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**JOURNAL NO. 40
Tuesday, December 11, 2018**

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CALL TO ORDER

At 3:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Evelina G. Escudero called the session to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM AND PRAYER

Pursuant to Section 73, Rule XI of the amended Provisional Rules of the House, the Members sang the National Anthem and thereafter, Rep. Rosanna "Ria" Vergara delivered the invocation.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Thereafter, the session was suspended at 3:03 p.m. upon motion of Rep. Victoria Isabel G. Noel.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 3:04 p.m.

**REMARKS OF
MAJORITY LEADER ANDAYA**

Recognized by the Chair, Majority Leader Rolando G. Andaya Jr. informed the Body that in line with the investigation being conducted by the Committee on Rules on the effects of a cash-based budgeting system and on the implementation of the 2018 budget, a large-scale scam has been discovered involving a certain proprietor named C.T. Leoncio who was found to have garnered billions of pesos in contracts with the Department of Public Works and Highways, Bureau of Internal Revenue, Department of Transportation, Philippine Ports Authority, Philippine Fisheries Development Authority, and Department of Labor and Employment. He further said that contracts starting in 2017 were bagged in the provinces of Sorsogon, Catanduanes, Samar, Camarines Sur, Pangasinan, Tarlac, Batangas, and Bulacan, as well as in the National Capital Region and Davao City.

He however claimed that a copy of a certification from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) revealed that C.T. Leoncio Trading was not a corporation and that C.T. Leoncio Construction was stated as a sole proprietorship owned by a certain Consolacion T. Leoncio.

**MOTION OF MAJORITY
LEADER ANDAYA**

In furtherance of the inquiry being conducted by the Committee on Rules, he thereafter moved to

subpoena Consolacion T. Leoncio as well as the pertinent DPWH regional directors, district engineering offices, and officials of the Commission on Audit in-charge of auditing the aforesaid projects.

There being no objection, the motion was approved.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The session was suspended at 3:07 p.m. upon motion of Majority Leader Andaya.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:53 p.m., the session resumed.

ROLL CALL

Thereupon, on motion of Rep. Rodante D. Marcoleta, there being no objection, the Chair directed the Secretary General to call the Roll and the following Members were present:

Abaya
Abayon
Abellanosa
Abu
Abueg
Acharon
Acop
Adiong
Advincula
Agarao
Aggabao
Albano
Alejano
Almario
Almonte
Alonte
Alvarez (F.)
Alvarez (M.)
Amante
Amatong
Andaya
Antonino
Antonio
Aquino-Magsaysay
Aragones
Arbison
Arcillas
Arenas
Atienza
Aumentado

Bag-ao	Deloso-Montalla
Bagatsing	Dimaporo (A.)
Banal	Dimaporo (M.K.)
Barbers	Duavit
Bataoil	Durano
Batocabe	Dy
Bautista-Bandigan	Elago
Belaro	Erice
Belmonte (J.C.)	Eriguel
Belmonte (R.)	Ermita-Buhain
Benitez	Escudero
Bernos	Espina
Bertiz	Estrella
Biazon	Evardone
Billones	Fernando
Biron	Ferrer (J.)
Bolilia	Ferrer (L.)
Bondoc	Ferriol-Pascual
Bordado	Floirendo
Bravo (A.)	Fortun
Bravo (M.V.)	Fortuno
Brosas	Garbin
Bulut-Begtang	Garces
Cagas	Garcia (G.)
Calderon	Garcia (J.E.)
Calixto-Rubiano	Garcia-Albano
Caminero	Garin (S.)
Campos	Gasataya
Canama	Gatchalian
Cari	Geron
Casilao	Go (A.C.)
Castelo	Go (M.)
Castro (F.L.)	Gonzaga
Castro (F.H.)	Gonzales (A.P.)
Catamco	Gonzales (A.D.)
Cayetano	Gonzalez
Celeste	Gullas
Cerafica	Hernandez (F.)
Cerilles	Hernandez (P.)
Chavez	Herrera-Dy
Chipeco	Hofer
Co	Jalosjos
Cojuangco	Javier
Collantes	Kho
Cortes	Labadlabad
Cortuna	Lacson
Cosalan	Lagman
Crisologo	Lanete
Cua	Laogan
Cuaresma	Leachon
Cueva	Lee
Dalipe	Limkaichong
Datol	Lobregat
De Jesus	Lopez (B.)
de Venecia	Lopez (C.)
Defensor	Lopez (M.L.)
Del Mar	Macapagal-Arroyo
Del Rosario	Maceda

Madrona	Sangcopan
Malapitan	Sarmiento (C.)
Manalo	Sarmiento (E.M.)
Marcoleta	Savellano
Marcos	Sema
Mariño	Siao
Marquez	Silverio
Martinez	Singson
Matugas	Suansing (E.)
Mellana	Suansing (H.)
Mending	Suarez
Mendoza	Sy-Alvarado
Mirasol	Tambunting
Montoro	Tan (A.)
Nava	Tan (S.)
Nieto	Tejada
Noel	Teves
Nograles	Ting
Nuñez-Malanyaon	Tinio
Ong (E.)	Tolentino
Ong (H.)	Treñas
Ortega (P.)	Tugna
Ortega (V.N.)	Tupas
Pacquiao	Unabia
Paduano	Ungab
Palma	Unico
Pancho	Uy (J.)
Panganiban	Uy (R.)
Panotes	Uybarreta
Papandayan	Vargas
Pichay	Vargas-Alfonso
Pico	Velasco
Pimentel	Velasco-Catera
Pineda	Veloso
Plaza	Vergara
Primicias-Agabas	Villanueva
Quimbo	Villarica
Ramirez-Sato	Violago
Ramos	Yap (A.)
Relampagos	Yap (M.)
Revilla	Yap (V.)
Roa-Puno	Yu
Robes	Zamora (M.C.)
Rocamora	Zamora (R.)
Rodriguez (I.)	Zarate
Rodriguez (M.)	Zubiri
Roman	
Romero	
Romualdez	
Romualdo	
Sacdalan	
Sagarbarria	
Sahali	
Salimbangon	
Salo	
Salon	
Sambar	
Sandoval	

With 250 Members responding to the Call, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum. (See Appendix)

QUERY OF REPRESENTATIVE ATIENZA

Informed by the Chair of the Roll Call count, Rep. Jose L. Atienza Jr. stated for the record that the Secretariat's count of 250 Members was more than his personal count of 220 Members.

REMARKS OF REPRESENTATIVE NOEL

With leave of the Chair, Representative Noel opined that the Secretariat already counted the Members and had done it on a point-by-point manner; and moved that the quorum be declared.

REMARKS OF REPRESENTATIVE ATIENZA

Representative Atienza reiterated that the actual number of Members on the floor before 4:10 p.m. was only 220. When the Chair said that the remark was duly noted, he stressed that his count will be material in his questioning of the proceedings.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION OF BOTH HOUSES NO. 15 ON THIRD READING

On motion of Representative Noel, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the approval on Third Reading of Resolution of Both Houses (R.B.H.) No. 15, entitled: "RESOLUTION OF BOTH HOUSES PROPOSING THE REVISION OF THE 1987 CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES," printed copies of which were distributed to the Members on December 6, 2018, pursuant to Section 58, Rule X of the amended Provisional Rules of the House.

The Chair then directed the Secretary General to call the Roll for nominal voting. Thereafter, pursuant to the amended Provisional Rules of the House, a second Roll Call was made.

MANIFESTATIONS OF SEVERAL MEMBERS

During the voting, the following Members manifested their desire to explain their votes at the proper time: Representatives Atienza, Kaka J. Bagao, Jose Christopher Y. Belmonte, Gabriel H. Bordado Jr., Arlene D. Brosas, Ariel "Ka Ayik" B. Casilao, France L. Castro, Emmi A. De Jesus, Sarah Jane I. Elago, and Edcel C. Lagman.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Escudero relinquished the Chair to Majority Leader Andaya.

In addition, Reps. Ramon "Rav" V.A. Rocamora, Amihilda J. Sangcopan, Antonio L. Tinio, and Carlos Isagani T. Zarate manifested their desire to also explain their votes at the proper time.

At this juncture, Majority Leader Andaya relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Escudero.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

The result of the voting was as follows:

Affirmative:

Abayon
Abellanosa
Abu
Abueg
Acharon
Acop
Adiong
Advincula
Agarao
Aggabao
Albano
Almario
Almonte
Alonte
Alvarez (F.)
Alvarez (M.)
Amante
Andaya
Antonino
Antonio
Aquino-Magsaysay
Aragones
Arbison
Arcillas
Arenas
Aumentado
Bagatsing
Barbers
Barzaga
Bataoil
Batocabe
Bautista-Bandigan
Belaro
Belmonte (F.)
Belmonte (R.)
Benitez
Bernos
Bertiz
Billones
Biron
Bolilia
Bondoc
Bravo (A.)
Bravo (M.V.)
Bulut-Begtang
Cagas
Calderon

Calixto-Rubiano	Gonzales (A.D.)
Caminero	Gonzalez
Campos	Gullas
Canama	Hernandez (F.)
Cari	Hernandez (P.)
Castelo	Herrera-Dy
Castro (F.H.)	Hofer
Catamco	Jalosjos
Celeste	Javier
Cerafica	Kho
Cerilles	Labadlabad
Chavez	Lacson
Co	Lanete
Collantes	Laogan
Cortes	Leachon
Cortuna	Lee
Cosalan	Limkaichong
Crisologo	Lobregat
Cua	Lopez (B.)
Cuaresma	Lopez (C.)
Cueva	Lopez (M.L.)
Dalipe	Maceda
Datol	Madrona
de Venecia	Malapitan
Defensor	Manalo
Del Mar	Mangudadatu (Z.)
Deloso-Montalla	Marcoleta
Dimaporo (A.)	Marcos
Dimaporo (M.K.)	Mariño
Duavit	Marquez
Durano	Martinez
Dy	Matugas
Enverga	Mellana
Eriguel	Mendoza
Ermita-Buhain	Mirasol
Escudero	Montoro
Espina	Nava
Estrella	Nieto
Evardone	Noel
Fernando	Nograles
Ferrer (J.)	Olivarez
Ferrer (L.)	Ong (E.)
Ferriol-Pascual	Ong (H.)
Floirendo	Ortega (P.)
Fortuno	Ortega (V.N.)
Garbin	Pacquiao
Garces	Paduano
Garcia (G.)	Palma
Garcia (J.E.)	Pancho
Garcia-Albano	Panganiban
Garin (S.)	Panotes
Gasataya	Papandayan
Gatchalian	Pichay
Geron	Pico
Go (A.C.)	Pimentel
Go (M.)	Pineda
Gonzaga	Plaza
Gonzales (A.P.)	Primicias-Agabas

Ramos
Relampagos
Revilla
Roa-Puno
Robes
Rocamora
Rodriguez (I.)
Rodriguez (M.)
Roman
Romualdez
Romualdo
Sacdalan
Sagarbarria
Sahali
Salimbangon
Salo
Salon
Sambar
Sandoval
Sarmiento (C.)
Sarmiento (E.M.)
Savellano
Sema
Siao
Silverio
Singson
Suansing (E.)
Suansing (H.)
Suarez
Sy-Alvarado
Tambunting
Tan (A.)
Tan (S.)
Tejada
Teves
Ting
Tolentino
Treñas
Tugna
Tupas
Unabia
Ungab
Unico
Uy (J.)
Uy (R.)
Uybarreta
Vargas
Vargas-Alfonso
Velasco
Velasco-Catera
Velo
Vergara
Villanueva
Villarica
Violago
Yap (A.)
Yap (M.)
Yap (V.)

Yu
Zamora (M.C.)
Zamora (R.)

Negative:

Abaya
Alejano
Amatong
Atienza
Bag-ao
Banal
Belmonte (J.C.)
Bordado
Brosas
Casilao
Castro (F.L.)
Cayetano
Daza
De Jesus
Elago
Erice
Lagman
Mending
Ramirez-Sato
Sangcopan
Tinio
Zarate

Abstention:

Del Rosario
Fortun
Zubiri

With 224 affirmative votes, 22 negative votes, and three abstentions, the Body approved on Third Reading Resolution of Both Houses No. 15.

**REMARKS OF
REPRESENTATIVE MARCOLETA**

At this point, Representative Marcoleta moved to recognize in alphabetical order the Members who had signified their intention to explain their votes. There being no objection, the Body approved the same.

EXPLANATION OF VOTES

The following Members explained their votes:

1. Adverting to his previous query on the roll call count, Representative Atienza stressed the need to have a higher count of Members present during the Roll Call because 220 votes were needed to approve the measure seeking to amend the Constitution. He

thereafter demanded for the list of those who actually voted in the day's proceedings. He voted "No" as he believed that the Constitution should not be tampered with or revised in the manner that the Body has been doing but with people's participation. He pointed out that shifting to federalism is not the answer to the country's present problem because as an archipelago, it is naturally segmentalized and dividing it with the promise of regional power, authority, and identity would further segmentalize it and could spell its collapse.

Representative Atienza advocated for a Constitutional Convention that would hear the people's voice and said that he did not want the present Congress to be written down in history as the one that caused the collapse of the country. Quoting Dr. Jose Rizal, he emphasized effective representation as the cornerstone of the stability and strength of the nation and while past Congresses had been abusive of the public funds, he declared that the current Congress is worse because it has trampled upon and obscured the future of the Filipinos.

2. Representative Bag-ao stated that she voted against R.B.H. No. 15 because of the absence of the anti-dynasty provision, the requirement of a college degree for candidates for elective and appointive positions in the Executive and Legislative branches, the proposal for a two-party system, and the deletion of the provision on an independent national economy. She said that while the preamble highlights the sovereignty of the Filipino people, she did not find their interests represented in most of the provisions of the proposed Federal Constitution. As a Mindanaoan and a long-time advocate of federalism, she remarked that "federalism" was not even clearly explained in the measure.
3. Representative Belmonte (J.C.) stated his opposition to the instant measure by first setting a background on how it had undergone transformation from the Committee level until the termination of the plenary debates thereon after only three session days which for him was a disservice to his constituents as many questions were left unanswered. He said that at a time when political and economic issues have to be resolved first, Charter change, all in the name of supposed change despite the absence of such clamor, will not contribute to nation-building. After citing the removal of term limits and anti-dynasty provisions in the draft Federal Constitution, he asked who will stand to benefit from Charter change.
4. In explaining his negative vote, Representative Bordado said that despite his expressed support for federalism, and in view of the dismal socio-economic condition of the Bicol Region despite its abundant natural and manpower resources, he opposed the instant measure because of the lifting of term limits for all elected officials and the deletion of the provision against political dynasty. He said that he felt disturbed by the findings released by reputable polling firms showing that an overwhelming majority of the people are against or not interested in revising the 1987 Philippine Constitution.
5. Representative Brosas cast her "No" vote as representative of the Gabriela Party-List's position that amending the Constitution is not the kind of change which the Filipino people are clamoring for. She stressed that it will just advance the interests of the capitalists and assure the politicians of unlimited terms of office. She added that the provision under R.B.H. No. 15 revising the basis for declaring martial law is a signal of warfare not with terrorists and rebels, but of warfare by the government against its people as what has happened in recent years ever since martial law was declared in Mindanao. She pointed out that Charter change is pro-imperialist, pro-capitalist, and is a self-serving effort of the Duterte Administration and its cronies.
6. Representative Casilao voiced his strong opposition to R.B.H. No. 15 as he considered the measure as the worst of all attempts to change or amend the Constitution. He further explained that the Resolution represents the interests of the few to strengthen their economic and political powers and that in reality, it will eliminate the victories of the Filipino people from their struggle against fascism and dictatorship that prevailed in the past and which victories were articulated in the 1987 Constitution.

He expressed his disapproval to the restoration of the two-party system that according to him, evolved into dictatorship in 1972; the removal of the provision prohibiting political dynasty; and the introduction of a Bill of Duties to create a nation of passive, meek, and silent citizens who would bow to all the desires of the government. As he deplored the elimination of the concept of social justice under the draft Federal Constitution, he affirmed the measure's lack of concern for the poor. He conceded that his group may have lost in the plenary voting but he assured that R.B.H. No. 15 will get thrown away in the trash bin of history.

7. Representative Castro (F.L.) voted "No" because (1) constitutional change issue is so critical that people's participation is very much needed; (2) R.B.H. No. 15 was railroaded and discussed without quorum, is self-serving and the process of amending the Constitution was improper; (3) political monopoly will reign since the provision on anti-political dynasty was removed and the two-party system will be established; (4) the measure eliminates the term limits of elected officials; (5) an Article on the Bill of Duties and lawless violence as a ground for martial law declaration were introduced in the draft Charter while the provision on the State's responsibility to guarantee respect for human rights was deleted; and (6) the measure provided for a 100% foreign ownership of educational institutions, mass media, and advertising as well as the liberalization of public utilities and privatization schemes in health care and housing, which Representative Castro said was a direct assault on Philippine sovereignty and will only worsen existing social inequalities.
8. Despite the lack of substantial debates on R.B.H. No. 15, Representative De Jesus lamented that it was still hastily passed on Second Reading, and that her Party-List was not given the opportunity to inquire thereon. She maintained that there is no need to amend the present Constitution, as what is more important is the lowering of prices of basic commodities and increasing the salaries of the workers. She opined that the proposed Charter change would enable foreigners to control public utilities and other sectors of the economy and subsequently allow them to exploit the Filipino workers, particularly the women sector.

REMINDER FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reminded Representative De Jesus to finish with her explanation of vote.

EXPLANATION OF VOTES

(Continuation)

Representative De Jesus thereafter cast her negative vote.

9. Representative Elago, in voting against R.B.H. No. 15, maintained that it only betrays the commitment to uphold national sovereignty and patrimony to the detriment of the Filipino people; provides for the liberalization of mass media and advertising; justifies the creation of a police state and establishment of a military rule; removes specifics on the protection of working women; promises equitable treatment of workers but removes their right to participate in policy and decision-making processes; and contains regressive provisions on agrarian reform, among others.

REMINDER FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reminded Representative Elago to finish with her explanation of vote.

EXPLANATION OF VOTES

(Continuation)

Finally, Representative Elago concluded that her negative vote is a resounding objection to treachery and betrayal of the country's future.

10. Representative Lagman voted against R.B.H. No. 15, and emphasized that amending the Constitution is not economically viable. He added that majority of the people are clueless about federalism, and that overhauling the present form of government could only be a perilous misadventure. Since the voting process for the Representatives and Senators has not been resolved, he concluded that the latter are lukewarm to constitutional amendments.
11. Representative Rocamora said that his affirmative vote is based on the belief that federalism would empower local government units and give them more resources

through the reversal of the internal revenue allotment formula, and institutionalize people's participation in budget sharing. As federalism is actually devolution, he also urged the House to inquire into the causes of the local governments' failure to prosper despite their devolved powers and functions and to analyze what specific problems to address; otherwise, the country will court disaster in the federalism experiment.

12. Voting against R.B.H. No. 15, Representative Sangcapan explained that the proposed constitutional changes do not reflect the campaign for federalism. She cautioned that a two-party system and extension of terms of elected officials may curtail the freedom of expression, and that liberalization of investment policies such as authorizing foreign nationals to acquire and own properties in the country, would be tantamount to giving up external sovereignties. This, she said, would repeat the historical injustices committed against the Moro people whom she represents, who were dispossessed of the land they inherited from their forefathers which ignited the Bangsamoro struggle.
13. Voting against R.B.H. No. 15, Representative Tinio objected to the provisions on unlimited terms for political dynasties, unlimited one-party rule, martial law powers for the President, and foreign ownership of public domain and utilities.
14. Representative Zarate cast his negative vote on R.B.H. No. 15 as it would be disadvantageous to the Filipino people and the patrimony of the nation; remove term limits of politicians and allow the existence of political dynasties; cancel the 2019 elections; and enable other countries to exploit the nation. Noting that the measure did not even state the reason for the shift to federalism and simply entrusted to Congress the process of restructuring the country into federal states, he cautioned the people about the uncertainty of the future in the hands of the incoming Congresses. Reiterating his colleagues' remarks to address the worsening poverty situation of the people instead of focusing on Charter change, Representative Zarate called on the Senators to block the measure despite its attractive provisions favoring them because it will not benefit the people nor contribute to the development of the nation.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

On motion of Representative Noel, 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, Communication, and Committee Reports, which were referred to the appropriate Committees hereunder indicated:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 8737, entitled:

“AN ACT CURTAILING THE ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES OF RACKETEERS AND POWERFUL SYNDICATES IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Tambunting

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY

House Bill No. 8738, entitled:

“AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST CHILDREN ON ACCOUNT OF ILLEGITIMACY OR BIRTH OUT OF WEDLOCK AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR”

By Representative Lopez (C.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF CHILDREN

House Bill No. 8739, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND COMPENSATION FOR EDUCATORS IN BASIC EDUCATION”

By Representative Nieto

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 8740, entitled:

“AN ACT RENAMING BOGO-CURVA-MEDULLIN-DAANBANTAYAN-MAYA ROAD IN THE PROVINCE OF CEBU TO JUAN MACARAEG HIGHWAY”

By Representative Salimbangon

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 8742, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE AL-AMANAHA ISLAMIC BANK AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6848, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CHARTER OF THE AL-AMANAHA ISLAMIC INVESTMENT BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND AUTHORIZING ITS CONDUCT OF ISLAMIC BANKING AND INVESTMENT”

By Representative Sangcopan

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

MESSAGES FROM THE SENATE

Message dated December 5, 2018, informing the House of Representatives that on December 4, 2018 the Senate designated Senators Joseph Victor G. Ejercito, Joel Villanueva, Emmanuel “Manny” D. Pacquiao, Franklin M. Drilon and Risa Hontiveros as conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1850 and House Bill No. 8636, both entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A NATIONAL INTEGRATED CANCER CONTROL PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Message dated December 6, 2018, informing the House of Representatives that on even date the Senate designated Senators Panfilo M. Lacson, Gregorio B. Honasan II, Joel Villanueva, Win Gatchalian and Risa Hontiveros as conferees should the House of Representatives ask for a conference upon approval of its counterpart version of Senate Bill No. 1898, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 66 AND 67 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6975, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE 'DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1990', APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Message dated December 6, 2018, informing the House of Representatives that on even date the Senate designated Senators Joseph Victor G. Ejercito, Joel Villanueva and Risa Hontiveros as conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing votes on House Bill No. 6618, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A ONE HUNDRED (100)-BED CAPACITY HOSPITAL IN BARANGAY HABAY 2 IN THE CITY OF BACOR, PROVINCE OF CAVITE TO BE KNOWN AS THE BACOR DISTRICT HOSPITAL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMUNICATION

Report of Honorable Dante Roberto P. Maling, Acting Secretary General, House of Representatives, on enrolled bills, submitted to the Office of the President, for His Excellency’s consideration and signature, pursuant to the provision of Rule VI, Section 18, Par. (h) of the Rules of the House of Representatives:

1. House Bill No. 416, entitled:

“AN ACT ALLOWING HOME ECONOMICS GRADUATES TO TEACH HOME ECONOMICS SUBJECTS AND HOME ECONOMICS-RELATED TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS IN ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, RESPECTIVELY, CONSISTENT WITH SECTION 8 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10533 OR THE ENHANCED BASIC EDUCATION ACT OF 2013”;

2. House Bill No. 5152, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO REPORT PARTICIPATION AND PROGRAM SUPPORT EXPENDITURES IN ALL COLLEGE ATHLETIC PROGRAMS”;

3. House Bill No. 5203, entitled:

“AN ACT MOVING THE DATE OF 'CATARMAN DAY' TO AUGUST 30 OF EVERY YEAR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO.

9203, ENTITLED 'AN ACT DECLARING THE FIFTEENTH (15TH) DAY OF AUGUST OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CATARMAN, PROVINCE OF CAMIGUIN, TO BE KNOWN AS "CATARMAN DAY" ' '";

4. House Bill No. 5638, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING NOVEMBER 28 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SANTA MARGARITA, PROVINCE OF SAMAR, IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY, TO BE KNOWN AS THE 'SANTA MARGARITA FOUNDATION DAY' ”;

5. House Bill No. 5639, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING OCTOBER 16 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE CITY OF CALBAYOG, PROVINCE OF SAMAR, IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS CHARTER DAY ANNIVERSARY, TO BE KNOWN AS THE 'CALBAYOG CITY CHARTER DAY' ”;

6. House Bill No. 5780, entitled:

“AN ACT RENAMING THE DON HONORIO VENTURA TECHNOLOGICAL STATE UNIVERSITY (DHVTSU) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BACOLOR, PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA AS THE DON HONORIO VENTURA STATE UNIVERSITY (DHVSU), AND EXPANDING ITS CURRICULAR OFFERINGS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9832, ENTITLED 'AN ACT CONVERTING THE DON HONORIO VENTURA COLLEGE OF ARTS AND TRADES IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BACOLOR, PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA INTO A STATE UNIVERSITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE DON HONORIO VENTURA TECHNOLOGICAL STATE UNIVERSITY (DHVTSU) AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR' ”;

7. House Bill No. 6065, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9718, ENTITLED: 'AN ACT CONVERTING THE NAVAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF NAVAL, PROVINCE OF BILIRAN INTO A STATE UNIVERSITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE NAVAL STATE UNIVERSITY, INTEGRATING THEREWITH THE BILIRAN NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BILIRAN AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR' ”;

8. House Bill No. 6129, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE LANA DEL NORTE SPORTS TRAINING CENTER TO BE LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TUBOD, PROVINCE OF LANA DEL NORTE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

9. House Bill No. 6294, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF THE BILIRAN PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL IN ITS PROPOSED RELOCATION SITE IN BARANGAY LARRAZABAL, MUNICIPALITY OF NAVAL, PROVINCE OF BILIRAN, FROM SEVENTY-FIVE (75) TO TWO HUNDRED (200) BEDS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

10. House Bill No. 7713, entitled:

“AN ACT CHANGING THE NAME OF INOYONAN HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY INOYONAN, MUNICIPALITY OF BULA, PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR TO FELIPE P. PANTON HIGH SCHOOL”;

11. House Bill No. 7714, entitled:

“AN ACT CHANGING THE NAME OF TAWANTAWAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN BARANGAY TAWANTAWAN, BAGUIO DISTRICT, DAVAO CITY TO ROSALIA 'AGLAY' AYAG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL”;

12. House Bill No. 7733, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE DR. EMILIO B. ESPINOSA, SR. MEMORIAL STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEBESMSCAT) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF MANDAON, PROVINCE OF MASBATE, INTO A STATE UNIVERSITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE DR. EMILIO B. ESPINOSA, SR. – MASBATE STATE UNIVERSITY (DEBESMSU), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

13. House Bill No. 7767, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE SICSICAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL – ANNEX IN BARANGAY STA. MONICA, PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, PROVINCE OF PALAWAN FROM THE SICSICAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS SANTA MONICA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

14. House Bill No. 7768, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE BOCBOC NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL – KIARA ANNEX IN BARANGAY KIARA, MUNICIPALITY OF DON CARLOS, PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON FROM THE BOCBOC NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS KIARA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

15. House Bill No. 7769, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY PINAYAG, MUNICIPALITY OF KAYAPA, PROVINCE OF NUEVA VIZCAYA TO BE KNOWN AS PINAYAG NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

16. House Bill No. 7775, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE BAYOG NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY KAHAYAGAN, MUNICIPALITY OF BAYOG, PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR INTO A NATIONAL TECHNICAL – VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS BAYOG NATIONAL TECHNICAL – VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

17. House Bill No. 7776, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE DABUBU HIGH SCHOOL – ANNEX IN BARANGAY SINAOANGAN SUR, MUNICIPALITY OF SAN AGUSTIN, PROVINCE OF ISABELA FROM THE DABUBU HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS SOUTHEASTERN REGION HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

18. House Bill No. 7777, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE CABANGAHAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL – CORDOVA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL EXTENSION IN BARANGAY DAY-AS, MUNICIPALITY OF CORDOVA, PROVINCE OF CEBU FROM THE CABANGAHAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS CORDOVA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs, the Committee on Trade and Industry, the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Ways and Means (Committee Report No. 1019), re H.B. No. 8758, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CAMARINES SUR SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE IN THE PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR, CREATING FOR THIS

PURPOSE THE CAMARINES SUR SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 4168

Sponsors: Representatives Garcia (G.), Biron, Zamora (M.C.), Suansing (E.) and Villa-fuerte

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Revision of Laws (Committee Report No. 1020), re H.B. No. 8762, entitled:

“AN ACT COMMEMORATING THE PLEBISCITE VICTORY ON THE CITYHOOD OF SAN JOSE DEL MONTE WITH THE TANGLAWAN FESTIVAL TO BE HELD ANNUALLY ON SEPTEMBER 10 ON THE OCCASION OF THE FOUNDATION DAY OF THE CITY OF SAN JOSE DEL MONTE, PROVINCE OF BULACAN, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9750”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 8376

Sponsors: Representatives Primicias-Agabas and Robes

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and the Committee on Trade and Industry (Committee Report No. 1021), re H.B. No. 8764, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 4 AND 8 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7042, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE 'FOREIGN INVESTMENTS ACT OF 1991' ”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 4067

Sponsors: Representatives Garcia (G.), Biron, Yap (A.), Gatchalian, Salo and Limkaichong

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Higher and Technical Education (Committee Report No. 1022), re H.R. No. 2358, entitled:

“RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING THE 2017 ACCOUNTANCY BOARD EXAMINATION TOPNOTCHERS AND PASSERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN CARLOS (USC) IN CEBU CITY FOR THEIR EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE IN THE 2017 BOARD EXAMINATION FOR CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS, AND COMMENDING THE USC FOR SETTING THE STANDARD FOR QUALITY ACCOUNTANCY EDUCATION”

recommending its adoption in substitution of House Resolution No. 1042

Sponsors: Representatives Javier and Garcia (G.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

SENATE TRANSMITTAL OF R.B.H. NO. 15

On motion of Representative Noel, there being no objection, the Body directed the Secretary General to immediately transmit to the Senate a copy of Resolution of Both Houses No. 15 which the Body just approved.

DEFERMENT OF APPROVAL OF JOURNAL

On further motion of Representative Noel, there being no objection, the Body deferred the approval of the Journal of the previous session.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Representative Noel acknowledged the presence in the Session Hall of the guests of Reps. Peter “Sr. Pedro” M. Unabia, “Kuya” Jose Antonio R. Sy-Alvarado, Conrado M. Estrella III, Ulysses G. Garces, and Cecilia Leonila V. Chavez.

CONCURRENCE WITH SENATE AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILLS

With the consent of the Committees hereunder indicated as well as the respective authors of the measures, on successive motions of Representative Noel, there being no objection, the Body concurred with the Senate amendments to the following House Bills:

With the consent of the
Committee on Revision of Laws:

1. House Bill No. 5565, entitled: "AN ACT DECLARING JANUARY 24 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN AND THE CITY OF PUERTO PRINCESA IN HONOR OF THE MARTYRDOM OF GOVERNOR HIGINIO ACOSTA MENDOZA, SR., TO BE KNOWN AS 'GOVERNOR HIGINIO ACOSTA MENDOZA, SR. DAY'"; and

With the consent of the
Committee on Legislative Franchises:

2. House Bill No. 7753, entitled: "AN ACT EXTENDING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO THE IGLESIA NI CRISTO (CHURCH OF CHRIST) UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4339, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7225."

DESIGNATION OF HOUSE CONFEREES

On motion of Representative Noel, there being no objection, the Body designated Reps. Franz E. Alvarez, Sherwin N. Tugna, Jose "Pingping" I. Tejada, Johnny Ty Pimentel, and Alfredo A. Garbin Jr. as House conferees to reconcile the disagreeing votes on the following franchise Bills:

1. House Bill No. 5717, extending for another twenty-five (25) years the franchise assigned to PBN Broadcasting Network, Inc.;
2. House Bill No. 6166, extending for another twenty-five (25) years the franchise granted to Filipinas Broadcasting Network, Inc.;
3. House Bill No. 6167, extending for another twenty-five (25) years the franchise granted to the University of Mindanao, doing business under the name and style of University of Mindanao Broadcasting Network and UM Broadcasting Network;
4. House Bill No. 6914, extending for another twenty-five (25) years the franchise granted to Peñafrancia Broadcasting Corporation;

5. House Bill No. 7385, renewing the franchise granted to Philippine Communications Satellite Corporation (PHILCOM-SAT) to construct, install, maintain and operate in the Philippines ground satellite terminal stations for telecommunication with satellite facilities and delivery to common carriers; and
6. House Bill No. 7752, extending for another twenty-five (25) years the franchise granted to Insular Broadcasting System, Inc.

**RATIFICATION OF CONFERENCE
COMMITTEE REPORT
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 8139
AND SENATE BILL NO. 1431**

On subsequent motion of Representative Noel, there being no objection, the Body considered and subsequently ratified the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 8139 and Senate Bill No. 1431, instituting a Philippine Labor Force Competencies Competitiveness Program and Free Access to Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

THE QUESTION HOUR

In accordance with Section 22, Article VI of the Constitution and pursuant to House Resolution No. 158 which the Body adopted on December 4, 2018, on motion of Representative Marcoleta, there being no objection, the Body proceeded to the Question Hour.

**QUESTIONS OF
MINORITY LEADER SUAREZ**

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the following questions submitted by Minority Leader Danilo E. Suarez to Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Benjamin E. Diokno, in accordance with the provisions of the amended Provisional Rules of the House:

1. Kindly discuss the legal history of the creation of the DBM.
2. What is the primary role of the DBM in the Budget Process?
3. Several agencies have very low absorptive capacities and many of them are complaining that this is due to delays in disbursements of DBM. May I ask the good Secretary to enlighten us on this matter?

4. Can you submit DBM report on the savings and use of savings for the Executive branch including GOCCs from 2017 to September 30, 2018 (Quarterly Report)?

5. For the past years, there have been audit report findings of mismanaged and zero implementation of the multibillion MVUC (Motor Vehicle Users' Charge) funds.

What happened to the Road Board Funds? With the impending abolition of Road Board, may I know what is the timeline and plan of the DBM to manage and dispose of these MVUC funds?

6. What are the terms and conditions of our China loans? Our concern is that we will be following the steps of Sri Lanka which defaulted into debt with China.

7. To supplement government revenue collections, around ₱1.189 trillion or 6.1 percent of the GDP will be borrowed in 2019. Of this amount, ₱906.2 billion or 76.2 percent will be sourced locally; while the remaining ₱282.7 billion will come from foreign borrowings.

Every year, the budget is not fully utilized, yet we keep on borrowing; thus, we keep on paying increasing interests. Elaborate your rationale on this borrowing mix.

The allocation for the debt burden increased from ₱370.8 billion in 2018 to ₱414.1 billion in 2019. In 2018, 4.1 percent of the budget was allocated for debt burden. For 2019, 11 percent of the budget was allocated for debt burden. As reported by the Bureau of Treasury, the Philippines reached a record high outstanding debt of ₱71.167 trillion as of end of October 2018, primarily driven by higher domestic borrowings. What is the DBM doing to effectively manage these debts? When will we be able to pay off our debts?

8. DWSD has the lowest absorptive capacity among all government agencies. This is primarily due to the delays, discontinuation, and poor implementation of projects and programs. This also means that the agency is being highly inefficient in the delivery of basic goods and services to the people.

What is the DBM doing to help DSWD in addressing this problem?

9. One of the agencies with low utilization rate is the DOTr. In 2017, DOTr has unused appropriations worth ₱14.19 billion.

What primarily drove DOTr's low utilization? What are the undertakings of the DBM to assist DOTr towards the improvement of its budget utilization?

10. Another agency with low utilization rate is the DPWH. In 2017, DPWH has unused appropriations worth ₱67.1 billion.

What accounts for the agency's hat accounts for the agcapacity?

What are the undertakings of the DBM to assist DPWH towards the improvement of its budget utilization?

11. Per COA findings, only ₱222.7 billion or 34.14 percent was disbursed of the ₱610.9 billion obligated by the DPWH for 2017 due to delayed and non-implementation of infrastructure projects. Inefficient and incomplete implementation of infrastructure projects amounting to ₱80.1 billion also contributed to the inefficiency of the department.

What were the main reasons for these cases?

How is the department addressing this problem to improve its efficiency?

12. COA also reported that a total of 334 infrastructure projects of DPWH were found to have defects equivalent to at least ₱40.9 million, which if not corrected, may result in wastage of government funds.

Does DBM call out underperforming agencies such as DPWH, in this case, for defective projects that cause wastage of funds?

13. What are the measures of the DBM in addressing issues on the increasing inflation rate?

14. What is the position of the DBM on the lifting of suspension on the excise tax for fuel?

15. As regards the cash-based budgeting, do you think this can help the government particularly in the “Build, Build, Build” build of President Duterte?
16. Under this kind of budgeting to be followed by the government, contracts for projects, programs intended to be implemented for the fiscal year should be fully delivered, inspected and accepted by the end of the fiscal year. Payment should also be done within the fiscal year and up to a three-month extended period after the fiscal year for goods and services accepted by December 31.

Based on experience, DBM sometimes or most of the time, the downloading of funds for a particular infrastructure project is always delayed. In some instances, the downloading of funds is at the end of the year.

Will the implementation of cash-based budgeting not hamper the delivery of basic health services or even infrastructure projects?

17. How will the agency implement, on time and on target, their proposed budget for the fiscal year 2019 considering the habitual delay of the DBM on the downloading of funds to the respective agencies?
- Will the multi-year projects be affected?
- How will the unpaid obligation of the national government be settled?
18. When will the DBM schedule the delayed downloading of funds intended for the local government support funds (LGSF) for the fiscal year 2018?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 5:39 p.m., on motion of Representative Marcoleta, the Chair suspended the session to allow DBM Secretary Diokno and his staff to access their designated seats.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:44 p.m., the session resumed with Deputy Speaker Raneo “Ranie” E. Abu presiding.

THE QUESTION HOUR

(Continuation)

On successive motions of Representative Marcoleta, there being no objection, the Body pro-

ceeded to the Question Hour and the Chair recognized DBM Secretary Diokno to answer the questions of several Members.

At this point, Deputy Speaker Abu relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Escudero.

REMARKS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO

Before answering the questions of Minority Leader Suarez, Secretary Diokno said that he came to the House to show his respect to the institution and because he saw it as an opportunity to clarify some concerns of the Members relative to the 2019 General Appropriations Bill (GAB).

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Minority Leader Suarez for his supplementary questions and Secretary Diokno for his answers.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE SUAREZ AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Madam Speaker, Your Honors.

Our Constitution was drafted within the context that there will no longer be a concentration of powers within one department or person; hence, the Executive, Judiciary, and Legislative Departments were given specific and mutually exclusive powers which act as a check on each other and prevent the over-reach of functions.

Even the Legislative was divided in two Houses with specific powers as stated in the Constitution. The Question Hour as enunciated in Section 22, Article VI of the 1987 Constitution allows the Legislative Department to invite any member of the Executive, the objective of which is to obtain information and pursue Congress’ oversight function.

Within this premise, Secretary Diokno, would you yield to my questions?

SEC. DIOKNO. Willingly, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Your Honor.

Mr. Secretary, this will be the third year of the Duterte Administration. It will end next year, 2019. On three separate appropriations hearings, this Representation asked for your help. Ang una ko pong sinasabi ay iyon pong localization ng pondo ng gobyerno na hindi nakakarating sa kabayanan, sa lalawigan, at sa barangay. Na-i-stock ho, kaya napakalaki ng ating underspending; nandoon po sa central at head offices.

Ang nangyayari po dito is human nature. Hina-highlight ko po sa inyo iyan na kapag ang isang ahensiya ay bilyun-bilyon ang pera, hindi naman nila nakikita ang pangagailangan sa ibaba. Kaya ho ako ay nakiusap sa inyo, “Puwede bang i-download natin sa ibaba ang salapi ng bayan nang ito ay mapakinabangan ng kabarangayan?” Ang sabi ho ninyo sa akin, “Ano’ng proseso?” Sabi ko, “I-amend po natin ang Government Procurement Act.” Natatandaan po ninyo iyon?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Sige, good.

Ngayon, ang sabi ninyo sa akin, Mr. Secretary, “Huwag mo nang i-amend, ayusin na lang natin ang IRR at matutugunan natin ang inyong problema.” That was 2016. Magtatapos na tayo ng 2018. Mr. Secretary, bakit hindi ho natin iyon binigyan ng pansin?

SEC. DIOKNO. Your Honor, first of all, the premise of the question is wrong. We do not have underspending now, we have licked underspending; in fact, we’re slightly overspending.

I don’t know if -- the chart will show you here -- but in 2014, Your Honor, underspending was about 13 percent, okay? That’s 2014, January to September. Because we want to compare the present performance from the first three quarters of this year. As you can see, underspending -- let me look at my chart here because you’ve been jumping on your questions. 2014, from January to September, underspending was about ₱275.8 billion as shown there.

In 2015, underspending from January to September, was 14.5 percent or about ₱276 billion, Your Honor.

In the first half of the year 2016, from January to September, the first three quarters..... So, with just one quarter, underspending was cut by about ₱56 billion or 2.6 percent.

Now, in 2018, underspending is gone. In fact, we’re slightly above the program. In fact, we have overspent by about ₱67 billion.

Of course, we cannot spend what you have not authorized us to spend. We’re bound by that constraint. We can only spend what Congress has authorized us to spend but we’ve frontloaded the projects and the ideal construction will be in the first six months of the year, so that is why there is slight overspending.

So, the premise is wrong, Madam Speaker, as can be shown there.

REP. SUAREZ. Well, Madam Speaker, Your Honor, the premise is not wrong, your explanation is correct but that is not the question. You are not answering my question.

SEC. DIOKNO. What is the question?

REP. SUAREZ. The question is that, we agreed on localization. We agreed. Pumayag po kayo.

SEC. DIOKNO. Could you define localization because I don’t understand what localization is?

REP. SUAREZ. Ang sinasabi po sa inyong localization, i-download natin ang mga project sa probinsya, sa bayan, at sa barangay. Ang kasalukuyang kaganapan, Mr. Secretary, may mga dumarating pong project per your GAA sa aming mga distrito at ang mga nakakakuha po ng mga project na ito, hindi po taga sa amin, taga-ibang lugar. Kaya ang sabi ko, para iyong pera ng pamahalaan ay dumaloy sa ka-barangayan, tingnan po ninyo ang isang barangay na mabibigyan mo ng farm-to-market road o repair ng flood control project sa halagang kalahating milyon. Napakalaking tulong niyan sa barangay. Magkakatrabaho ang ating mga ka-barangay. Ang pera, maiiwan sa barangay. Hindi ho ninyo sinunod iyon.

But I’ll go to another major issue, Mr. Secretary. Kung ang concept ninyo, at sinasabi ninyo sa akin, ang pera ng bayan ay dapat pangalagaan, proper management -- iyan po ang inyong sinasabi sa mandate po ng DBM, hindi po ba?

SEC. DIOKNO. That is correct.

REP. SUAREZ. Ngayon, Mr. Secretary, kilala po ba ninyo si Vice Governor Ester Hamor?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Kilala ba ninyo ang kanya pong kabiyak, Mayor Edwin “Boboy” Hamor?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Sila ho ay tatakpong kandidato sa bayan ng Casiguran at Sorsogon City. Ang kanila pong anak ay asawa ng inyong anak. Sila ho ay inyong in-laws.

Tama po ba ako na mayroon po tayong project na gagawin sa dalawang lugar na ito na nagkakahalaga ng ₱2.8 billion?

SEC. DIOKNO. I am not aware of that. That is not part of your question and I can answer ...

REP. SUAREZ. No, no, I am just ...

SEC. DIOKNO. ... that at the appropriate time, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. ... Your Honor, I am just saying that ...

SEC. DIOKNO. I can send the reply to your answer, to your question, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. I have the... well, it is ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Let me tell you, Your Honor, I've served three Presidents, I am known for my integrity, okay? I have no relatives, no friends, as far as the public affairs are concerned. That's my reputation. That's why they call me "Dr. No," all right? So, I don't know what your question is all about and ...

REP. SUAREZ. No, no, ang ...

SEC. DIOKNO. ... that's not part of your question, ...

REP. SUAREZ. ... ang sinasabi ko ...

SEC. DIOKNO. ... Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. ... po dito, Mr. Secretary, hindi ho—ito ho naman ay kasama na sa 2018 at 2019, eh. Tapos na ho tayo dito. Tapos na ang GAA, eh. It's presented and approved already, not by this present leadership ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Your Honor, ...

REP. SUAREZ. ... but by all our leaderships.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... my job as DBM ... May I reply, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. If you will allow me to finish my question, Mr. Secretary.

SEC. DIOKNO. Sure, sure.

REP. SUAREZ. All of these will be undertaken by just one contractor, one. And, if you like localization, you should insist that it is a contractor from Sorsogon. The contractor is from Bulacan. For you to be able to handle projects worth billions in pesos and with this scope of work, you have an array of heavy equipment, engineers, field offices, et cetera. Single proprietorship?

SEC. DIOKNO. May I reply now, Your Honor? May I reply now? My job as DBM Secretary is to allocate resources. What happens to the line departments, that's not my concern, Your Honor. Okay. As we release documents, we say, the use of these funds shall be in accordance with all budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules and regulations.

The whole government will come to screech, to a halt, if I have to look at every project that's being done all over the country, Your Honor. That's not my job. That's the job of the line departments.

REP. SUAREZ. Well, that's my next question, Your Honor. Sinasabi po ninyo na sinusuri ninyo at tsine-check ninyo ang line item, ang bawat nakalista sa GAA.

SEC. DIOKNO. That's part of the ...

REP. SUAREZ. That's part of your job.

SEC. DIOKNO. That's part of my job to allocate resources per department. But, to implement - that's not my job, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Secretary, you're delivering a message to this Representation and to my colleagues that these amounts -- "Concrete Road, Bulacan, Sorsogon, ₱39 million"; "Off-Carriage Way, Tertiary Road, Casiguran Road, ₱49 million"; "Construction of Flood Control Infrastructure, Embarcadero ₱39 million"; so forth and so on. This long ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct. Correct, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. ... hindi ninyo ito alam?

SEC. DIOKNO. I cannot check, as I said, I just release the money to the line departments. They disburse the money. We do not disburse the money, by the way. Because you are telling us that we're slow in disbursement, we release, practically all by day one. Ninety percent almost by day one. What they do with the money, that's the concern of the line department, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. That may be so, Mr. Secretary, in other districts, ...

SEC. DIOKNO. No, no, it's nationwide.

REP. SUAREZ. ... not this time.

SEC. DIOKNO. It's nationwide, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. There's a specific reason and I won't even blame you for that.

SEC. DIOKNO. We release ...

REP. SUAREZ. It's emotional and family reason ... that your in-law's parent is running for a position and they may need help. That's precisely what you did.

SEC. DIOKNO. Let me tell you why we have reformed the system. What we call it now is comprehensive release.

When I served under Mrs. Aquino, I served under President Estrada, okay, when I was working with Senator Angara, who's the Senate President at that time, I was amazed that it took about six months to prepare the budget and another six months for you to go through Congress, Your Honor.

And now, after the budget was approved, the agencies cannot move yet, they were waiting for another document to be issued by DBM. That's the wrong way to do it because you already approved it and it was already signed by the President.

So, when I assumed office under Mr. Estrada, we adopted a new system called "What you see is what you get." Your passage of the bill into a law and signed by the President, that is the authority, so they no longer need us, okay. I did that in 1999 and 2000. That was abandoned during the term of President Arroyo and they abandoned also that system.

Now, we are back to that system. Under Mr. Aquino, that was abandoned. So, now we have gone to the same system that they adopted 20 years ago. What you see is what you get. What Congress has approved is automatically released, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Secretary, your treatment in other districts, offices or related agency, I'm not questioning it. Maybe you're doing a good job. I'm just particularly concerned in this particular area where you show an extraordinary concern.

SEC. DIOKNO. How do you say that? I don't even know that transaction, Your Honor. It's the job of DPWH, not mine. That's the job of the line departments. The line departments disburse, they implement. I don't. Okay.

REP. SUAREZ. Are you telling this Representation and addressing the plenary that there was no communication at all with your daughter who could have stated that my husband's parents are running for a position.

SEC. DIOKNO. Absolutely none, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Hindi ho ninyo pinag-usapan.

SEC. DIOKNO. Wala—hindi namin pinag-usapan.

REP. SUAREZ. Hindi rin kayo nagkikita doon.

SEC. DIOKNO. Walang relative, walang friends, as far as I'm concerned.

REP. SUAREZ. Hindi ho ninyo pinag-uusapan iyong totoo.

SEC. DIOKNO. Wala ho.

REP. SUAREZ. Talaga!

SEC. DIOKNO. Itaga ninyo sa bato.

REP. SUAREZ. Magaling iyon.

SEC. DIOKNO. As I said, there are no friends, no relatives when I make a decision. Unbiased. Objective. That's why you call me "Dr. No" eh, di ba?

REP. SUAREZ. This was 2018, ito pong napakalaking release. Tama po ba?

SEC. DIOKNO. I have no idea what was released, Your Honor, eh. It's DPWH which knows that.

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Secretary, hindi ko ho sinasabi na itong ni-list ng DPWH ay mali. Tama po naman ito. Ang sinasabi lang namin dito sa Kongreso, napakalaki ng ibinigay mo sa dalawang bayan.

SEC. DIOKNO. Hindi po ako nagbigay ng—that was the request of DPWH.

REP. SUAREZ. Sa inyo.

SEC. DIOKNO. Hindi po—and that was in—you approved the request. It's part of the law, hindi ho ba?

That's part of the General Appropriations Bill or Act.

REP. SUAREZ. Well, standard practice po iyong sinasabi ninyo at naniniwala naman ako na tama po iyong sinasabi ninyo. But ang sinasabi namin dito, sinasabi mo na hindi ka gumawa ng kaunting pakiusap man lang sa ibang ahensiya na pakitulangan itong dalawang bayan na ito. Hindi ho ninyo ginawa iyon?

SEC. DIOKNO. No, Sir. Never.

REP. SUAREZ. At ito pong nag-iisang ...

SEC. DIOKNO. You know, whenever somebody wants to request something, a department Secretary, I say “no” because he will ask more from me. That’s my policy, Your Honor. And that’s the truth.

REP. SUAREZ. Madam Speaker, Your Honor, there will be a continuing hearing on this by the Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability because I don’t feel it. There are a lot of other Members who would like to raise questions. But the bottom line is this, si Vice Governor Ester Hamor, incumbent vice governor ngayon po ng lalawigan ay tatakbong mayor ng Sorsogon City. Hindi ho ninyo alam iyon.

SEC. DIOKNO. I don’t know that, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Iyong gagawin noong father-in-law ng inyong anak hindi ninyo alam.

SEC. DIOKNO. I don’t know and I don’t care, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. You expect us to believe that.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor, you have to believe me.

REP. SUAREZ. Mabuti walang kidlat ngayon dahil sa baka tamaan kayo ng kidlat.

SEC. DIOKNO. You have to believe me, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. At hindi din ninyo alam, Mr. Secretary, na iyong kanyang asawa ay tatakbong mayor ng Casiguran.

SEC. DIOKNO. I don’t know, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Hindi rin ho sinabi sa inyo ng inyong anak na iyong aking father-in-law tatakbo din.

SEC. DIOKNO. They are very careful when they discuss these things.

REP. SUAREZ. Do you see them?

SEC. DIOKNO. They don’t discuss projects with me, Your Honor. They don’t.

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Secretary, are you a close-knit family?

SEC. DIOKNO. Can’t you believe what I say—what I’m telling you?

REP. SUAREZ. Come dinner, nag-uusap-usap kayo; kapag Sunday, ganoon.

SEC. DIOKNO. Hindi po. Pag nag-uusap-usap kami ay as a family lang. Wala pong mga projects, walang mga ganitong klaseng ...

REP. SUAREZ. Hindi ninyo pinag-uusapan iyon.

SEC. DIOKNO. Hindi po namin pinag-uusapan iyan. Bawal po pag-usapan iyan in our family. Okay.

REP. SUAREZ. At hindi din ninyo kilala itong CT Leoncio Construction and Trading.

SEC. DIOKNO. Absolutely, I haven’t heard of Leoncio Co., Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Kung hindi ho n’yo kilala, wala hong nagsabi sa inyo na pakitulungan lang itong...?

SEC. DIOKNO. Wala po.

REP. SUAREZ. Kung ikaw ay nag-a-analyze, Mr. Secretary, ng line-item budgeting, at nakita mo na 2.5 plus 998, ₱3.5 billion is awarded to just one company, hindi ho tataas ang kilay ninyo?

SEC. DIOKNO. No. I have seen projects where we approved ₱14 billion po. We’ve given contracts worth ₱14 billion. DOTr for the subway; around ₱10 billion for the long haul. That’s not-- and I don’t ...

REP. SUAREZ. This is not unusual?

SEC. DIOKNO. Hindi ko po alam iyan. That’s DPWH job, not mine.

REP. SUAREZ. Na bulk ng area will be deployed doon po sa dalawang bayan na tatakbuhan, hindi talaga binanggit man lang sa inyo o inihingi ng tulong na pakitulungan. Wala ho iyon?

SEC. DIOKNO. Wala po. Maybe we could move to the next question, Your Honor. You have 18 questions. I wanna answer them.

REP. SUAREZ. No, no, we will continue on this in the Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability. But there are other Members

who asked me if they can raise questions also regarding this matter. I just have one issue to take up.

Mr. Secretary, were you approached by someone from the Palace with the instruction to release the money for the Road Board fund?

SEC. DIOKNO. We have talked about it many times, Your Honor, highest level. Let me tell you the decision of the Road Board. We will not release. We want the Road Board abolished, as you did, and then they called. Okay. That's the policy. We will not release until the Road Board is abolished. Because we want to give Congress, who has the power of the purse, the decision to do what they want to do with the Road Board fund proceeds which right now is about ₱45 billion, Madam Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. You were informed already that when our good Speaker ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Madam Speaker, Your Honor, I have not received, on the contrary, a directive from the President.

REP. SUAREZ. That was June. Ni-recall po niya iyong congressional approval of abolishing the Road Board. As I've said, that is one law with good intention. And these are the events: letter dated to you on July 8, returning the Board Resolution-approved projects by the Board in April of 2018.

In 2014, you returned again to the Board the approved project No. 06 December of 2017, letter of Director Clavano to Secretary Diokno, dated September 17, 2018, re-submitting Road Board for request for the release of SARO for project approved by the Board. Iyan po ay mga requests ng mga Congressmen.

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct, Madam Speaker, Your Honor. I'm familiar with the circumstance.

REP. SUAREZ. I hope you will understand the plight of a Congressman, Madam Speaker, Your Honor.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Madam Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Pag ho may masamang kalsada, baku-bako, nagkakabarahan, hindi po iyon nagagalit sa Secretary of Public Works, hindi ho nagagalit sa inyo na may hawak ng pananalapi, hindi ho sa gobyerno, hindi ho sa gobernador, hindi sa Presidente, kami pong mga Congressmen ang minumura.

SEC. DIOKNO. As I said, Your Honor, the policy is that the Road Board should be abolished. We don't want a small group of unelected officials to decide on that amount. We want to give it back to Congress. And so until the Road Board is abolished, we will not release.

REP. SUAREZ. But on the last letter, you made a reply. You stated, the Department will study the same and reevaluate its policy on the matter ...

REP. DIOKNO. Correct.

REP. SUAREZ. ... upon receiving the formal copy of the House Resolution, rescinding the House of Representatives' approval on Third Reading of the bill abolishing the Road Board.

SEC. DIOKNO. I have not received a contrary directive from the President, Madam Speaker, Your Honor, so, that policy stands.

REP. SUAREZ. Mr. Secretary, what do you mean by reevaluate?

SEC. DIOKNO. Well, we'll bring it up with the President. There is no change in the policy, Madam Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Whose policy?

REP. DIOKNO. It's the Executive Department's policy. We want the Road Board abolished. Why are you delegating ...

REP. SUAREZ. I just would like to make this clear, Mr. Secretary.

SEC. DIOKNO. Right, right.

REP. SUAREZ. Madam Speaker, dear Members, this issue is between this Representation and the good Speaker, Palace has nothing to do with this.

SEC. DIOKNO. No, no, the Senate also has its own position, abolishing the Road Board and that is the policy of the Palace, Your Honor. It is not my policy, it's the policy of the Palace.

REP. SUAREZ. Madam Speaker, Your Honor, I will temporarily yield to my questioning as there are several Members who would like to raise questions to the good Secretary.

At this juncture, on motion of Representative Marcoleta, the Chair recognized Majority Leader

Andaya who yielded the floor to Representative Atienza to accommodate his one question.

**QUESTION OF
REPRESENTATIVE ATIENZA
AND ANSWER OF SECRETARY DIOKNO**

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po, Mr. Majority Leader.

This Representation would like to take advantage of the presence of no less than the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management. Now, we know very well he has full control of the money of the government. It has been bruited about in media that this Congress is guilty of inserting pork barrel funds, they call it “insertions.” And, Senator Ping Lacson has been repeatedly pointing at the Members of Congress to be guilty of this.

I would like to ask him directly, in your full knowledge and control of the funds, since you are the one preparing the budget, would you say categorically if there are insertions in the nature of pork barrel or none at all?

SEC. DIOKNO. Your Honor, ...

REP. ATIENZA. To clear the names of Members of Congress who are all suffering public ridicule. Para bagang bumalik na tayo sa dating gawi, ayaw po namin iyon. Hindi po tayo puwedeng lumabag sa Saligang Batas.

SEC. DIOKNO. If you look at the budget process, the Executive prepares the budget and the President submits the President’s budget to the House, and then you can do what you want to do with the budget. You can mangle it, you can approve it *en toto*, that is your prerogative. Okay?

REP. ATIENZA. So, I ask the Gentleman then, has this Congress mangled the budget that you proposed in the past years while you were holding the position of Secretary of Budget?

SEC. DIOKNO. This Congress, no, Sir.

REP. ATIENZA. No.

SEC. DIOKNO. No, as far, no.

REP. ATIENZA. Did I hear right? Hindi po gumagawa ng iligal itong Kongresong ito, tama po ba iyon?

SEC. DIOKNO. Tama po iyon.

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po, iyon po ang pinag-uusapan ng bayan. Tayo po ba ay gumagawa ng paraan upang makinabang sa pondo o ito po ay mga nakalagay sa budget as public improvement projects in the different districts? Mapalad nga lamang iyong ibang distrito katulad po noong binanggit ng ating Minority Leader, mapalad iyong distrito ng mga kamag-anak ng ating Secretary. But I would never accuse him of being biased and providing funds for his relative.

In the same manner, I accept his admission that this Congress has not committed any pork barrel violation and therefore Senator Lacson is way off the mark and the allegations in media are not true.

Thank you.

At this point, the Chair recognized Majority Leader Andaya.

**QUESTIONS OF
MAJORITY LEADER ANDAYA
AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO**

REP. ANDAYA. Yes. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Today is quite special. This is our, for me, 18 years ago, the good Secretary also stood in the same place for a Question Hour, and I had the chance to talk to him last time and what quite a coincidence, I was sporting the same haircut when that time happened 18 years ago. So, here we go again doing the same thing.

Madam Speaker, these past two weeks have been very unique, shall we say. Last week, the honorable spokesman for the Palace has been saying that Congress should hurry up the budget, pass it on time, it is the President’s budget. And, our good Secretary, the head of the DBCC, scaring everyone into thinking that we will have an economic slowdown if we do not pass the budget. But, just recently, just now, the presidential spokesperson finally said, Congress now is allowed to scrutinize the budget. We are allowed to take our time. What a sudden change. Even the Senate seems to be very confused from the messaging of our economic managers. At first, they said that we need to extend our session to December 19 to pass it, then they agreed to December 14 to pass it. Now, they said January is okay and now today, February will be okay. Probably they realized that all of those arguments were hogwash, to say the least, Madam Speaker.

For if you look at it, the budget for 2018 is actually bigger than 2019, so if you reenact the

budget, then it's bigger. Isn't that better? Simple logic dictates that's better. The good Secretary himself said that large-ticket projects with the Build, Build, Build are covered by a MYOA. There is no need for a budget so walang problema. There were scare tactics na iyong mga salary increases daw hindi mangyayari kung walang bagong budget. Kalokohan iyan.

If you recall, Madam Speaker, the first tranche of the increase of uniformed personnel took effect this year. Do you see any specific line item for the increase of salaries? None. Paano nangyari? Eh diniskartehan na lang ng ating DBM. Magaling eh. Nangyari iyon. So, kung gusto mo, puwede. Hindi ba?

Now, during the term of our good Secretary, as I recall year 2000, the budget was passed in February, am I not correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. That's correct, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Did the earth, did the heavens crash?

SEC. DIOKNO. But there was a slowdown, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, because you did not have the guts to raise revenues, am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. I ...

REP. ANDAYA. Yes.

SEC. DIOKNO. That's 20 years ago, Your Honor, I cannot recall.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. You cannot recall precisely but I do recall. In 2007, the budget was passed in March, but the first quarter growth was 6.9% and the second quarter growth was a mind-boggling 8.3%. So, I really don't know where they're getting that argument, Madam Speaker. What will really slow down—and this will really happen—is that meron tayong utang ngayon sa lahat ng mga departments na hindi mabayaran ngayon ng DBM, around ₱100 billion. Would I be correct, Mr. Speaker?

SEC. DIOKNO. I have to check the numbers, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. I will refresh your memory. In your last DBCC meeting in October, you already have overspent ₱20 billion, am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. That's correct.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, October.

SEC. DIOKNO. That is what I am saying – that we're not underspending.

REP. ANDAYA. October. Yes, I am not saying you're underspending.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. ANDAYA. I'm saying you've overspent tremendously. Let me read to you the statement of Usec Cabral yesterday and I'm just referring to DPWH. Ang sabi niya, as of November, meron po kaming ibinigay sa DBM na ₱44 billion na utang sa mga contractor. Ang tanong ko, mababayaran ba? Ang sagot niya sa akin, "Sir, as of now wala pa po kaming tinatanggap na cash. Ang sabi po sa akin ng mga contractor, pa-cash-based, cash-based budget pa kayo, wala naman pala kayong cash." So, isn't it true, Madam Speaker, that at the end of the year, we will have utang? There's no other way to say it. Hindi natin mababayaran iyong mga contractors—ng buong national government to the tune of ₱100 billion.

SEC. DIOKNO. What I recall, Your Honor,...

REP. ANDAYA. Yes.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... from our conversation with...

REP. ANDAYA. Yes.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... Usec. Cabral is that I was talking of ₱20 billion not ₱40 billion...

REP. ANDAYA. By October.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... as you said.

REP. ANDAYA. We are now in December. I talked to her yesterday.

SEC. DIOKNO. We have not exceeded yet our deficit level, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, because you will end up with a deficit of 3.8.

SEC. DIOKNO. No, no, we will end with a 3.0 as promised.

REP. ANDAYA. Oh, I doubt it.

SEC. DIOKNO. As promised.

REP. ANDAYA. You will end up with a 3.3 if you don't pay the ₱100 billion. That we are in agreement.

SEC. DIOKNO. I have not seen the ₱100 billion, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Well, I'm telling you now. If as head of the DBCC now you don't see it, at this point in time, then you have a problem.

SEC. DIOKNO. We have two weeks to go, Your Honor,...

REP. ANDAYA. Yes.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... before the end of the year.

REP. ANDAYA. So, you mean to tell me you'll be paying off in two weeks?

SEC. DIOKNO. We have two weeks to go and we have not yet reached...

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, so, you've admitted to me now...

SEC. DIOKNO. ... the deficit level, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. ... you owe ₱100 billion to contractors?

SEC. DIOKNO. I don't know that...

REP. ANDAYA. See?

SEC. DIOKNO. ... for a fact.

REP. ANDAYA. You can pay for it but you don't know how much you're paying for. So, let me go now to the next topic.

SEC. DIOKNO. Let me just—could I make a statement here? Earlier, Congressman Andaya mentioned that this is the second time that I was here on the podium.

REP. ANDAYA. You really want to go through that?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. ANDAYA. You really want to go through that?

SEC. DIOKNO. That is not true, Your Honor. This is my first time.

REP. ANDAYA. No.

SEC. DIOKNO. Under the Question Hour. The first time was when the House constituted itself into a Committee of the Whole. I was defending the budget...

REP. ANDAYA. But isn't it—why did you think...

SEC. DIOKNO. That's just an information.

REP. ANDAYA. ... why did you think they were constituted as a whole? Because you could not explain to them...

SEC. DIOKNO. For me...

REP. ANDAYA. ... what was going on.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... to defend the budget, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. You know, because they could not understand what was going on. It's the same thing that's happening now.

SEC. DIOKNO. No, no, because...

REP. ANDAYA. Let me—you really want to go through that route? I remember I asked you before—flat out when you assumed your Secretary seat. Remember the time of President Ramos when he imposed budgetary reserves of 25 percent? Do you remember that?

SEC. DIOKNO. I remember that.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, and the first question I asked you, "How much money is in the reserve control account?" What was the answer you gave me straight to my face?

SEC. DIOKNO. I don't remember.

REP. ANDAYA. You don't remember. Well, I remember.

SEC. DIOKNO. That was 20 years ago, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, I remember. You said, "Nothing." There was zero when in reality there were billions. Would you confirm that? And you put it in an account called reserve control account?

SEC. DIOKNO. It's the Treasury that knows...

REP. ANDAYA. No.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... how much reserve we have, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. No. But you put it in an account called reserve control account. Was I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. We have such an account at that time, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. So, you have it? You said “No.”

SEC. DIOKNO. Reserve control account.

REP. ANDAYA. You said “No” when we were asking you flat out.

SEC. DIOKNO. Could I answer your question earlier on the...

REP. ANDAYA. Oh, we’re going back again?

SEC. DIOKNO. ... the fact of the deficit?

REMINDER FROM THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair reminded the two Gentlemen to speak one at a time.

QUESTIONS OF MAJORITY LEADER ANDAYA AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO (Continuation)

REP. ANDAYA. No, no, no. I think that answer is already cleared.

SEC. DIOKNO. No, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. The answer is clear already. Let’s move on to the next question. It means to say, Madam Speaker, if you’re holding back, oh, means to say that if you have overspent this year, it totally screws up your budget assumptions for next year because you’ll be paying off debts for this year next year. So, the next year cash program will be totally off, therefore rendering the cash budget system useless. Am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. That’s not true, Your Honor. What will happen is because there’s a move now by Congress to extend the life of...

REP. ANDAYA. No, no, no. Okay.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... 2018 budget, what will happen is any amount and we are going to extend only the capital outlays...

REP. ANDAYA. We? Who are “we”?

SEC. DIOKNO. Any amount that will be extended to 2019 will have to bump some of the 2019 appropriations.

REP. ANDAYA. Yeah, ngayon, “we” na tayo.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. ANDAYA. The first time we proposed that you didn’t agree. Now you...

SEC. DIOKNO. You have to bump...

REP. ANDAYA. That’s us now asking our help to help you.

SEC. DIOKNO. No, no.

REP. ANDAYA. That’s your proposal, say one year and a half or one year?

SEC. DIOKNO. That’s the...

REP. ANDAYA. One year and a half or one year?

SEC. DIOKNO. One year and a half.

REP. ANDAYA. No, it says one year. Don’t give me wrong answers, please. It insults the intelligence of everyone here. It says one year.

SEC. DIOKNO. What are we talking about?

REP. ANDAYA. So, you forgot. Let us move on to another question.

REMINDER FROM THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair reminded the two Gentlemen to talk one at a time and to address the Chair.

QUESTIONS OF MAJORITY LEADER ANDAYA AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO (Continuation)

REP. ANDAYA. Apparently, I forgot the question, so let’s move on.

So the next point, who has control over savings?

SEC. DIOKNO. It’s the—well, the savings are declared by the individual agencies, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes.

SEC. DIOKNO. And when they come to us and they want to, say, want to use the savings.

REP. ANDAYA. Yeah. But the question is, who controls it? Who is the person that controls it?

SEC. DIOKNO. They ask us. If they want to augment an item, we go to the Office of the President.

REP. ANDAYA. No. No. No. Who controls the savings, not who receives the savings? Who controls where it goes?

SEC. DIOKNO. The DBM, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes. It's so hard to get an answer.

Now, do Members of Congress get a report on where, when these projects are released? As you've said now, we can do anything with the budget.

SEC. DIOKNO. With the OP approval, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. No, wait—no, no, no.

SEC. DIOKNO. The question is, the use of savings ...

REP. ANDAYA. I am not asking ...

SEC. DIOKNO. ... requires OP approval, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. No, you really want to go that route.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, sure.

REP. ANDAYA. Okay. The question is, first, who decides where it goes?

SEC. DIOKNO. Well, it's the Office of the President, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Office of the President.

SEC. DIOKNO. We augment an ...

REP. ANDAYA. No. No. No. I am just asking.

SEC. DIOKNO. As a result of the Supreme Court decision, we augment only items in the budget.

REP. ANDAYA. Okay.

SEC. DIOKNO. We cannot augment a non-existing item.

REP. ANDAYA. I am not asking for the augmentation. I am asking who signs the release of savings? Therefore, that person controls saving.

SEC. DIOKNO. I doubt proper procedure, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. I am not asking for the procedure, Madam, but I am asking for the person.

SEC. DIOKNO. No, no, no, but I send a memo to the President for the use of savings.

REP. ANDAYA. We understand that, Madam Speaker. I am asking for the person who signs it.

SEC. DIOKNO. I sign the ...

REP. ANDAYA. Then, you sign.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay. I request the President.

REP. ANDAYA. You sign it.

SEC. DIOKNO. The President approves...

REP. ANDAYA. You sign it.

SEC. DIOKNO. And then I sign it again.

REP. ANDAYA. Okay.

SEC. DIOKNO. It's the President ...

REP. ANDAYA. We will get there. You keep on dropping the name of the President, we will get there.

How many times have you declared savings over the year 2018?

SEC. DIOKNO. I have no idea.

REP. ANDAYA. You have no idea.

SEC. DIOKNO. In fact, I asked for an extension of this invitation, but you didn't give it.

REP. ANDAYA. You don't want to answer the question. You are free to...

SEC. DIOKNO. Because I want to have a complete list.

REP. ANDAYA. No, no, no, you can decline if you want. It's not our problem.

SEC. DIOKNO. By the way, on the fund status...

REP. ANDAYA. There is no question yet, Madam Speaker.

SEC. DIOKNO. We submit to you a quarterly report...

REP. ANDAYA. No, no, no.

SEC. DIOKNO. ...and so you'll know exactly how many times we have used savings.

REP. ANDAYA. Since you've submitted to me, why can't you tell me now how many times you have declared savings?

SEC. DIOKNO. Because I said, I have not collated all of it, Your Honor, ...

REP. ANDAYA. Oh—well, let me refresh your memory.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... because of time constraint.

REP. ANDAYA. Since you don't know, may I refresh your memory.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay.

REP. ANDAYA. I talked to Secretary Cabral yesterday and she said, "No less than five times." You don't know?

SEC. DIOKNO. Maybe.

REP. ANDAYA. Maybe.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yeah.

REP. ANDAYA. Six times?

SEC. DIOKNO. No. I am aware of ...

REP. ANDAYA. Six times?

SEC. DIOKNO. Three times, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Three times.

SEC. DIOKNO. Three times.

REP. ANDAYA. She said, "Five."

SEC. DIOKNO. Who is this? Who?

REP. ANDAYA. Assistant Secretary of Public Works Department—maybe.

SEC. DIOKNO. Maybe so.

REP. ANDAYA. Alright. Now, would you have an idea how much for this?

SEC. DIOKNO. As I said, Your Honor, I don't have the time to collate all of these. Okay.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, so, I'll give you an amount.

SEC. DIOKNO. But I'll submit it to you in writing in a week's time, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. No, no need for it. I know it. Shall we say around ₱50 billion?

SEC. DIOKNO. As I said, I will submit a written report in a week's time, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Okay. ₱50 billion it is.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay.

REP. ANDAYA. And the ₱50 billion savings from Public Works Department gets plowed back, part of it, to them. Am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. That's correct.

REP. ANDAYA. That is correct. Is the Public Works Department consulted when savings is plowed back to them, considering that they are the ones who do the vetting of the projects, they know the priorities?

SEC. DIOKNO. They are consulted, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. No, they are not.

SEC. DIOKNO. No, they are consulted.

REP. ANDAYA. They are not.

SEC. DIOKNO. We have ...

REP. ANDAYA. Do you want me to read the TSN? Secretary Cabral said, "It just arrives to them without them being consulted.

SEC. DIOKNO. Secretary Cabral...

REP. ANDAYA. ...Usec Cabral..

SEC. DIOKNO. ...does not speak for the Department.

REP. ANDAYA. Well, she did, for that particular...

SEC. DIOKNO. Alright. Yeah, it is Secretary Mark Villar who speaks for...

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, and Secretary Mark Villar agreed to the statement.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay.

REP. ANDAYA. Alright. So, they have no idea what's coming back to them. Now, the question is, who placed DPWH now in choosing which projects should be released from savings? Who is now the pseudo-DPWH Secretary?

SEC. DIOKNO. Well, as I said, we made the request from the savings, from the Office of the President, then it goes back to the DPWH.

REP. ANDAYA. No, the question is, who decides that these projects will be released?

SEC. DIOKNO. It comes from many sources, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. No, I am not asking for the source. I am asking who decides what projects will be released?

SEC. DIOKNO. It's the Office of the President, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Really?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. ANDAYA. You really want to go that route?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. ANDAYA. Okay. When does the President specifically know each and every project...

SEC. DIOKNO. He does not...

REP. ANDAYA. ...that is released from savings?

SEC. DIOKNO. Your Honor, he does not...

REP. ANDAYA. When does he know? That is the question.

SEC. DIOKNO. He does not specifically know, but he has his own Executive Secretary.

REP. ANDAYA. Iyan, so, he doesn't know..

SEC. DIOKNO. ...Office of the Secretary.

REP. ANDAYA. So, stop dropping the Office of the President.

SEC. DIOKNO. I have no idea what is going on in that office, right.

REP. ANDAYA. So you don't know now?

SEC. DIOKNO. So, you have PMS, you have Office of the Executive Secretary, you have Office of Cabinet Secretary. They come to us and put them together.

REP. ANDAYA. Which is it? Do you know, do you not know?

SEC. DIOKNO. We put them together.

REP. ANDAYA. So, you do not know?

SEC. DIOKNO. We know that it comes from the Office of the President.

REP. ANDAYA. No. You keep on dropping "Office of the President," so, I'm asking you now. When does the President, the head of the Office of the President, know each and every detail of the releases from savings?

SEC. DIOKNO. He does not...

REP. ANDAYA. When?

SEC. DIOKNO. ..he does not know...

REP. ANDAYA. He does not know.

SEC. DIOKNO. ..every detail, but it comes from the Office of the President.

REP. ANDAYA. He does not know.

SEC. DIOKNO. But it comes from the Office of the President.

REP. ANDAYA. Who is the head of the Office of the President?

SEC. DIOKNO. Office of the Executive Secretary, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Oh, so, you are telling me now it's the Office of the Executive Secretary.

SEC. DIOKNO. No, as I said...

REP. ANDAYA. ES Medialdea now is the one releasing these projects?

SEC. DIOKNO. No, there are requests coming...

REP. ANDAYA. See.

SEC. DIOKNO. ...from the Office of the President, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. There are requests coming. So Office of the President plays now public works? Is that what you are trying to tell me?

SEC. DIOKNO. The President's budget is his budget.

REP. ANDAYA. Oh, here we go again with that. You really want to go that route again?

SEC. DIOKNO. Well, the President's budget is his budget.

REP. ANDAYA. You want to go to that route?

SEC. DIOKNO. Sure.

REP. ANDAYA. Okay, the President's budget. Let's talk about the President's budget. You know, I talked to him about that ₱51 billion, personally.

SEC. DIOKNO. What ₱51 billion?

REP. ANDAYA. Your insertion.

SEC. DIOKNO. I have no insertion, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Oh, it's what Secretary Villar told me. I thought you said Secretary Villar was the authority in the Public Works Department. He told me he did not know of the ₱51 billion worth of projects inserted in the Public Works budget. He asked for ₱488, you gave him a ceiling of ₱488 and lo, and behold, there was an additional ₱51 billion, which no one now claims. So, Public Works Department did not ask for it, and DBM submitted that Presidential budget to us, then, it only has come plain from you.

SEC. DIOKNO. May I answer, Your Honor?

REP. ANDAYA. Not yet. I'm not yet finished.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay.

REP. ANDAYA. Just to lay the predicate, the President told me since it's the President's budget, he had nothing to do with it, and that I should ask you. And that he asked who were the big recipients of the budget, and I showed him. And do you know what he told me? Do your job. And now I'm doing my job.

So, what is this ₱51 billion insertion of yours all about?

SEC. DIOKNO. May I answer the question now?

REP. ANDAYA. Yes.

SEC. DIOKNO. Six hundred fifty-two. We approved on first tranche, ₱123.9 billion. The second tranche, another ₱356 for a total of ₱480.2 billion. Out of a request of ₱652, we approved ₱480. Now, because we want the infra budget or the infra to be higher, and we have fiscal space, we decided to augment or to add to the ₱480, another ₱75 billion, not ₱51.

REP. ANDAYA. How? ₱71?

SEC. DIOKNO. But ₱75.

REP. ANDAYA. Okay. So ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Seventy-five billion ...

REP. ANDAYA. So ₱75 billion insertions, okay.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... for a total of ₱555 point...

REP. ANDAYA. Better.

SEC. DIOKNO. You cannot call that insertion because that's part of the process that we ...

REP. ANDAYA. Ah, it's the President's budget.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... because part of ...

REP. ANDAYA. President's budget.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... the budget preparation process. There is no insertion.

REP. ANDAYA. President's budget.

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct.

REP. ANDAYA. Correct. Yes, but he doesn't know anything about it.

SEC. DIOKNO. Well, we submit ...

REP. ANDAYA. So, where is the President's budget?

SEC. DIOKNO. We submitted the budget to the President, he approved the budget, and we submitted it here.

REP. ANDAYA. He approved the budget as you gave it to him.

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct.

REP. ANDAYA. So, you are the President?

SEC. DIOKNO. No, we submitted the budget to the President.

REP. ANDAYA. How come he doesn't know anything about it?

SEC. DIOKNO. I think he knows about it.

REP. ANDAYA. Oh, so he is lying to me, he is a liar.

SEC. DIOKNO. He knows what it is all about.

REP. ANDAYA. Ah, really, he just assumes he knows.

SEC. DIOKNO. His staff does not go through it line by line ...

REP. ANDAYA. So he doesn't know.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... as any President does.

REP. ANDAYA. So he doesn't know.

SEC. DIOKNO. So ...

REP. ANDAYA. So, you know the details.

SEC. DIOKNO. That's the DPWH budget.

REP. ANDAYA. Now, hindi na naman.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay. That's the DPWH budget.

REP. ANDAYA. So, okay. So in this whole tell-a-tale that we are having, it's clear now that the insertion is not ₱51 but ₱75. Thank you very much for admitting it. ₱75 in which Public Works Department doesn't have an idea where it came from. Alright, I think your silence is yes. You've not only

managed to overspend by around ₱100 billion, but it seems like you really don't care because as of December, you are still releasing projects, am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. We are still releasing ...

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, you are still releasing which again screws up your cash budgeting system. Am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. We have to make payments, so we have to release money.

REP. ANDAYA. I am not talking about payments. I am talking about ...

SEC. DIOKNO. No, we are releasing SARO and NCA.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes.

SEC. DIOKNO. We do not disburse, it's the Treasury ...

REP. ANDAYA. Yes.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... that is disbursing.

REP. ANDAYA. But you are releasing SAROs now, December ha, as we speak, in billions of pesos...

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, yes.

REP. ANDAYA. ... worth of infrastructure projects.

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct.

REP. ANDAYA. Correct, which no one knows where it's going.

SEC. DIOKNO. It is stated there.

REP. ANDAYA. Where is it?

SEC. DIOKNO. Where it is going.

REP. ANDAYA. Where? Where?

SEC. DIOKNO. It's in the release document, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Where?

SEC. DIOKNO. It's in the release document, Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. The release document says various infrastructure projects. Where?

SEC. DIOKNO. Of Public Works, Public Works.

REP. ANDAYA. So, again, we throw it to Public Works. Who signed for the SARO?

SEC. DIOKNO. I did.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes, but you don't know where it's going. Thank you very much. One thing that struck me in your conversation with Congressman Suarez was your, and this I admire you for, your so-called "what you see is what you get", very catchy phrase. Isn't it true, Madam Speaker, that you are the only Budget Secretary that was able to operate on one fiscal year using three budgets all at the same time?

SEC. DIOKNO. That's—many...

REP. ANDAYA. Do you remember ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Many Presidents have done that ...

REP. ANDAYA. No, no, no.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... because of continuing process.

REP. ANDAYA. You are the only one who was able to do it in three years. I have done it in two. Secretary Boncodin has done it in two, but none was able to do it using three budgets. Oh, would you like me to refresh your memory and show you the Resolution which you asked for. Am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. Show.

REP. ANDAYA. Yes. So what we see is not the entire picture. We only see one year. But we do not see the two years prior. So, where is the "what you see, is what you get" portion?

SEC. DIOKNO. It's the release of the current year's appropriation automatically.

REP. ANDAYA. Parang savings pala ano?

SEC. DIOKNO. It's the release of the current appropriation.

REP. ANDAYA. I agree. I agree. It's the release of the current year, but iyong bilyon-bilyon na savings from two previous years, no one sees it. Correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. No, everybody sees it.

REP. ANDAYA. Who sees it?

SEC. DIOKNO. Commission on Audit, the line departments ...

REP. ANDAYA. How do they see it? How does a regular person see it?

SEC. DIOKNO. Every release document ...

REP. ANDAYA. Where?

SEC. DIOKNO. ... is provided a copy ...

REP. ANDAYA. Where?

SEC. DIOKNO. ... the Commission on Audit ...

REP. ANDAYA. Where?

SEC. DIOKNO. ... provided a copy. It's with the ...

REP. ANDAYA. Where?

SEC. DIOKNO. ... Commission on Audit. It's with the Department.

REP. ANDAYA. Where?

SEC. DIOKNO. It's with the DBM.

REP. ANDAYA. When I asked you ...

SEC. DIOKNO. It's with the Office of the President.

REP. ANDAYA. ... where the reserve account control was, how much, that was one of the years, and you said "None". So, who will see it when you deny it?

SEC. DIOKNO. No, I did not deny that there is something.

REP. ANDAYA. You denied it.

SEC. DIOKNO. That there is an RCI.

REP. ANDAYA. You denied it.

SEC. DIOKNO. No, there was an account.

REP. ANDAYA. That is why I was inspired to study the budgeting.

SEC. DIOKNO. I remember that during that... Your Honor.

REP. ANDAYA. Because you denied out flat to my face.

SEC. DIOKNO. Your Honor, I remember that during the time of...

REP. ANDAYA. And that inspired me. Thank you very much for inspiring me, Madam Speaker. Thank you very much and your answers are very telling. Thank you very much and your opening speech about respect for Congress, it came three months late.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Rep. Arthur R. Defensor Jr., the session was suspended at 6:40 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:41 p.m., the session was resumed.

QUESTIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE BRAVO (A.) AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good afternoon to everyone. Will the good Secretary of the DBM yield to some questions from this Representation?

SEC. DIOKNO. Willingly, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you. Madam Speaker, I would like to take off from the issue on savings that was asked by the Majority Leader; and based on savings and augmentation, Madam Speaker, Mr. Secretary, is an important budget issue considering that savings of the departments and agencies runs into more than half billions of pesos annually.

So there are questions that are hanging around because we have not seen reports on relative savings, questions being posed on how savings is generated, how much has been generated and how it was used.

Prior to 2017, Madam Speaker, savings of departments and agencies, as well as savings from Special Purpose Fund and the automatic appropriations were dutifully reported and reflected in the chapter, Overall Savings, in the National Expenditure Program. But since 2018, there has been no re-

port on the savings and overall savings by the National Government.

Inquiries during budget deliberations have been met with promises of compliance of report, misdirection or even flat-out denial of the existence of savings and it happened here in the plenary. In one of my questions, one of the agencies says, "There is no savings." So, we need to understand the utilization of the savings because this is a huge fund, Madam Speaker, Mr. Secretary.

And to recall again, to this humble—honorable Body, in 2016, there was an unused appropriation of ₱596,652,000,000.21. Mr. Secretary, Madam Speaker, how much of this was declared as savings of the National Government in 2016?

REP. DIOKNO. Your Honor, there is a definition of savings here. Savings refers to portions or balances of any unreleased appropriations in the GAA which have not been obligated as a result of the following:

- a. Completion, final discontinuance, or abandonment of the program, activity or project for which the appropriation is authorized; and
- b. Implementation of measures resulting in improved systems and efficiencies, and thus enabled an agency to meet and deliver required or planned targets, programs, and services approved in the GAA.

REP. BRAVO (A.). I know the same definition.

REP. DIOKNO. It has to be, the budget has to be released first. If it is unreleased, you cannot have savings out of unreleased appropriations.

REP. BRAVO (A.). I agree with the definition, Madam Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. My question is, how much was the overall savings generated in 2016 based on your definition?

SEC. DIOKNO. In 2018, a total of one billion, yes.

REP. BRAVO (A.). 2016?

SEC. DIOKNO. 2016, yes, Your Honor, was the...

REP. BRAVO (A.). Total of?

SEC. DIOKNO. ₱1,087,000,606.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Is it the general savings — overall savings ...

SEC. DIOKNO. That is the overall ...

REP. BRAVO (A.). ... of the National Government?

SEC. DIOKNO. That is the overall savings, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). I will take note of that.

SEC. DIOKNO. As I ...

REP. BRAVO (A.). ₱1 billion.

SEC. DIOKNO. As I said, you can only have savings out of the released appropriations.

REP. BRAVO (A.). I'll take note of that, one billion.

SEC. DIOKNO. ₱1 billion.

REP. BRAVO (A.) So, that is one point?

SEC. DIOKNO. ₱1.1 billion.

REP. BRAVO (A.). ₱1.1 billion. Okay.

In 2016, how much was disbursed by the DBM relative to augmentation?

SEC. DIOKNO. ₱1.1 billion, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). So, ₱1.1 billion was disbursed by the DBM for augmentation. Will you please submit to this Body the SAROs that were issued in 2016?

SEC. DIOKNO. We will do that, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). All of the SAROs that were issued for augmentation, okay.

Let me proceed to 2017. How much was the total or overall savings generated by the National Government in the year 2017? Again, anchored on the same definition.

SEC. DIOKNO. Total savings, Your Honor, from 2017 is ₱10 billion but that was used to augment the contingent fund by the same amount, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). In the same matter, can you please submit to this Body the SAROs ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). ... on the disbursement to include all SAROs that were used for augmentation?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Thank you.

Let me proceed to 2018. How much savings was generated in 2018?

SEC. DIOKNO. For 2018, as of November 30, 2016, total savings is ₱2.897 billion, but we used that to augment the NDRRMC, Your Honor, the...

REP. BRAVO (A.). ₱2.8 billion?

SEC. DIOKNO. ₱2.897 billion.

REP. BRAVO (A.). So, how can we reconcile the statement of the DPWH that it has already generated ₱44 billion, Madam Speaker?

SEC. DIOKNO. Much of their savings, they used it themselves, Your Honor. It was used to augment their existing projects, Sir.

REP. BRAVO (A.). I have here a copy, Madam Speaker, distinguished Secretary, of a letter coming from no other than the Secretary dated April 6, 2018, and to read: "Dear Secretary Diokno: Pursuant to Section 68 of the General Provisions of Republic Act No. 10964 or the Fiscal Year 2018 General Appropriations Act, we are respectfully submitting for withdrawal the unobligated allotment, balances of the central office, UPMO, regional and district implemented projects nationwide in the amount of ₱3,734,760,345.04. This seems not to coincide with ...

SEC. DIOKNO. No. To be accurate, Your Honor, he, in fact, generated such savings out of deficiency gain, ₱3.7 billion, but he used up the same amount to augment existing programs within his department, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). This was released ...

SEC. DIOKNO. May 18, 2018, right? The OP approval is May 18, 2018, the use of savings.

REP. BRAVO (A.). You made mention a while ago that you control the release of savings. Am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. As I said, but we have to go through the process. It is really the Office of the President that approves the use of savings.

REP. BRAVO (A.). And your office has released several SAROs that augment deficient appropriations in 2018. Am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. That is correct, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). And the releases happen from months of October and December. Am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, I see here May 18. These are the dates of approval of the Office of the President: May 18, August 23, October 31, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). And there were still releases of funds to augment deficient appropriations for the month December 5.

SEC. DIOKNO. It was possible, Your Honor, yes.

REP. BRAVO (A.). 2018.

SEC. DIOKNO. 2018.

REP. BRAVO (A.). So, just one week ago. Am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). And, please submit to this Body the documents that are attached to the release of the SARO because you just mentioned a while ago, Mr. Secretary, Madam Speaker, that in augmentation or use of savings, there are procedures that need to be complied and there are documents that need to be ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct.

REP. BRAVO (A.). ... attached to the processes.

SEC. DIOKNO. You can only augment an existing item in the budget, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Yes.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay. And that is the DAP rule.

REP. BRAVO (A.). And there are documents that need to be attached to such before it should be released. Am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). So, we need that document, Madam Speaker, Mr. Secretary, and you assure this that you are going to submit the same.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

By the way, DBM regularly submits a report on a quarterly basis and these are contained there, okay. We submitted it to both Houses of Congress, DBM, of course and the Commission on Audit. The report includes information on releases; savings, if any; and the amounts of items augmented. So, there is a report, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). So, I would like to request for a copy of the report because I really wonder, Madam Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, because Year 2016, Year 2017 ended already but yet no reflection, in terms of report in National Expenditure Program on appropriation and obligation on the savings that was generated. You can see the report as reflected in the National Expenditure Program under appropriation and obligation, if that is in any report, that is why ...

SEC. DIOKNO. The report, Your Honor, is submitted to the Office of the Speaker and then, I guess, he sends it to the Committee on Appropriations.

REP. BRAVO (A.). But this is only the first time, Mr. Secretary, Madam Speaker, that in a particular year of expenditure ...

SEC. DIOKNO. But, you know, that is required under the General Appropriations Act, to report out all the requirements.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Yes, that is why it is a requirement but I have not seen it in the report. It is only the Year 2016.

In 2017, during your time as Budget Secretary of this new administration, of the administration of President Duterte — since 2002 up to 2015, there are reports reflected in the National Expenditure Program. Only this year, that is why I am curious what is happening.

SEC. DIOKNO. I will send you reports, Your Honors.

REP. BRAVO (A.). So, we are assured that a complete report will be submitted, to include supporting documents that, indeed, the use of savings was authorized because, DBM, for itself, cannot

just use the savings without authority coming from the President. Am I correct?

SEC. DIOKNO. We regularly submit a report, Your Honor, in accordance with the General Provisions.

REP. BRAVO (A.). What I am asking is, in the use of savings, in the regularity and in the use of savings, the DBM cannot just use savings, whether it is declared as savings from any agency, without authority from the President.

SEC. DIOKNO. For example, I have here a copy of the report we submitted to Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez, dated July 12, 2018, Your Honor, on a quarterly basis.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Then, why is it that there was no report reflected in the National Expenditure Program relative to appropriation and obligation on the savings? So it was intentionally done or was it..

SEC. DIOKNO. We submit a...

REP. BRAVO (A.). ... inadvertently omitted?

Because, it is not the Speaker that will report, it should be the DBM.

SEC. DIOKNO. We submit to you a quarterly report and that is also contained in the BESF, Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing, that is the use of savings and how much we have saved for a particular calendar year, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). Yes, but I've not seen in the report an overall savings that's why I'm stressing that.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay.

REP. BRAVO (A.). In the year, particularly years 2016 and 2017. So, we will be expecting a comprehensive report on the matter, Madam Speaker,...

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. BRAVO (A.). ...distinguished Secretary.

There are still Members who would want to ask question, Madam Speaker. I wish to proceed to the next topic, but since the Speaker is giving me a signal that it's time, so I will yield to the next interpellator. But I would like to request the good Secretary, aside from those reports relative to savings, to look

into the implementation of agencies relative to the centrally managed item and lump sum that are still in existence.

Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you po, Mr. Secretary.

The Chair thereafter recognized Representative Zarate for his questions.

QUESTIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE ZARATE AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good evening, Mr. Secretary.

SEC. DIOKNO. Good evening, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. My question will also be a follow-up to the questions earlier, but I'll be discussing more on the issue of lump sums still in our Budget.

Madam Speaker, by way of background, lump-sum appropriations in budget parlance can really readily be identified when the item has no specific area as to where a particular project will be implemented, like what particular region, province or district, or even city or municipality or barangay.

While our General Appropriations Act has now been considered as the allotment order, lump-sum appropriations are not covered by this policy. Section 3 of both the 2018 General Provisions and the proposed General Provisions for the 2019 GAA provides the following proviso:

The GAA, as the allotment order, the GAA upon its effectivity shall be considered the allotment authorizing agencies to obligate in accordance with its provisions except for the following:

"A. Appropriations that by virtue of law, general or special provisions and rules and regulations have conditions or requirements before their release;

B. Lump-sum appropriations in the agency budget and special purpose funds that have no details necessary for the release; and

C. Those requiring a special budget under the general and special provisions of this Act.

In case of automatic appropriations, the allotment shall be issued by the DBM upon compliance with the conditions provided by law. The DBM shall identify the items of appropriations in the

GAA which are not covered by the above allotment order and submit a copy thereof, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate of the Philippines, the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance.”

In relation to this provision, Madam Speaker, Section 66 of the 2018 General Appropriations Act, General Provisions states “release of lump sum appropriations shall be made upon compliance with the requirements under the applicable general or special provisions and submissions by the agency concerned of a special budget pursuant to Section 35, Chapter 5, Book VI of Executive Order Number No. 292 and copy furnished the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance.”

The special budget shall include the complete details of the programs, activities, and projects covering lump-sum appropriations with the corresponding cost up to the lowest level, meaning provincial, city, municipal level, as the case may be.

My first question now, Madam Speaker, Mr. Secretary, is, how much is the total amount of lump-sum appropriations in the regular budget of line departments and agencies under our 2019 National Expenditure Program?

SEC. DIOKNO. I am not aware of—there are Special Purpose Funds which includes the Budgetary Support to Government Corporations, Contingent, Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund, et cetera, et cetera, that is about ₱491.5 billion, Your Honor, ₱491.5 billion.

REP. ZARATE. Four hundred ninety-one point five.

SEC. DIOKNO. It does not include, for example, the Internal Revenue Allotment, which as you know, is automatically appropriated,

REP. ZARATE. Yes.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... which is about ₱522.8 billion.

REP. ZARATE. So, aside from the Internal Revenue Allotment and other automatic appropriations, we have ₱491.5 billion as lump sum in the 2019 Budget.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay, so if you look—if you include the Special Purpose Funds which you meant, it is ₱491.5 billion, and then if you include

the automatic appropriations that is about ₱980.8 billion. That includes the IRA, of course the interest payments, the net lending, et cetera, et cetera.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, Madam Speaker. How about the total amount allotted to those classified as centrally managed items or CMIs, Mr. Secretary, Madam Speaker, how much is the total amount of this particular fund?

SEC. DIOKNO. We don't have that here right now but I will provide you, Your Honor, in writing, if you don't mind, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Please do so.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay.

REP. ZARATE. Next, so you mentioned earlier that the SPF alone is ₱491.5 billion.

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Now, for the lump-sum appropriation under SPF, did you consider, Mr. Secretary, Madam Speaker, the actual obligations of these items in the previous years in relation to the amount allocated to these items for the fiscal year 2019?

SEC. DIOKNO. They are mostly disbursed, Your Honor ...very high utilization rate.

REP. ZARATE. There is a very high utilization rate.

SEC. DIOKNO. Utilization rate. For example, this Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund is for positions created and is not transferred to departments. So, more or less, they are highly utilized, Your Honor. The IRA, the allocation to local government units -- that is usually used up, the Contingent Fund is usually used up. And the NDRRMC, in fact, oftentimes, we have to augment the NDRRMC because of a series of typhoons, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. So, for example, the MPBF, do you have the exact percentage of utilization of the MPBF?

SEC. DIOKNO. It is right now, it is 82.9 percent utilized, Your Honor, percent of releases over our program, and that is about ₱99 billion, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. So, this is for 2018.

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Correct, and because it has 82.9 percent utilization, for 2019, how much is our MPBF? Did you ...

SEC. DIOKNO. The total program for Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund is ₱99.5 billion, as I mentioned earlier. The balance to date is about ₱17 billion, Your Honor, ₱17 billion. For 2019, we propose much lower, ₱51.6 billion, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Fifty-one point six billion. How is that so when you said that the utilization rate of MPBF is as high as 82 percent of the ₱99.5 billion and for next year you will only allocate ₱51.6 billion?

SEC. DIOKNO. We have already transferred, Your Honor, the amount to the respective departments like DepEd, Department of Health, because much of this is the salary adjustment, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

My next question, you will remember, of course, that in 2013, the Supreme Court pointed out that in its PDAF ruling, an item of appropriation must be an item characterized by singular correspondents, meaning, an allocation of a specified singular amount for a specified singular purpose. So, that is what the Supreme Court said.

As the head of the DBM, the leading agency in the crafting of our national budget, how would you interpret this particular ruling of the Supreme Court in that PDAF case?

SEC. DIOKNO. As I said, these budgets 2017, 2018, 2019 are all compliant with the Supreme Court ruling, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Which means?

SEC. DIOKNO. Which means, you won't find any appropriations here that will violate the definitions as stated by the Supreme Court.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. So, in relation to that definition, ruling of the Supreme Court, would you enlighten us again, Mr. Secretary, what is your definition of lump-sum appropriations, being the head of the DBM?

SEC. DIOKNO. Lump-sum appropriations, Your Honor, are for purposes of addressing some contingency that we still don't know in the course of the fiscal year. Let's say, we are talking of next year, we don't know exactly how many typhoons

will hit us, earthquakes, et cetera. So, that's the nature of the contingency.

So, Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund is contingency for the number of positions to be created. The Pension and Gratuity Fund -- we get this from those who signify their intention to retire next year. Some of them don't. So, some of them retire. So, this is just an estimate. And, some of this allocation to local government units is by law. Like, for example, the special shares of LGUs in the proceeds of national taxes -- that is defined by law.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. So, you—are you saying na, Mr. Secretary, Madam Speaker, that lump sums in the PDAF ruling in 2013 are no longer existing in the present budget.

SEC. DIOKNO. That's correct, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Section 66 of the General Provisions of the 2018 GAA requires the issuance of a Special Budget for the release of lump-sum appropriations. My question now, Mr. Secretary, is how do you define Special Budget because it is required under the Special Provisions? And, why is there a need for this Special Budget for the release of lump-sum appropriations?

SEC. DIOKNO. This is ... Special Budget would show exactly how the amount being requested will be used, okay. So, sometimes we even require a feasibility study, detailed engineering, and so forth and so on. So, we don't just release money without knowing exactly how it will be utilized.

REP. ZARATE. Yes. In fact, from the same provision of Section 66, the following can be found: the Special Budget shall include the complete details of the programs, activities, and projects covering the lump-sum appropriations with the corresponding cost up to the lowest level, meaning, province, city, municipal, as the case may be. So, interpreting this particular provision, am I right, Mr. Secretary, to assume that projects with description like "Concreting of Local Road in Pangil, Laguna" which can be found in page 1,643 in the details of the DPWH budget are not line items but lump-sum appropriations. Can you confirm that, Mr. Secretary?

SEC. DIOKNO. If it's a line item in the DPWH budget, then it's not a lump-sum appropriation, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Well ...

SEC. DIOKNO. If it's a line item in the DPWH budget. If it's part of these lump sums that we're talking about, then we require them a specific description, not only description but also detailed information about the cost, et cetera, et cetera.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. So, can you confirm that whether or not this particular entry, "Concreting of Local Road in Pangil, Laguna" -- without, you know, the details as to how, what particular area -- whether or not this is a line item or this is a lump-sum appropriation?

SEC. DIOKNO. I assume, Your Honor, that the DPWH would have the details when they included that in their budget, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. That is why I am asking, Mr. Secretary, because it's now part of the budget. How is this being interpreted by your Department when there is a particular amount with a description like "Concreting of Local Road in Laguna" without really specifying which part of Laguna, what particular. ... because that ... as required in Section 66, it must contain all the details, et cetera, et cetera.

Now, in relation to that, there is also an item ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Usually, Your Honor, when they come to us, they would have the detailed information about a particular project. So, we don't want to make this budget documents lengthy, too lengthy, so we allow that. But that—those are line items and they are supported by documents submitted by DPWH.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Because our understanding is, when we say line item, it should be very specific.

I'll cite another item, in page 938. Again, this can be found in the details of the DPWH program for 2018 GAA. It says, "EDSA Rehabilitation/Improvement Including other Major Roads in Metro Manila." Can you consider that as a line item or a lump-sum appropriation, Mr. Secretary?

SEC. DIOKNO. That's a line item if it is under DPWH. And we asked them to give us supporting documents, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. And are you saying that despite this caption or description, "EDSA Rehabilitation/Improvement Including other Major Roads in Metro Manila" with an amount, that this item is being specified as submitted by DPWH?

SEC. DIOKNO. If they are not supported with documents, then that's lump sum, okay. But if it's supported ...

REP. ZARATE. And you call this—this is a lump sum or this a line item?

SEC. DIOKNO. It's a line item under DPWH, as long as they support it with detailed information.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Escudero). Honorable Zarate, can you wrap up.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, okay. May I inquire now, Mr. Secretary, are there lump-sum items in the 2018 GAA and the proposed 2019 National Expenditure Program which are captioned as "For Comprehensive Releases"?

SEC. DIOKNO. No, Your Honor. There are no such things.

REP. ZARATE. Are you sure of that? There are no lump-sum items that are labeled as "For Comprehensive Releases," for example, the 4Ps of DSWD.

SEC. DIOKNO. That, Your Honor, that is not included in the Special Purpose Funds, they are comprehensively released.

REP. ZARATE. So, they are labeled as "Comprehensive Releases" with a corresponding lump-sum amount.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you. Now...

SEC. DIOKNO. As I said, the General Appropriations Act itself is the release document.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. I still have other questions but, can I just go to this last item, Madam Speaker. Under Table B-8 of the Regional Allocation in the NEP by Departments/Special Purpose Funds for Calendar Year 2018, the distribution of the government expenditure by region is reflected. And under that report, one will find the inequitable distribution of funds by region, as I was reviewing that. Do you share the same observation, Mr. Secretary, that the distribution of funds is inequitable if you look at it from the National Capital Region down to the ARMM?

SEC. DIOKNO. Well, you cannot just look at it in one year and say that it is inequitable because you have to have a long, long view, Madam Speaker, Your Honor. Because if in the past that particular region has already received so much assistance, then it makes sense that, maybe, for this year it should have less. Okay. And also, there are some—we have 75 major projects, Madam Speaker, Your Honor, that cut across regions. For example, the Long Haul, the South Long Haul, which is about 625 kilometers of rail tracks, so, how do you distribute that?

REP. ZARATE. At any rate, if you look at the summary of regional allocations from 2016 to 2018, and this administration is advocating, for example, to devolve, equalize the budget, for almost two budgets now, as proposed by this administration . . . ang nakikita pa rin natin na hindi totoo na iyong budget natin ay ang lahat ng rehiyon, at least, equitably distributed.

For example, the 2018, kung titingnan ho natin iyong budget natin napakalaki, 57.5 nasa national offices, nasa central office at nasa NCR, while CARAGA, for example, only gets 1.7 percent; ARMM, 1.3 percent and Region 4-B, 1.9 percent. So, taliwas ito doon sa sinasabi nating reporma na ang ating budget ay kailangang ireporma din natin that it will reflect na hindi lang ang nasa National Capital Region o nasa Kalakhang Maynila ang pinaglalaanan ng budget dahil mas malala ang kahirapan natin sa rehiyon.

Thank you for entertaining. I will have—if there's a second round, we will just appear on the second round.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Escudero relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Sharon S. Garin.

SEC. DIOKNO. We will just give you a table, Madam Speaker, Your Honor, where it shows a regionalized budget. And there's also a non-regionalized budget for various years, from 2007 to 2018. So, you get a long-term perspective on the allocation of resources by region, you know, I'll give you.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Madam Speaker, Mr. Secretary.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Garin, S.). Thank you, Honorable Zarate.

On motion of Representative Defensor, the Chair then recognized Rep. Bernadette “BH” Herrera-Dy for her questions.

QUESTIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE HERRERA-DY AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO

REP. HERRERA-DY. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good evening, Secretary.

I just have a very few clarificatory questions. The National Budget Circular No. 573, entitled, Guidelines on the Release of Funds for Fiscal Year 2018, issued on January 3, 2018, serves as the implementing guidelines of R.A. No. 10624 or our 2018 GAA, passed in Congress on December 12 and signed by the President on December 19.

However, the provisions on modification and augmentation have confused departments and agencies with the end result of—I feel that DBM, controlling the use of savings, worth hundreds of billions of pesos. It is that confusing, in fact, that it led to a point where USec Cabral of DPWH sought clarification on the modification of DBM saying that if DBM No. 573 is to be implemented, it is expected that 16 percent or more than 3,000 line items cannot be implemented.

DBM replied by stating, doon lang po ako nagulat doon sa reply ng DBM because it stated there that instead of issuing clear guidelines, DBM said, modifications of allotment can be allowed, subject to further discussions with DBM. So, I'd like to know why it is subject to further discussions with DBM. Are there not clear set guidelines regarding augmentation kung bakit po doon sa sagot nyo sa DPWH it says, modification of allotment can be allowed, subject to further discussions with DBM?

SEC. DIOKNO. Well, augmentation, let me explain that, if you have savings, you are allowed to augment an existing item. Now—but if you have, for example, if you say completion of road in Barangay A and you want to do it in Barangay B, that is not allowed because Congress specifically appropriated that money for Barangay A, okay. We cannot change what Congress has done, okay. Those are the rules. So, sometimes it's just typo error, that is allowed; but as serious transfers of appropriation from one town to another, that cannot be allowed, Your Honor.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Yes. My question is how come it says, “Modification of allotment can be allowed subject to further discussion with DBM”? Iyon po iyong question ko, why is it subject to further discussion? If it's no, then it's no. If it's allowed, then it is allowed. So, iyon lang naman po iyong tinatanong ko, kasi tinatanong ko ang

DPWH, paano kapag typographical errors? Paano kapag change in station limits? Paano kapag change in location if LGU is not existing with the same barangay, same municipality or city? The answer of DBM is “Modifications of allotment can be allowed subject to further discussion with DBM”.

SEC. DIOKNO. So, that is why, Your Honor, I wrote Secretary Villar specifically asking to make clear what is allowed, what is not allowed.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Kaya lang may “subject to” kasi, iyon lang po iyong pinagtataka ko, kasi, if it’s not allowed then you can say it’s not allowed.

SEC. DIOKNO. Sure.

REP. HERRERA-DY. If it’s allowed, these are the parameters that are allowed. Why is it, why do they have to discuss it further with DBM? Is there elbow room?

SEC. DIOKNO. What exactly, for example, what project, specific project do you have in mind?

REP. HERRERA-DY. Hindi ko po alam. Kasi, pinakita ko lang po iyong reply ninyo ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct.

REP. HERRERA-DY. ... na sinasabing—kasi, I understand if you say it’s not allowed, then clear-cut iyon, hindi allowed. But when you say it is allowed but you have to discuss with DBM, then that leaves subjectivity in the matter. Kaya po sila nalilito kasi bakit may allowable ba up to what point?

SEC. DIOKNO. For most of the cases, Your Honor, it is clear. It is only for the particular case where they have to, maybe, clarify the issues that are unclear. So, we’ll try to change this to make it clear.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Yes, I hope it can be cleared because marami pong departments are really confused on this, because kapag sinabing subject to further clarifications ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. HERRERA-DY. ... that leads to a lot of questions. So, sana po maayos po natin ito.

SEC. DIOKNO. Sure.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Then now to my next question. Recently, DBM posted in its website the

updated list of SARO. So, medyo makapal po ito, 1,500 pages. So, to my surprise DBM released augmentations to DPWH, doon po sa nakita mo, amounting to more than ₱5 billion. So, iyon na po iyong na-release na augmentations sa DPWH.

Yesterday, pinatawag po namin si USec. Cabral sa Committee, and sabi po niya, katulad noong sinasabi ni Majority Leader kanina, wala po siyang alam doon sa mga augmentation because bumababa na lang sa kanya iyong SARO. Kaya iyon po iyong gusto ko pong linawin because I would like to ask because more than ₱5 billion ang nakita kong releases. Like for example, noong December 5, ₱2.7 billion was released to the Office of the Secretary of DPWH and it says, “Release of Funds to Augment Deficient Appropriations for Various Projects”. Ano pong ibig sabihin noon, Secretary?

SEC. DIOKNO. It is up to Secretary Villar to augment. As you know, under the DAP ruling, you cannot augment a non-existing item in the budget. So, he has to look for the items that he needs more resources for.

REP. HERRERA-DY. So, we released this without them requesting it from your office.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Kasi ang sabi ni Undersecretary Cabral, hindi naman po nila alam iyong bumababang SARO sa kanila. Kaya gusto ko pong malaman, para alam ko... ni-release ninyo po iyong SARO sa kanila upon whose request?

SEC. DIOKNO. They also have a request. I can read the letter here from Mark Villar ...

REP. HERRERA-DY. Opo.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... to augment ... “May I hereby request for the release of funds in the total amount of ₱730 million for the construction, rehabilitation of various infra projects indicated in the attached Annex A.” So, this came from Secretary Villar himself.

REP. HERRERA-DY. So, ito pong ₱5 billion, is it safe to say ... para alam ko po kasi siyempre I’m just coming out from what USec. Cabral stated yesterday that they don’t know the SARO that goes down. Marami po kaming naka-witness noon na sinabi niya. So, iyong more than ₱5 billion po ba na augmentation are all requests of DPWH?

SEC. DIOKNO. These are the requests and this is the Annex A with signature of Cabral. Okay.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Okay. So, at least . . . puwede po bang humingi po ako ng kopya.

SEC. DIOKNO. Sure.

REP. HERRERA-DY. So that when we call them again . . . because before any SARO is to be released, gusto natin siyempreng makakita ng, siyempre nire-require ninyo iyong program of work, validation.

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct, correct.

REP. HERRERA-DY. And then . . . so, kumpleto po lahat ito. May paper trail po lahat itong SARO releases.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, yes, Ma'am.

REP. HERRERA-DY. I hope I can request for a copy of the paper trail of the SARO releases for the augmentation so that we can just show Usec Cabral na alam naman po pala niya at sila naman po pala iyong nag-request noon.

SEC. DIOKNO. May signature po siya.

REP. HERRERA-DY. May signature po siya. So, iyon po iyong magandang nasabi ninyo po sa amin ngayon dahil iba po iyong sagot po niya sa amin kahapon. And then . . . so do you require their endorsement before you process any request for augmentation?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes. We do not know what projects they want to fund out of their savings so we ask for their list and then we forward it to the Office of the President and then it goes back to them, Your Honor.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Doon po sa nakita ko, how come there are no augmentations for other agencies? Only DPWH, except, of course, for PS and RLID?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes. The old practice, Your Honor, is that they have a separate . . . they pool it together and then they, out of that pool, they fund projects, okay. This is—we identify where the money is coming from and then we ask them where do you want to use the money.

REP. HERRERA-DY. May ibang agencies din po ba na nag-request for augmentation?

SEC. DIOKNO. Meron din po.

REP. HERRERA-DY. Because I didn't see . . .

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, yes.

REP. HERRERA-DY. . . . I didn't see it in the SARO that you . . . but you have released augmentation to them already.

SEC. DIOKNO. The biggest department with savings is the Department of Public Works.

REP. HERRERA-DY. That's DPWH. And then, gusto ko lang din pong linawin because you answered a while ago that the savings will be reflected in the BESF. Wala naman po yata doon iyong reflection noong savings sa BESF. Kasi makikita po iyan sa national expenditure . . . hanggang 2017 lang, wala pa po iyong 2018.

SEC. DIOKNO. Nasa NEP daw, NEP, not BESF.

REP. HERRERA-DY. NEP for the 2017, right? Iyong 2018, siguro magre-request na lang po ako . . .

SEC. DIOKNO. Sige, sige.

REP. HERRERA-DY. . . . noong tungkol po doon sa detalye po ng savings natin for 2018. I just wanted to correct that. It's not in the BESF, we cannot find it there.

Iyon lamang po, Madam Speaker. Marami pong salamat. I just look forward to the submission of the documents from the good Secretary. Thank you.

At this juncture, the Chair recognized Rep. Makmod D. Mending Jr. to ask his questions.

QUESTIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE MENDING AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO

REP. MENDING. Assalamu alaikum and good evening, Madam Speaker. Good Secretary, Sir, magandang gabi po.

SEC. DIOKNO. Good evening, good evening.

REP. MENDING. And to your family, the DBM, good evening po.

Galing po kasi ako sa Marawi kahapon kaya iyon iyong una kong tanong: the NEP submitted to Congress is the President's budget, tama po?

SEC. DIOKNO. That's correct, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. Ang naka-earmark po sa NDRRM Fund for Marawi Rehabilitation is ₱3.5 billion. Ito po ba ay indicative of the priority of the President?

SEC. DIOKNO. No, Your Honor. In addition to the three point . . . this is for 2019 or 2018?

REP. MENDING. 2019 po.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yeah, there are more funds from the 2018 budget and we have recently had a pledging session where I think we raised something like ₱35 billion out of possible ₱70 billion, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. Thank you, Madam Speaker. May we know in what agencies are the funds intended for the rehabilitation of Marawi embedded?

SEC. DIOKNO. Usually, the . . . it's Public Works, National Housing Authority, and the HUDCC, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. I am talking about the proposed 2019 budget, Madam Speaker, because sa pagsuyod ko noong budget na iyon, wala po akong nakita. May we confirm, Madam Speaker, from the good Secretary, saan pong ahensiya nakalagay, magkano, among proyekto iyong para sa rehabilitation ng Marawi?

SEC. DIOKNO. For 2018, under NDRRM allocation, we have regular ₱7.6 billion, another ₱2 billion for what we call parametric insurance, and then another ₱10 billion just really for Marawi...

REP. MENDING. Yes, Madam Speaker...

SEC. DIOKNO. ... so, that's a total of...

REP. MENDING. ... 2018 po iyon currently ₱10 billion.

SEC. DIOKNO. ... ₱19.6. Now for 2019...

REP. MENDING. Iyong 2019 po na proposal...

SEC. DIOKNO. No, in addition...

REP. MENDING. ... of the President's budget...

SEC. DIOKNO. In addition, okay. Itong 2019, we have ₱16.5 billion for Marawi and then ₱3.5 billion again for Marawi or a total of ₱20 billion; and then in addition, we have Quick Response Fund of about ₱6.45 billion, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. May we know saan po iyong

₱16 billion? Saan pong ahensiya nakalagay iyong pondo na iyon?

SEC. DIOKNO. Sa NDRRMC siya.

REP. MENDING. My reading of the NDRRMC is that the earmarked amount is only ₱3.5 billion for Marawi rehabilitation under the NEP and adopted by the GAB. May we confirm from the good Secretary, Madam Speaker?

SEC. DIOKNO. I was informed that we have set aside ₱16.5 billion if it's really necessary on top of the ₱3.5 billion. So, for a total of ₱20 billion.

REP. MENDING. Yes, Madam Speaker, Secretary, gusto ko pong malaman nasaan iyong ₱16.5? Nakasulat ba siya sa GAB ngayon?

SEC. DIOKNO. Nasa NDRRMC po, nasa NDRRMC.

REP. MENDING. NDRRMC. The NDRRMC fund is how much for 2019 proposed?

SEC. DIOKNO. Total of ₱20 billion, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. Twenty billion? So, ₱3.5 is earmarked for Marawi? May mga QRF po ba diyan?

SEC. DIOKNO. Iyong QRF is separate.

REP. MENDING. Nasa mga agencies.

SEC. DIOKNO. You have ₱6.4 billion QRF.

REP. MENDING. Sa mga agencies.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. So, ₱3.5 plus ₱6.4, that makes ₱9.9 billion, you have a balance of ₱11. Where is that ₱16 billion, Madam Speaker?

SEC. DIOKNO. The ₱20 billion is ₱16.5 plus ₱3.5, that's NDRRMC proper.

REP. MENDING. Yes, I understand.

SEC. DIOKNO. And then you have QRF of ₱6.45 billion.

REP. MENDING. So, meaning to say balanse iyong ₱16.5, walang earmarking?

SEC. DIOKNO. Wala pang commitment iyon.

REP. MENDING. Yes, so, available siya if and when necessary for Marawi rehab...

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct.

REP. MENDING. ... it will—it can be earmarked...

SEC. DIOKNO. It can be.

REP. MENDING. ... for Marawi rehab.

SEC. DIOKNO. Plus, you know, we have also foreign loans, we can actually use that in the event that there's really a need for it.

REP. MENDING. Yes, my point, Madam Speaker, is this, are we saying that mas gugustuhin pa natin iyong foreign funding para sa rehabilitation ng mga kapatid natin sa Marawi kaysa iyong guarantee ng General Appropriations Act, Madam Speaker? Is it the policy of this administration?

SEC. DIOKNO. It cannot be done within one year anyway, okay? We're cash budgeting. We do not want to go over budget and then it will not be used for 2019, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. Yes, again, my question is, are we or is this administration's policy to use foreign funding for the rehabilitation of Marawi rather than local funds or funds in the General Appropriations Act, Madam Speaker? Policy question lang po, Mr. Secretary.

SEC. DIOKNO. For policy question, we are committed to raise money for Marawi, right? As I've said, there will be ₱3.5 billion already pledged; and then the Secretary of Finance is committed to raise the money himself, the Marawi bond for Marawi.

REP. MENDING. Thank you, Madam Speaker, Secretary. Would you be familiar with what happened in Yolanda, as to the pledges? Were they fulfilled or not?

REP. DIOKNO. Well, you cannot compare Yolanda with Marawi. President Duterte is not President Aquino. Okay.

REP. MENDING. All right. Would you be familiar with Yolanda? What happened with the pledges? Do you have data?

REP. DIOKNO. I was not in the government at that time, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. But you have no historical data in the DBM.

REP. DIOKNO. We ...

REP. MENDING. You are not informed about it.

REP. DIOKNO. I was informed that it is posted in the website, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. All right. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Ang next question ko po is, iyong para matuto tayo, ano po iyong unappropriated surplus of the General Fund?

REP. DIOKNO. I was told that it's not a real account. It is an account where you put all the reversions, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. You put all the ...

REP. DIOKNO. The reversions, the money that was not spent will revert to that fund.

REP. MENDING. Would you have historical data with you for the past two years only? Let's say, '16 and '17. How much unappropriated surplus of the General Fund for '16 and '17?

REP. DIOKNO. It is the Bureau of Treasury, Your Honor, that has the total amount. We'll give you a copy of that in writing.

REP. MENDING. Thank you. How is this unappropriated surplus of the General Fund utilized?

REP. DIOKNO. It's not utilized, Your Honor. It's, as I said ...

REP. MENDING. Because it goes to a different account; and then, how do we draw from that?

REP. DIOKNO. As I said, it's already a reversion. So, you don't draw from it, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. So, you can utilize it for what purpose?

REP. DIOKNO. You cannot utilize it, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. You cannot use it anymore.

REP. DIOKNO. You cannot use it anymore.

REP. MENDING. The Treasury knows how much is the total.

REP. DIOKNO. Yes, and we will ask them to provide you a copy, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. Okay. So, in the definition of savings, can it be posted again? I asked this before about the abandonment of a programmed activity or a project. In this administration, has the power of abandonment of an appropriation or a programmed activity or project been used? Has it been exercised, the power of abandonment?

REP. DIOKNO. Yes, there are some projects that have been abandoned, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. May we know what are these projects that were abandoned?

REP. DIOKNO. We'll ask the agencies to come up with the list of the projects they have abandoned, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. Thank you, Madam Speaker, good Secretary. May we know the limitation once a programmed activity or project is abandoned. What would be the effect?

REP. DIOKNO. Well, I think the rule is you can no longer ask for money for that particular project for the next two fiscal years.

REP. MENDING. Precisely, why I'm asking that, Madam Speaker, good Secretary, to be able to determine if that rule was followed.

REP. DIOKNO. So, in case final discontinuance or abandonment is used as basis in the declaration of savings, such discontinued or abandoned program, activity or project shall no longer be proposed for funding in the next two fiscal years.

REP. MENDING. Yes, Madam Speaker, gusto po nating malaman kung ano iyong in-abandon, so that we would be able to know if the same programmed activity or project has been funded in the NEP of 2019 or as what you have indicated in the GAB. That is why I am asking for the list.

REP. DIOKNO. We will give you the list, Your Honor. We don't have it right now.

REP. MENDING. Okay. Thank you. Madam Speaker, would the Secretary, please, distinguish for us the impoundment of an appropriation from the abandonment of a programmed activity or a project?

REP. DIOKNO. Impoundment is when a decision is made not to release the money because of some, maybe, some unmanageable public sector deficit.

REP. MENDING. So, a decision not to release.

REP. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. MENDING. Would that be the same with abandonment?

REP. DIOKNO. No, that's different. Abandonment is, the money has already been released and then ...

REP. MENDING. You abandoned the implementation.

REP. DIOKNO. ...and then the agency has abandoned the project.

REP. MENDING. Abandoned the implementation.

REP. DIOKNO. Yes, for that ...

REMINDER FROM THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair reminded Representative Mending on the 10-minute rule and requested that he wrap up his questions.

QUESTIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE MENDING AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO (Continuation)

REP. MENDING. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Iyon lang po iyong gusto kong maintindihan kasi iyong distinction ng impoundment at saka abandonment because in impoundment, there is a Joint Resolution coming from both Houses agreeing to the impoundment. Whereas, in abandonment, that is the power of the President or those authorized. Would that be correct, Mr. Secretary?

SEC. DIOKNO. Correct, Your Honor.

REP. MENDING. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good evening.

At this point, on motion of Rep. Florida "Rida" P. Robes, the Chair recognized Deputy Speaker Prospero A. Pichay Jr. for his questions.

**QUESTIONS OF
DEPUTY SPEAKER PICHAY
AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO**

REP. PICHAY. Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wouldn't have asked questions, but you know I did not like the answer when the Minority Floor Leader asked a question.

I would like to ask whether the policy of not releasing the money intended for road maintenance is a written policy? As you said, it is the policy of the Administration not to release because there was a plan to abolish. Is it a written policy?

SEC. DIOKNO. No, it's not written. It's a result of various top-level meetings in the Palace, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. So, there is no written policy?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. Are you aware that the MVUC is a law?

SEC. DIOKNO. We know that, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. You know that. So, an unwritten policy can amend the law? In other words, you can violate the law because there is an unwritten policy?

SEC. DIOKNO. The policy is not to release. That's the policy by the President.

REP. PICHAY. My question is, can a policy amend the law? Because the law states—I think I have a copy of the law. Let me read, Section 7 of Republic Act No. 8794—I think the author of this Bill is our Minority Floor Leader. Section 7 states, "Disposition of Monies Collected. All monies collected under this Act shall be earmarked solely and used exclusively (1) for road maintenance and the improvement of road drainage, (2) for the installation of adequate and efficient traffic lights and road safety devices, and number three (3) for the air pollution control." Now, can a policy amend the law? Please, answer with sincerity. Because if you do not give me the right answer, then, all you have said here tonight, will be deemed as not true.

SEC. DIOKNO. Your Honor, we have anticipated the abolition of the Road Board.

REP. PICHAY. You cannot anticipate an abolition.

SEC. DIOKNO. It has been passed by the House.

REP. PICHAY. Since it was not abolished...

SEC. DIOKNO. It's been passed by the...

REP. PICHAY. Then it's your duty, I'm still speaking, since it was not abolished, then, it is your duty to release. Only after it is abolished then you do not release the funds, because the law dictates that you have to release it. So, it's still the policy that will count. Let me ask you, because then you will be liable to an anti-graft.

SEC. DIOKNO. I have been instructed not to release, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. Who instructed?

SEC. DIOKNO. The group.

REP. PICHAY. The group. So, the group now can overrule a law?

SEC. DIOKNO. The group that is supposed to administer the fund, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. Can you name names, so that we can invite them here in the House.

SEC. DIOKNO. We have Secretary Dominguez, myself, Secretary Tugade, Secretary Villar and he's the...

REP. PICHAY. So, that group...

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. PICHAY. So, that group can now amend the law passed by Congress?

SEC. DIOKNO. I don't think so, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. If you then don't think so, then why don't you release the funds? Because it is mandated by law that you have to release it.

SEC. DIOKNO. There is no instruction for me to release the fund, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. The law is the instruction.

SEC. DIOKNO. Many of the laws, Your Honor, may or may not be released. It's just a manner of programming.

REP. PICHAY. So, in other words, you are not going to follow the law because four people instructed you not to release?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, it is.

REP. PICHAY. I don't want to belabor the issue. But the fact that Congress passed the law, and then that law is not being followed then ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Your Honor, if I remember, you passed a law abolishing it. Senate also passed a law.

REP. PICHAY. We have not passed a law abolishing, there were bills that were actually proposed,...

SEC. DIOKNO. You have, but the Senate also ...

REP. PICHAY. ... but there was no law passed to abolish it.

SEC. DIOKNO. The Senate also ratified.

REP. PICHAY. Let me ask you now.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay.

REP. PICHAY. Has the MVUC been abolished?

SEC. DIOKNO. No, not yet.

REP. PICHAY. So if it's not abolished, why did you not release the funds? Because the mandate of the law is that you have to release the fund exclusively for the purposes that I mentioned.

SEC. DIOKNO. Because I have no contrary instruction from the top, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. The instruction comes from the law. Submit to us the written instruction.

SEC. DIOKNO. Okay.

REP. PICHAY. Because from that written instruction, then we will continue our Question Hour. Now, another question. I move to another question. I understand that around ₱7.5 billion has been allocated for the ASEAN Games.

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. So, saan po nakalagay iyong ₱7.5 billion na iyan?

SEC. DIOKNO. Right now, it's with the Department of Foreign Affairs, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. Is the Department of Foreign Affairs mandated to conduct tournaments or competition?

SEC. DIOKNO. I understand that the Senate is going to transfer it to the Sports Commission, Your Honor.

REP. PICHAY. So, how did it come to pass that money intended for sports will be allocated in the Department of Foreign Affairs?

SEC. DIOKNO. It was requested by then Foreign Affairs Secretary who's on top of the ASEAN Games.

REP. PICHAY. In other words, let's say, the Department of Foreign Affairs will request that ₱10 billion be allocated for infrastructure in the Department of Foreign Affairs, you are going to follow that?

SEC. DIOKNO. For what purpose, Your Honor?

REP. PICHAY. Well, for the purpose of building.

SEC. DIOKNO. For the purpose of building, we will allow it, if it is for the building of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Garin (S.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Escudero.

REP. PICHAY. The Department of Foreign Affairs has no mandate. There is an agency that has the mandate to promote sports and to spend money for various international events which is the PSC. So in the first place, why did you not put it sa PSC? Ano bang milagro iyan?

SEC. DIOKNO. Well, we have placed that before under the Office of the President, the APEC, and the ASEAN. Remember we hosted both ASEAN and APEC. We put the budget under the Office of the President.

REP. PICHAY. Well, that should be understood because we are the host of that event, and the President was very much involved in that. But this is sports, you know, this is not about diplomatic relationship. This is about sports, and there is an agency tasked to do these things which is the PSC. Ang tanong ko lang, bakit nilagay ninyo diyan sa

Department of Foreign Affairs when it should have been placed under the PSC which is the agency that is mandated to do these things?

SEC. DIOKNO. I understand that at that time the Department of Foreign Affairs Secretary was the Chairman of the ASEAN Committee.

REP. PICHAY. Even if you are the Chairman.

SEC. DIOKNO. Now, that he is no longer there, it will be transferred to the Sports Commission.

REP. PICHAY. Are you aware that the new Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs does not want that money there? Because if they are going to spend it, how are they going to liquidate it? It is not related to their job.

SEC. DIOKNO. That is why it is going to be transferred to the Sports Commission.

REP. PICHAY. Why did you put it there? You are supposed to be the Secretary of DBM.

SEC. DIOKNO. It was so they...

REP. PICHAY. You should have told them, "I cannot put it there because you don't have the mandate, I'll rather put it with PSC." Anyway, Madam Speaker, I don't need the answer. I do not want to belabor the issue. That is all. Thank you very much, and good evening, everyone.

At this point, on motion of Representative Robes, the Chair recognized Rep. Salvador B. Belaro Jr. who signified to deliver a manifestation instead of posing questions to Secretary Diokno.

MANIFESTATION OF REPRESENTATIVE BELARO

My dear colleagues, Madam Speaker, all along we have been taught that the power of Congress is to make the laws and in Constitutional Law, the power to make the laws is fortified by the ability to finance such laws. Hence, it is called the power of the purse.

Now, all these discussions in Congress showed us that indeed we have effectively abdicated the power of the purse. It began by the exposés of the good Majority Leader on this single contractor handling billions of pesos of projects and misaligned perceptions as to the role of Congress in the budgetary process. The present state of affairs is that

there is confusion as to which, saan po nakalagay ang power of the purse? Well, to be fair to the good Secretary, it is understandable because of the recent development in jurisprudence. For instance, in the case of *Belgica vs. Ochoa*, the infamous pork barrel case, it has outlined rules that made the rule more confusing.

In the same manner, the rule on DAP, *Arroyo vs. Aquino* has further outlined the rule that made us more confused. Hindi lang po ako bilang first-termer kung hindi po ang milyong-milyong mga Filipino ay naguguluhan po kung ano ba talaga ang proper role ng Kongreso sa usaping ito. And isa lang po ang kasagutan diyan. We have to uphold the rule of law and ano po ang rule of law? The rule of law implies that we have to return to the basics and the basics is that ito po ang principle of separation of powers. A principle enshrined as early as the case of *Angara vs. Electoral Commission*; and the rule is here, and may I just remind the Body there should be—the rule, the standard is this one: There should be a faithful implementation of the role of the Executive implementing the project. The key word is "faithful implementation of the Executive power."

Ngayon po tanungin natin, ang batas po ay nakalagay sa GAA. Ito po ay nakalagay doon explicitly kung ano po ang provisions na dapat gawin ng DBM. Let me outline it. The Rule on Savings is laid out in Section 69. May mga requirements po ang savings bago ito ma-obtain. Ang tanong ko po sa good Secretary, has the Department been faithful in implementing the terms and conditions of this provision? The Rule on Augmentation is laid out in Section 70. Bago po magkaroon ng augmentation, mayroon po itong mga preconditions. Again, the question: Has the Department of Budget and Management been faithful to implement it and mayroong corollary tanong po doon, faithful to whom? Faithful to the mandate?

Kanina po naririnig ko, faithful to the President. Was the President the deciding factor in determining who should dispense the budget? May confusion po tayo doon. Malaking-malaking confusion. Section 95 on Financial Reports. Nakalagay po doon—quarterly reporting to the House of Representatives, the Rule on Lump Sum. Section 66, nakalagay din po doon iyong rules. Has the Department of Budget and Management been faithful to its provisions?

Ito po ang sinabi kanina ni Deputy Speaker Pichay, the Rule on Impoundment- Section 63. Ang nakalagay po doon there should be special authority

from Congress to move the Road Board Funds – has not been complied.

Ito pa hong isa, Section 64 in relation to Section 83, the prohibition against retention, reduction of funds, reversion of unexpected balances of appropriations. In short, hindi po gagalaw ang pondo kung walang mandato ang Kongreso.

Ang tanong ko, has there been a faithful compliance with the provisions of the GAA? Ito po siyuro ay i-pursue ko na lang sa Committee on Public Accounts. Pero ito pong mga nangyari ngayon, isa lang po ang nagpapatunay, na ito po is just—kung baga the tip of the iceberg. They are just lucky right now that we have a Speaker who is a former President of the land, the highest executive of the country. And we are also fortunate that we have a Majority Leader who is a former Department of Budget Secretary and, of course, our Minority Leader who initiated this Question Hour.

Ito pong usaping ito is larger than life. Hindi lang po ito question of power of the purse. Let me narrate to you what happened to my Committee hearing this afternoon. Ako po ay nag-attend sa Bicol Recovery and Economic Development Committee hearing at ang isa pong usapin doon ay kinakastiga iyong Department of Social Welfare and Development kasi hindi po sila nag-re-report sa mga projects. This is our present state of affairs. Hindi na po tayo ginagalang ng mga departamento, kasi alam po nila wala sa atin ang power of the purse. Ito po ang realization na dapat natin gawin. Let's do it not only for our constituency but also for the country. Let us regain the power of the purse because it would make us better constituents, better lawmakers, na kapag sinabi po natin na tayo ay mag-a-appropriate ng pondo, ito po ay mangyayari because we, indeed, have the power.

Marami pong salamat.

Thereupon, on motion of Representative Robes, the Chair recognized Rep. Maximo B. Rodriguez Jr. for his questions.

QUESTIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE RODRIGUEZ (M.) AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO

REP. RODRIGUEZ (M.). I would like to go to the train of thought of Honorable Pichay. In many of our meetings in Mindanao Affairs Committee, it's about the Road Board and the release of the funds. And it was mentioned there a while ago that even it's a law and there was this law that abolishes it, no—not yet a law but a bill, he forgot to mention

that that bill has been rescinded already. And I want to present to you the official Journal of the House of Representatives dated September 12. Here it says, "Rescindment of the approval of House Bill No. 7436." That's the law that wishes to abolish the Road Board and it says, "With leave of the House on motion of Majority Leader Rolando G. Andaya, Jr., the Body acting as a whole, rescinded the approval of House Bill No. 7436, which was previously approved on Third Reading by the Body." It was then placed under the Bicameral Conference Committee to the effect that the House will no longer pursue its passage. And so, this is a reminder to us, Secretary, that there's no law—there's no bill already that stands for its abolition. And the law is still the Road Board Law or MVUC.

And so, I came here because during our meeting with the Mindanao Affairs Committee composed of 60 Congressmen, I was tasked to talk to you about this Resolution which we filed already in the House, House Resolution No. 2362, in which we wish to have this resolution adopted, informing the Department of Budget and Management that the House of Representatives has rescinded its approval of House Bill No. 7436, entitled: "AN ACT ABOLISHING THE ROAD BOARD AND PROVIDING FOR THE DISTRIBUTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE MOTOR VEHICLE USER'S CHARGE COLLECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8794, ENTITLED 'AN ACT IMPOSING A MOTOR VEHICLE USER'S CHARGE ON OWNERS OF ALL TYPES OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES AND RELEASE THE FUNDS FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION'."

This, in effect, is the whole picture of the Road Board funds. And I wish to encourage the Secretary to please reconsider the decision which is erroneous, the decision of the policymakers in the Cabinet, whoever they may be that, as of now, the Bill abolishing the Road Board had been rescinded, that was dated September 12, this year, and the Committee on Mindanao Affairs which I chaired has this Resolution already which is filed in the House and will be taken up in the plenary soon, probably tomorrow. I would just like to appeal to the Secretary that all of our Congressmen have not received—have not availed of the benefits given to the fund itself to repair our roads, put street lights, pedestrian overpasses, and others.

And me, as a Mindanaoan, I would really appeal to the Secretary, to your good sense of patriotism, that we in Mindanao need the funds, we need it to be released, we need to have it implemented in

our roads. You know, I have been an avid supporter of the advocacy for the increase of Mindanao funds.

And so, that is my appeal, Mr. Secretary, and if this has to be sent to the principal Cabinet, then we will send this Resolution so that you can change your minds—and even to the President. Because, for all we know, we didn't know that this Bill abolishing Road Board has not been rescinded. Even the Cabinet, for that matter, has not known that this Bill has been rescinded. And, you see, they are hoping that this will be approved, or they have to approve the bill itself, but no more, there's no bill to approve and the law on the motor vehicle tax is still there.

SEC. DIOKNO. We will convene the Road Board, Your Honor, and we will bring this up.

REP. RODRIGUEZ (M.). Yes. I sent you already an advance copy of the Resolution ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. RODRIGUEZ (M.). ... and I hope you will find time to show this to them. In fact, the House Journal, I will be giving this to Usec. Jumilla, Usec. Bravo, I have talked to them earlier—only that I have to tell this now in open plenary because my members in the House will be asking me what has transpired in this meeting. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

SEC. DIOKNO. Thank you very much, Your Honor.

At this juncture, the Chair recognized Rep. Arnolfo “Arnie” A. Teves Jr. to ask his questions.

QUESTIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE TEVES AND ANSWERS OF SECRETARY DIOKNO

REP. TEVES. Thank you, Madam Speaker; good evening everybody. Gusto ko lang itanong, Madam Speaker, kung ano iyong wisdom ng across-the-board budget cut. Halos lahat ng departamento, halos lahat ng distrito na-cut iyong budget. Kumbaga, yes, they slashed the budget. Gusto ko lang malaman, ano ang wisdom nito?

SEC. DIOKNO. Your Honor, there is no wisdom in across-the-board. It is a lazy way of reducing the budget. You have to choose the priorities, Your Honor.

REP. TEVES. So ngayon pa lang nakita natin na gumawa tayo ng hakbang na walang wisdom. Kung intindihin ko iyon, walang wisdom, sa akin kabobohan eh or hindi pinag-isipan. Unang-una,

hindi ko maintindihan because mayroong ibang distrito na kulang pa iyong budget nila dahil mabilis magtrabaho. Hindi naman natin dini-deny na mayroon ding ibang distrito na hindi kayang i-absorb at iyong ibang ahensiya hindi kayang i-absorb iyong budget nila. So, how can we increase absorptive capacity if we cut the budgets on those who can afford to spend? Iyon lang sana ang isa rin na tanong ko, how can we increase absorptive capacity kung iyong kayang mag-absorb ng budget kina-cut din, katulad ng hindi maka-absorb ng budget?

SEC. DIOKNO. Your Honor, when we do budgeting at our level, we only look at the department level, we don't go to the regional level. So, if there is disparity among regions, I think you can raise that question to the respective Department Secretaries, Your Honor.

REP. TEVES. Ni-raise na namin ito, Madam Speaker, sa Secretary, ang turo nila, DBM. Ang sa akin pa, kung nag-across-the-board budget cut tayo, matanong ko lang, do we support the President's “Build, Build, Build” Program?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, we do, Your Honor.

REP. TEVES. Ngayon, hindi ko na maintindihan, papaano ka gagawa ng Build, Build, Build kung ang budget mo slash, slash, slash, ‘di ba?

SEC. DIOKNO. Your Honor, I think...

REP. TEVES. It's way beyond logic, Madam Speaker.

SEC. DIOKNO. Now, I get the tenor of your question. The reduction in the budget for 2019 is because it's cash-based budgeting, Your Honor, from obligation-based—two year obligation-based budgeting. So, that's the reason for the reduction in the budget of the respective departments.

REP. TEVES. Whatever the reason is, Madam Speaker, ang sa akin lang, papaano ka magbi-build—hindi ko alam sa Tagalog e, sa Bisaya, magtukod ‘no. How can you build when you don't have the budget? Because budget, whether cash or inutang mo, budget pa rin iyon—makaka-build ka. Pero kung tinanggalan mo ng budget, definitely, you will build less. Anyway, naniniwala ba kayo na kung hindi gumastos iyong gobyerno, it contributes to unemployment?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. TEVES. Do you consider yourself as part of the economic team of the President?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. TEVES. Do you think we have a good economy?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, Your Honor. Next year, the economy will grow by seven percent—lower inflation of between two to four percent, Your Honor, and we will have much higher foreign direct investments.

REP. TEVES. So, ngayon, hindi ko na alam kung sino iyong tama, iyong mas maraming taumbayan o iyong Budget Secretary natin. Ang daming nanonood sa TV ngayon, gusto ko matanong sa inyo, “Kumusta iyong buhay ninyo?”

I would like to ask the Budget Secretary. Do you think the Filipinos today, mas maganda ba iyong buhay nila ngayon or mas hirap sila now compared to last year? Mas nahihirapan ba sila ngayon or mas magaan iyong buhay nila?

SEC. DIOKNO. I think they are much better now than before, Your Honor.

REP. TEVES. I wish to disagree, Madam Speaker. Bago ako naging Congressman, isa akong Barangay Captain. Hanggang ngayon, I am very well attached to the ground. My son is the ABC President of our Province, he is in contact with the barangay captains at sa ibang barangay captain at ibang ABC president ng Pilipinas.

Kung mali ako, mag-re-resign ako. Ang tanong ko, willing ba kayong mag-resign kung kayo iyong mali? Dahil tanungin natin ang taumbayan kung mas magaan ba buhay nila ngayon compared sa dati. Ang kasama ko dito sa Manila—wala iyong pamilya ko, kasama ko dito driver ko, bodyguard ko, helper ko. Tinatanong ko sila, kumusta buhay nila, ang sabi nila, “Pahirap nang pahirap nang pahirap.”

At hindi natin ma-deny, ang bilihin ay pamahal nang pamahal nang pamahal. I think even our workers here in Congress agree with me that life is getting harder and harder every day. And to me, a good economy is an economy felt by the people na gumaan iyong buhay nila. Ngayon, Madam Speaker, I'd like to make a manifestation na kung ganito iyong magpapatakbo ng ating ekonomiya, na hindi nila nakikita na nahihirapan na pala ang taumbayan, wala tayong mapapala at mas lalo tayong mahihirapan.

Sana marinig ito ng ating Presidente na akala ng ating Budget Secretary, gumaganda iyong buhay ng

Pilipino pero sa katotohanan, hindi naman. And I'm sure of that, because again, I'm in contact with the masses, baka kayo, hindi? Iyon ho, Madam Speaker, ang daming issues na, 'no. Ang daming issues—mayroon pa kaninang admissions of violations of the law. Kahit abutin pa tayo rito ng bukas, wala tayong mapapala.

I move, Madam Speaker, that we refer all these issues to the Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability and also to the Committee on Public Accounts for further discussion, deliberations and investigation. I so move, and that is all for tonight. Thank you very much.

At this point, on motion of Representative Marcoleta, the Chair recognized Minority Leader Suarez for his manifestation.

MANIFESTATION OF MINORITY LEADER SUAREZ

REP. SUAREZ. Thank you, Madam Speaker, a very short manifestation. The good Secretary mentioned that you do not have clearance from the President to release the Road Board Fund. Do you have to seek a clearance from him?

SEC. DIOKNO. That there was policy decision not to release, Your Honor, so, unless I am instructed otherwise, I will not release.

REP. SUAREZ. Now, what I have here, Mr. Secretary, is a letter signed by you addressed to the Chairman of the Road Board, bearing in mind that what is being requested here, very close to the chest and to the heart of the Members of the House because this partially addresses our request for the repair of our national roads. Now, your reply is that you are waiting for the copy of the Resolution that the Road Board will not be abolished.

The Road Board of the Philippines signed by Secretary Tugade, Mr. Necasario, Secretary Villar, Assistant Secretary Joven—you're the only one that did not sign. Did this pass to your office for your signature and you just simply said, “I am not going to sign this or ...?”

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, I have seen that and I just returned the ...

REP. SUAREZ. No, I have it with me, requesting ₱4 billion. Another one is requesting for ₱631 million. The other one is P4,000,000,812, and Special Road Safety Fund, ₱150 million, Your Honor.

Now, glaring at this listing, asphalt overlay with reflectorized thermoplastic, Metro Manila, Ifugao, Ilocos Norte, Isabela, Pangasinan, Isabela, Bataan, Nueva Vizcaya, Bulacan, Pampanga, Pampanga, Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Laguna, Laguna, Quezon, my district is not here, only First District, never mind, but this represents vindication to the motorists.

Alam po ba ninyo kung bakit natin ginawa ang MVUC? Iyon pong bayad sa plaka, kinuha natin on an increasing basis of—nilagyan po natin ng staggered increase ang schedule, at sinasabi natin sa motorists, gaganda naman ang kalsadang dadaanan ninyo, but bearing in mind, Mr. Secretary, during that time, hirap pa ho tayo sa pera. As a matter of fact, I have to admit, I was asked when I was the Chair of Ways and Means Committee to pass this through the recommendation of World Bank and IMF. Kaya this whole year, wala ho kayong nire-release ni isa. Why? Magtatapos na ho tayo ng 2018.

SEC. DIOKNO. The motor vehicles users' tax is a good tax, Your Honor, I agree. But, to be administered by a small group, unelected, that is what is objectionable, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Small group?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. SUAREZ. They are your colleagues in the Cabinet.

SEC. DIOKNO. I know, even myself, I don't want to be like a mini-Congress. I don't want that role. It should be assigned to Congress, Your Honor.

REP. SUAREZ. Did you make your comments formally?

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes, that is understood by my colleagues.

REP. SUAREZ. You address that to Secretary Tugade, ...

SEC. DIOKNO. Yes.

REP. SUAREZ. ... Assistant Secretary Nece-sario, Secretary Villar, Dominguez.

SEC. DIOKNO. That ...

REP. SUAREZ. Na hindi pa nire-release ito.

SEC. DIOKNO. The power to allocate important tax, which is a good tax, Your Honor, should be given back to Congress. That's our position.

REP. SUAREZ. Your Honor, we crafted the four different support funds in these trust funds. As a matter of fact, I intentionally put it in a trust fund para hindi ho ninyo mapakialaman. I mean, hindi ka pa ho naman Cabinet Secretary noon, sa DBM. But, purposely, that was the purpose of this Representation.

Nevertheless, Madam Speaker, this issue, maybe, can be taken up in a different venue. I just heard you when you said that there was no approval from the President and with my limited knowledge of what really transpired in the conversation between the Chairman of the Board and no less than the President, there was an approval and an instruction given to one of the high officials of the Palace to inform you to release the Road Board Fund. I'll have that verified.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

TERMINATION OF THE QUESTION HOUR

Thereafter, on motion of Representative Mar-coleta, there being no objection, the Body terminated the Question Hour.

EXPLANATION OF VOTE ON R.B.H. NO.15 BY REPRESENTATIVE ALEJANO

On further motion of Representative Marcoleta, there being no objection, the Body took note of the submitted written explanation of Rep. Gary C. Alejano with respect to his "No" vote on R.B.H. No. 15, a copy of which will be given to the Office of the Secretary General.

RATIFICATION OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON HOUSE BILL NO. 6938 AND SENATE BILL NO. 1971

On successive motions of Representative Mar-coleta, there being no objection, the Body considered and subsequently ratified the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 6938 and Senate Bill No. 1971, providing for the special protection of child passengers in motor vehicles.

**RATIFICATION OF CONFERENCE
COMMITTEE REPORT
ON HOUSE BILL NO. 8302**

On successive motions of Representative Marcoleta, there being no objection, the Body considered and subsequently ratified the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing votes on House Bill No. 8302, granting MORE Electric and Power Corporation a franchise to establish, operate, and maintain, for commercial purposes and in the public interest, a distribution system for the conveyance of electric power to the end users in the City of Iloilo.

APPROVAL OF JOURNAL NO. 39

At this point, on motion of Representative Marcoleta, there being no objection, the Body approved Journal No. 39 dated December 10, 2018.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On motion of Representative Marcoleta, the Chair suspended the session at 8:19 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

The session resumed at 8:20 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

On motion of Representative Marcoleta, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, December 11, 2018.

It was 8:21 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

(Sgd.) **MR. DANTE ROBERTO P. MALING**
Acting Secretary General

Approved on January 14, 2019.

Congress of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Philippines

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE*Journal No. 40***Tuesday, December 11, 2018**

ABAYA	BENITEZ	DEL ROSARIO
ABAYON	BERNOS	DELOSO-MONTALLA
ABELLANOSA	BERTIZ	DIMAPORO (A.)
ABU	** BIAZON	DIMAPORO (M.K.)
ABUEG	BILLONES	DUAVIT
ACHARON	BIRON	DURANO
ACOP	BOLILIA	DY
**** ACOSTA	BONDOC	ELAGO
**** ACOSTA-ALBA	BORDADO	* ENVERGA
ADIONG	BRAVO (A.)	ERICE
ADVINCULA	BRAVO (M.V.)	ERIGUEL
AGARAO	BROSAS	ERMITA-BUHAIN
AGGABAO	BULUT-BEGTANG	ESCUDERO
ALBANO	CAGAS	ESPINA
***** ALCALA	CALDERON	***** ESPINO
ALEJANO	CALIXTO-RUBIANO	ESTRELLA
ALMARIO	CAMINERO	***** EUSEBIO
ALMONTE	CAMPOS	EVARDONE
ALONTE	CANAMA	**** FARIÑAS
ALVAREZ (F.)	CARI	FERNANDO
ALVAREZ (M.)	CASILAO	FERRER (J.)
***** ALVAREZ (P.)	CASTELO	FERRER (L.)
AMANTE	CASTRO (F.L.)	FERRIOL-PASCUAL
AMATONG	CASTRO (F.H.)	FLOIRENDO
ANDAYA	CATAMCO	***** FLORES
***** ANGARA-CASTILLO	CAYETANO	FORTUN
ANTONINO	CELESTE	FORTUNO
ANTONIO	CERAFICA	***** FUENTEBELLA
AQUINO-MAGSAYSAY	CERILLES	GARBIN
ARAGONES	CHAVEZ	GARCES
ARBISON	*** CHIPECO	GARCIA (G.)
ARCILLAS	CO	GARCIA (J.E.)
ARENAS	COJUANGCO	GARCIA-ALBANO
ATIENZA	COLLANTES	***** GARIN (R.)
AUMENTADO	CORTES	GARIN (S.)
BAG-AO	CORTUNA	GASATAYA
BAGATSING	COSALAN	GATCHALIAN
***** BAGUILAT	CRISOLOGO	GERON
BANAL	CUA	GO (A.C.)
BARBERS	CUARESMA	GO (M.)
* BARZAGA	CUEVA	***** GOMEZ
BATAOIL	DALIPE	GONZAGA
BATOCABE	DATOL	GONZALES (A.P.)
BAUTISTA-BANDIGAN	* DAZA	GONZALES (A.D.)
BELARO	DE JESUS	GONZALEZ
* BELMONTE (F.)	DE VENECIA	***** GORRICETA
BELMONTE (J.C.)	DEFENSOR	GULLAS
BELMONTE (R.)	DEL MAR	HERNANDEZ (F.)

HERNANDEZ (P.)	* OLIVAREZ	SIAO
HERRERA-DY	ONG (E.)	SILVERIO
HOFER	ONG (H.)	SINGSON
JALOSJOS	ORTEGA (P.)	SUANSING (E.)
JAVIER	ORTEGA (V.N.)	SUANSING (H.)
KHO	PACQUIAO	SUAREZ
***** KHONGHUN	PADUANO	SY-ALVARADO
LABADLABAD	PALMA	TAMBUNTING
LACSON	PANCHO	TAN (A.)
LAGMAN	PANGANIBAN	***** TAN (M.)
LANETE	PANOTES	TAN (S.)
LAOGAN	PAPANDAYAN	TEJADA
**** LAZATIN	PICHAY	TEVES
LEACHON	PICO	***** TIANGCO
LEE	PIMENTEL	TING
LIMKAICHONG	PINEDA	TINIO
LOBREGAT	PLAZA	TOLENTINO
LOPEZ (B.)	PRIMICIAS-AGABAS	TREÑAS
LOPEZ (C.)	QUIMBO	TUGNA
LOPEZ (M.L.)	**** RADAZA	TUPAS
***** LOYOLA	RAMIREZ-SATO	***** TY
MACAPAGAL-ARROYO	RAMOS	***** UMALI
MACEDA	RELAMPAGOS	UNABIA
MADRONA	REVILLA	UNGAB
MALAPITAN	ROA-PUNO	UNICO
MANALO	ROBES	UY (J.)
* MANGAOANG	ROCAMORA	UY (R.)
***** MANGUDADATU (S.)	RODRIGUEZ (I.)	UYBARRETA
* MANGUDADATU (Z.)	RODRIGUEZ (M.)	VARGAS
MARCOLETA	ROMAN	VARGAS-ALFONSO
MARCOS	ROMERO	**** VELARDE
MARIÑO	ROMUALDEZ	VELASCO
MARQUEZ	ROMUALDO	VELASCO-CATERA
MARTINEZ	**** ROQUE	VELOSO
MATUGAS	SACDALAN	VERGARA
MELLANA	SAGARBARRIA	***** VILLAFUERTE
MENDING	SAHALI	VILLANUEVA
MENDOZA	**** SALCEDA	***** VILLARAZA-SUAREZ
***** MERCADO	SALIMBANGON	VILLARICA
MIRASOL	SALO	* VILLARIN
MONTORO	SALON	VIOLAGO
NAVA	SAMBAR	YAP (A.)
NIETO	SANDOVAL	YAP (M.)
NOEL	SANGCOPAN	YAP (V.)
NOGRALES	**** SANTOS-RECTO	YU
***** NOLASCO	SARMIENTO (C.)	ZAMORA (M.C.)
NUÑEZ-MALANYAON	SARMIENTO (E.M.)	ZAMORA (R.)
***** OAMINAL	SAVELLANO	ZARATE
***** OCAMPO	SEMA	ZUBIRI

* Appeared after the Roll Call

** On official mission

*** Attended meetings of CA/HRET/Conference Committee/Committee meetings authorized by Committee on Rules

**** Officially notified the House, through the Secretariat, of their absence

***** Absent without notice

(Subject to correction/s that may appear in the Annual Journal)