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ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Revision of Laws	Organizational meeting and adoption of the Committee's Internal Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Cheryl Deloso-Montalla (2nd District, Zambales), 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 the revision and codification of laws."</p>
Veterans Affairs and Welfare	Organizational meeting and adoption of the Committee's Internal Rules of Procedure	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan), 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 the welfare of war veterans, veterans of military campaigns, military retirees, and their surviving spouses and other beneficiaries."</p>

COMMITTEE MEETINGS				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Banks and Financial Intermediaries	HB 775	Rep. Collantes	Regulating the Philippine credit card industry	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Junie Cua, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the bills.</p> <p>Shivakumar Sriraman, VISA Card's chief risk officer for Southeast Asia, outlined the electronic payment process. Sriraman said that in securing the safety of VISA cardholders from fraud, VISA has invested heavily in updating its intelligence network and technology.</p> <p>Navotas City Rep. John Reynald Tiangco inquired on the type of security standards that banks have put in place to ensure the security of information of credit cardholders.</p> <p>Credit Card Association of the Philippines (CCAP) Chair Jose Angelo Gomez replied that CCAP member banks have set up a multi-layered security platform, which is regularly updated, for the protection of their cardholders. He added that other safeguards include the immediate notification of credit card holders of possible questionable or fraudulent transactions.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Prospero Pichay Jr. (1st District, Surigao del Sur) proposed that credit card companies should produce cards that bear the photo of the credit card holders as</p>
	HBs 893 & 5282	Reps. Mariño and Barba	Limiting the liability of a cardholder for unauthorized transactions in cases of loss, fraud or theft of credit or debit cards, amending for the purpose RA 10870, otherwise known as the Philippine Credit Card Industry Regulation Law	
	HB 2563	Rep. Castelo	Institutionalizing awareness and grassroots advocacy and tightening the issuance of credit cards thereby averting delinquency on the part of the credit card holders and bankruptcy on the part of the banks and other parties involved in the credit card system	
	HB 4591	Rep. Delos Santos	Amending RA 10870 (by requiring all establishments to have handheld credit card terminals so that the credit card can be swiped in front of the customer to prevent cases of fraud)	
	HB 5274	Rep. Olivarez	Requiring the creation of a system or application that would determine potential credit limit breach and give the credit card holder real-time financial notification	

Continuation... Banks and Financial Intermediaries				well as their biometric identification to avoid the use of credit cards by unscrupulous people.
	HB 1297	Deputy Speaker Villafuerte	Enabling banks to expand service delivery channels through cash agents and providing guidelines therefor	<p>The Committee agreed to create a TWG to deliberate further on the bill.</p> <p>HB 1297, authored by Deputy Speaker Luis Raymund "Lray" Villafuerte Jr. (2nd District, Camarines Sur), aims to allow banks to expand their reach and serve a wider client base through cash agents, particularly in the low-income and rural areas. Under the bill, "cash agent" refers to any person with a retail outlet such as but not limited to convenience stores, pharmacies, and other highly accessible retail outlets that deliver certain bank services allowed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP).</p> <p>BSP Deputy Director Charina de Vera-Yap expressed her support for the bill, adding that the bill, if passed into law, will institutionalize the provisions of Memorandum Circular (MC) 940 of 2017 or the guidelines on deposit and cash servicing outside of bank premises.</p> <p>Philippine Retailers Association (PRA) President Paul Santos also expressed his support for the bill.</p>
Cooperatives Development	HB 5422	Rep. Canama	Declaring the month of October of every year as the "National Cooperative Month" in the entire country	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Sabiniano Canama (Party-List, COOP-NATCCO), approved HB 5422. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.
	HRs 423, 424, 425 & 510	Rep. Canama	Commending certain cooperatives for their exemplary performance and lasting commitment as partners for economic growth and sustainable development in the countryside	The Committee adopted the four resolutions. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Reports.
	HR 523	Rep. Canama	Commending the DCCCO Multipurpose Cooperative, Bagong Barrio Multipurpose Cooperative, Kooperatiba Naton Multipurpose Cooperative, San Jose Sico Landfill Multipurpose Cooperative, and Litolet Consumer Cooperative as the winners of the 2019 <i>Ninth Gawad Parangal</i> of the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA)	<p>The Committee adopted HR 523 and directed the Secretariat to come up with a substitute resolution for each of the five CDA-awarded cooperatives.</p> <p>The CDA was requested to submit the criteria for the selection of its <i>Gawad Parangal</i> awardees.</p>
Energy	HB 2099	Rep. Velasco	Strengthening the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) by expanding and streamlining its bureaucracy, upgrading employee skills, augmenting benefits, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Marinduque Rep. Lord Allan Jay Velasco, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate HBs 2099 and 2427.</p> <p>Rep. Sergio Dagooc (Party-List, APEC) was designated as chair of the TWG.</p>
	HB 2427	Rep. Vargas	Enhancing the governance structure of the ERC	At the outset, Rep. Velasco, who is also the author of HB 2099, underscored the need to expand, enhance and streamline the ERC in order to improve the transparency and efficiency of the Commission's operations and

Continuation... Energy				<p>ensure a reliable and sustainable supply of energy.</p> <p>ERC Chairperson Agnes Devanadera said that if the goal of the proposed law is to strengthen the ERC, she advises to retain the ranks and privileges of the Commission <i>en banc</i>. She also does not favor the proposal to increase the number of members of the Commission <i>en banc</i> to nine from five as proposed in HB 2099. Devanadera explained that the delay in some of its operations is mostly due to the lack of technical personnel in the ERC and not because of the lack of members of the Commission.</p> <p>Nevertheless, if Congress agrees to the increase, she said she can go with seven, to which Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) agreed.</p> <p>On the contrary, Rep. Jericho Jonas Nograles (Party-List, PBA) maintained that the number of Commission <i>en banc</i> members should be increased to nine.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Dagooc supported Devanadera's request to allow ERC to hire sufficient number of technical personnel to allow the ERC to efficiently dispose of cases.</p>
Government Reorganization jt. w/ Overseas Workers Affairs	<p>Substitute Bill to HBs 2, 335, 526, 1439, 1449, 2067, 2207, 2216, 2317, 2319, 2368, 2409, 2412, 2425, 2547, 2850, 2982, 3168, 3246, 3274, 3313, 3440, 3514, 3637, 3663, 3888, 3940, 4065, 4165, 4173, 4189, 4576, 4663, 4687, 4814, 4884, 5146, 5171 & 5256</p>	<p>Speaker Cayetano, Deputy Speaker Arenas, Reps. Aglipay, Campos, Singson-Meehan, Salceda, Deputy Speakers Pichay and Romero, Reps. Gonzalez, Yap (E.), Deloso-Montalla, Deputy Speaker Hernandez, Reps. Castelo, Vargas, Deputy Speaker Villafuerte, Reps. Villaraza-Suarez, Tan (A.S.), Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.), Reps. Romualdez (Y.M.), Villar, Deputy Speaker Santos-Recto, Reps. Torres-Gomez, Sy-Alvarado, Bolilia, Tambunting,</p>	<p>Creating the Department of Filipinos Overseas and Foreign Employment, defining its mandate, powers and functions, appropriating funds therefor</p>	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" Mariño (5th District, Batangas), Chair of the Committee on Government Reorganization, and Rep. Raymond Democrito Mendoza (Party-List, TUCP), Chair of the Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs, approved the substitute bill and the corresponding Committee Report with amendments.</p> <p>Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay), author of HB 2067 and co-chair of the technical working group that deliberated on the bills, said that it is timely for the government to create a department that will focus on looking after the welfare of OFWs, considering their immense contribution to the country's foreign exchange earnings, amounting to about \$32 billion annually.</p> <p>Filipino Association for Mariners' Employment, Inc. (FAME) Director Marlon Roño suggested the creation of a unit in the proposed Department that will cater solely to the needs of the seafaring sector, to be headed by an undersecretary.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Luis Raymund "LRay" Villafuerte Jr. (2nd District, Camarines Sur), author of HB 2547, said that the government cannot afford to designate one undersecretary for each sector. Nevertheless, the Deputy Speaker said that the Office of the Undersecretary for Foreign Employment, which is under the proposed Department,</p>

Continuation... Government Reorganization jt. w/ Overseas Workers Affairs		Pacquiao, Salo, Lim, Haresco, Olivarez, Aragones, Espino Chipeco, Tutor, Flores, Lusotan, Nograles (J.F.F.), and Mendoza		<p>already covers the sea-based and land-based workers.</p> <p>Susan Ople of Blas Ople Policy Center (BOPC) conveyed her support for the bill. She stressed that time is of the essence, referring to the early passage of the bill, since there are numerous OFWs in Hongkong and Saudi Arabia that need immediate help.</p>
Human Rights	HBs 55, 487, 522, 1579 & 4586	Reps. Cabochan, Deloso-Montalla, Aglipay, Deputy Speaker Hataman, and Rep. Belmonte	Prohibiting racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Jesus "Bong" Suntay (4th District, Quezon City), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the bills.</p> <p>Rep. Francisco "Kiko" Benitez (3rd District, Negros Occidental) was designated chair of the TWG.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Suntay said that the proposed law promotes the equality of all persons, regardless of race, age, gender, ethnicity and religion, and adheres to the country's international treaty obligations.</p> <p>MAGDALO Party-List Rep. Manuel Cabochan III, author of HB 55, said that his bill aims to address religious and other forms of discrimination.</p> <p>Bishop Reuben Abante of Bible Mode supports the bills, saying that it is about time that a law be passed to implement the Consitutional provisions against religious and ethnic discrimination.</p> <p>Civil Service Commission (CSC) lawyer Angelina Faral said the CSC recognizes the internal policies and regulations of different agencies governing the conduct of their respective employees. She added that they are not precluded from imposing dress codes nor medical examinations on their employees, if done uniformly and without discrimination.</p> <p>On the other hand, Maria Janina Belen, representative of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), noted that in the international human rights framework, exceptions may be provided as long as the differentiation in treatment is justifiable and will not impair the human rights of any person.</p> <p>P/Col. Alessandro Abella, chief of the Philippine National Police's Human Rights Affairs Office (PNP-HRAO), averred that the PNP personnel observe equal treatment of all individuals regardless of race, religion and political affiliation, in the conduct of police operations and investigations.</p>
Local Government	HB 1900	Rep. Go (M.)	Revising the Charter of the City of Baguio	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Noel Villanueva (3 rd District, Tarlac), approved HB 1900 subject to style and amendment.

Continuation... Local Government	HB 2376	Rep. Robes	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 RA 9750	The Committee approved HB 2376.
	HBs 1452, 1560, 2539, 2544, 2607, 2612, 2645, 2726, 2855, 2869, 3050, 3193, 3272, 3305, 3317, 3336, 3499, 3707, 4041, 4083, 4193, 4250, 4324, 4464, 4598, 4614, 4688, 5004, 5020, 5346, 5375 & 5402	Reps. Bagatsing, Angara, Deputy Speakers Gonzales (A.) and Villafuerte, Reps. Siao, Nograles (J.J.), Deloso-Montalla, Gatchalian, Nieto, Tupas, Tan (A.), Suarez (A.), Romualdez (Y.M.), Yap (V.), Del Mar, Deputy Speaker Romero, Reps. Sy-Alvarado, Barba, Deputy Speaker Hernandez, Reps. Torres-Gomez, Abellanos, Tambunting, Dy (F.), Deputy Speaker Puno, Reps. Roman, Peña, Chipeco, Deputy Speaker Oaminal, Reps. Tan-Tambut, Lara, Suarez (D.), and Deputy Speaker Pimentel	Providing for a Magna Carta for Barangays	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the 92 bills.</p> <p>Rep. Faustino "Inno" Dy V (6th District, Isabela) was designated as TWG Chair and sat as the presiding officer during the meeting.</p> <p>The Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), and the League of Barangays in the Philippines were requested to submit their respective position papers for the TWG's reference in its deliberations on the bills.</p>
	HBs 23, 43, 58, 109, 130, 441, 452, 534, 535, 617, 669, 764, 772, 835, 856, 1052, 1085, 1161, 1315, 1412, 1503, 1620, 1785, 1797, 1830, 1905, 1918, 2089, 2177, 2178, 2413, 2415, 2448, 2576, 2601, 2615, 2699, 2701, 2721, 2749,	Deputy Speaker Escudero, Reps. Benitez, Yap (V.), Fortun, Zubiri, Revilla, Lopez (M.L.), Paduano, Yap (E.), Salo, Biazon, Collantes, Bordado, Aglipay, Loyola, Sy-Alvarado, Cuaresma, Fortuno, Vargas, Chatto, Suarez (A.), Espino, Gullas, Rodriguez, Silverio, Deputy	Granting additional benefits to barangay officials and barangay workers	

Continuation... Local Government	2860, 3016, 3039, 3106, 3139, 3153, 3154, 3325, 3443, 3870, 3912, 4374, 4396, 4416, 4607, 4758, 4866, 5058, 5438 & 5551	Speaker Abu, Rep. Castelo, Deputy Speaker Villafuerte, Reps. Go (M.), Acop, Mariano- Hernandez, Panotes, Gonzaga, Lim, Palma, Suansing (E.), Tolentino, Romulo, Tambunting, Deputy Speaker Santos-Recto, Rep. Lacson- Noel, Deputy Speaker Legarda, Reps. Baronda, Calixto, Bagatsing, Abueg-Zaldivar, Nieto, Agabas, Delos Santos, and Zarate		
Metro Manila Development	Substitute Bill to HBs 2418, 4111, 4124 & 4698	Reps. Castelo, Lopez (M.L.), Belmonte, and Nieto	Mandating the establishment, management, maintenance, and regulation of a rain water harvesting facility in all new institutional, commercial, industrial, and residential development projects in Metro Manila	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Manuel Luis Lopez (1 st District, Manila), approved the substitute bill subject to style and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HB 413	Rep. Romualdo	Withdrawing the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), amending for the purpose RA 7924 or the law creating the MMDA, defining its powers and functions, providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 413 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Camiguin Rep. Xavier Jesus Romualdo, author of HB 413, said that the MMDA is not entitled to a just share in the IRA, or the share of local government units (LGUs) from national taxes, because it is an administrative body and not an LGU. Hence, MMDA's charter should be amended accordingly.</p> <p>Article 10 Section 6 of the 1987 Constitution states that "local government units shall have a just share, as determined by law, in the national taxes which shall be automatically released to them."</p> <p>Rep. Jose Christopher Belmonte (6th District, Quezon City) objected to the bill emphasizing that it will lead to a diminution of the funds of the MMDA that are necessary in managing the development of Metro Manila. He added that the Supreme Court is the proper venue, and not Congress, to question whether or not giving the MMDA a just share of the IRA is legal.</p> <p>Rep. Stella Luz Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City) said that LGUs have full discretion over their IRA, so even if MMDA is not entitled by law to receive an IRA, responsible LGUs will</p>

Continuation... Metro Manila Development				<p>still be willing to give up a portion of their IRA in favor of MMDA, which performs a very important government function.</p> <p>MMDA General Manager Jose Arturo Garcia Jr. said that MMDA should be given its IRA share owing to its essential role in maintaining peace, order and security in Metro Manila.</p> <p>On the other hand, DBM Director for Local Government and Regional Coordination Bureau John Aries Macaspac said that MMDA, as a national agency, is not entitled to IRA shares as the Constitution provides that only provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays are entitled to a just share in the national taxes.</p> <p>The Committee directed DBM to submit a sample computation on how the MMDA's share in the IRA is derived. Likewise, it requested the resource persons present to submit their respective position papers on the proposed law.</p>
Public Order and Safety	HB 607	Rep. Acop	Defining the offenses of discharge of firearms and indiscriminate firing of firearms and providing stiffer penalties therefor, amending for the purpose Article 254 of Act No. 3815, as amended, otherwise known as the Revised Penal Code, and RA 10591, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulation Act	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Narciso Bravo Jr. (1 st District, Masbate), approved HB 607 subject to style and amendment.
	HB 1373	Rep. Oaminal	Providing for the reorganization of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune and deliberate further on the three bills.
	HBs 2247 & 3065	Reps. Cabochan and Nograles (J.J.)	Strengthening the Internal Affairs Service (IAS) of the PNP, amending for the purpose certain provisions of RA 6975, as amended by RA 8551, otherwise known as the PNP Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998	<p>Rep. Manuel Cabochan III (Party-List, MAGDALO), author of HB 2247, and Rep. Jericho Jonas Nograles (Party-List, PBA), author of HB 3065, explained the merits of their bills. They stressed the importance of strengthening the IAS to make it more effective in promoting higher standards of integrity in the police force.</p> <p>Rep. Nograles also proposed in his bill that the IAS be placed under the direct supervision of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) to make it an "independent, impartial, effective and efficient institutional guardian of integrity."</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Bravo regarding the proposal to transfer the supervision of the IAS from the PNP Chief to the DILG Secretary, IAS Inspector General (IG) Alfegar Triambulo replied that if the proposal is approved, the IAS should have an independent investigative body and independent office outside of the PNP.</p>
	HB 1593	Deputy Speaker Romero	Amending RA 10591, to promote a higher standard of protection, increasing its penalties and sanctions	The Committee agreed to create a TWG to deliberate further on the four bills.

Continuation... Public Order and Safety	HB 3895	Rep. Cuaresma	Promoting responsible gun ownership by streamlining and amending for this purpose RA 10591	Rep. Arnolfo "Arnie" Teves Jr. (3 rd District, Negros Oriental) was designated as TWG Chair. PNP Civil Security Group (CSG) Head Roberto Fajardo said that the problem with increasing penalties and sanctions under RA 10591 is that firearm owners are more likely to declare their firearms as missing instead of complying, because the penalty costs higher than the firearm. Deputy CEO and Senior Executive Vice President Gina Marie Angangco of Armscor Global Defense Inc. and President Alaric Topacio of the Association of Firearms and Ammunition Dealers of the Philippines Inc. (AFAD) suggested that law enforcement agencies should further streamline the process of obtaining firearm licenses to encourage firearm owners to comply with the requirements.
	HB 4728	Rep. Castelo	Mandating more stringent policy on granting individuals permit to carry firearms and prescribing penalties for violation thereof	
	HB 5127	Rep. Cabochan	Fixing the validity period of the license to own and possess, permit to carry outside of residence or place of business, and registration of firearms, amending for the purpose Sections 7 and 19 of RA 10591	
Public Works and Highways	HBs 779, 1084, 2431, 3399, 3664, 3958, 3963 & 5441	Reps. Collantes, Sy-Alvarado, Mangaoang, Salimbangon, Adiong, Castelo, Herrera-Dy, and Deputy Speaker Garcia	Naming/renaming roads and bridges in certain parts of the country	The Committee, chaired by Romblon Rep. Eleandro Jesus Madrona, approved the eight bills subject to the compliance with the requirements set by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) on naming or renaming of roads and bridges.
	HB 1344	Rep. Go (M.)	Establishing the Barangay Road Development (BRD) Program under the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)	The Committee approved HB 1344.
	HBs 175, 238, 825, 923 & 4008	Reps. Tan (A.), Vargas, Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.), Rep. Fernando, and Deputy Speaker Romero	Regulating the planning, design, construction, occupancy, and maintenance of buildings, enacting a New Building Act, repealing PD 1096 or the law adopting a National Building Code of the Philippines (NBCP), thereby revising RA 6541	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate the nine bills. Rep. Romeo Momo Sr. (Party-List, CWS) was designated as TWG Chair.
	HB 364	Rep. Yap (V.)	Providing for the telecommunications technology readiness of buildings and structures, amending certain sections of PD 1096, otherwise known as the National Building Code	
	HB 1650	Rep. Cabochan	Expediting and streamlining the application process for securing building permits and certificates of occupancy, amending for the purpose certain provisions of RA 6541, otherwise known as the National Building Code of the Philippines	
	HB 1891	Rep. Vargas	Strengthening PD 1096, as amended, by mandating a comprehensive nationwide inspection of buildings and imposing stiff penalties against building officials who violate the pertinent provisions of the said Code	

Continuation... Public Works and Highways	HB 5605	Rep. Momo	Regulating the planning, design, construction, occupancy, and maintenance of buildings, promoting building resilience versus earthquake, fire, flood, storm, and multiple hazards, enacting a new Philippine Building Act, thereby repealing PD 1096	
	HBs 3438, 3482, 3538, 4220 & 4412	Deputy Speaker Santos-Recto, Reps. Mariño, Acop, Haresco, and Dy (F.)	Creating district engineering offices in certain parts of the country	The Committee deferred the approval of the five bills pending compliance with the requirements set by the DPWH on creating district engineering offices.
Revision of Laws	HBs 478, 507, 1622, 1939, 2538, 2661, 3088, 3513, 3533, 3703, 3902, 3911, 4040, 4242, 4782, 4971, 5059 & 5497	Reps. Brosas, Barbers, Fortun, Pineda, Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.), Reps. Sy-Alvarado, Villaraza-Suarez, Aragonese, Castelo, Deputy Speakers Fernandez, Legarda and Hernandez, Reps. Abaya, Guico, Nieto, Agabas, and Delos Santos	Amending RA 8972, otherwise known as the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000, by providing additional benefits to solo parents	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Cheryl Deloso-Montalla (2nd District, Zambales), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to study further the 18 bills.</p> <p>Rep. Lawrence "Law" Fortun (1st District, Agusan del Norte) was designated as TWG Chair.</p> <p>The bills seek to amend RA 8972 by providing additional benefits to solo parents such as discounts on the purchases of child's clothing, medicines, school supplies as well as discounts in the payments of hospital and laboratory fees, school tuition fees and other basic necessities.</p> <p>All the authors of the bills manifested that the explanatory notes attached to the bills be considered as their sponsorship speeches.</p> <p>The Departments of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Health (DOH), and Labor and Employment (DOLE), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), Federation of Solo Parents LuzViMin, and the Solong Nanay at Tatay (SONATA) expressed their support for the bills.</p> <p>On the other hand, lawyer Ralbert Tibayan of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) said that the proposed individual tax exemption for solo parents may not be possible as it runs counter to the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) law. He recommended certain income tax deductions instead.</p> <p>Rep. Robert Ace Barbers (2nd District, Surigao del Norte) commented that discounts to solo parents should be limited to basic necessities and not include restaurants and other recreational facilities.</p>
	HB 1239	Rep. Violago	Amending subsection (C) of Section 10 of RA 9208, otherwise known as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (by restoring death penalty for those convicted of qualified trafficking)	<p>The Committee suspended its deliberation of HB 1239 pending the submission of pertinent data from concerned government agencies.</p> <p>Rep. Micaela Violago (2nd District, Nueva Ecija), author of HB 1239, said that her bill seeks to restore death penalty for those convicted of qualified trafficking.</p>

Continuation... Revision of Laws				<p>Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso III (3rd District, Leyte) said that qualified trafficking is a compelling reason for the restoration of death penalty. He informed the body that neighboring Asian countries with death penalty have a very low crime rate.</p> <p>The Philippine National Police (PNP), Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) expressed their support for the bill, while the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and the PCW expressed their respective reservations.</p> <p>Also expressing their reservations were Reps. Arlene Brosas (Party-List, GABRIELA), Lawrence "Law" Fortun (1st District, Agusan del Norte), and Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) who all said that good enforcement of the law is a more effective solution to reducing crime.</p> <p>Replying to the query of Rep. Fortun, PNP's Case Monitoring Division Chief Robert Gallardo said that the recorded incidence of trafficking in the country has significantly decreased from 243 in 2016 to 130 as of October 2019.</p>
Suffrage and Electoral Reforms	HB 1991	Rep. Siao	Authorizing the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) to provide field offices for the provincial election supervisor and election registrar, amending for the purpose Section 55 of Batas Pambansa Blg. 881, otherwise known as the Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines, as amended, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Juliet Marie Ferrer (4th District, Negros Occidental), approved the seven bills. The Secretariat was instructed to draft a substitute bill.</p> <p>Rep. Marisol Panotes (2nd District, Camarines Norte), author of HB 5330, said that her bill seeks to protect the independence and integrity of the COMELEC by giving them the capability to provide for their own field office, thereby removing from the LGU the burden of providing the office space for the COMELEC officials and staff.</p> <p>Rep. Pablo Ortega (1st District, La Union) said that the establishment of individual COMELEC offices in each LGU would require bigger funding. He, therefore, suggested that an additional capital outlay should be allocated to COMELEC for this purpose.</p> <p>COMELEC National Capital Region (NCR) Assistant Regional Director Jovencio Balanquit expressed support for the bills. He said that it has always been the desire of the agency to provide on its own the field offices of election personnel.</p> <p>Also expressing support for the passage of the proposed law were representatives from the Constitutional Reform (CoRe), Legal Network for Truthful Elections (LENTE), and National Citizens Movement for Free Election (NAMFREL).</p>
	HBs 3144, 3468, 3493, 4574 & 4900	Rep. Bagatsing, Deputy Speaker Savellano, Reps. Olivarez, Rodriguez, and Nieto	Strengthening the COMELEC, amending for the purpose pertinent provisions of Batas Pambansa 881, as amended, providing funds therefor	
	HB 5330	Rep. Panotes	Protecting the integrity and independence of the COMELEC by removing from the local government unit (LGU) the burden of providing an office space for the office of the provincial election supervisor and his staff and the election registrar and his staff, repealing for the purpose Section 55 of Batas Pambansa Blg. 881, as amended	
	HBs 1318, 1479, 3731, 3838, 4091,	Reps. Fortuno, Chipeco, Agabas, Deputy	Increasing the authorized campaign expenditures of candidates and political parties, amending for the purpose Section	The Committee approved the seven bills. The Secretariat was instructed to draft a substitute bill.

Continuation... Suffrage and Electoral Reforms	4191 & 5187	Speaker Oaminal, Reps. Silverio, Villanueva, and Deputy Speaker Pimentel	13 of RA 7166 or the law providing for synchronized national and local elections and for electoral reforms, authorizing appropriations therefor	<p>COMELEC Campaign Finance Office head Efraim Bag-id expressed support for the bills. He said that it has always been the position of the COMELEC to increase the campaign expenditures limit. NAMFREL also expressed support for the passage of the proposed law.</p> <p>In response to the query of Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso III (3rd District, Leyte) on the ideal or allowable expenses of a candidate or a political party, CoRe Executive Director Ramon Casiple said there are a lot of factors to consider. For one, Casiple said the calculation of election expenses per voter varies depending on whether the voter resides in urban or rural area. He added that the authorized campaign expenditure should be periodically adjusted based on the consumer price index (CPI). The current spending pattern should also be taken into consideration, Casiple said.</p>
	HBs 2275 & 3090	Deputy Speaker Garcia	Amending RA 7166, to make election expense limitations more reasonable by periodically adjusting them for inflation	<p>The Committee approved HB 3090 subject to style. It recognized the withdrawal of HB 2275 by its author, Deputy Speaker Pablo John Garcia (3rd District, Cebu).</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Garcia underscored the need to provide a periodic adjustment of the maximum allowable election expenses because of inflation. He explained that due to the continued increase in the prices of goods and services, the election spending limit has become unrealistic and outdated. Thus, the passage of his bill will no longer require a new law every time adjustments have to be made, the Deputy Speaker emphasized.</p> <p>Expressing support for the bill were representatives from the COMELEC, CoRe and NAMFREL.</p>
Trade and Industry	HBs 386, 450, 506, 1037, 2125, 2214, 2923, 3215, 3262, 3540, 3559, 4335, 4621, 4776, 5354, & 5355	Reps. Zamora (M.), Lopez (M.L.), Barbers, Tambunting, Deputy Speaker Marcoleta, Reps. Reyes, Castelo, Herrera-Dy, Gatchalian, Violago, Pancho, Nieto, Peña, & Deputy Speaker Escudero	Regulating parking fees and carpark operations	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Wes Gatchalian (1st District, Valenzuela City), agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to harmonize the 16 bills.</p> <p>The Committee Vice Chair, Rep. Jesus "Bong" Suntay (4th District, Quezon City), was designated as TWG Chair.</p> <p>Resource persons from SM Prime Holdings, Ayala Land Malls, Robinsons Land Group and Megaworld expressed their reservation on the bills, arguing that the amount of parking fees may vary depending on the location and operating costs, citing as an example the realty taxes being paid by mall owners which are different for every place in the country.</p>
	HBs 1198, 1225 & 3853	Reps. Macapagal Arroyo, (J.M.), Pineda, and Agabas	Encouraging corporate social responsibility (CSR), providing incentives therefor	<p>The Committee approved HBs 1198, 1225 and 3853. The Secretariat was instructed to prepare a consolidated bill.</p> <p>Rep. Tyrone Agabas (6th District, Pangasinan), author of HB 3853, manifested</p>

Continuation... Trade and Industry				<p>that a bill with similar subject matter was approved on Third Reading during the 17th Congress.</p> <p>Rep. Gatchalian noted the concern raised by Nestle Corporate Affairs head Ernesto Mascenon, who pointed out that Nestle is constrained from donating milk products to victims of calamities as part of its CSR project because of certain limitations under Executive Order 51.</p> <p>EO 51 adopts a "National Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, Breastmilk Supplements and Other Related Products." it promotes breastfeeding and proper nutrition of infants and regulates the advertising, marketing, and distribution of breastmilk substitutes and other related products.</p> <p>Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) legal counsels Ralbert Tibayan and Coney Rose Perez underscored the need to add a provision in the consolidated bill that would provide safeguards against any abuse of the law.</p>
Veterans Affairs and Welfare	HB 700	Rep. Biazon	Rationalizing the disability pension of veterans, amending for the purpose RA 6948 or the law standardizing and upgrading the benefits for military veterans and their dependents, as amended	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan), approved HB 700 with amendment.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Muntinlupa City Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon, author of HB 700, said that the proposed measure seeks to increase and rationalize the grant of disability pensions to veterans and their beneficiaries. He explained that since 1994, when RA 7696 was passed amending RA 6948, the amount of disability pension has not been increased which ranges from P1,000 to P1,700 only.</p>

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Natural Resources (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 106, 1474, 3061 & 4891	Reps. Fortun, Yu, Babasa, and Deloso-Montalla	Providing for the sustainable management of forest and forest lands	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Rep. Lawrence "Law" Fortun (1st District, Agusan del Norte), terminated its deliberation on the draft substitute bill. The bill will be presented to the mother Committee for its deliberation and approval in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Fortun said that a bill with similar subject matter was approved on Third Reading during the 17th Congress. He explained that the TWG meeting was conducted to give the concerned government agencies and environmentalist groups a chance to provide their inputs and suggestions on the bill.</p>

Continuation... Natural Resources (Technical Working Group)				<p>The members of the TWG agreed, among others, on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To include a provision in the substitute bill mandating concerned government agencies to conduct a study, participated in by multiparty stakeholders, that will determine the scale of forest cover the country needs to retain to ensure social and ecological balance; and To come up with a solid basis for the bill's Penal Clause to make it work as an effective deterrent without being used as a "strategic lawsuit against public participation" (SLAPP), particularly against indigenous peoples (IPs). SLAPP refers to a lawsuit filed in retaliation for speaking out on a public issue or controversy.
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AGENCY BRIEFINGS		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Mindanao Affairs	Briefing by the Department of Transportation (DOTr) and Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) on the status of various airport projects in Mindanao	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte), listened to the briefing of the DOTr and MinDA on the status of various airport projects in Mindanao.</p> <p>Rodrigo de Vera, supervising communication development officer of DOTr's Air Transport Planning Division, reported that the DOTr plans to develop and upgrade all regional airports in Mindanao, among which are the Davao International Airport, General Santos Airport, Butuan Airport, Zamboanga International Airport, and Dipolog Airport.</p> <p>For the Davao International Airport, De Vera said that the DOTr allocated P800 million for the expansion of its terminal building and P315 million for the construction of a parallel taxi way. A larger terminal building will decongest the airport of its current passenger traffic of four million, compared to its original capacity of two million annually.</p> <p>De Vera also said that the DOTr has plans to relocate the Zamboanga International Airport, which is currently situated in Canelar, Zamboanga City, to Mercedes, which is also in the same City. De Vera said that the proposed site in Mercedes has a bigger space enough to accommodate the volume of passengers. The relocation of the airport, which costs P13 billion, will also support the programs and activities of the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), he added.</p> <p>On the other hand, the airports located in the Cities of Pagadian, Dipolog, and General Santos are lined up for night-rating to be able to operate and accommodate flights even during the night.</p> <p>Meanwhile, MinDA Director Rizaldy Tan presented the trends in airport passenger capacity in Mindanao. He said that there is high passenger volume in the airports in Davao, Laguindingan, and Zamboanga.</p> <p>On the request of some Members that an airport be constructed in their respective provinces, De Vera said that the DOTr's priority is to develop existing airports in Mindanao, and not to construct new ones to avoid having too many airports in the region which are not commensurate to current demand. Nevertheless, De Vera said that the Members' requests will be subjected to a feasibility study.</p>

Continuation... Mindanao Affairs		The Secretariat was directed to invite representatives from the Railroad Sector of the Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP), Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), and airline companies to attend the Committee's next meeting.
Veterans Affairs and Welfare	Briefing by the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) on its mandate, powers and functions, major accomplishments, and budget for FY 2020	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Geraldine Roman (1st District, Bataan), listened to the briefing conducted by the PVAO on its mandate, powers and functions, major accomplishments, and budget for FY 2020.</p> <p>PVAO Administrator and Defense Undersecretary Ernesto Carolina said that PVAO is mandated to provide immediate and adequate care and benefits to veterans and their qualified dependents and to inculcate patriotism and nationalism among the youth.</p> <p>Carolina presented PVAO's Kagitingan Roadmap 2028 which identifies the agency's long term priorities geared towards efficiently allocating its resources and continuously improving its services.</p> <p>At present, Carolina said PVAO administers the Veterans Hospitalization and Medical Care Program (VHMCP) in partnership with the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) and other accredited government and private hospitals nationwide as part of its advocacy that "no veteran shall pay for his own medicine."</p> <p>In line with PVAO's Direct Remittance Pension Servicing Program, Carolina said that the agency has partnered with nine banks and financial institutions for the timely and accurate delivery of pension and other benefits to the veterans. He added that PVAO is also coordinating with the Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost) and the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) to ensure the integrity of the pensioners' list and to efficiently manage the limited pension funds of the government.</p> <p>Carolina also reported that PVAO has implemented the Veterans' Records Digitization Program to consolidate all veterans' records into one facility.</p> <p>Carolina also presented the legislative agenda of PVAO, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in old age pension for senior veterans of WW II, Korean and Vietnam wars from P5,000 to P20,000; • Increase in old age pension from P5,000 to P10,000 for Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) retirees; • Rationalization of disability pension or increase of monthly disability pension from P1,700 to P5,000; • Modernization of the VMMC; • Establishment of veterans wards in government hospitals; • Commemoration of Veterans Memorial Day and Filipino Veterans Day in two distinct dates to honor Filipino veterans; • Proclamation of a National Military Shrine in Mindanao; and • Creation of a Philippine Veterans Authority. <p>Carolina reported that the retrieval and digitization of extant Philippine World War II documents and other pertinent records in the United States of America's National Archives in Maryland, which started on June 9, 2015, is already completed through the collaborative efforts of PVAO's Office of Veterans Affairs in Washington, D.C. and the Filipino Veterans Foundation, Inc. (FILVETS).</p> <p>Meanwhile, Carolina said that PVAO is requesting for an increase in its FY 2020 budget of P11.43 million to fund its "love for country projects" in connection with the Build, Build, Build program of the Duterte administration.</p>
Ways and Means	Briefing by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) on its revenue collection performance, strategic reforms and initiatives, and digital transformation programs	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2 nd District, Albay), listened to the briefing conducted by the BIR on its revenue collection performance, strategic reforms and initiatives, and digital transformation programs.

Continuation... Ways and Means	<p>Early in the meeting, the Chair requested Committee Senior Vice Chair, Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), to take over as presiding officer for the rest of the meeting.</p> <p>BIR Assistant Commissioner for Collection Service Alfredo Misajon reported that the BIR's annual collections from 2016 to 2018 are on an increasing trend and that the Bureau has consistently achieved its collection targets at more than 95% annually during the same period. BIR's revenue collection performance for the period January-October 2019 is 95.29% (P1.78 trillion) of this year's target collection of P1.87 trillion. Misajon was confident that the BIR would be able to further increase the rate of collection to over 96% by the end of the year.</p> <p>Rep. Salceda, however, countered that based on his own calculations, the BIR would have an estimated revenue collection deficiency of P104 billion this year.</p> <p>BIR Assistant Commissioner for Client Support Service Teresita Angeles, informed the Committee that the Philippines' ranking in World Bank's 2019 Ease of Doing Business Report is now 95th as compared to the previous year's ranking of 124th out of 190 economies. She stated that it can partly be attributed to the strategic reforms and initiatives undertaken by the BIR in the payment of taxes, in starting a business, and in registering properties. Some of BIR's reforms and initiatives are the reduction of processing time and documentary requirements; establishment of a single-window policy and fast lanes for certain transactions; simplification of forms; and development and implementation of digital or electronic systems and processes.</p> <p>Meanwhile, BIR Assistant Commissioner for Project Management and Implementation Service Marietta Lorenzo presented BIR's digital transformation (DX) roadmap with the goal of providing convenient, reliable, and transparent service to taxpayers as well as increasing revenues for the government in order to deliver better and more services to the Filipinos. Lorenzo discussed BIR's present digitized tax filing and payment systems, including the Electronic Tax Software Provider Certification (eTSPCert) System, which was launched in 2018 as an alternative tax filing and payment scheme.</p> <p>As a result of BIR's innovations, by 2018, 1.8 million or 57% of taxpayers are "eFilers" and 20.5 million or 81% of tax returns were "eFiled." Of the total revenue collection for CY 2018, P1.64 trillion or 84% was processed through e-payment channels, Lorenzo said.</p> <p>The BIR is presently developing the Internal Revenue Integrated System (IRIS) to serve as its central tool and repository in the processing of taxpayer information. IRIS will be implemented in three phases starting in the first quarter of 2020.</p> <p>BIR Director for Planning and Management Service Noe Balbedina also discussed briefly other BIR programs and projects such as the Oplan Kandado; Run After Tax Evaders (RATE); Broadening of the Tax Base; Centralized Arrears Management in Revenue Regional Offices; and other IT systems.</p> <p>The BIR was requested to submit the documents requested of them by the Members.</p>
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