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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Banks and Financial Intermediaries	HB 6375	Rep. Romualdez (Y.M.)	Consolidating all subsequent amendments to the Charter of the Philippine Veterans Bank, reenacting for the said purpose the pertinent portions of RA 3518, or the law creating the Philippine Veterans Bank, as amended, and introducing further amendments thereto	<p>The Committee, chaired by Quirino Rep. Junie Cua, will continue its deliberation on HB 6375 in its next meeting.</p> <p>In today's meeting, the Committee discussed and reviewed Sections 8 and 12 to 23 of the bill.</p> <p>Philippine Veterans Bank (PVB) President and Chief Executive Officer Roberto de Ocampo, PVB Director Federico Manalo, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Managing Director for Financial Supervision Sector Arifa Ala, and Philippine Veterans Affairs Office Administrator Ernesto Carolina gave their respective comments and recommendations on the bill.</p> <p>Among the points agreed upon by the Committee to be incorporated in the bill were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The membership of the PVB Board of Directors shall include not just veterans and their heirs but also other qualified individuals, as independent directors, consistent with BSP regulations on the matter;• The members of the PVB Board shall receive a per diem/allowance the amount of which shall be within acceptable banking industry rates and shall be set in accordance with the Revised Corporation Code of the Philippines (RA 11232);• The PVB Board shall set the frequency of audit reports subject to BSP rules and regulations;• The portion of PVB's net profit that shall accrue to its reserve account shall not be fixed at 20%, as proposed in the bill, to allow certain flexibility in determining such amount;• The proposed 10% dividend on common shares of stock owned by veterans and their widows, orphans, or compulsory heirs shall be based on the retained earnings of the PVB and not on its net profits. <p>The Committee shall review further the bill's provision prohibiting PVB's directors, officials, and employees from imposing or collecting any fee, charge, or commission from those obtaining loans from the bank, as well as the provision identifying persons who shall be prohibited from owning stock in or becoming indebted to the PVB.</p> <p>On the proposal to include ex-officio members in the PVB Board, Manalo explained that it cannot</p>

Continuation... Banks and Financial Intermediaries				<p>be done because the PVB now operates as a private bank, thus the Board of Directors are now being elected by its stockholders. Manalo added that in the past, ex-officio members were included as members of the Board because government shares in the bank were not yet completely transferred to the veterans.</p> <p>Rep. Cua agreed that this proposal to include ex-officio members in the PVB Board should be studied further.</p>
Labor and Employment	HB 29	Deputy Speaker Escudero	Providing for a Magna Carta of Workers in the informal sector, institutionalizing mechanisms for implementation thereof and amending for the purpose certain provisions of RA 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, and RA 8282, or the law further strengthening the Social Security System (SSS)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-PACMAN), referred the seven bills to its Subcommittee on Workers with Special Concerns for consolidation.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair, Eastern Samar Rep. Maria Fe Abunda, heads the Subcommittee.</p> <p>Deputy Speakers Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon) and Danilo Ramon Fernandez (1st District, Laguna), and Committee Vice Chair Rep. Raymond Democrito Mendoza (Party-List, TUCP), respective authors of HBs 29, 2025 and 3688, explained the merits of their bills. The bills aim to reduce inequalities among the workers in the informal sector, as well as to develop and enhance their skills so that they become more productive and self-reliant citizens, thereby ensuring participation in mainstream economic activities.</p> <p>Likewise, Rep. Pineda said that the proposed law will allow the informal sector workers to have access to government social protection programs. He lamented that many of the low-income informal sector workers were not granted subsidies under the Social Amelioration Program (SAP) amidst the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.</p> <p>Rep. Abunda asked how the government can determine the tax to be collected from the informal sector when the incomes of the members of this sector are not properly reported and monitored.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Fernandez said that the Informal Sector Development Council, proposed to be created under the bill, will coordinate with local government units, in identifying the informal sector employers and workers in particular localities. In this way, he said, assistance to this sector and appropriate taxes on their economic activities will be determined properly.</p> <p>Baguio City Rep. Mark Go underscored the importance of clearly defining the workers in the informal sector.</p> <p>Alliance of Workers in the Informal Economy/Sector (ALLWIES) spokesperson Susanita Tesiorna agreed to Rep. Go's suggestion, adding that the term being used now is "informal economy" which is more inclusive.</p> <p>Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) Governor Antonio Abad Jr. recommended</p>
	HBs 273, 2240 & 4203	Reps. Aglipay, Fortun, and Vargas	Providing for a Magna Carta of Workers in the informal economy, institutionalizing mechanisms for implementation thereof	
	HBs 2025, 3465 & 3688	Deputy Speakers Fernandez and Villafuerte, and Rep. Mendoza	Providing for a Magna Carta for Workers, enterprises and organizations in the informal economy and institutionalizing mechanisms for recognition, integration, and transition to the formal economy	

Continuation... Labor and Employment				<p>that a comprehensive program be established with the aim of helping the informal economy transition to the formal economy. He also said that the proposed creation of a council would duplicate the functions already being undertaken by government agencies such as the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).</p> <p>Director Karen Trayvilla of DOLE's Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns expressed support for the bills.</p>
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DEFEAT COVID-19 AD HOC COMMITTEE (DCC) MEETING				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
New Normal Cluster	HB 6623	Speaker Cayetano	Establishing policies and regulations for the new normal for the workplace and public spaces and instituting penalties for violations thereof	<p>The Cluster, chaired by Deputy Speaker Antique Rep. Loren Legarda, agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune the proposed law incorporating therein the comments, suggestions and recommendations from resource persons present during the meeting.</p> <p>The New Normal Cluster is one of the five smaller bodies under the Defeat COVID-19 Ad Hoc Committee (DCC), which was created during the special session of Congress on March 23, with House Speaker Alan Peter "Compañero" Cayetano (1st District, Taguig City-Pateros) as chairperson and the Majority Leader, Rep. Martin Romualdez (1st District, Leyte), as co-chairperson.</p> <p>Early on in the meeting, the Cluster adopted its Internal Rules of Procedure for the 18th Congress.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Legarda said that HB 6623, principally authored by Speaker Cayetano, establishes the guidelines for the "new normal" (or new way of life) in the workplace and public spaces after the lifting of the COVID-19 restrictions. She cited the critical task of Congress in defining the country's readiness and responsiveness to the challenges of the new normal to avoid having to grapple again with a similar crisis of enormous scale and human impact in the future.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Luis Raymund "LRay" Villafuerte Jr. (2nd District, Camarines Sur), co-author of the bill, said that HB 6623 aims to strike a balance between protecting people's lives and preserving their livelihood while efforts to develop a vaccine for COVID-19 are underway. He mentioned the following pillars that the country can consider in its fight against COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political will - provision of stimulus package to marginalized and affected sectors, investment in healthcare system, and protection of frontliners; • Widespread testing - establishment of more testing booths and system of isolation and quarantine;

<p>Continuation...</p> <p>New Normal Cluster</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact tracing - development of applications in tracking positive patients, as well as suspect and probable cases); and • Public will - compliance with rules, health, and safety protocols by the public at large. <p>Deputy Speaker Villafuerte likewise presented the best practices towards the “new normal” in several countries from which HB 6623 was basically patterned. These include the wearing of masks, frequent temperature checking, mass testing, social distancing, instituting alternative work arrangements, establishing public hand washing stations, improvement of building ventilation systems, and using e-government systems.</p> <p>On the query of Pasig City Rep. Roman Romulo on whether these countries have enacted laws to implement their new normal protocols, Deputy Speaker Villafuerte said they have been mostly implementing these on the strength of executive orders and not through legislation. But in the case of the Philippines, Deputy Speaker Villafuerte said it is best for Congress to enact a law to enforce the guidelines for the new normal to effectively stem the spread of COVID-19.</p> <p>Baguio City Rep. Mark Go asked whether there are “new normal” models in other developing countries from which the Philippines can learn. Deputy Speaker Villafuerte said there is none, but on the reverse, the Philippines may well serve as the model for others when its guidelines on the new normal are in place.</p> <p>Expressing support for the bill were representatives from the Departments of Trade and Industry (DTI), Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Interior and Local Government (DILG), Education (DepEd), Health (DOH), Justice (DOJ), Labor and Employment (DOLE), and Transportation (DOTr), the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), National Task Force Against COVID-19 (NTF), Civil Service Commission (CSC), and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). They also presented to the Cluster their respective action plans and programs towards the new normal.</p> <p>Undersecretary Isidro Purisima of the NTF, which is the operational arm of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF), said that the government’s desired end state is that COVID-19 is prevented and contained, its impact on the economy is mitigated, government and private sector resumed their operations, and people adapt to the new normal.</p> <p>DTI Secretary Ramon Lopez presented the DTI-DOLE Interim Guidelines for Workplaces for the Prevention and Control of COVID-19. He also explained the DTI’s plans of accelerating online e-</p>
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<p>Continuation...</p> <p>New Normal Cluster</p>				<p>commerce and e-government systems delivery in this time of pandemic.</p> <p>Lopez agreed to the suggestion of Rep. Wes Gatchalian (1st District, Valenzuela City) to clarify to the public that employers are not required to conduct rapid testing among their employees. Rep. Gatchalian said that this should clear up any confusion on the matter.</p> <p>DICT Undersecretary for Legal Affairs, Policy, Planning and Finance Jose Arturo de Castro presented the DICT's National ICT Agenda in the New Normal which seeks to digitalize the transactions and services of the government and the public sector as a whole.</p> <p>Likewise, DICT Undersecretary for Operations Eliseo Rio Jr. said that the short-term goal of the DICT is to provide digital systems and infrastructure to make it possible for people to work from home and conduct online classes amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Rio also reported the status of the government's National Broadband Program (NBP), which aims to improve internet speed by accelerating the deployment of fiber optics cables and wireless technologies in the country.</p> <p>On education, DepEd Undersecretary Nepomuceno Malaluan said that the Department has developed a Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan, which provides guidance on how to deliver education services in times of crisis, while ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of both learners and teachers. Malaluan explained that learning modalities under the "new normal" will involve any or a combination of the following: face-to-face learning (subject to physical distancing and minimum health standards), distance learning, blended learning, and homeschooling.</p> <p>Reps. Romulo and Go suggested the full use of broadcast media, such as television and radio, as alternative learning delivery modalities explaining that these media platforms can extend its reach even to remote and far-flung areas compared to the internet.</p> <p>NEDA Undersecretary Rosemarie Edillon suggested that the proposed law should provide a general framework for the new normal that would allow it to adapt to new standards and guidelines that may be set by health authorities considering that knowledge on COVID-19 is still unfolding.</p>
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