



18<sup>th</sup> Congress  
First Regular Session

# Committee Daily Bulletin

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Agriculture and Food	Substitute Bill to HB 869	Deputy Speaker Estrella	Amending certain sections of RA 10068 or the Organic Agriculture Act of 2010	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Wilfrido Mark Enverga (1 <sup>st</sup> District, Quezon), approved the Substitute Bill to HB 869.
	HB 6721	Rep. Defensor (L.)	Establishing the Agriculture Information System in all cities and municipalities	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to deliberate further on HB 6721.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Francisco "Kiko" Benitez (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Negros Occidental) was designated as TWG Chair.</p> <p>Rep. Lorenz Defensor (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Iloilo), author of HB 6721, underscored the need for a nationwide modernized agriculture information system (AIS) that will address the mismatch between production and demand. He cited the importance of complete, real-time data on agricultural products at the barangay level and efficient marketing linkages for small farmers and farm cultivators.</p> <p>He informed the body of the existence of the Municipal Agriculture Information System (MAIS) that is being implemented in Mina, Iloilo. The MAIS serves as a decision-making tool with an up-to-date inventory of all agricultural commodities in the province and provides for easy access to a commodity's real-time supply and production situation at all times. According to Rep. Defensor, his proposed measure intends to realize the potential of the MAIS nationwide.</p> <p>Reps. Benitez and Michael Gorriceta (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Iloilo), co-authors of the bill, also gave their respective sponsorship speeches.</p> <p>Former Mayor Lydia Grabato of Mina, Iloilo presented to the body the system flow of the MAIS-Farmers Agriculture Resource Management System. She said that MAIS aims to establish a central information system where agriculture stakeholders, planners, and local chief executives will have basis for decision-making to manage agricultural development and production. It also aims to reduce wastage or oversupply of commodities and minimize dependence on importation of commodities that can be grown locally.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bill and presenting their respective recommendations were resource persons from the following</p>

Continuation... Agriculture and Food				<p>agencies: Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Budget and Management, National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), and the Action for Economic Reforms (AER).</p> <p>DA Undersecretary for Policy and Planning Rodolfo Vicerra emphasized the importance of full connectivity in order to implement the proposed law effectively at the national level. He also suggested to include the fisherfolk and fishery sector in the proposed AIS and to establish or maintain a centralized repository under the DA.</p> <p>NEDA Undersecretary for Policy and Planning Rosemarie Edillon informed the body that one of the goals to be included in the Resiliency Plan that NEDA is currently finalizing is the modernization of the agriculture system. She advised the Committee to carefully study the operationalization of the proposed AIS in a smaller scope before adopting the system at the national level.</p> <p>Meanwhile, DILG Undersecretary for External and Legislative Affairs Ricojudge Echiverri said that the DILG's role in the implementation of the proposed law would be to ensure that all LGUs will implement the AIS.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Eufemia "Ka Femia" Cullamat (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) concerning the applicability of the AIS to poor farmers with no internet access, Rep. Defensor answered that the MAIS resorts to the manual collection of data in barangays with poor or no internet connection. This, he said, will also be adopted in the proposed AIS.</p> <p>DICT Undersecretary for Legal Affairs, Policy, Planning and Finance Jose Arturo de Castro also said that the Department is already in the process of installing the necessary infrastructures to attain total connectivity nationwide. He also assured the body that the DICT will study the viability of the proposed AIS.</p> <p>Asked by Rep. Victor Yap (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Tarlac) on the necessity of the proposed law given the DA's programs on increasing the productivity of farmers, Vicerra replied that the proposed AIS will be properly implemented if it is supported by law.</p> <p>Several Members lauded the proposed law and expressed their full support for its immediate passage.</p>
<b>Good Government and Public Accountability</b>	HRs 879 & 882	Reps. Zarate and Lacson	Inquiry into the sudden increase in electricity rates and interruptions during the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ) and general community quarantine (GCQ)	The Committee, chaired by Rep. "Kuya" Jose Antonio Sy-Alvarado (1 <sup>st</sup> District, Bulacan), will deliberate further on the issues raised in HRs 879 and 882 in its next meeting.

<p>Continuation...</p> <p>Good Government and Public Accountability</p>				<p>At the outset, Rep. Sy-Alvarado said that the meeting is in line with the Committee's exercise of its oversight power to determine possible cases of malfeasance, misfeasance and non-feasance committed in light of the numerous complaints concerning the reported increase of electricity bills during the ECQ. Taking off from previous discussions, Rep. Sy-Alvarado said that the meeting will focus on two issues: the increase in the transmission cost during the ECQ; and the inclusion of meter-reading charge in the electricity bill by Manila Electric Company (Meralco) during the ECQ despite not having done actual meter readings.</p> <p>Rep. Virgilio Lacson (Party-List, MANILA TEACHERS), author of HR 882, said that the high cost of electricity in the country is one of the reasons why the country has been lagging behind its neighbors in terms of economic growth. Worse, he said, there was a sudden increase in electric bills even at a time when people are reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the attendant ECQ.</p> <p>Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA), author of HR 882, along with several lawmakers, maintained that it was inconsiderate on the part of Meralco to make the consumers pay for higher electricity bills compared to their usual billing in the middle of a pandemic. They said that the company's explanation for such increase as manifested during the Committee's previous meeting is unacceptable.</p> <p>In the Committee's previous meeting, Meralco said that the sudden spike in the electric bills was due to the increase in the consumption of electricity during the summer months and because residential consumers were mostly home during the ECQ.</p> <p>Rep. Lacson urged Meralco to waive and reimburse the meter-reading charge they collected from consumers during the ECQ. Rep. Zarate asked the company to do the same with the P47 convenience fee that was collected by PayMaya – an online payment account – from Meralco consumers who paid their bills online.</p> <p>Meralco Senior Vice President William Pamintuan agreed to waive the meter reading charge and the convenience fee collected by Meralco's payment gateway PayMaya. He also said that meter reading has now resumed and that the next billing will already reflect the actual consumption. He also assured the Committee that Meralco will not issue a notice of disconnection and will not conduct actual disconnections during the ECQ.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Dan Fernandez (1<sup>st</sup> District, Laguna) asked the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) to justify its request to</p>
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Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability				<p>increase its interim Maximum Annual Revenue (iMAR) from P43.78 billion to P47 billion in the middle of the pandemic.</p> <p>NGCP Vice President and Head of Revenue Regulatory Affairs Cynthia Manrique explained that although the NGCP is entitled to an annual adjustment of its iMAR, it has not been granted such adjustment since 2016. This, despite the increase in its capital expenses and operational expenses over the years.</p> <p>ERC Legal Officer Florecinda Digal told the Committee that the NGCP's capital expenses, operational expenses, viable rate of return, and the forecasted demand are some of the factors that are taken into consideration in computing for the iMAR. She also said that the approved iMAR is P11.8 billion lower than NGCP's proposal of P58.8 billion.</p> <p>ERC Chairperson Agnes Devanadera explained that the ERC approved the increase of NGCP's iMAR in February, prior to the declaration of ECQ and before the effects of COVID-19 became apparent. She said that the iMAR is still subject to adjustments by the Commission until it issues its Fourth Regulatory Period Final Determination.</p> <p>The iMAR is the maximum revenue that NGCP is allowed to earn from its transmission operations, or the process of transporting electricity from power generators to distributors.</p>
Health	HB 3606	Rep. Ramirez-Sato	Increasing the bed capacity of San Jose District Hospital in Municipality of the San Jose, Province of Occidental Mindoro from 50 to 200 beds, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4<sup>th</sup> District, Quezon), approved HB 3606, subject to style and amendment, and compliance with the requirements set by the Department of Health (DOH).</p> <p>Occidental Mindoro Rep. Josephine Ramirez-Sato, author of HB 3606, explained the importance of her bill in providing an accessible and quality health service to the residents of Occidental Mindoro. She said that the San Jose District Hospital not only caters to the health care needs of the residents of the Municipality of San Jose but also to those in nearby municipalities of Magsaysay, Rizal, Calintaan, and Caluya in Antique.</p>
	HB 5025	Rep. Tan (S.A.)	Further increasing the bed capacity of the Samar Provincial Hospital in the City of Catbalogan, Province of Samar, from 100 to 220 beds, upgrading the service facilities and professional health care therein and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 5025 subject to style and amendment, and compliance with the requirements set by the DOH.</p> <p>Rep. Sharee Ann Tan (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Western Samar), author of HB 5025, said that the passage of her bill will enable the Samar Provincial Hospital to accommodate more patients from her province. Likewise, upgrading the facilities of the hospital and increasing its manpower complement will ensure more effective and efficient delivery of its services.</p>

Continuation... Health	HB 6081	Rep. Biazon	Establishing the Public Health Emergency Council, providing its powers	The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to consolidate HBs 6493 and 6081.
	HB 6493	Rep. Tan (A.)	Providing for a national health security and appropriating funds therefor	<p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Jose Enrique "Joet" Garcia III (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Bataan) presided over the deliberation on the two bills to make way for Rep. Tan's sponsorship of HB 6493.</p> <p>According to Rep. Tan, her bill seeks to institutionalize a health security system that will minimize the danger and impact of disease outbreaks and other public health emergencies on the collective health of the population. The proposed law also seeks to create the Philippine National Health Security Council (PNHSC) that will craft a National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS).</p> <p>The NAPHS is a country-owned multi-year, planning process that can accelerate the implementation of International Health Regulations (IHR) core capacities and is based on a one health and whole-of-government approach for all hazards.</p> <p>Muntinlupa City Rep. Rozzano Rufino Biazon, author of HB 6081, said that his bill will provide a framework for the prevention, detection, management, and containment of public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic including man-made emergencies like terrorism.</p> <p>Health Undersecretary Myrna Cabotaje expressed support for the bills and recommended its immediate passage to address the challenges brought about by the pandemic.</p>
Transportation	Consolidated Bill on HBs 770, 1251, 1893, 1910, 2520, 2794, 4493, 5374, 5435 & 5495	Rep. Biazon, Deputy Speaker Villafuerte, Reps. Vargas, Castro, Nograles (J.J.), Rodriguez, Velasco, Zubiri, Olivarez, and Ty	Providing for bicycle riders' rights, creating local bicycle lanes, and institutionalizing the use of bicycles as an alternative mode of transportation, appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento (1<sup>st</sup> District, Western Samar), approved the consolidated bill, subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>During the meeting, the bills' authors gave their respective sponsorship speeches: Reps. Rozzano Rufino Biazon (Muntinlupa City), France Castro (Party-List, ACT-TEACHERS), Jericho Jonas Nograles (Party-List, PBA), Rufus Rodriguez (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Cagayan de Oro City), Lord Allan Jay Velasco (Marinduque), Eric Olivarez (1<sup>st</sup> District, Parañaque City), and Diego Ty (1<sup>st</sup> District, Misamis Occidental).</p> <p>Rep. Velasco gave a short presentation on the salient provisions of his bill which include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of bike-friendly communities;</li> <li>• Development of bicycle lanes in all primary and secondary roads nationwide;</li> <li>• Provision of bicycle racks for bicycle parking in all public places, government offices, schools, and major business establishments</li> </ul>

Continuation... Transportation				<p>including malls, banks, restaurants, hospitals and the like; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of bicycle support facilities such as: sidewalks, traffic signages, and pedestrian and bicycle crossings.</li> </ul> <p>Rep. Alfredo Garbin Jr. (Party-List, AKO BICOL) sponsored HB 1251 in behalf of Deputy Speaker Luis Raymund "LRay" Villafuerte Jr. (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Camarines Sur), author of the bill.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bills were the following government agencies: Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Land Transportation Office (LTO), Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), Philippine National Police-Highway Patrol Group (PNP-HPG), and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).</p> <p>The Move as One Coalition, a mobility coalition composed of various transport organizations, also expressed its support for the bills.</p> <p>Bureau of Treasury Director Dominick Mariano asked about the funding source of the proposed law.</p> <p>Rep. Velasco replied that the funding may not necessarily be sourced from the 2021 General Appropriations Act.</p> <p>The Chair commented that the proposed law will be endorsed as one of the programs to be funded under the stimulus package bills that are set to be approved by the House, such as the Philippine Economic Stimulus Act of 2020 (PESA).</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Leonardo Babasa Jr. (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Zamboanga del Sur) if the proposed law will cover variants of bicycles such as motorized bicycles and electric bicycles, Rep. Velasco said that he is amenable to the suggestion and will include other variants of bicycles as part of the definition of bicycles in the proposed law.</p>
	HBs 5453, 6152, 6424, 6605 & 6664	Reps. Kho (W.), Umali (A.), Ty, Deputy Speaker Legarda, and Rep. Haresco	Establishing district branches or satellite offices of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) in certain parts of the country and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved the nine bills.</p> <p>The following authors gave their respective sponsorship speeches and briefly discussed the significance of establishing or converting these LTO offices in their districts: Reps. Ty, Wilton "Tonton" Kho (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Masbate), Greg Gasataya (Bacolod City), Braeden John Biron (4<sup>th</sup> District, Iloilo), Alfonso Umali Jr. (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Oriental Mindoro), Teodorico Haresco Jr. (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Aklan), and Divina Grace Yu (1<sup>st</sup> District, Zamboanga del Sur).</p> <p>Reps. Rodriguez and Gasataya sponsored HBs 6605 and 6169 in behalf of Deputy Speaker</p>
	HBs 5680, 5766, 6169 & 6440	Reps. Gasataya, Biron, Garin (J.), and Yu	Converting LTO extension offices into regular licensing center/district offices, appropriating funds therefor	

Continuation... Transportation				<p>Loren Legarda (Antique) and Rep. Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA) respective authors of the bills.</p> <p>LTO Chief Edgar Galvante expressed his full support for the bills.</p>
	HB 2419	Rep. Acosta	Amending RA 8506, or the law banning the registration and operation of vehicles with right-hand steering wheel in any private or public street, road or highway, providing penalties therefor [by allowing right hand drive vehicles to enter the country to facilitate the country's Roll-on Roll-off (RoRo) connectivity with ASEAN countries]	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to deliberate further on HB 2419.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. John Reynald Tiangco (Navotas City) was designated as TWG Chair.</p> <p>Rep. Gil "Kabarangay Jr." Acosta (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Palawan) presented his bill, HB 2419, to the body. The bill provides that ASEAN-registered private motor vehicles, including tourist vans or buses that carry tourists from another country and delivery trucks or lorries carrying goods from any ASEAN country, may be granted special motor vehicle operation permit to be able to enter and operate on any highway, street or road in the Philippines.</p> <p>The special permit and special driver's license to be issued by the DOTr shall have a validity of 30 days from the date of entry if the purpose is to ferry tourists, and a validity of seven days if the purpose is to deliver goods.</p> <p>Department of Foreign Affairs' Director for ASEAN Economic Community Jim Tito San Agustin expressed his support for the bill. He said that allowing right hand drive vehicles to enter the country would boost the country's preparedness for ASEAN integration.</p> <p>On the other hand, resource persons from the DOTr, LTO, LTFRB, and the Department of Trade and Industry recommended that this be discussed further at the TWG level to look into the safety implications of the proposed law as well as the technical and engineering aspects.</p>

DEFEAT COVID-19 AD HOC COMMITTEE (DCC) MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
<b>Defeat COVID-19 Ad Hoc Committee</b>	Substitute Bill to HB 6623	Speaker Cayetano	Establishing policies and regulations, and public health safeguards for the better normal in the workplace, public places and communities toward a sustainable recovery from COVID-19 pandemic	<p>The Defeat COVID-19 Ad Hoc Committee (DCC), presided by Majority Leader Ferdinand Martin Romualdez (1<sup>st</sup> District, Leyte), approved the Substitute Bill to HB 6623 and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>The DCC, with House Speaker Alan Peter "Compañero" Cayetano (1<sup>st</sup> District, Taguig City-Pateros) as chairperson and the Majority Leader as co-chairperson, was created on March 23 to monitor and coordinate government response to the pandemic and to</p>

Continuation... Defeat COVID-19 Ad Hoc Committee				craft legislations to address its effects on the people, economy, labor and industry.  Majority Leader thanked his colleagues for their hard work in crafting pieces of legislation that will respond to the challenges of COVID-19. He underscored the need to fast-track the approval of these measures to rescue the Filipinos from further harm in the wake of the pandemic.
	Substitute Bill to HB 6707	Rep. Garin (J.)	Mandating the conduct of Baseline Polymerase Chain Reaction COVID-19 testing for the vulnerable members of society to stop the transmission of the disease.	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HB 6707 and the corresponding Committee Report.  The proposed law seeks to conduct a baseline polymerase chain reaction COVID-19 testing on vulnerable members of society, including those asymptomatic but with co-morbidities. The bill also encourages that testing be made affordable and accessible to all.
	HB 6709	Speaker Cayetano	Establishing a COVID-19 Unemployment Reduction Economic Stimulus (CURES) Fund and instituting mechanisms for the implementation thereof and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved HB 6709 and the corresponding Committee Report.  HB 6709 aims to stimulate the economy and generate more jobs through increased public infrastructure spending with the following priority sector beneficiaries: Health, Education, Agriculture, Local roads/infrastructure, and Livelihood (HEALS).  The proposed measure also provides for a budget allocation of P1.5 trillion that will be allocated for three fiscal years, or P500 billion each year, from the approval of the proposed law.
	Substitute Resolution to HR 807	Rep. Fernando	Urging the national government to fast track the disbursement of the Special Amelioration Program (SAP) by giving the barangay the power to identify the beneficiaries and to disburse the allocation	The Committee adopted the Substitute Resolution to HR 807 and approved the corresponding Committee Report.
	Substitute Resolution to HR 821	Rep. Robes	Expressing the commitment of the House of Representatives to work with the Department of Agriculture to pass the proposed supplemental budget of the Department to support its programs to address the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the areas of food security and stability	The Committee adopted the Substitute Resolution to HR 821 and approved the Committee Report.