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COMMITTEE MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Basic Education and Culture jt. w/ Higher and Technical Education	Substitute Bill to HBs 1406, 1591, 1845, 3201, 3610, 3983, 4074 & 6661	Reps. Vargas, Hofer, Rodriguez, Olivarez, Deputy Speaker Escudero, Reps. Ong, Duavit, and Deputy Speaker Villanueva (E.)	Amending Section 3 of RA 7797, or the law lengthening the school calendar from 200 days to not more than 220 class days (by giving the President the authority to set a different date for the start of the school year in the event of a state of emergency or state of calamity)	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by Pasig City Rep. Roman Romulo, Chair of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture, and Baguio City Rep. Mark Go, Chair of the Committee on Higher and Technical Education, approved the Substitute Bill to the eight bills and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>The substitute bill endorsed by the joint technical working group, which held its meeting earlier, is patterned after a counterpart bill in the Senate which was already approved on Second Reading.</p> <p>Rep. Roman underscored the importance of allowing the President, upon the recommendation of the Secretary of the Department of Education, to set a different date for the start of the school year for basic education in the event of a state of emergency or state of calamity such as the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Right now, even while recognizing that the threat of the pandemic to the safety of schoolchildren is still highly evident, the executive department does not have much flexibility to move the opening of the school year to a later date because of RA 7797. Section 3 of the law states that "the school year shall start on the first Monday of June but not later than the last day of August."</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Aurelio "Dong" Gonzales Jr (3rd District, Pampanga) echoed the pronouncement of President Rodrigo Duterte that no face-to-face learning modality should be undertaken until there is no vaccine against COVID-19.</p> <p>On the other hand, Reps. Leonardo Babasa Jr. (2nd District, Zamboanga del Sur), France Castro (Party-List, ACT-TEACHERS), and Paul Ruiz Daza (1st District, Northern Samar) said that face-to-face learning should still be considered in areas not affected by COVID-19 and where alternative modes of learning are not available, provided that the minimum health standards will be observed.</p> <p>DepEd Undersecretary Tonisito Umali said that DepEd will adhere to the President's pronouncement and would make use of alternative learning modalities such as distance learning and the use of TV and broadcast media.</p> <p>The Joint Committee agreed to draft a resolution expressing the sense of the House on the appropriate learning modality to be in place while there is no vaccine yet against COVID-19. Likewise, it will <i>motu proprio</i> deliberate on the matter in its next meeting.</p>

Comments, suggestions and requests for copies may be sent to the Committee Publication Staff, Committee Management Support Service I, 3rd Floor, Ramon V. Mitra, Jr. Bldg., House of Representatives, Constitution Hills, Quezon City, through cms1.cad.hrep@gmail.com or at tel. nos. 8932-6118/8931-5001 local 7122. Also available at <http://www.congress.gov.ph>