



Committee Daily Bulletin

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Land Use (Special Committee)	Organizational meeting and adoption of the Committee's Internal Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Eduardo Gullas (1st District, Cebu), held its organizational meeting during which the Committee's Internal Rules of Procedure for the 18th Congress was adopted.</p> <p>Under the Rules of the House, the Committee has jurisdiction over "all matters directly and principally relating to land use issues inclusive of the enhancement of resource use and management of indigenous cultural communities, land valuation regulation, preservation of historical and cultural heritage sites, and public-private partnership as well as linkages among national and local agencies and stakeholders in land resource management."</p>
Reforestation (Special Committee)	Organizational meeting and adoption of the Committee's Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Apayao Rep. Elias Bulut Jr., held its organizational meeting during which the Committee's Rules of Procedure for the 18th Congress was adopted.</p> <p>A brief presentation on the Committee's vision, goals and objectives, and legislative agenda was conducted.</p> <p>Under the Rules of the House, the Committee has jurisdiction over "all matters directly and principally relating to policies and programs on reforestation including the effects of forest denudation, and other actions to ensure the implementation of a sustained community-based nationwide reforestation program."</p>
Sustainable Development Goals (Special Committee)	Organizational meeting and adoption of the Committee's Internal Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Anna Marie Villaraza-Suarez (Party-List, ALONA), held its organizational meeting during which the Committee's Internal Rules of Procedure for the 18th Congress was adopted.</p> <p>Under the Committee's Internal Rules, the Committee has jurisdiction over "all matters directly and principally relating to the United Nations' (UN's) 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the programs and projects implemented by the Philippine government to achieve its targets by year 2030."</p> <p>The Committee designated the four Committee vice chairpersons to head the following subcommittees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poverty and Human Resource Development (SDGs 1 to 4) - Biñan City Rep. Marlyn "Len" Alonte;• Promoting Equality and Good Governance (SDGs 5,10, 16 and 17) - Rep. Jocelyn Tulfo (Party-List, ACT-CIS);• Economy (SDGs 8, 9 and 12) - Rep. Vincent Franco "Duke" Frasco (5th District, Cebu); and• Ecology and Environment (SDGs 6, 7, 11, 13, 14 and 15) - Rep. Cristal Bagatsing (5th District, Manila). <p>The Committee Members were encouraged to sign up for the subcommittee of their choice.</p>

COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Ecology	HBs 618 & 1938	Reps. Marquez and Pineda	Regulating the use of treatment technology for municipal and hazardous wastes, repealing for the purpose Section 20 of RA 8749, otherwise known as the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Glona Labadlabad (2 nd District, Zamboanga del Norte), directed the Secretariat to come up with a substitute bill and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HBs 933 & 4419	Reps. Cabochan and Suarez (D.)	Promoting and permitting the use of waste-to-energy technology, amending for this purpose RA 8749	<p>In his sponsorship speech, Rep. Carlito Marquez (1st District, Aklan), author of HB 618, emphasized the need to immediately start utilizing waste-to-energy (WtE) technologies to help address the problem of waste disposal in the country. Marquez reported that according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), garbage generated in Metro Manila alone is an astonishing 8,400 to 8,600 tons per day. This puts Metro Manila as one of the five “most severe waste-ridden” cities in the world with Quezon City as the largest generator of trash followed by the cities of Manila and Caloocan.</p> <p>Rep. Marquez explained that with the use of WtE technologies, waste will be burned to produce energy thereby putting these discards to good use while helping reduce the volume of trash for disposal. He said that there is a great need for reducing the volume of garbage as existing landfills continue to fill up.</p> <p>On the legality of the use of WtE technologies, Rep. Marquez cited a Supreme Court (SC) resolution in 2002 declaring that not all incinerators are banned under RA 8749 (Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999). This means that the DENR can allow WtE projects with incineration processes as long as they comply with existing emission standards, Marquez said.</p> <p>Among those who support the bills are representatives from the DENR, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), Department of Health (DOH), Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), Board of Investment-Department of Trade and Industry (BOI-DTI), Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), Bureau of Customs (BOC), Climate Change Commission (CCC), Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP), EcoWaste Coalition, Pollution Control Association of the Philippines, Inc. (PCAPI), and the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI).</p> <p>DENR's Environment Management Bureau (EMB) Senior Environmental Management Specialist Juvinia Serafin cited Section 15 of RA 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000) as the legal basis</p>

Continuation... Ecology				<p>for the use of WtE technologies.</p> <p>Meanwhile, No Burn Pilipinas Senior Program Officer Glenn Ymata expressed his objection to the bills saying that the emissions from burning waste will only contribute to air pollution and harm the health of the people. It will burden the government with the high cost of establishing WtE plants and facilities as well. He also explained that WtE projects with incineration processes will not reduce the volume of trash in landfills as incineration produces toxic ashes which will still be disposed in landfills.</p> <p>Ymata suggested instead that a more effective program on recycling and segregation of solid waste should be pursued.</p> <p>Similarly, Mother Earth Foundation Chairperson Sonia Mendoza said that local governments do not need high-tech but expensive and harmful waste disposal technologies. The solution is proper waste management, she said.</p>
Housing and Urban Development	HB 1176	Deputy Speaker Romero	Increasing the capitalization of the National Housing Authority (NHA), expanding and accelerating its urban land reform and social housing program	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Strike Revilla (2nd District, Cavite), will deliberate further on the seven bills in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Revilla underscored the need to formulate and implement appropriate and decisive policy measures to urgently address the increasing requirement for housing especially in urban communities.</p>
	HBs 2450 & 4759	Reps. Sy-Alvarado and Nieto	Providing for a national housing development, production, and financing program regularizing its appropriation for its implementation	
	HBs 2564 & 4902	Reps. Castelo and Nieto	Providing for the resettlement, aid, and rehabilitation services for the underprivileged and homeless citizens affected by the demolition of houses/dwellings along danger areas as well as the victims of disasters and calamities and those affected by government infrastructure projects in urban areas	<p>Rep. Precious Hipolito Castelo (2nd District, Quezon City), author of HB 2564, said that her bill seeks to provide housing and other services to the informal settler families (ISFs) living along danger areas such as esteros, garbage dumps, waterways and similar areas; victims of disasters and calamities; and those affected by government infrastructure projects. She added that the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) will be the lead implementing agency.</p>
	HBs 3541 & 3837	Rep. Violago and Majority Leader Romualdez	Establishing a unified housing and urban development fund and a centralized home financing program, amending for the purpose RA 7835, otherwise known as the Comprehensive and Integrated Shelter Financing Act (CISFA) of 1994	<p>Expressing their support for the bills were representatives from the DHSUD, National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC), National Housing Authority (NHA), Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF) or Pag-IBIG Fund, Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC), Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) and Land Management Bureau (LMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Land Registration Authority (LRA), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Association Inc. (CREBA).</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Paul Ruiz Daza (1st District, Northern Samar) concerning the</p>

Continuation... Housing and Urban Development				<p>causes of delay in the production of housing units, DHSUD Project Evaluation Officer Ma. Armida Melendres cited the lack of government lands available for socialized housing as one of the major reasons. She added that due to the effects of climate change, lands previously identified for socialized housing have been declared unsafe for this purpose, further decreasing potential areas for housing.</p> <p>In addition, Subdivision and Housing Developers Association, Inc. (SHDA) First Vice President Rosie Tsai attributed the low production of housing units to the complicated process of securing permits including the numerous documentary requirements that need to be complied with.</p> <p>The Board Adviser of the Organization of Socialized and Economic Housing Developers of the Philippines (OSHDP), Bansan Choa, agreed with the statement of Tsai, adding that another slowdown in housing production can be expected due to a new government guideline setting new housing design standards and price ceilings for socialized housing projects, which will not be viable for developers.</p> <p>Rep. Daza urged the DHSUD to adopt measures that would streamline the process of securing permits and to report to the Committee the status of its commitments to address the housing backlog.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective position papers on the bills.</p>
Information and Communications Technology	Substitute Bill to HBs 57 & 4109	Reps. Yap (V.) and Abaya	Promoting open access in data transmission, providing additional powers to the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Victor Yap (2nd District, Tarlac), approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 57 and 4109 subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair, Rep. Francis Gerald Aguinaldo Abaya (1st District, Cavite), presided over the meeting to give way for Rep. Yap to sponsor his bill.</p> <p>A bill with similar subject matter was approved on Third Reading during the 17th Congress.</p>
	Consolidated Bill on HBs 298, 453, 658, 743, 1056, 1773, 2312, 2411, 2747, 3033, 3152, 3629, 3732, & 5350	Reps. Yap (V.), Lopez (M.L), Abaya, Biazon, Loyola, Olivarez, Gatchalian, Castelo, Rodriguez, Vargas, Romulo, Pineda, Agabas, and Sy-Alvarado	Requiring the registration of all users of subscriber identity module (SIM) cards	<p>The Committee approved the consolidated bill subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>All authors present said the proposed law seeks to require the registration of SIM cards to prevent them from being used irresponsibly and illegally especially in thefts, text scams, acts of terrorism, false emergency, triggering devices to defuse bombs, and the like.</p> <p>Muntinlupa City Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon, author of HB 743, also said that the identification of pre-paid subscribers will help</p>

Continuation... Information and Communications Technology				<p>police and other law enforcers in investigating cases. He then suggested that the public telecommunication entities should establish a foolproof system of identifying users and purchasers of pre-paid SIM cards.</p> <p>Ariel Tubayan, head of the Globe Telecommunications Inc.'s Policy Division, Corporate and Legal Service Group, and Kenneth Regañon, legal counsel of Smart Communications Inc., both expressed support for the bill. However, they suggested that the National Identification (ID) System should be fully implemented first to help in the registration of all pre-paid SIM card subscribers.</p> <p>Also supporting the proposed law were representatives from the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), National Privacy Commission (NPC), Philippine National Police (PNP), and National Security Council (NSC).</p>
	Consolidated Bill on HBs 297, 659 & 2909	Reps. Yap (V.), Abaya, and Castelo	Establishing the "No Call and No Text Registration" System, providing penalties for violations thereof	The Committee approved the consolidated bill subject to style and amendment.
Labor and Employment	HB 3147	Rep. Romulo	Mandating all barangays to create a registry of skilled workers	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-PACMAN), approved HB 3147.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p>
	HBs 135, 850, 2519 & 5201	Reps. Roman, Aglipay, Nograles (J.J.), and Noel	Instituting policies for the protection and welfare of caregivers in the practice of their profession	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to draft a substitute bill to the four bills.
	HB 1670	Deputy Speaker Villafuerte	Amending Article 83 of PD 442, otherwise known as the Labor Code of the Philippines, as amended (by removing the "normal work hours" of eight hours a day, to a more flexible work duration)	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to consolidate the bills.</p> <p>Baguio City Rep. Mark Go, author of HB 1904, underscored the importance of adopting a compressed work week scheme saying that this will promote competitiveness, productivity and efficiency in the workplace and provide employees the opportunity to sustain work and life balance by giving them ample time to spend with their family and friends and pursue other things outside of work.</p> <p>Rep. Go added that a compressed work arrangement would help reduce traffic congestion, particularly in the metropolis, since there will be less road users during the work free days.</p> <p>Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Assistant Secretary Benjo Santos Benavidez expressed support for the bills.</p> <p>On the other hand, those who object to the proposed compressed work week were</p>
	HB 1904	Rep. Go (M.)	Increasing the normal work hours per day under a compressed work week scheme, amending Articles 83, 87 and 91 of PD 442, as amended	

Continuation... Labor and Employment				resource persons from the labor sector, namely, Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL), Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), and Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP). They argued that the welfare of the workers would be compromised due to longer working hours.
	HB 1343	Rep.Go (M.)	Mandating golf clubs to provide social security and welfare benefits to golf caddies and other related service workers through a shared contribution scheme	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 1343 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Go, author of HB 1343, said that a bill with similar subject matter was approved on Third Reading during the previous Congress.</p> <p>Rep. Ma. Theresa Collantes (3rd District, Batangas), who headed the TWG which worked on the bill similar to HB 1343 during the previous Congress, suggested that golf club owners, golf caddies, and other related service workers be invited in the next meeting to give their positions on the measure.</p>
	HB 2632	Rep. Mendoza	Limiting the power to assume jurisdiction over labor disputes involving essential services by the President of the Philippines, amending for this purpose Article 263 (g) PD 442, as amended	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 2632 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Expressing reservation on the proposed law, Benavidez said that DOLE's position is to maintain the status quo on who has the authority to assume jurisdiction over labor dispute cases and on the parameters used by the Labor Secretary in assuming jurisdiction or certifying a case for compulsory arbitration.</p> <p>In response to the query of Rep. Go, Rep. Raymond Democrito Mendoza (Party-List, TUCP) said that the Secretary of Labor may assume jurisdiction as long as it should be compliant with the International Labor Organization's (ILO) standards.</p>
	HB 4802	Rep. Singson	Extending the maximum allowable period of probationary employment, amending for the purpose PD 442, as amended	<p>The Committee agreed to include HB 4802 in the deliberations of the TWG created to study the Security of Tenure Bills.</p> <p>Rep. Jose "Bonito" Singson Jr. (Party-List, PROBINSYANO AKO), author of HB 4802, said that his bill seeks to extend the probationary employment period from six to 24 months to deter the vicious cycle of terminating workers every six months.</p> <p>Benavidez argued that the probationary period of two years may be too long and that this may not be a solution to the "endo" (end of contract) problem.</p>
	HB 4514	Rep. Nograles (J.J.)	Strengthening the regulation of employment of foreign nationals, amending for the purpose Articles 40, 41, and 42 of Title II, Book 1 of PD 442, as amended	The Committee deferred consideration of HB 4514 pending the submission of position paper by the DOLE.
Legislative Franchises	HB 2324	Rep. Fortuno	Renewing for another 25 years the franchise granted to Bicol Broadcasting Systems, Inc., under RA 8092	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Franz "Chicoy" Alvarez (1 st District, Palawan), approved HB 2324.

Continuation... Legislative Franchises	HB 4855	Rep. Duavit	Renewing for another 25 years the franchise granted to Cruz Telephone Company, Inc., under RA 7961	The Committee approved HB 4855.
Natural Resources	HBs 98 & 4540	Rep. Acosta-Alba and Deputy Speaker Santos-Recto	Providing for the delineation of the specific forest limits of the public domain	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Elpidio Barzaga Jr. (4th District, Cavite), approved HBs 98 and 4540 pursuant to Section 48, Rule 10 of the House Rules which provides that priority bills passed on Third Reading in the immediately preceding Congress may already be disposed of as matters already reported, upon approval by the Committee.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to come up with a substitute bill for the two bills and the corresponding Committee Report.</p>
	HB 4408	Rep. Dalog	Establishing the forestland boundary of Mountain Province	The Committee approved HB 4408.
	HB 4785	Rep. Frasco	Declaring certain drylands of the public domain located in the Islands of Ponson, Poro, and Pacuan, known as the Camotes Group of Islands, Province of Cebu, as alienable and disposable land open to disposition for agricultural, commercial, residential, industrial, and other purposes, amending for the purpose Proclamation No. 2152 or the law declaring the entire Province of Palawan and certain parcels of the public domain and/or parts of the country as mangrove swamp forest reserves	<p>The Committee approved HB 4785. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Similar measures have been approved on third and final reading in the previous Congresses according to Deputy Speaker Pablo John Garcia (3rd District, Cebu).</p>
	HB 267	Rep. Ramirez-Sato	Establishing the final forestland boundary of the Province of Occidental Mindoro	The Committee will deliberate further on the bills in its next meeting.
	HB 1062	Rep. Yap (V.)	Establishing the forest boundary of the Province of Tarlac	The heads of the Land Management Bureau (LMB), Forest Management Bureau (FMB), and the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA) under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) will be invited to attend the next meeting to respond to the issues raised by the House Members.
Sustainable Development Goals (Special Committee)	HBs 106, 1474, 3061 & 4891	Reps. Fortun, Yu, Babasa, and Deloso-Montalla	Providing for the protection, rehabilitation, and sustainable management of the forest ecosystem	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune the four bills.</p> <p>Rep. Lawrence "Law" Fortun (1st District, Agusan del Norte) was designated as TWG Chair.</p>
	HR 398	Rep. Nograles (J.F.F.)	Urging all legislators from the House of Representatives to adopt and align the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the bills crafted in the 18 th Congress	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Anna Marie Villaraza-Suarez (Party-List, ALONA), adopted HR 398 subject to style. The Secretariat was directed to draft the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Rep. Juan Fidel Felipe Nograles (2nd District, Rizal), author of HR 398, recognized efforts towards achieving the SDGs noting that it has already been integrated in several chapters of the Philippine Development Plan – the country's socio-economic blueprint towards a long-term vision or the AmBisyon Natin 2040.</p>

Continuation... Sustainable Development Goals (Special Committee)				Rep. Sarah Jane Elago (Party-List, KABATAAN), co-author of HR 398, highlighted the need to fast-track the country's attainment of the SDGs citing the commitment of the member-countries to achieve these by year 2030.
Youth and Sports Development	HB 3860	Rep. Agabas	Preserving the indigenous games of the Philippines	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Eric Martinez (2nd District, Valenzuela City), approved HB 3860 with amendments.</p> <p>The bill defines "indigenous games" as those "traditional sports and games or activities inherent to the different indigenous cultural communities reflecting their rich cultural heritage, traditions or customs handed down from generation to generation such as, but not limited to, dug out, canoe races, precision-around obstacles or rapids, <i>supok</i> or <i>sampit</i>, <i>sungka</i>, <i>kadang-kadang</i>, <i>tumbang preso</i>, <i>piko</i>, and <i>sepak takraw</i> and such other games distinct with the indigenous communities." These indigenous games form part of the country's history and heritage.</p> <p>A bill with similar subject matter was approved on Third Reading during the 17th Congress.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that a funding provision will be included in the bill and that the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) and the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) will serve as the lead agencies in the implementation of the proposed law.</p>
	HBs 323 & 3859	Reps. Elago and Agabas	Declaring August 12 of every year as the National Youth Day	<p>The Committee agreed come up with a substitute bill, taking into consideration the recommendations of the National Youth Commission (NYC).</p> <p>A bill with similar subject matter was approved on Third Reading during the 17th Congress.</p>

AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Health	Briefing by the Department of Health (DOH) on the status of implementation of RA 11223, otherwise known as the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4th District, Quezon), listened to the briefing conducted by the DOH on the status of implementation of the Universal Health Care Act.</p> <p>Health Undersecretary Mario Villaverde reported that the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the UHC Act was already published last November 6. Under the law, each Filipino will be automatically covered by the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) and will become automatic members of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) either as direct contributors (those who have the capacity to pay the premiums) or indirect contributors (those whose premiums are subsidized by the National Government).</p> <p>Villaverde said that the UHC law provides a "no balance billing" policy wherein indigent patients will not pay fees or charges above and beyond the PhilHealth coverage when confined in government hospitals and health facilities. The law also ensures that there will be</p>

Continuation... Health		<p>no reduction in the current PhilHealth package and there will be additional benefits to direct contributors.</p> <p>The funds needed to implement the law will be sourced from the following: incremental tax collections under the Sin Tax Reform Law; 50% of the national government's share from the income of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR); 40% of the Charity Fund, net of the Documentary Stamp Tax and mandatory contributions of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO); premium contribution of members; annual appropriations of the Department of Health (DOH); and government's subsidy to PhilHealth.</p> <p>Some House Members said that the UHC may be tainted with politics because of the involvement in the supervision of the program by the province and city governments. Villaverde explained that the local governments will not have control over the program but merely supervision of the local health systems. He added that the provincial and city health boards shall oversee the integration of health services in their area, manage the special health fund, and exercise administrative and technical supervision over their health facilities and human resources.</p> <p>Meanwhile, PhilHealth President and CEO Ricardo Morales admitted that one of the challenges that may be encountered in the course of the implementation of the law is the inadequate number of health care professionals and health facilities. He said that the country lacks 15,000 doctors and 4,000 Level I hospitals or hospitals that can accommodate patients who need minor care and supervision.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Ron Salo (Party-List, KABAYAN) as to how the health needs of people in the geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas will be served, Morales said that PhilHealth has plans in place and committed to report to the Committee after six months on the progress of its services in these areas.</p> <p>Rep. Janette Garin (1st District, Iloilo) suggested that the DOH should consult the stakeholders themselves including the practicing medical professionals in the crafting of the implementing guidelines that will be issued to concerned government agencies.</p>
Land Use (Special Committee)	Briefing by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)-National Land Use Committee on the proposed National Land Use Act (NaLUA)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Eduardo Gullas (1st District, Cebu), agreed to create a subcommittee to further discuss the NEDA-proposed NaLUA.</p> <p>NEDA Director for Regional Development Staff Remedios Endencia underscored the need to pass a national land use policy, explaining that the improper and uncoordinated land use planning and management have caused the following ill effects: uncontrolled development that encroached on prime agricultural lands; indiscriminate conversion of prime agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses which threatens food security; poorly-planned settlements that lack basic amenities; and proliferation of informal settlements in unsafe and hazard-prone areas.</p> <p>Endencia also identified the salient features of the proposed law, which include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a network of sustainable settlements that should be supported with appropriate infrastructure; • Determination and mapping out of high-risk areas where informal settlers will be disallowed; • Allocation of adequate land for socialized housing; • Non-conversion of all irrigated and irrigable lands, all lands developed or earmarked for development of high value crops, and all agricultural lands that are ecologically fragile; • Land use conversion may be allowed when the land ceases

<p>Continuation... Land Use (Special Committee)</p>		<p>to be economically feasible and sound for agricultural purposes or when the locality has become urbanized and the land will have a greater economic value for residential, commercial or industrial purpose; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prohibition of mining activities in areas under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) and in prime agricultural lands. <p>Rep. Jose Christopher Belmonte (6th District, Quezon City) and Rep. Teodorico Haresco Jr. (2nd District, Aklan) were dismayed at NEDA's failure to finalize its proposal despite previous discussions and bills filed on the matter.</p> <p>Rep. Belmonte also stressed that the proposed NaLUA was considered and approved by the House of Representatives a number of times in previous Congresses but has not fared well in the Senate each time. He fears that the slow pace of NEDA is an indication that the bill will once again languish in Congress. He then asked Endencia to provide a timeline for the release of the executive's version of the NaLUA.</p> <p>Endencia could not commit to a timeline but assured the Committee that the proposal is close to being finalized.</p> <p>Rep. Sergio Dagooc (Party-List, APEC) encouraged the participation of the Department of Energy (DOE) and the National Electrification Administration (NEA) in the discussions on the proposed NaLUA, adding that the proposed law will have an effect on the energy sector considering that energy-related infrastructure such as transmission lines will also require lands.</p> <p>Rep. Presley de Jesus (Party-List, PHILRECA) said that the rights of the indigenous peoples (IPs) over their ancestral domain should be upheld at all times in the pursuit of rural electrification and other development projects.</p>
<p>Reforestation (Special Committee)</p>	<p>Briefing by the Forest Management Bureau (FMB) on its mandate, programs and accomplishments</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Apayao Rep. Elias Bulut Jr., will continue its discussion of FMB's mandate, programs, and accomplishments in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Bulut said that according to the United Nation's (UN) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), there is an urgent recommendation for reforestation and ecosystem restoration.</p> <p>FMB Director Nonito Tamayo presented the Bureau's mandate and activities as well as the guiding principles in forest management. The FMB is a bureau under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Tamayo also discussed the Expanded National Greening Program (ENGP) pursuant to the Philippine Master Plan for Climate Resilient Forestry Development. He said that the target is to reforest or rehabilitate 1.2 million hectares for 2017-2022 and another 1.2 million hectares for 2023-2028.</p> <p>Tamayo informed the body that out of the country's total land area of 30 million hectares, 15.8 million hectares or 52.7% are legally classified as forestlands while the remaining 14.2 million hectares or 47.3% are classified as alienable and disposable lands. As of 2015, the Philippine forest cover is estimated at 7,014,155 hectares.</p> <p>Both Reps. Solomon Chungalao (Ifugao) and Ron Salo (Party-List, KABAYAN) suggested that the DENR should study first the type of trees that will be appropriate and suitable to plant in certain forestlands before proceeding with the planting. Fruit bearing trees might be more appropriate than those used for building houses in order to further curb illegal logging activities, the Congressmen advised.</p>

Continuation... Reforestation (Special Committee)		The FMB was requested to submit a report on the utilization of its budget for reforestation program as well as data on the number of trees planted per hectare for the past years.
Tourism	<p>Briefing by the following agencies on their respective mandates, accomplishments, and plans and programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Tourism (DOT) Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Sol Aragones (3rd District, Laguna), listened to the presentation of the tourism agencies on their mandates, accomplishments, and plans and programs.</p> <p>DOT Undersecretary Benito Bengzon Jr. reported on the country's tourism performance for 2018 and 2019. He said inbound arrivals from January to June this year already reached 4,133,050 or an 11.43% increase compared to the same period last year. For the whole of 2018, foreign tourist arrivals totaled 7.17 million, posting an 8.27 increase compared to 2017 figures; while domestic travelers totaled 111.35 million or a 15.13% increase. Revenues reached P3.2 trillion from domestic tourists and P441.4 billion from inbound tourists also in 2018.</p> <p>Bengzon also presented to the Committee the DOT's 2019 accomplishments for each program category, the highlights of which are as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism Policy Formulation and Planning – 8 tourism action plans implemented and 2,038 technical assistance provided to tourism stakeholders and local government units (LGUs); Tourism Industry Training – 342 days of training conducted and 2,207 LGU personnel trained; Standards Development and Enforcement – 99% of accreditation applications acted upon within the prescribed period and 100% of accredited enterprises monitored to have maintained tourism standards; and Market and Product Development – 60 trade development activities conducted/participated and 93 products developed and product partners engaged. <p>Bengzon said that the DOT has also attended/participated in international forums or conventions to promote the country's tourism industry such as the ASEAN-Korea Tourism Building Workshop, ASEAN Plus Three Tourism Youth Summit, Philippines-Thailand Implementation Program of Tourism Cooperation 2017-2022, and United Nations World Tourism Organization Advocacy Campaign for Sustainable Tourism.</p> <p>TIEZA Chief Operating Officer Pocholo Joselito Paragas presented the agency's mandate and accomplishments.</p> <p>An attached agency of the DOT, TIEZA is mandated to designate, regulate and supervise the tourism enterprise zones (TEZs), as well as develop, manage and supervise tourism infrastructure projects in the country.</p> <p>Paragas also said that TIEZA's major programs are the following: online travel tax payment system; Project DREAMS (Destination, Restoration, Eco-Sustainability, Agri-tourism, Medical Assistance, and Security and Accessibility); assets rehabilitation and assessment for public-private cooperation; accreditation and expansion of tourism enterprise zones; and the construction of a cruise-dedicated port in Manila.</p> <p>After the presentation of the two agencies, Rep. Edgar Chatto (1st District, Bohol) asked the status of operation of the Philippine Commission on Sports Scuba Diving (PCSSD), which is an agency attached to the DOT.</p> <p>Bengzon said that the PCSSD has been dependent on the DOT and TIEZA for funding. The DOT has also formally submitted to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) the proposed organizational structure and staffing pattern of the PCSSD.</p>

Continuation... Tourism		<p>Nevertheless, the DOT continues to promote the country as a major diving destination. It recently organized the Philippine International Dive Exposition bringing in foreign travel agents from major source markets.</p> <p>Rep. Chatto asked about DOT's collaborative work with the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) in the implementation of the National Cruise Tourism Development Strategy.</p> <p>Bengzon said that the DOT already prepared a master plan for the strategic direction of the Philippine Cruise Tourism. The DOT has identified the priority ports of call for the cruise ships which are in Manila, Subic, Puerto Princesa (Palawan), Salomague (Ilocos), and Boracay. This information was already relayed to the PPA, which is actually a member of the steering committee for the implementation of the National Cruise Tourism Development Strategy, Bengzon added.</p>
Youth and Sports Development	Briefing by the National Youth Commission (NYC) on its plans and programs and legislative priorities for the youth sector	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Eric Martinez (2nd District, Valenzuela City), listened to the presentation of the NYC on its plans and programs and legislative priorities for the youth sector.</p> <p>Mark Joseph Eliste, technical assistant of the NYC's Policy Research Division, briefed the Committee on the agency's mandate, vision and mission. Eliste said that the NYC aims to provide leadership in the formulation of policies, encourage wide and active participation of the youth in governmental and non-governmental programs, harness and develop the full potential of the youth as partners in nation-building, and supplement government appropriations for youth promotion and development.</p> <p>For the 18th Congress, the NYC is pushing for the following legislative measures: passage of the Citizens Service Act with reforms to the existing Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program; amendment of RA 10742 or the Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act and RA 8044 or the Youth in Nation Building Act; expanding government internship program; and addressing teenage pregnancy by amending the Reproductive Health Law.</p> <p>Rep. Martinez inquired on the initiatives being undertaken by the NYC to address the prevalence of HIV and AIDS cases among the youth between 15 to 24 years old.</p> <p>NYC Chairperson Ryan Enriquez replied that the agency is collaborating with concerned government agencies and non-government organizations to address the matter. At present, the NYC is undertaking the Project Happy or the NYC HIV and AIDS Prevention Program for the Youth to engage youth organizations, schools, communities, and agency partners in HIV awareness, education, prevention, screening, and trainings.</p> <p>The Project Happy is being undertaken in partnership with The Project Red Ribbon Care Management Foundation, Inc. – a non-stock, non-profit foundation which aims to improve the lives of persons living with HIV through awareness and provision of resources, treatment, care, and support.</p>