of the MRT-3 common station.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair suspended the session at 11:18 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 11:19 a.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES
(Continuation)

Whereupon, Reps. Colmenares and Violago further expounded on the issue of the MRT-3 common
station after which the former asked for the details of the government’s budget of ₱1.2 billion if the facility were to be built in TriNoma.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair suspended the session at 11:22 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 11:24 a.m.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES**

(Continuation)

Rep. Colmenares then focused on the breakdown or composition of the ₱1.2-billion budget for a TriNoma common station; the winning concessionaire of the LRT-1 Cavite extension project and its financing and management arrangements with the government, project’s terms of reference, concession period, schedule of payments of its ₱9.35 billion winning bid, and the government’s gains from the project; and computations of the fares to be paid by the riding public.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair suspended the session at 11:39 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 11:40 a.m., the session resumed.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES**

(Continuation)

Rep. Colmenares exchanged views with the Sponsor regarding the concept of notional fare and its effects on the concessionaire and the government, as well as the implementation of the LRT ticketing system. He inquired thereafter on the revenues generated from advertising spaces located in the different LRT stations.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair suspended the session at 11:54 a.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

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

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES**

(Continuation)

After he was informed about the government revenues from commercial and advertising spaces located in the LRT stations, Rep. Colmenares tackled with the Sponsor the costs of the LRT-1 Cavite extension concession agreement to the concessionaire and the government, including the costs of maintenance and operations to be shouldered by the concessionaire.

In reply to Rep. Colmenares’ succeeding questions, Rep. Violago stated that concessionaires have to follow strict requirements in order not to sacrifice maintenance just to earn profit. He said that there is a provision stating that the government can cancel concession and take over the operations should they find that the safety of the people is being sacrificed. He added that a penalty is imposed every time there is a breakdown in their maintenance and operations.

Thereupon, Reps. Colmenares and Violago also discussed the benefits and incentives that the government obtained from the owners of TriNoma and SM malls for choosing the location of the MRT-3 common station.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair suspended the session at 12:05 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 12:06 p.m.
After discussing the pros and cons of privatizing government functions and projects, Rep. Colmenares asked about the ownership of assets, construction details, and government buyout of MRT-3.

Rep. Violago gave details on said buyout, including the total amount incurred for rentals, operation and maintenance, foreign debt payments, and taxes. He explained as well the advantage of providing appropriations for the buyout even if the private concessionaire had not yet approved of it.

Whereupon, Deputy Speaker Padilla relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Henedina R. Abad.

After Rep. Colmenares requested comprehensive documents on the aforesaid buyout, he and the Sponsor examined the DOTC’s purchase of trains for which funds from the DAP were used.

Rep. Colmenares, at this point, asked for a copy of the build-lease-transfer (BLT) agreement between the DOTC and the winning concessionaire, and Rep. Violago said that he will provide it.

Rep. Colmenares also stressed that the proposed budget of P54 billion for the MRT-3 project is unacceptable considering that it could be another form of pork barrel and an additional burden to the riding public and the Filipino people. He added that the money could be realigned to other worthy public programs and that privatizing MRT-3 is proof that privatization is a plague that must not continue.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Jose Christopher Y. Belmonte, the Chair recognized Rep. Dela Cruz for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Reps. Dela Cruz and Violago discussed the allocation, implementation, impact on pollution control, and projects and beneficiaries of the Special Vehicle Pollution Control Fund under a special provision in the proposed budget of the DOTC; and the utilization of seatbelt fines under Republic Act (RA) No. 8750 or the Seatbelt Law as well as the enforcement of this law.

Rep. Violago assured Rep. Dela Cruz that he will be furnished with the data he had requested on these matters.

The Members next focused on a joint administrative order (JAO) of the LTO and the LTFRB with regard to franchise violation, with the Sponsor clarifying that a nationwide cluster consultation was made with the transport sectors concerned in the drafting thereof. Rep. Violago also committed to give a copy the following week of the minutes of said consultation meetings. They then focused on the status of the LTO’s information technology (IT) program and contract with service provider Stradcom. The Sponsor also clarified that Stradcom only handles the database because all hard copies of the records are with the LTO; the distribution of driver’s licenses which would be fully addressed by November 2014; and the LTO’s budget, income, personnel and district offices, as well as the number of registered vehicles in the country.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Padilla.

They then discussed the implementation of the Motor Vehicle Plate Standardization Program and the status of the LTO’s plate-making facility as well as its book value, and the government plans for the said facility.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair motu proprio suspended the session at 1:24 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 1:24 p.m., with Deputy Speaker Abad presiding.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON

Rep. Ridon’s query centered on several public-private partnership (PPP) projects, the first being the Mactan-Cebu International Airport’s (MCIA) design and conflict of interests among the project bidders.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abad relinquished the Chair to Rep. Jorge “Bolet” Banal.

He also raised issues concerning the delay in the MCIA project completion due to a pending Supreme Court case, the plight of its employees and their retirement benefits, and the allegation that the MCIA’s winning consortium, the Mega-GMR is a notorious airport builder.
The Members next discussed the Automatic Fare Collection System (AFCS) contract and the winning bidder’s advantages over other bidders.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair suspended the session at 1:39 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 1:40 p.m., the session resumed.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON**  
(Continuation)

On the ridership requirement for the private concessionaire’s payment of the full price of the contract, Rep. Violago relayed the DOTC’s assurance that it will be met by the 8th or 10th year of the single ticket system’s operation.

At this juncture, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Giorgidi B. Aggabao.

The Members subsequently dealt with the following matters, among others: the construction of the MRT-3 common station; the fare increases under the provisions of the LRT-1 extension project contract; the implementation status of the MRT-7 project in San Jose del Monte City, Bulacan, with focus on the issues of relocation and right-of-way; and the maintenance and operational failures of MRT-3 trains.

Rep. Ridon then delved into the order of the Ombudsman for an investigation into the first maintenance contract negotiated by the DOTC with PH Trams.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair suspended the session at 2:16 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

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

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. RIDON**  
(Continuation)

After further discussing Rep. Ridon’s concerns pertinent to the maintenance and operations of MRT-3 light rails under the existing maintenance contract, Reps. Ridon and Violago delved into the following: 1) the procurement of additional MRT coaches; 2) the BLT agreement between MRTC and the government, with the former having the right of first refusal to buy out the whole project; and 3) the bond paid to MRTC during the previous administration with the understanding that it did not translate into equity ownership.

Thereafter, Rep. Violago explained that in pushing through with the government’s total buyout of MRT, government is limited with the BLT agreement. He then gave a breakdown of the buy-out amount.

On why the DOTC rejected the Metro Pacific Investment Corporation’s (MPIC) proposal to take over the MRTC, the Sponsor said that it did not involve a bidding process and would result in fare increases.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Violago, the Chair declared a recess at 2:45 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**


**INTERPELLATION OF REP. ABAYON**

Rep. Abayon first asked about the location and history of the LRT and MRT systems. The Sponsor explained how the master plan had changed since the Marcos Administration, because of progress.

As regards the safety of the riding public, Rep. Violago stated that the DOTC has come up with a plan to buy out the whole MRT in order for the government to have full control of its operation and maintenance.

For the record, Rep. Abayon next asked why the DOTC is not implementing RA No. 9593 or the Tourism Act of 2009 which provides for access to
travel and the need to develop tourist destinations both in the country’s urban and rural areas, and RA No. 9330 which seeks to establish the San Antonio Airport in Northern Samar. He stressed that the House has the power to appropriate, and asked when the construction of said airport would be given funds.

Agreeing therewith, Rep. Violago suggested the provision of funds and identification of priorities for measures enacted in the House. However, he relayed the DOTC’s position that the proposed airport project is not viable as well per the cited budgetary constraints; while Rep. Abayon argued that Region VIII has a big tourism potential.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 3:31 p.m., on motion of Rep. Violago.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:32 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ABAYON
(Continuation)

Upon resumption of session, Rep. Violago committed to secure the proposed airport’s future site by fencing it, obtain an agreement for commercial airline routes and allocate funds for the continued construction of the airport. He however underscored that the project might take several years to complete.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Recognized by the Chair, on motion of Rep. Belmonte (J.), Rep. Dela Cruz initially reiterated his request for reports on the activities of some DOTC agencies.

He then expressed his strong sentiments on the fact that while Congress can only deliberate on 36% of the total budget pie because the rest comes in the form of lump sum and automatic appropriations, the Members were not being given the information that they have been requesting. He underscored that the Constitution vests the power of the purse in Congress and yet, it is the DBM which calls the shots after all.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair suspended the session at 3:50 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:50 p.m.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. RODRIGUEZ (R.)

Reps. Rodriguez and Violago discussed the status of the proposed construction of the Mindanao Railway Project and requested for a timetable and timeframe on the submission of the detailed terms of reference for the said project which the NEDA already endorsed for feasibility study funding.

Rep. Violago assured Rep. Rodriguez that DOTC Secretary Joseph Emilio A. Abaya will endorse the NEDA’s letter of endorsement but the term of reference will be provided to Rep. Rodriguez within a month.


TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOTC, INCLUDING ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS

There being no further interpellations, on joint motion of Reps. Lopez (C.J.) and Gunigundo, for the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DOTC, including its attached agencies and corporations.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair suspended the session at 4:02 p.m.
RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:03 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DSWD, INCLUDING ATTACHED AGENCIES

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DSWD, including its attached agencies.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DSWD, INCLUDING ATTACHED AGENCIES

There being no further interpellations, on motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.), on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the OPAFSAM.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE PSC

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC).

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE PSC

In the absence of interpellations, on joint motion of Reps. Lopez (C.J.) and Gunigundo, for the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the PSC.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OPAFSAM

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budget of the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Food Security and Agricultural Modernization (OPAFSAM).

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OPAFSAM

There being no further interpellations, on motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.), on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the OPAFSAM.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DND AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

On another motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the Department of National Defense (DND) and its attached agencies.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DND AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

There being no further interpellations, on motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.), on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DND and its attached agencies.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOH AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS

On further motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the Department of Health (DOH) and its attached agencies and corporations.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOH AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS

There being no further interpellations, on motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.), on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of
sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DOH and its attached agencies and corporations.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOF, INCLUDING ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Finance (DOF), including its attached agencies and corporation and the Chair recognized Rep. Lopez (C.J.) for her motion.

MOTION OF REP. LOPEZ (C.J.)

Rep. Lopez moved to terminate the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DOF, including its attached agencies and corporation.

Before the Majority could join the Minority’s motion, the Chair recognized Rep. Dela Cruz.

REMARKS OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Rep. Dela Cruz stated that he will not interpellate but would like to make a manifestation.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair suspended the session at 4:10 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 4:12 p.m.

REMARKS OF REP. GUNIGUNDO

Rep. Gunigundo stated that the parliamentary status was that the Body was deliberating on the proposed budgets of the DOF, including its attached agencies and corporation; and he then moved for the recognition of Rep. Gabriel Luis R. Quisumbing to sponsor the said budget.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

However, upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Dela Cruz informed the Body that he had received copies of documents he requested earlier during the discussion on the budgets of the DOF, including its attached agencies/corporation regarding funding from DAP funds of 1) payment of obligations for the comprehensive import supervision scheme, and 2) reacquisition of air rights for the right-of-way of the SLEX-NLEX connector. He said that the information provided was insufficient and unresponsive to his needs. He then manifested his disagreement with the following provisions of the DOF budget: the creation of the Office of Revenue Agency Modernization, and the assumption of the Development Budget Coordinating Committee on growth projections and revenue collections.

Rep. Dela Cruz requested that as soon as the 2015 GAB is approved, the sponsoring Committee will inquire into the DBCC assumptions used in the crafting of the 2015 national budget to ascertain if they are realistic, and the activities undertaken by the Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Internal Revenue and other revenue-generating DOF attached agencies, because of their miserable revenue performance.

Rep. Quisumbing said that he would refer Rep. Dela Cruz’ manifestation to the DOF for its comment.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOF, INCLUDING ATTACHED AGENCIES/CORPORATION

There being no interpellations, on joint motion of Reps. Lopez (C.J.) and Gunigundo, for the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DOF, including its attached agencies/corporation.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DILG AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Gunigundo, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DILG and its attached agencies.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Gunigundo, the Chair suspended the session at 4:20 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 4:25 p.m., the session resumed.


**REMARKS OF REP. ATIENZA**

Rep. Atienza rose to clarify the statements made by Rep. Evardone the previous day with regard to the former’s query on which agency is responsible for the maintenance of peace and order in the country. He pointed out that it would not be difficult to determine that Rep. Evardone was wrong in his statement considering that the mandate to ensure the protection of citizens and the peace and order situation is specifically vested in the DILG to which the PNP, a law enforcement agency, belongs. He stated that he would like to put on record that with his statements, Rep. Evardone was not being honest to his duty as chairperson of the Committee on Local Government nor cognizant of the tasks of the DILG.

Rep. Atienza also stated that he would like to put on record his request for the Department to make a decisive action on the deteriorating peace and order situation and the proliferation of crimes not only in Metro Manila, but also in the whole county.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DILG AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES**

There being no other interpellations, on joint motion of Reps. Lopez (C.J.) and Gunigundo, for the Minority and the Majority, respectively, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DILG, including its attached agencies.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Thereupon, the Chair suspended the session at 4:35 p.m., upon Rep. Gunigundo’s motion.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 4:35 p.m., the session resumed.

**RESUMPTION OF THE DEBATE ON THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND PROVISIONS**

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Juan Pablo “Rimpy” P. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body continued with the debate on the General Principles and Provisions of House Bill No. 4968.

**MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

Rep. Dela Cruz manifested for the record his proposal for the Body to revert to the definition of “savings” as contained in the 2014 General Appropriations Act (GAA) to conform to the ruling of the Supreme Court.

**REMARKS OF REP. UNGAB**

Rep. Ungab however explained that the proposal would have to be decided upon by the Body during the period of amendments. He clarified that it is also within the powers of Congress to define the term “savings.”

**TERMINATION OF THE DEBATE ON THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND PROVISIONS**

There being no further interpellations, on motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.), on behalf of the Minority, and Rep. Gunigundo, on behalf of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the debate on the General Principles and Provisions.
CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DEPED AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Education (DepEd) and its attached agencies.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

Rep. Tinio’s discussion with Rep. Almario focused on the teachers’ welfare and how this will be protected in the proposed 2015 DepEd budget, particularly with regard to salary increases. The Members likewise discussed the following important matters, namely: 1) The child protection policy of the DepEd, as well as the protection for teachers in regard to this policy in accordance with the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers and DepEd Order No. 49; 2) the Magna Carta benefits for teachers; and 3) the additional “chalk” allowance for teachers which Rep. Almario suggested that Rep. Tinio submit his amendments at the proper time.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Dela Cruz for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Initially, Rep. Dela Cruz expressed his appreciation to the DepEd for finally coming up with an inventory of the assets of the Department as far as school buildings are concerned. However, he said, he was still waiting for a copy of the revised guidelines on the formation of parent-teacher associations in each and every school so they can organize themselves on a nationwide basis.

Rep. Dela Cruz also asked for a report on the operations and teachers’ contributions of the Philippine Public School Teachers Association (PPSTA).

Rep. Almario relayed the agency’s commitment to address the aforecited concerns of her colleague.

Subsequently, the two Members exchanged views on how the agency was preparing to implement the K-12 program by 2016 and how the calamities and the lack of manpower had resulted in the under-utilization of capital outlay (CO) and Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) funds. To his colleague’s succeeding requests, the Sponsor then promised reports on 1) the National Capital Region’s (NCR) seemingly bigger allocations for MOOE and CO, and the Indigenous People’s Education Program; and 2) on the entire agency’s unfilled positions.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DEPED AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

On a joint motion of Rep. Lopez (C.J.), on the part of the Minority and Rep. Bondoc, on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DepEd and its attached agencies.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DENR AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and its attached agencies and corporations.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair declared a recess at 5:16 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:17 p.m., the session resumed.


SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. SY-ALVARADO

Rep. Sy-Alvarado gave a breakdown of the proposed budget of the DENR and its attached agencies and corporations and stated that she was ready to defend the measure.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ILAGAN

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Luzviminda C. Ilagan raised several issues with the Sponsor regarding the 1) mapping of “no-go” mining zone areas; 2) granting of environmental compliance certificates (ECCs) by the DENR to two multinational mining companies in Davao City and ignoring an
ordinance and a legislative measure declaring Davao City as a mining-free zone; and 3) implementation of a program reducing mercury emissions and its components under the Minamata Convention.

Rep. Ilagan next sought clarification on the use of cyanide or any other harmful substances in mining activities.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 5:36 p.m., upon motion of Rep. Sy-Alvarado.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 5:38 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. ILAGAN

(Continuation)

After Rep. Sy-Alvarado clarified the DENR policy on the use of cyanide in mining, Rep. Ilagan next focused on the following concerns: 1) DENR’s lead implementing agency of RA No. 6969 on the monitoring of toxic substances and hazardous wastes; 2) disposition of chemicals and electronic wastes; 3) monitoring of waste recycling plants; and 4) alleged incidents of illegal logging in the forests of Bulacan.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Aggabao relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.

Thereafter securing the commitment that she would be given a copy of the report on the investigation on illegal logging, Rep. Ilagan expressed concern on the planting of commercial instead of endemic trees just so the DENR could meet its reforestation target in 2016 but to the detriment of biodiversity.

Whereupon, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aggabao.

The Members also discussed the total expenditure for the National Greening Program (NGP) about which the Sponsor committed to provide Rep. Ilagan a copy of the agency’s roadmap. They also tackled the status of the suspension of the four nickel mining companies in Zambales and the damage to environment caused by mining activities, with Rep. Sy-Alvarado stating that the DENR had no intention of lifting the suspension.

Rep. Ilagan then advocated respect for those provinces that do not want the continuance of mining in their areas. Rep. Sy-Alvarado expressed support for the same.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. MENDOZA (J.)

Rep. Mendoza (J.) initially inquired about the DENR’s policy concerning confiscated and abandoned minerals and mineral products. In reply, Rep. Sy-Alvarado said that the State is the owner of confiscated or abandoned minerals and has the power to donate them. Rep. Mendoza (J.) then asked about the 257 marble blocks found in Biak-na-Bato and confiscated by the DENR. The Sponsor clarified that these blocks were not confiscated but were found abandoned along the national highway. She further said that it is the Office of the President (OP) who ordered the donation of said minerals.

Upon further inquiry by Rep. Mendoza (J.) on the matter, the Sponsor asked that she read the letter from the OP, signed by the Deputy Executive Secretary for Legal Affairs. Rep. Mendoza (J.) replied that he had already read the letter and he has no objection to the donation of the marble blocks to the province of Bulacan by the OP. He then asked whether an information has reached the OP in support of its decision even if the DENR had not yet confiscated the blocks. Rep. Sy-Alvarado stated that the DENR is not privy to the OP’s decision to donate the blocks. She further said that they should defer to the wisdom and discretion of the OP.

Rep. Mendoza (J.) then inquired as to who drafted the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) governing the donation. Rep. Sy-Alvarado responded that it was the DENR. She further pointed out that the blocks were mined during the incumbency of Rep. Mendoza (J.) as provincial governor which the State considered as illegally mined. She underscored that the donation by the OP was for the benefit of the Bulakeños and inquired from Rep. Mendoza (J.) why illegal mining persisted during his term as governor when it was he himself who conceptualized a House
bill declaring Biak-na-Bato as sacred grounds and significant to the history of the country and Bulacan. She also expressed her support to the donation made in favor of the provincial government, of which Rep. Mendoza (J.)’s son presently sits as a provincial board member.

Further, Rep. Sy-Alvarado assured the President, the Bulakeños and the Filipino people that every centavo from the proceeds of the abandoned minerals will be used for environmental projects and for the benefit of the entire province.

Setting the record straight, Rep. Mendoza (J.) said that while he was indeed the governor at the time of mining the said blocks, he did not permit its extraction. He also said that his office has nothing to do with the Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) issued to Rosemoor Mining and Development Corporation. He then asked whether the 1991 Local Government Code (LGC) provides for donation of the minerals to the province only without regard to the towns where the minerals originally came from.

The Sponsor emphasized that the State owned the marble blocks and wondered whether Rep. Mendoza (J.) was questioning the wisdom and integrity of the President for donating the minerals to Rep. Mendoza (J.)’s own province for the benefit of the Bulakeños.

Rep. Mendoza (J.), as a rejoinder, asked whether the towns of Doña Remedios Trinidad (DRT) and San Miguel do not have the right to participate in the conduct of the public bidding of the minerals. Rep. Sy-Alvarado replied that the bidding is open to the public and representatives from the towns can sit as observers. She further said that all the towns of Bulacan, including DRT and San Miguel and others within the district of Rep. Mendoza (J.), will benefit from the proceeds of the minerals.

Even as Rep. Mendoza (J.) agreed with the Sponsor that anybody could observe the public bidding of the marble blocks, he hoped that the two municipalities he mentioned would be included as members of the bids and awards committee.

Rep. Sy-Alvarado replied that the House was in no position to comply with Rep. Mendoza (J.)’s request because the matter was a concern of the provincial government of Bulacan, which is in no way connected with the budget deliberation.

Rep. Mendoza (J.) expressed regrets that the DENR is unable to address the issues raised and said that what was important was that he stood up and fought for his belief and the rights of his constituents.

At this juncture, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Paquiz for her interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ

Reps. Paquiz and Sy-Alvarado talked about the filling up of only one-half of the total number of authorized positions in the DENR for 2014 and 2015 and the hiring of personnel through service contracts and job orders to augment the shortage.

Rep. Paquiz then inquired whether the DENR has conducted a study on the total forest land area in the country that needs to be replanted with trees.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Sy-Alvarado, the Chair suspended the session at 6:25 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 6:26 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ

(Continuation)

In response, Rep. Sy-Alvarado said that based on the study of the Forest Management Bureau (FMB) from 2003 to 2010, the forest land area covered was reduced from 7.1 million hectares to 6.8 million hectares and that eight million hectares were denuded and needed rehabilitation.
They also discussed the proactive efforts implemented by the DENR in the replanting of trees and the status or condition of the replanted trees under the NGP. The Sponsor said that they will provide Rep. Paquiz with a copy of the five-year program.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Sy-Alvarado, the Chair suspended the session at 6:30 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 6:31 p.m.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. PAQUIZ

(Continuation)

After a discussion on the tree planting component of the NGP, Reps. Paquiz and Sy-Alvarado then discussed the implementation and accomplishments of the DENR pollution disclosure policy; the policy and accountability measures on companies that discharge chemicals in the lakes, rivers and seas, such as the Marcopper case in Marinduque; and the drying up of Ipo Dam.

Rep. Sy-Alvarado assured Rep. Paquiz that the agency will provide her with a copy of the report on the livelihood and seedlings propagation program, and an update on the case filed against Marcopper.

Rep. Paquiz next inquired whether the Committee can provide her with the DENR’s program of action on the environmental protection of Ipo Dam and the necessary documents pertinent thereto. The Sponsor replied that the DENR and the MWSS was in the process of preparing their dam management and protection plan for Ipo Dam.

Thereupon, Rep. Paquiz informed the Sponsor of the 50 container vans of mixed waste and garbage that had been in the Subic Free Port and the Port of Manila and which had cost the country P60 million in storage and demurrage charges. She manifested her objection thereto and underscored that on the basis of the Basel Convention, the country of the port of origin should pick up the hazardous wastes and garbage within 30 days upon entry in Philippine ports. She underscored that the Philippines is not a dumping ground for garbage and that the container vans should be returned to Canada. She informed the Body that she had filed House Resolution No. 1525 for a congressional investigation into the importation of mixed waste and garbage.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DENR AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATION

On a joint motion of Rep. Silvestre “Bebot” H. Bello III on the part of the Minority, and Rep. Bondoc on the part of the Majority, there being no objection to the motion, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DENR and its attached agencies and corporations.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATION

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and its attached agencies and corporation.

Subsequently, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. Quisumbing to sponsor the measure.

REMARKS OF REP. QUISUMBING

Rep. Quisumbing submitted to the Body the P6.4-billion budget of the NEDA and its attached agencies and corporation and said that he was ready to answer interpellations thereon.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. DE JESUS

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair recognized Rep. De Jesus who initially adverted to the mandate and core responsibilities of the NEDA before citing the need for an evaluation and a study of the effectiveness, costs and benefits, and economic implications of the various budgetary policies and programs of the Administration geared towards increased investments in programs and projects to support inclusive and sustainable growth as enunciated in the 2015 budget priorities.

She argued that the budgetary policies and programs of the national government for 2015 were not specifically targeted for inclusive growth and development and were skewed in favor of only a particular sector of the poor in the case of the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) program; do not provide adequate budgetary support to public hospitals to ensure immediate medical and health
services to the marginalized sectors; do not create permanent employment opportunities in the country; do not have the legislative imprimatur for programs and projects that were still subject to the deliberations of Congress in the cases of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) and the PAMANA projects; and do not deter private interests from perpetually cornering public-private partnership (PPP) contracts.

Lastly, she reiterated her request for a copy of the documents with regard to PPP projects that were still under the bidding process, and a copy of the list of PPP bidders. She urged the Sponsor to take note of the points she had raised as they consider the 2015 national budget.

**INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ**

Recognized by the Chair upon motion of Rep. Bondoc, Rep. Dela Cruz discussed with Rep. Quisumbing the gross domestic product (GDP) for 2014 and the drivers of growth for the rest of 2014. Rep. Dela Cruz particularly asked about the agricultural sector especially when the integration of the ASEAN economic zone sets in; the sensitivity of the manufacturing sector to the power crisis; the use of the DAP funds that the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) had received; how the P400 million Feasibility Studies Fund for non-PPP projects were utilized by the NEDA; the approved PPP projects and those that are still under consideration; and the new agency called the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) which is a conglomeration of several agencies under the NEDA.

Rep. Quisumbing affirmed that Rep. Dela Cruz will be given data on the impact of the power crisis, the utilization of PIDS funds, list of projects funded out of the Feasibility Studies Fund as well as the data on the corresponding consulting firm and status of the studies made, and on all other concerns he had raised.

After the Sponsor had clarified that the PSA will use its funds to conduct a survey on the poorest of the poor, Rep. Dela Cruz stressed that the NEDA’s budget should be increased to enable it to evaluate and monitor huge government projects.

**MANIFESTATION OF REP. RODRIGUEZ (R.)**

Recognized by the Chair, Rep. Rodriguez initially asked for additional storage space for Rep. Dela Cruz’ request for records, and Rep. Quisumbing seconded the same.

On behalf of the district and party-list Representatives of Mindanao, Rep. Rodriguez then thanked Director-General Arsenio Balisacan’s prompt inclusion of the Mindanao Railway Project among the NEDA’s feasibility study projects so that it will be included in the PPP program. Stressing that it was a historic move for Mindanao, he expressed support for the agency’s budget.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE NEDA AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND CORPORATION**

On a joint motion of Rep. Bello (S.), on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Bondoc, on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the NEDA and its attached agencies and corporation.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OPAPP**

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP).

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE OPAPP**

On a joint motion of Rep. Bello (S.), on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Bondoc, on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the OPAPP.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED LUMP SUM FUNDS**

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed Lump Sum Funds.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED LUMP SUM FUNDS**

On a joint motion of Rep. Bello (S.), on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Bondoc, on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed Lump Sum Funds.
MOTION OF REP. BONDOC

Rep. Bondoc then moved for the Body to resume its consideration of the proposed budgets of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and its attached agencies.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. ATIENZA

Before the Body could act on the motion, Rep. Atienza sought recognition from the Chair.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair suspended the session at 7:36 p.m. upon Rep. Bondoc’s motion.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:36 p.m., the session resumed.

QUERY OF REP. ATIENZA

With the permission of the Chair, Rep. Atienza proposed to remove a distracting one-way mirror in the balcony area of the Session Hall. Agreeing therewith, Rep. Bondoc said that it covered a former radio announcers’ booth but which now housed the CCTV cameras monitoring the plenary proceedings.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOJ AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

On successive motions of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed budgets of the DOJ and its attached agencies; and the Chair recognized Rep. Mercedes K. Alvarez to sponsor the same and Rep. Colmenares for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

Rep. Colmenares initially raised his concern to the Sponsor on the following issues: 1) the status of his letter requesting that fiscals who retired before the new retirement law should be given their retirement benefits; and 2) the augmentation of the proposed budget of the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) to address the matter of subsistence allowance and congestion in the prison detention cells.

Rep. Alvarez (M.) assured Rep. Colmenares that he would be furnished with the names of the retired fiscals who have gotten their retirement benefits.

Both Members further delved into the status of the case filed against the Makabayan bloc which attended a rally during the 2014 State-of-the-Nation Address (SONA), with the Sponsor saying that she will relay to the DOJ Rep. Colmenares’ sentiment that the accused was not yet given copies of the complaint. They also discussed the status of a panel that the DOJ committed to form in order to facilitate a case filed by several farmers against Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac Province.

Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aggabao.

They also talked about the position of the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (OGCC) with regard to the Supreme Court ruling on the case of Pagcor vs. BIR on Pagcor’s payment of income tax due from casino owners; and the DOJ’s implementation of the resolution prohibiting the use of the name “John Doe” in cases it files because such could constitute a human rights violation and be used to harass political opponents and activists.

Rep. Alvarez promised to give Rep. Colmenares a list of violators of such resolution, if any, and information on the action taken by the DOJ thereon.


INTERPELLATION OF REP. ATIENZA

Rep. Atienza suggested the review of cases of jailed persons, and inquired on the solutions to the problems of jail congestion and the release of overstaying prisoners who have already served their term as well as efforts to improve the criminal justice system. He also focused on the growing use and marketing of illegal drugs, and the rising incidence of drug-related crimes.

Rep. Alvarez (M.) said that the DOJ was doing its best to address the aforesaid matters.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

On motion of Rep. Belmonte (J.), the Chair next recognized Rep. Dela Cruz who followed up on his request for a report on the activities of the OGCC and its position on the MWSS concession agreement. The Sponsor said that the agency already submitted the document.
SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 8:29 p.m., the Chair declared a recess upon Rep. Bondoc’s motion.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 8:30 p.m., the session resumed.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE DOJ AND ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES

On a joint motion of Rep. Bello (S.), on behalf of the Minority and Rep. Bondoc, on the part of the Majority, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the DOJ and its attached agencies.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 8:32 p.m., the Chair declared a recess upon Rep. Bondoc’s motion.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 8:38 p.m., the session resumed.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE DBM

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objection, the Body considered the proposed budget of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Chair recognized Rep. Ungab for his sponsorship of the same.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. UNGAB

Rep. Ungab said that he was ready to answer interpellations on the proposed budget of the DBM.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Aggabao relinquished the Chair to Rep. Banal.

INTERPELLATION OF REP. TINIO

Rep. Ungab agreed to submit, for the Committee’s evaluation at the proper time, the following proposals of Rep. Tinio: to reinstate in the General Provisions of the budget, the provision mandating a minimum funding of at least one percent of the agencies’ annual budgets for persons with disabilities; to include in the GAB the amount of ₱150.3 million for Personnel Services of the National Printing Office; and to include a penalty provision on the nonreporting and non-posting of all government agencies’ use of their additional income for the sake of transparency and consistency.

The Sponsor however took exception to Rep. Tinio’s proposal to implement the new provision of Joint Resolution No. 4, providing for a five percent earmark for every ₱50 billion increase in the GAB for the automatic annual salary increase of all government employees. He clarified that this could only be considered during the deliberations on the 2016 national budget.

At this point, Rep. Banal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aggabao.

Rep. Ungab further explained that the Committee and the DBM would have to study further the proposal for possible implementation in the 2016 GAB. He added that a proposed performance enhancement incentive amounting to ₱30.6 billion which was more substantial than the salary increase, was due to government employees.

On the issue of transparency and public accountability with regard to the budget programming of the DBM on the disposition of public funds for the DAP, Rep. Tinio underscored that the DBM has yet to comply with its commitment to Rep. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate made during the DBCC briefings on his request for certain documents from the DBM. He maintained that being the representatives of the people, Members of Congress have the right to information regarding where the DAP funds had been spent. He reiterated to the Body the specific requests of Rep. Zarate, to wit:

1) specific and detailed sources of funds and which programs, activities, and projects were subjected to withdrawal of Unobligated Funds;
2) detailed list of all the specific projects funded under the DAP and the current status of each project; and
3) detailed list of the DAP projects that had not been funded. He pointed out that the information on the website of the DBM did not contain the specific information that had been requested.

Rep. Ungab however informed Rep. Tinio that the requested information had already been posted on the DBM website.

The Members then debated on the implementation of Special Provisions on Realignment of Funds in the 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 national budgets authorizing the Secretaries of the DPWH, DOTC and the DepEd to realign and modify the budgetary allotments...
subject to certain conditions, with Rep. Tinio object-
ing to such authority given to said Cabinet secretaries.

They also talked about the errata that the DBM in-
tends to submit with respect to many other provisions
that have already been debated in plenary. As regards
Rep. Tinio’s request to look at the list of errata that the
DBM intends to submit, Rep. Ungab stated that the list
will still have to be submitted to the committee that
will evaluate and finalize all the errata, suggestions,
amendments and recommendations made by the
Members of the Body.

Rep. Tinio then asked to see the document con-
taining the errata submitted that afternoon by the
DBM to the Committee on Appropriations.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Ungab, the Chair suspended
the session at 9:32 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 9:32 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF
THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE DBM

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objec-
tion, the Body suspended further consideration of the
proposed budget of the DBM.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED
BUDGETS OF THE OP, INCLUDING THE PMS

On motion of Rep. Bondoc, there being no objec-
tion, the Body considered the proposed budgets of the
Office of the President (OP), including the President-
ial Management Staff (PMS).

Likewise, on motion of Rep. Bondoc, the Chair
recognized Rep. Ungab to sponsor said budget.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF REP. UNGAB

Rep. Ungab informed the Body that the proposed
budget of the OP is ₱2.568 billion while the PMS has
₱330.9 million.

INTERPPELLATION OF REP. COLMENARES

Recognized by the Chair, upon motion of Rep.
Bondoc, Rep. Colmenares inquired on the following
matters: 1) the status of the letter he sent to the Presi-
dent more than a year ago, relative to the increase in
the amount of SSS pensions that its current pensioners
are receiving; 2) whether the 2015 budget has an allo-
cation increasing the Social Pension Fund; and 3) the
total outstanding debt of the country as of 2014.

Rep. Ungab said that the DBM will retrieve the
letter; and study the proposal to increase the SPF allo-
cation as well as the amendment to lower the benefi-
ciaries’ age.

At this point, the Members analyzed the country’s
budget deficit. The Sponsor pointed out that the total
debt stock was decreasing and that a sustainable inclu-
sive development budget would support sound financial management. Rep. Colmenares stressed that
the government had huge savings but was channelling it
to “pork barrel” funds.

Ungab said that 1) the Governance Commission for
GOCCs (GCG) was investigating the exemption of ca-
 sino owners from corporate income tax; 2) the huge
GPBP monitoring and allocation fund was meant to
help LGUs learn how to initiate and implement their
projects; and 3) special accounts and lump sums like
the Malampaya Fund were not “pork barrel” funds as
stated by his colleague and were governed by strict
rules, guidelines, and processes.

Rep. Colmenares next raised his concern on the
lump sum allocation of the different projects and pro-
grams of the government that could be a source of
pork barrel. He stressed that such lump sum appropri-
ations would take away from Congress its power of
the purse considering that after the approval of the
budget, it is only the President who decides on how
and when to allocate the lump sum accounts thereby
negating the power of Congress to appropriate.

Rep. Ungab clarified that most of the lump sum
allocations in the 2015 GAB such as the Budgetary
Support to Government Corporations, Miscellaneous
Personnel Benefits Fund (MBPF) and Special Purpose
Funds, among others have already been disaggregated
and that only 1.8% could be construed as lump sum
accounts. He stated that he could furnish Rep. Col-
menares with the detailed list of the itemized disaggre-
gated funds.

Next focusing on the use of savings, Reps. Col-
menares and Ungab discussed the definition of the
term “savings” under the previous General Appropri-
ations Acts (GAAs), with the former pointing out that
the definition of savings in the 2015 GAB had been
changed and warned that the President now has the
power to discontinue at any time any project approved
by Congress and as such, funds allotted for that project
could be construed as savings and be realigned.
Thereafter, Rep. Colmenares raised the issue of the complaint filed against the Makabayan bloc for attending a rally during the 2014 SONA. As he asked why the President has been harassing the Opposition Members for conducting their own SONA, he stressed that it was unfair filing a case against them when they were just expressing their disagreement with the President’s SONA.

Rep. Ungab assured that the OP would study Rep. Colmenares’ concern. Turning back to the subject of the national budget, he clarified that the proposed GAA aims to spend the budget and not generate savings; and that savings will only be resorted to in exceptional cases.

Rep. Colmenares asserted that the national budget has always been miscalculated to the detriment of agencies which really need more funds. This, as he asked why agencies like the DepEd and the DSWD would be given huge amounts of funds only to have them realigned or declared as savings.

Rep. Colmenares thereafter focused on the human rights violations during the Aquino Administration, and noted the lack of human rights agenda therein. Stressing that the 2015 budget is full of pork barrel allocations, he said that the OP has no right to ask funds from Congress because it is the main violator of human rights. He suggested that the Body suspend the deliberation on the OP budget until the President agrees to withdraw the pork barrel allocations therein and commits to prosecute human rights violators.

**MOTION OF REP. COLMENARES**

Whereupon, Rep. Colmenares moved for the deferment of the deliberation and approval of the proposed OP budget.

**OBJECTION OF REP. UNGAB**


**VIVA VOCE VOTING ON THE MOTION OF REP. COLMENARES**

The Chair motu proprio called for a viva voce voting on the motion of Rep. Colmenares, and with the majority of the Members voting against the motion, the same was lost.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGETS OF THE OP, INCLUDING THE PMS**

On motion of Majority Leader Neptali M. Gonzales II, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budgets of the OP, including the PMS.

**RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE DBM**

On a subsequent motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the proposed DBM budget.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET OF THE DBM**

On another motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of sponsorship and debate on the proposed budget of the DBM.

**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968**

Likewise, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body suspended the consideration of House Bill No. 4968 or the 2015 GAB.

**APPROVAL ON THIRD READING OF CERTAIN HOUSE BILLS**

On successive motions of Rep. Banal, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the approval on Third Reading of the following House measures, printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on September 10, 2014, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the Provisional Rules of the House:


**QUERY OF REP. ATIENZA**

At this point, Rep. Atienza requested for an explanation of the Bill so that the Members will have an idea of what was being voted on.
Rep. Gonzales said that copies of the Bill were distributed on September 10, 2014, and the matter required no further explanation because the Bill was already subject to Third Reading.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. ATIENZA

Rep. Atienza then stated for the record that the Members were not duly informed of official matters that were being taken up on the floor. He manifested that he was abstaining from voting because he did not know what the Body was voting on.

APPROVAL ON THIRD READING OF CERTAIN HOUSE BILLS
(Continuation)

2. House Bill No. 4926, entitled: “AN ACT PROVIDING FOR AN ON-LINE NETWORK ESTABLISHMENT POLICY FOR THE PHILIPPINES”; and

3. House Bill No. 4963, entitled: “AN ACT CREATING A LOCAL HOUSING BOARD IN EVERY CITY AND IN EVERY FIRST TO THIRD CLASS MUNICIPALITY, PROVIDING FOR ITS POWERS AND DEFINING ITS DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS.”

The Chair then 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.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

The result of the voting was as follows:

Affirmative:

Abad
Abaya
Abayon
Abellanosa
Abueg
Acedillo
Acharon
Acop
Acosta-Alba
Adiong
Agarao
Aggabao
Agyao
Albano
Alcala
Alejano
Aliping
Almario
Almonte
Alvarez (F.)
Alvarez (M.)
Amante
Amatong (L)
Angara-Castillo
Angping
Antonino-Nadres
Antonio
Apostol
Aragones
Arbison
Arenas
Arnaiz
Arroyo
Asilo
Aumentado
Bag-ao
Bagatsing
Baguilat
Banal
Barcelona-Reyes
Bataoil
Bautista
Bello (S.)
Bello (W.)
Belmonte (F.)
Belmonte (J.)
Benitez
Biazon
Bichara
Binay
Bondoc
Bonoan
Bravo (A.)
Bravo (M.)
Briones
Bulut-Begtang
Cabilao
Cagas
Calalay
Calixto-Rubiano
Caminero
Castelo
Castro
Catamco
Cayetano
Celeste
Cerafica
Cerilles
Chipeco
Co
With 249 affirmative votes, no negative votes and one abstention, the Body approved on Third Reading the aforementioned House Bills.

APPROVAL ON THIRD READING OF CERTAIN HOUSE BILLS
(Continuation)


The Chair then 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.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

The result of the voting was as follows:

**Affirmative:**

Abad
Abaya
Abayon
Abellanaso
Abueg
Acedillo
Acharon
Acop
Acosta-Alba
Adiong
Agarao
Aggabao

**Negative:**

None

**Abstention:**

Atienza

Yap (S.)
Yu
Zamora (M.)
Zarate
Zubiri
Yap (A.)
Yap (S.)
Yu
Zamora (M.)
Zarate
Zubiri

Negative:
None

Abstention:
None

With 250 affirmative votes, no negative votes and no abstentions, the Body approved on Third Reading House Bill No. 4970.

REFERRAL OF HOUSE RESOLUTIONS ON INQUIRIES IN AID OF LEGISLATION

On successive motions of Rep. Banal, there being no objection, the Body approved to refer the following House Resolutions on inquiries in aid of legislation to the appropriate Committees hereunder indicated:

1. House Resolution No. 784, on the wanton and unrestrained noncompliance with government safety regulations by many public land transportation utilities – to the Committee on Transportation;

2. House Resolution No. 785, on the implementation of Republic Act No. 6727 or the Wage Rationalization Act -- to the Committee on Labor and Employment;

3. House Resolution No. 786, on the escalating price of LPG in the country and also the reason behind the inordinately higher price of LPG in the Visayas and Mindanao when compared to Luzon – to the Committee on Trade and Industry;

4. House Resolution No. 788, on the measures undertaken to protect women and children affected by disasters, calamities, and other crisis situations – to the Committee on Women and Gender Equality;

5. House Resolution No. 798, on the recent mishap in Bontoc Mountain Province involving a utility bus which killed at least 14 people and injuring several others – to the Committee on Transportation;

6. House Resolution No. 807, on the state of road safety in the country – to the Committee on Transportation;

7. House Resolution No. 817, on the power shortage and high power rates imposed among Panay Electric Company (PECO) customers – to the Committee on Energy;

8. House Resolution No. 818, on the measures to protect local industries against unfair competition – to the Committee on Trade and Industry;

9. House Resolution No. 819, on privatization, corporatization, or modernization of public hospitals – to the Committee on Health;

10. House Resolution No. 824, on the destructive mining in Sta. Cruz, Zambales – to the Committee on Natural Resources;

11. House Resolution No. 830, on the status of the Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF) – to the Committee on Agriculture and Food;

12. House Resolution No. 847, on the Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2014-1 dated February 3, 2014 providing for guidelines on the implementation of expanded students’ grants-in-aid program for poverty alleviation – to the Committee on Higher and Technical Education;

13. House Resolution No. 851, on the incidents that led to the G.V. Florida bus accident, which transpired in Bontoc, Mt. Province on February 7, 2014 – to the Committee on Transportation;

14. House Resolution No. 852, on the reported anomalous contract between the National Housing Authority (NHA) and the Ayala Corporation on the sale and conversion of public lands within the original national government center (North Triangle) for commercial development – to the Committee on Housing and Urban Development;

15. House Resolution No. 854, on the state of Philippine agricultural education in relation to the National Agriculture and Fisheries Education System established under “The Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997” – to the Committee on Agriculture and Food;
16. House Resolution No. 865, on the phase out of fifteen-year old public utility buses— to the Committee on Transportation;

17. House Resolution No. 869, on the plight of depositors of closed banks— to the Committee on Banks and Financial Intermediaries;

18. House Resolution No. 870, on the impending privatization of public hospitals through the modernization of the Philippine Orthopedic Center project— to the Committee on Health;

19. House Resolution No. 872, on the reported acts of violence through hazing and/or corporal punishment committed by student officials of the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) unit of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines-Sta. Mesa on January 16, 2014— to the Committee on Higher and Technical Education;

20. House Resolution No. 874, on the influx of illegal migrant workers to the Philippine labor market and on the need for stricter enforcement of existing Philippine Labor and Immigration Laws— to the Committee on Labor and Employment; and

21. House Resolution No. 1533, on the need to establish additional generating capacity to ensure the energy requirements of the country, in accordance with Section 71 of RA No. 9136, otherwise known as the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001— to the Committee on Energy.

AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

In accordance with the Rules of the House, on motion of Rep. Banal, there being no objection, the Body authorized all Committees to conduct meetings or public hearings, if deemed necessary, during the recess from September 27, 2014 to October 19, 2014.

CONTINUATION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of House Bill No. 4968, as contained in Committee Report No. 421 and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations, entitled: “AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

Rep. Gonzales said that the Bill was in the period of turno en contra and on his motion, the Chair recognized Rep. Colmenares for his turno en contra speech.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ

Upon recognition by the Chair, Rep. Dela Cruz adverted to a previous request for him to allow other Members to interpellate first and manifested that Members of Congress should exercise a level of civility and integrity particularly if a Member seeks to speak about the integrity of the House of Representatives.

POINT OF ORDER OF REP. GONZALES

Rep. Gonzales however raised a point of order and stated that the Chair had already recognized Rep. Colmenares to deliver his turno en contra speech.

The Chair concurred with the point of order.

REMARKS OF REP. COLMENARES

Rep. Colmenares stated that he would yield to Rep. Dela Cruz as long as the manifestation was brief.

REMARKS OF REP. GONZALES

Rep. Gonzales affirmed the same, saying he was not aware of any rule that a manifestation was of higher precedence over a turno en contra speech.

MANIFESTATION OF REP. DELA CRUZ (Continuation)

When recognized by the Chair, Rep. Dela Cruz explained that in the plenary proceedings of the 2015 GAB deliberations, both the Members of the Minority and the Majority had exercised a certain degree of civility to attain a better understanding of the national budget. He pointed out that as a deliberative Body, the Members of the Minority had been able to conduct their interpellations properly; however, their interpellations continued to be stifled by the obstinate refusal of the DBM, despite its acquiescence on record to their requests, in providing them with the necessary documents regarding the list of the DAP projects and the names of legislators who had availed of these projects, to also include the list of fake, missing, unaccounted,
and double-numbered Statement of Allotment and Release Orders (SAROs).

Rep. Dela Cruz cited that there were about 3,458 SAROs amounting to P1.9 trillion that the DBM and the COA had to account for.

**TURN EN CONTRA SPEECH OF REP. COLMENARES**

Rep. Colmenares presented his arguments against the proposed 2015 national budget and why it should not be approved by Congress. He argued that the proposed budget cannot put a dent on the country’s foremost problem of widespread unemployment and poverty considering the political and economic conditions in the country that perpetuate a largely bureaucratic, politics-based system of government, and exploitative political and economic system controlled by foreigners, capitalists, and landowners and subject to the political and economic impositions of the US, IMF, World Bank and the WTO.

He then expounded on the deleterious budgetary priorities of the PNoy government and took exception to the P958 billion lump sum discretionary funds as presidential pork barrel in the 2015 GAB. He opined that House Bill No. 4968 was a circumvention of the Supreme Court’s ruling on the unconstitutionality of the DAP funds by providing for a redefinition of “savings” to allow a presidential budgetary prerogative, and declaring certain budgetary appropriations as savings. He thereafter expressed his objection to a presidential pork barrel system.

In ending his turno en contra speech, Rep. Colmenares stated that the 2015 Budget Bill was not responsive to the needs of poor Filipinos for employment and reduction of poverty inasmuch as the measure is premised on a wrongful political and economic system, wrongful budgetary priorities, and wrongful presidential pork barrel system. He said that Congress should not approve the 2015 budget.

**PERIOD OF AMENDMENTS**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the period of amendments.

**CREATION OF A SMALL COMMITTEE TO ACCEPT INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body created a small committee composed of the following Members to receive and resolve individual amendments to House Bill No. 4968 or the 2015 GAB: Reps. Ungab, Carlo E. Cua, and JC Rahman Dakila A. Nava, M.D. for the Majority; Rep. Gonzales for the Committee on Rules; and Rep. Ronaldo B. Zamora for the Minority.

Rep. Gonzales added that the deadline for submission of amendments is Wednesday, October 1, 2014.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF AMENDMENTS**

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body terminated the period of amendments.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, the Chair suspended the session at 11:42 p.m.

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

The session resumed at 11:42 p.m. with Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. presiding.

**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968**

On motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of House Bill No. 4968 to allow the Speaker to address the Body.

**REMARKS OF SPEAKER BELMONTE**

Speaker Belmonte then delivered the following remarks:

_The budget deliberations, both in committee and in plenary this year, have been exceedingly spirited and incisive. I think we have seen that._

_I welcome the resurgence of the legislative will for budget oversight that we have seen in action these past_
months. It is a sign that we are strengthening our institutional muscle to make this government work better, and to ensure that public resources are allocated more effectively for the welfare of our people.

Here, I would like to reiterate what I said earlier before we deliberated on this budget, that we, in this Congress, are resolved to have a real hardworking and strong oversight committee to look over how the money is spent.

Kulang ng palakpak iyan. Kulang ng palakpak. I want you to show, and we are going to do that.

All of us in this Chamber may often disagree on issues that affect our nation, but our collective strength here in this 16th Congress, springs from our willingness to set aside our differences, and find the avenues of cooperation, compromise and consensus, to serve our people the best we can at any particular point in time.

It is my singular pride, as Speaker, to be a part of this community of lawmakers committed to the primacy of the people’s welfare and the nation’s survival. There is so much more we are expected to do in the remaining years of this Congress, and I ask that we continue working together.

We have a very full Legislative plate in the coming months.

The proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law that will demand our best efforts and attention, so that we can arrive at an informed consensus on the measure, guided by the aspirations for enduring peace and ensuring sustainable development within a constitutional framework.

The amendments to the economic provisions of the Constitution, together with game changing economic measures such as the Philippine Competition Act that seeks to level the playing field for investments, and the rationalization of our income tax system. May I just state in this connection that we have, since July, passed 589 bills on Third Reading, including the bill increasing the tax exemption ceiling of the 13th month pay and other bonuses, to ₱70,000 from ₱30,000. Also we need to address these Third Reading bills with dispatch before the end of the Second Regular Session to allow time for Senate action.

Other important reform measures targeting the electoral system, the power industry, and the regulatory regimes on the development and utilization of our natural resources, particularly, the Mining Act that has been pending for so long, all these, we need to review and prioritize.

I am confident that with the grit, fortitude and unity that we have exhibited in the past few days, many of us, even soldiering on until the morning, we shall accomplish what we have set out to do.

In this spirit, I convey my deepest gratitude to all of you for bringing this House to this hour of pride.

We have, as one Body, suffered greatly, let us admit that, in the bar of public opinion in the past months, but we have shown today that we are public servants first and last. And that is what eventually counts in the minds of everybody.

To each and every Member of this House, my deepest appreciation.

To the Chairperson of the Committee on Appropriations, Congressman Sid Ungab, the vice chairmen and the members, I salute you for a job very well done.

To our Majority Leader, in fact I got nervous when he lost his voice yesterday, as always, you have once again steered plenary deliberations most admirably, together with your very hardworking, some of them, even good looking deputies in the Committee on Rules.

To the Deputy Speakers, your patience and fortitude in steering the proceedings in plenary were most commendable, and in many instances, enlivening, one of them said, funny. Maraming salamat sa inyo.

To the Minority Leader, who despite his operation on his kidney, continued to be very concerned with what we are doing. To his deputies here, particularly, Congressman Colmenares for his speech, Congresswoman Carol Lopez, I’d like to mention her. I’d like to mention everybody, pero ‘yon na lang, and to the independent Members of our Congress. All of you have been incisive and vigilant, enriching the deliberations with insights that can never be discovered by the timid and the tame.

Thank you for standing with us in building and strengthening consensus among our Members on various issues.

To our Secretariat, the hardworking members of the staff of all of the Congressmen. All of them have served with dedication and efficiency, and they really deserve our appreciation and thanks.
Sa atin din namang lahat, congratulations.

Maraming salamat.

May God bless all of us and our country.

REMARKS OF REP. GONZALES

At this point, in behalf of all the Members of the House, Rep. Gonzales greeted Speaker Belmonte an advanced happy birthday.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of House Bill No. 4968, as embodied in Committee Report No. 421 and reported out by the Committee on Appropriations, entitled:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

APPROVAL ON SECOND READING OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4968

Rep. Gonzales stated that the parliamentary status of the Bill was that the Body had closed the period of amendments.

Thereafter, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Body approved on Second Reading House Bill No. 4968 through *viva voce* voting.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Likewise, on motion of Rep. Gonzales, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until four o’clock in the afternoon of Monday, October 20, 2014.

It was 11:53 p.m., Friday, September 26, 2014.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

(Sgd.) ATTY. MARILYN B. BARUA-YAP
Secretary General

Approved on October 22, 2014
MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE

Date: September 15 to 18; 22 to 26, 2014

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SUAREZ
SY-ALVARADO
TAMBUNTING
TAN (A.)
TAN (M.)
TEJADA
TEODORO
TEVES
Tiangco
* TIENG
TING
TINIO
* TOLENTINO
* TRENÁS
TUGNA
* TUPAS
TURABIN-HATAMAN
* TY
* UMALI (C.)
* UMALI (R.)
UNABIA
UNGAB
UY (J.)
UY (R.)
VARGAS
VARGAS-ALFONSO
* VELARDE
VELASCO
VILLANUEVA
VILLAR
* VILLARICA
* VIOLAGO
* YAP (A.)
* YAP (S.)
YU
* ZAMORA (M.)
* ZAMORA (R.)
ZARATE
ZUBIRI

* Appeared before/after Roll Call
** On official mission
*** Attended meetings of CA/HRET/Bicameral Conference Committee/Committee meetings authorized by Committee on Rules
**** Officially notified the House, through the Secretariat, of their absence
***** Absent without notice