



# Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 18<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

## House of Representatives

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No. 18a

### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 1:00 p.m., the session was resumed with Deputy Speaker Raneo "Ranie" E. Abu presiding.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

### CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 4228

*Continuation*

### PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 4228 and that the Secretary General be directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General is hereby directed to read only the title of the measure.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 4228, entitled: AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONETODECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

### FILM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF THE PHILIPPINES

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Film Development Council of the Philippines and for that purpose, we recognize the honorable Vice Chairman, Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; Honorable Gonzaga is recognized to sponsor the budget for the Film Academy...

REP. BONDOC. Film Development Council.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). ...Film Development Council of the Philippines.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize our esteemed Member of the Minority, the Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo of the Second District of Marikina is recognized for her interpellation or manifestation.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member from the Minority with questions on the Film Development Council of the Philippines budget, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate thereon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in moving to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Film Development Council of the Philippines.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Film Development Council of the Philippines is hereby terminated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

### OPTICAL MEDIA BOARD

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Optical Media

Board, and for this purpose, we recognize our esteemed Vice Chairman, Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Honorable Gonzaga, is recognized to sponsor the Optical Media Board budget.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the esteemed Member of the Minority, Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Lady from Marikina, Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo, is recognized for her interpellation or manifestation.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member from the Minority with questions for the Optical Media Board, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate on their proposed budget.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in moving to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Optical Media Board.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Optical Media Board is hereby terminated. The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### AURORA PACIFIC ECONOMIC ZONE AND FREEPORT AUTHORITY

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we begin the consideration of the budget of the Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority, and for that purpose, we recognize our esteemed Vice Chairman of Appropriations, the Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Honorable Gonzaga, Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, is recognized to sponsor the Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority budget.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize our esteemed Member of the Minority from

the Second District of Marikina, Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo is recognized for her manifestation or interpellation with respect to the Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority budget.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member from the Minority with questions for the Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate on their proposed budget.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in moving to close the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority is hereby terminated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CAGAYAN ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we begin the deliberations on the budget of the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority, and for this purpose, we recognize the esteemed Vice Chairman, Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Honorable Gonzaga is recognized to sponsor the budget for Cagayan Economic Zone Authority.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize our esteemed Member of the Minority from the Second District of Marikina, Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Lady from Marikina, Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo is recognized for her interpellation or manifestation with respect to Cagayan Economic Zone Authority budget.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member from the Minority with questions for the Cagayan

Economic Zone Authority, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate on their proposed budget.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in moving to close the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority is hereby terminated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CREDIT INFORMATION CORPORATION

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, we move to begin the deliberations on the budget of the Credit Information Corporation, and for this purpose, we recognize our esteemed Vice Chairman, Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Hon. Ruwel Gonzaga, is recognized for his sponsorship of the Credit Information Corporation budget.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the esteemed Lady from the Second District of Marikina, Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo from the Second District of Marikina is hereby recognized for her interpellation or manifestation with respect to the budget of the Credit Information Corporation.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member from the Minority who have questions on the proposed budget of the Credit Information Corporation, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate thereon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in moving to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Credit Information Corporation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Credit Information Corporation is hereby terminated. The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CULTURAL CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we begin the deliberations on the budget of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, and for this purpose, we recognize our esteemed Vice Chairman, Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga, is recognized for his sponsorship of the Cultural Center of the Philippines budget. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the esteemed Representative of the Second District of Marikina, Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Stella Quimbo from the Second District of Marikina is recognized for her interpellation or manifestation with respect to the budget of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member from the Minority with questions on the proposed budget of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate thereon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in moving to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Cultural Center of the Philippines budget is hereby approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status of House Bill No. 4228 is that we are in the period of sponsorship and debate. I move that we proceed with the consideration of the proposed budget of the Judiciary.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). What is the pleasure of the Gentleman from BUHAY Party-List?

REP. ATIENZA. Before we proceed, this Representation ...

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session.

REP. ATIENZA. ... would like to manifest our disapproval on what is going on.

We have been approving budgets for the three departments and I do not see even a quorum on the floor. This is a mockery of our rules in the House and a mockery of parliamentary rules all over the world.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. We note—very well-taken is the manifestation of our esteemed colleague, Mr. Speaker. The budgets of these small attached agencies had been thoroughly scrutinized during the Committee hearings, and the Majority and the Minority have no further questions. Now, we will begin to tackle the budgets of the bigger agencies, and we expect, Mr. Speaker, our colleagues who are interested in the particular budgets of these agencies to start filling the hall.

With that, I move that we ...

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, with due permission and indulgence of the Majority Leader, this Representation expresses his position very clearly that we should not go on approving budgets without the necessary quorum on the floor.

Therefore, at this point, I am constrained ...

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

*It was 1:09 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 1:11 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### THE JUDICIARY

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move

that we proceed to the consideration of the proposed budget of the Judiciary.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Sponsor, Rep. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga, Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, is hereby recognized for his sponsorship of the budget of the Judiciary.

REP. GONZAGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Arlene D. Brosas for her interpellation on the budget of the Judiciary. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Hon. Arlene Brosas is recognized for her interpellation on the budget of the Judiciary.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, with the indulgence of the honorable interpellator, may we greet the Judiciary family present in the session hall.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. I move that we acknowledge the presence of the following: From the Supreme Court: Associate Justice Diosdado M. Peralta; Court Administrator Jose Midas P. Marquez; and Deputy Court Administrator Raul B. Villanueva. From the Sandiganbayan: Presiding Justice Amparo Cabotaje-Tang; Associate Justice Efren N. De La Cruz; Associate Justice Rafael R. Lagos; Associate Justice Sarah Jane Fernandez; Associate Justice Karl Miranda; and Associate Justice Georgina Dumpit Hidalgo. From the Court of Appeals: Acting Presiding Justice Remedios A. Salazar-Fernando; Associate Justice Danton Q. Bueser; Associate Justice Edwin D. Sorongo. From the Court of Tax Appeals Presiding Justice Roman G. Del Rosario.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). May I

request the family of the Judiciary to please rise for proper acknowledgment by the House of Representatives.

Welcome to the House of Representatives.  
(Applause)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize Hon. Arlene Brosas for her interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Once again, I am recognizing Hon. Arlene Brosas for her interpellation of the Sponsor of the Judiciary budget.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

To the good Sponsor, may we ask some clarificatory questions regarding the Judiciary.

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mme.

REP. BROSAS. This issue involves a certain judge who is quickly building up a reputation as a factory of warrants and other court personnel like him.

Mayroon po kaming napag-alaman na si Judge Soliver Peras of Cebu City, RTC Branch 10, issued multiple search warrants na ginawang excuse ng PNP para sa operations nila noong April 4 to 7, sa Canlaon City, Manjuyod, Sta. Catalina in Negros Oriental, part of the Oplan Sauron Part 2. Operations daw po ito against loose firearms and explosives pero naging daan para tokhang-style operations, which resulted in 14 deaths, an apparent evidence of summary execution, unnecessary force, premeditated violence and treachery; and the arrests of 15 members of progressive organizations including Karapatan, GABRIELA and ANAKPAWIS.

In fact, kasama po ang Kinatawang ito, sa fact-finding mission ng Negros 14 kung saan nalaman natin na isa po rin siya sa nagpalabas ng more than 100 search warrants issued in connection with Sauron Part 1, jointly implemented by the AFP and PNP from December 27 to January 15, 2019, which resulted in seven persons killed, 40 arrested and charged due to illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

Mayroon pa pong search warrant na ginamit against Amorgena Caballero, dated March 27, 2019, used in an operation that led to the filing of trumped-up charges against Amorgena Caballero and the acts of robbery against her family and child abuse of her grandchildren aged 1 and 4 by the PNP.

Nagpalabas din po ng Search Warrant No. 0082—032719 served on March 30 in Sitio Carmen, Canlaon City against Azucena Avelino Garubat. Napuntahan po namin sa Canlaon City jail si Azucena Avelino Garubat at nakausap po namin.

Mr. Speaker, gusto po naming malaman itong—

para matigil iyong mga malicious and dangerous or unconstitutional practices na ito, lalong-lalo na dito sa factory of search warrants. Ang tawag po namin “factory” kasi ang bilis magpalabas ng search warrants. Gusto po sana naming magkaroon ng specific investigation and administrative action specifically against this judge.

Mayroon po bang masasabi ang ang Sponsor natin dito, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The court where the judge which you have mentioned is stationed in Cebu City. He is assigned in Ozamiz because the previous judge there was murdered. Now the question is whether or not there would be an investigation on the issuance of warrants. Well, this Representation would assure you that the Judiciary will conduct an investigation as to the issue that you have raised today—the issuance of warrants of arrest.

Now, with regard to the issuance of warrants of arrest, of course, we have procedures on that matter. If there is a case filed in court, of course, the judge would determine if there is probable cause to issue a warrant of arrest or not. If the judge finds that there is a probable cause, then it follows that there will be an issuance of a warrant of arrest. With regard to your issue of whether or not the Judiciary will conduct an investigation, then we will assure you of that, Ma’am.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, of course, iba ang accountability for the excesses in the implementation of warrants, planting of evidence at iba pa ng mga pulis, pero may hiwalay na pananagutan para sa pag-issue ng depektibong search warrants, hindi po ba? May authority ang SC to *motu proprio* investigate and discipline its judges upon evidence. Kaya po ang sinasabi natin ay magkaroon ng specific investigation and administrative action kaugnay dito.

REP. GONZAGA. The Judiciary assures you that there will be a *motu proprio* investigation on that matter, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, maaari po bang mag-sumite ng report sa Representanteng ito at kailan maaaring i-submit ang report na iyan?

REP. GONZAGA. The Judiciary would like to give due process to the judge involved and after that, there will be comments to be filed by the subject judge, then investigation follows.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, kailan ulit magsa-submit ng report?

REP. GONZAGA. The judge will be given 10 days to comment and after that, the Judiciary will give you the report within 30 days, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Within 30 days, okay.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, para sa commitment na maibigay ang report kaugnay dito—this is really equally noteworthy—dahil si Judge Peras ng RTC Branch 10 of Cebu City, siya po kasi ang nagbigay talaga ng mga search warrants, nagpalabas sa police operations even in Negros Island last December 2018 na anim na farmers din ang namatay. So, parang mayroong pattern kaming nakikita dito at gusto talaga naming malaman kung ano at paano hino-hold accountable mismo ng korte itong isyu tungkol kay Judge Soliver Peras of Cebu City, RTC Branch 10.

Maraming salamat po sa commitment.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, G. Isponsor.

REP. GONZAGA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you, Honorable Brosas from GABRIELA Party-List. The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. France L. Castro from the ACT TEACHERS Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. France L. Castro from the ACT TEACHERS Party-List is recognized for her interpellation of the good Sponsor on the budget of the Judiciary.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Magandang hapon po sa ating lahat.

Itutuloy ko lang po iyong interpellation ng aking kasamahan, si Cong. Arlene Brosas, tungkol sa pag-issue ng search warrant, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Nakita natin talaga dito na malinaw na mayroong irregularity sa pag-issue ng warrant—100 search warrants sa isang araw. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, hindi ba mayroon tayong guidelines sa pag-issue ng search warrant? Sa pag-issue ng search warrant, Mr. Speaker, kailangan ang judge ay personal na pupunta doon sa lugar na kung saan mayroong epektos o mayroong hinahanap na firearms, mayroong hinahanap na kung anoman doon sa respective accused. Tama po ba ito, Mr. Speaker, kailangang personal ang judge na pumunta doon sa paghahanapan o sa pag-search sa lugar?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the *curat* procedure there is, the judge will conduct searching questions on the witnesses presented, but it is not necessary that

the judge will go to the area where the subject is to be searched. The only requirement there is, during the personal interview of the judge, in his or her searching questions, she or he may find that there is a probable cause. That will be the time a warrant of arrest will be issued, but it is not necessary for the judge to go to any place as requested by the parties.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Lilinawin ko lang, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, hindi ito warrant of arrest kung hindi search warrant.

REP. GONZAGA. Just the same, search warrant, the same searching questions, and it is not necessary for the judge na pumunta sa lugar na gusto ng isang—sa court room lang po iyong determination ng search warrant, during the hearing for the issuance of the search warrant.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mayroon ako dito, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ng OCA Circular No. 40-2016. It states:

To : All Judges, First and Second Level  
Subject : Constitutional Requirements and Rules in the Issuance of Arrest and Search Warrants.

Ang pumirma po dito ay si Court Administrator Jose Midas Marquez. Tama po ba ito, Mr. Speaker, na mayroong circular na ganito?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, that circular is issued by the OCA or the Office of the Court Administrator.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Salamat po. Sinabi ninyo kanina na hindi kailangang pumunta si judge ng personal sa lugar where the search will be conducted, tama po ba ito?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Nakalagay kasi dito, “In the issuance of warrant of arrest, the judge shall determine the existence of probable cause.” Tama naman po iyong sinabi ninyo kanina na what the law requires as persona determination on the part of the judge is that he should not rely solely on the report of the investigating prosecutor. This means that the judge should consider not only the report of the investigating prosecutor, but also the affidavit and the documentary evidence of the parties, the counter affidavit of the accused and his witness as well as the transcript of stenographer notes taken during the preliminary investigation.

Ang tanong, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, kung

walang naganap na preliminary investigation, ano po ang procedure? Kasi nakalagay dito na may kailangang maganap na preliminary investigation. Tama po ba?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the preliminary investigation or the inquest is not the job of the judiciary. It is not the job of the judge. The inquest or the preliminary investigation, as the case may be, is the job of the prosecution. Like for example, when a case is filed or police officers go to the prosecution office because there is a warrantless arrest, and the crime is punishable by four years and two months and one day, there is a need of an inquest.

Inquest will be conducted by the prosecution. Inquest is the duty of a separate agency. When the prosecution finds there is a probable cause for the filing of the case, then it is the duty of the prosecution to file the case before the court. If the court finds out that there is indeed probable cause, then that will be the time that a judge will issue a search warrant, or as the case may be, a warrant of arrest, but the preliminary investigation is distinct and separate from the processes in the issuance of a warrant of arrest or search warrant.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Mahalaga ito dahil mayroon talagang mahigpit na proseso sa pag-grant ng search warrant. Napakamasalimuot, Mr. Speaker, ng procedure natin. Ginawa ito ng korte, ginawa ito ng Supreme Court at ng Judiciary para maiwasan natin ang mistaken identity or iyong case na walang hustisya doon sa taong pinagbibintangan. Ang nangyari, Mr. Speaker, sa binigay na example kanina ni Cong. Arlene Brosas sa Negros, ang nangyari po ay pinasok ang mga bahay ng farmers sabay-sabay, around midnight pinasok, and only after several hours nang lumabas ang search warrant. Hindi ito ipinakita—madaling araw po ito nangyari at tulog pa ang farmers noong mga oras na iyon. Madaling araw ito nangyari at after several hours dumating na iyong search warrant at saka ipinakita, kung saan nandoon na iyong mga ebidensya daw na may mga baril.

Kanina, Mr. Speaker, mayroon namang commitment ang ating Judiciary para imbestigahan itong judge na nagma-manufacture ng 100 search warrants sa loob ng sa isang araw. Paano mangyayari iyon, Mr. Speaker, na sa isang araw o isang linggo, mai-imbestigahan niya lahat iyong 100 search warrants na issue niya?

Mayroon po ba tayong ganyang experience sa mga nakalipas na panahon? Puwede po bang mag-cite, Mr. Speaker, ang ating Sponsor na sa kasaysayan ba, mayroon bang ganon kabilis na pag-imbestiga ng prosecutor, ng judge, ng more than 100 search warrants or mga kaso sa loob lamang ng isang araw, dalawa o hanggang tatlo, wala pa ngang isang linggo iyon, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, as regards the question raised by Congresswoman Brosas earlier, the Supreme Court gave the assurance that within 10 days, there will be notices to the subject judge, he will be given time within which to comment, and after 30 days, the Supreme Court will give a report in this hall of Congress.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, for that assuring answer.

Ang susunod naman po na concern ko, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ay iyong kaaba-abang kalagayan ng ating mga korte. Nakita natin dito sa budget ng Judiciary, hindi pa nga sapat ito para mapunan po iyong mga trabaho sa ating mga korte. Ang kasabihan nga para sa mga mahihirap, “Those who have less in life should have more in law.” Karamihan po na nagpupunta sa korte, kadalasan, mga mahihirap na talagang kahit pamasahé sa pagpunta sa korte ay talagang hirap. Ganon din po iyong kalagayan ng ating mga empleyado sa Judiciary.

Ang tanong ko lang po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ilan ba ang ating mga empleyado sa lahat ng korte that we may attend to? Nakikita ko rin, personally, na sa mga korte, sobrang daming mga kaso na dumarating, at kung bibilangin po ninyo iyong mga staff, mga clerks, mga stenographers at ilan pang mga empleyado na nandoon sa korte ay talagang nakikita namin na talagang tambak na tambak sa dami ng trabaho.

Ang tanong po, Mr. Speaker, sapat ba iyong ating mga personnel sa ating mga korte to attend to sa mga kasong idinudulog sa korte, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. GONZAGA. Records would speak, Mr. Speaker, that as of 2019 August, there are more or less 35,000 employees in the entire Judiciary.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So 35,000 employees po all over the nation. Ano po ba ang pagtasa dito ng ating Judiciary as to the work, nakakayanan po ba natin? Just imagine, Mr. Speaker, sa isang kaso, halimbawa, ilang buwan or taon nga minsan ang binibilang natin para ma-resolve ang mga kaso at iba pa. Ang tanong, Mr. Speaker, sapat ba itong 35,000 na mga empleyado natin o kailangan ng Judiciary natin ng additional personnel para dito?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, as of December 28, the Supreme Court gave us records. For the Supreme Court, the disposition rate is 42 percent. For the Court of Appeals, the disposition rate is 41 percent. Ibig sabihin po niyan, kung mayroong pending case na 19,732 for the Court of Appeals, may disposal po ang Court of

Appeals na 14,520, and that would be equivalent to 42 percent disposition rate.

The Sandiganbayan has a disposition rate of 19 percent; the Court of Tax Appeals, 27 percent; the second level courts, 39 percent; the first level courts, 62 percent; and the family courts, 39 percent, but that is only on the disposition rate. As to the accomplishment rate, ang ibig sabihin ng accomplishment rate is kailangan kunin iyong total case disposal for 2018 and divide it per the disposal target in 2018. For the Supreme Court, 108 percent accomplishment rate; for the Court of Appeals, 95 percent; for the Sandiganbayan, 339 percent; for the Court of Tax Appeals, 141 percent; for the second level courts, RTCs, 169 percent; for the first level courts, 118 percent; family courts, 94 percent. Ibig sabihin, gumagana po ang Judiciary.

With regard to your question na kailangan pa ng pondo ang Judiciary, yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Kung titingnan po natin, Mr. Speaker, at such rate—kung ako si teacher, mukhang hindi pa siya papasa sa standard ko kasi halos kalahati lang; ang pasado ay 75 percent. That goes to show na medyo mabagal ang kung baga sinasabi nating “wheels of justice” sa ating lipunan. So this will constitute to the low budget that we are giving the Judiciary.

Isang malaking issue, Mr. Speaker, ng mamamayan ay iyong pagpapabilis ng “wheels of change” ika nga. Similar to education, susi dito iyong easing the workload and decongesting the dockets by creating sufficient positions, especially those in the frontline services and vital court functions, kagaya po ng stenographers, legal researchers, clerks of courts, interpreters, administrative personnel per sala, judges, PAOs, et cetera. Naniniwala po ba ang distinguished Sponsor dito, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). And providing for sufficient infrastructure for justice like sa portion ng budget, sa total NEP, growth in the past years ay talagang mababa, the staffing summary in the past years at iyong statistics. Halimbawa, sa MTC and RTC branches, covered ba ang allocations for operations sa mga MTC at RTC branches?

REP. GONZAGA. May portion na covered and then may portion din na nangangailangan talaga ang Judiciary ng dagdag na pondo.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, we had this consultation with the employees of the Judiciary at ikinuwento sa amin iyong mga kaaba-abang kalagayan ng ating mga empleyado. In fact, Mr. Speaker, katulad din ng mga teachers,

bumibili din sila minsan ng kanilang mga gagamitin sa opisina, kaya kung titingnan natin, kung mayroong talagang dapat na dagdagan ng budget ay itong sa Judiciary. Tama po ba, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). By the way, how much did the Judiciary propose for 2020?

REP. GONZAGA. For 2020, the proposed budget is P38.71 billion.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). The approved budget.

REP. GONZAGA. The Automatic Appropriations is P1.06 billion—that is the Automatic Appropriations—and P37.65 billion is the New Appropriations for the Judiciary.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay, covered na po—nandito po iyong MOOE. What percent of the budget is for MOOE and CO?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Ano pong porsiyento from the budget ang para sa MOOE at Capital Outlays?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the Personnel Services is 79 percent and the MOOE is 15.9 percent and the Capital Outlays is 4.2 percent. Ibig sabihin po niyan, the Personnel Services is P30.9 billion, the MOOE is P6.14 billion and the Capital Outlays is P1.6 billion, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

In 2019, the Judiciary proposed a total of P55.921 billion, but the DBM cut that in the NEP. The Judiciary's budget was lowered to P37.3 billion, with the difference of P18 billion, pero mas mababa pa rin ang na-propose sa GAA. Tama po?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, sabi dito, the courts collect a Judiciary Development Fund (JDF) from the court fees, from those who file cases, get married, seek copies of documents and take bar exams. The bulk of these amounts, around 80 percent, are allocated for the cost of living allowance of Judiciary workers, with only 20 percent for acquisition, maintenance and repairs.

So, the JDF goes a long way to augment the meager salaries of court employees, but it cannot be spent for what the national government should pay for. Sa konklusyon, Mr. Speaker, nakikita natin dito



na napakahalaga ng papel ng Judiciary sa ating mga mahihirap at nangangailangan ng justice, kaya dapat po, Mr. Speaker, nagpo-propose ako na maibalik iyong na-cut ng DBM dito na about eight—how many millions iyong na-cut ng DBM? Tama po ba ako na P18 billion?

REP. GONZAGA. Sixteen billion.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Sixteen billion. Sana po, Mr. Speaker, this Representation would like to ask the Committee on Appropriations na matulungan natin iyong Judiciary na maibalik ang mga kinaltas na ito ng DBM para naman po makaalwan iyong ating mga empleyado, na katulad ng sitwasyon ng mga kaguruan natin.

Thank you po.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, sabi po ng mga honorables na nasa likod po—salamat po.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize Hon. Irene Gay F. Saulog of the KALINGA Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Honorable Saulog of the KALINGA Party-List is recognized.

REP. SAULOG. Mr. Speaker, inasmuch as there is no other Member from the Minority who wishes to ask questions, I move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Judiciary. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Judiciary.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Judiciary is hereby terminated.

Congratulations to the family of the Judiciary. *(Applause)*  
The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that

we begin the consideration of the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Romeo M. Jalosjos Jr. from the First District of Zamboanga del Norte.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Before I recognize the distinguished Sponsor of the budget of the Ombudsman, we will have a one-minute suspension of the session so that the Members of the House can congratulate the members of the Judiciary family.

*It was 1:45 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 1:45 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

Before I recognize Hon. Romeo Jalosjos Jr., the Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations assigned to sponsor the budget of the Ombudsman, may we welcome the members of the Ombudsman family headed by Ombudsman Samuel Martires: Special Prosecutor and Acting Overall Deputy Ombudsman Edilberto Sandoval; Deputy Ombudsman Paul Elmer M. Clemente; Deputy Ombudsman Rodolfo Elman; Deputy Ombudsman Cyril Ramos; and OIC Deputy Ombudsman Adoracion Agbada. Welcome to the House of Representatives.

Now, the Chair is recognizing Hon. Romeo Jalosjos Jr. to sponsor the budget for the Office of the Ombudsman.

REP. JALOSJOS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate of BAYAN MUNA Party-List for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Carlos Zarate of the BAYAN MUNA Party-List is hereby recognized for his interpellation or manifestation with respect to the budget of the Ombudsman.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Magandang hapon po sa pamilya ng Office of the Ombudsman. Mararapatin po ba ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor na maglinaw ng ilang mga katanungan patungkol sa budget ng Office of the Ombudsman?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ako po ay sumasang-ayon.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Ang una ko pong katanungan—nitong mga nakaraang araw ay naglabas ang Office of the Ombudsman ng isang kautusan na suspindihin ang mahigit 20 opisyaes at empleyado ng Bureau of Corrections in relation to the issue on the releases, of convicted prisoners related to the Good Conduct Time Allowance controversy. Is this confirmed, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. May I inquire from the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, what was the basis for the suspension of these employees and officials of the Bureau of Corrections?

REP. JALOSJOS. It is a preventive suspension pending investigation.

REP. ZARATE. Was there a complainant from the private sector or from the public sector? Or was it based on a *motu proprio* investigation conducted by the Office of the Ombudsman, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. I am sorry, honorable Gentleman. Can you please repeat the question?

REP. ZARATE. Was the investigation based on a complaint or was it a merely *motu proprio* investigation conducted by the Office of the Ombudsman?

REP. JALOSJOS. It is *motu proprio* po, on its own initiative.

REP. ZARATE. Based on the *motu proprio* investigation? I suppose the Office of the Ombudsman interviewed the witnesses and also gathered documents from the Bureau of Corrections as well as other sources, that is why it recommended the suspension of these officials, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Just for the record, how many officials were already suspended and are there still other officials who will be suspended or investigated

by the Office of the Ombudsman, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Thirty officials are being investigated.

REP. ZARATE. Thirty incumbent officials? Is Director Faeldon included in the investigation?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Your Honor, he is included in the investigation.

REP. ZARATE. He was already fired, so you can no longer suspend him? So, just another clarification as this investigation is not only administrative in nature but also criminal in nature. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. May I also inquire from the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, considering that this is also a criminal investigation, possible criminal violation because of the releases made based on the law granting Good Conduct Time Allowance, what about the previous officials prison officials, from 2014 up to the present who were also involved in the releases of convicted felons, especially those charged of heinous crimes or those who were considered recidivists or repeat offenders, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. It is possible that they will be included on top of the 30 who are now being investigated upon the evidence, the findings Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. So, all officials, past and present, who may have been involved in this controversy are being investigated criminally? Is that confirmed, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Will the Sponsor confirm that all Bureau Directors from August of 2014 up to the present, including dismissed Director Faeldon, are among those being investigated, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. It is possible. Yes, and definitely Faeldon is one of those being investigated.

REP. ZARATE. What about Senator Bato who was also a previous Director of the Bureau of Prisons?

REP. JALOSJOS. As mentioned, all present and past officials are now under investigation.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Now, in relation to this *motu proprio* investigation by the Ombudsman, may the Sponsor enlighten this Representation, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, what are the parameters or guidelines or protocols, if you may call them that way, when the Office of the Ombudsman conducts a *motu proprio* investigation?

REP. JALOSJOS. Your Honor, the guidelines right now are not available at this moment. We will just furnish you with the proper guidelines.

REP. ZARATE. May we hear it once again, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Can the question be more specific?

REP. ZARATE. For example, if the Office of the Ombudsman decides to conduct a *motu proprio* investigation, ano po ang pagbabasehan nito? Basta lang ba kontrobersiyal iyong isyu ay magka-conduct ang Office of the Ombudsman ng *motu proprio* investigation or because it believes, even if it is controversial, that this is a—the Office of the Ombudsman will conduct an investigation because it is important in our, you know, quest to give justice to our people, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang gamit po is Republic Act No. 6770.

REP. ZARATE. That is precisely my question, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Are there guidelines? Ano iyong mga kaso na sasabihin ng Office of the Ombudsman na it will conduct a *motu proprio* investigation?

REP. JALOSJOS. Anything unjust, improper, illegal and inefficient.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Anything that is considered illegal, inefficient or when there are transactions, for example, that are disadvantageous to the public. Can we say that, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes.

REP. ZARATE. Now, my next question is, I suppose the Sponsor is also aware that in the present administration's campaign against drugs, the Philippine National Police admitted, and this is based on official statistics, that there are almost a thousand individuals who were supposedly

killed during the conduct of police operations. Is the Sponsor aware of that, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Can you repeat the question?

REP. ZARATE. Is the Sponsor aware that, in the conduct of the campaign against drugs by the government since June of 2016, almost 6,000 individuals or persons were killed as officially admitted by the PNP? They called it “tokhang” or Oplan Double Barrel in the past. For these 6,000 individuals who were killed, ang sagot po ng mga pulis ay “nanlaban.” Is the Sponsor aware of that fact that there are these victims in the war against drugs?

REP. JALOSJOS. As reported po, yes.

REP. ZARATE. So, considering that the Sponsor and the Office of the Ombudsman are aware of this, may I inquire from the Office of the Ombudsman as to whether or not there is an ongoing *motu proprio* investigation conducted by their office related to this issue, specifically to the police officers involved who variously claimed in the past, and even up to now, that these 6,000 individuals were killed during police operations, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Your Honor, there is.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. What is now the progress of that investigation, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Still under investigations, pending review.

REP. ZARATE. It is almost three years now and the investigation is still continuing. There was no suspension, preventive or otherwise, of those who were involved in these operations that resulted in the death of almost 6,000, at least officially, as admitted by the PNP in several occasions. Almost 6,000 individuals were killed in various operations conducted by the PNP.

REP. JALOSJOS. For your information, Your Honor, some of the policemen or persons were dismissed already and some of the cases....

REP. ZARATE. There were police officials who were already dismissed by the Office of the Ombudsman. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. So, just to expedite, may we just request the Office of the Ombudsman to give this

Representation, as well as the Committee, a detailed report of the investigation conducted by your office, and if there were already police officers dismissed as a result of the investigation conducted by the Office of the Ombudsman because of these police operations na nagresulta po sa pagkamatay, hindi lang po daan-daan, kung hindi libo-libong tao sa nakaraang anim na taon. Maaari bang mabigyan po ang Kinatawang ito at ang komiteng ito ng report na iyan? Maaari po ba tayong kumuha ng commitment mula sa ating Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, we will furnish you a report on those cases that were resolved and decided.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Bilang panghuli po, hindi na maging detalyado, pero napansin ko po sa inyo ring panukalang budget, totoo kulang pa rin ang budget ninyo dahil kailangang mas maging epektibo ang opisina ng Office of the Ombudsman sa kanyang mandato na habulin iyong mga tiwaling kawani at opisyal ng ating pamahalaan at maging ang nasa pribadong sektor na kasapahat at kasabwat ng mga tiwaling opisyal. Napansin ko po na marami pa rin pong mga posisyon sa iba't ibang opisina ninyo na hindi po napupunan, at sana ay pabilisin din ng Office of the Ombudsman to fill up all these positions para po matugunan natin iyong problema, iyong lahat na ninanais natin, na iyong labanan ang korapsyon at katiwalian sa ating pamahalaan.

Iyon lang po ang aking mga katanungan at sana po ay panatilihin ng Office ng Ombudsman ang kanyang pagiging independent, and the Office of the Ombudsman will not be weaponized as a tool to run after the critics of any administration because the Office of the Ombudsman is a constitutional office at ang kanyang bias lang dapat ay nasa interes ng hindi isang indibidwal, hindi ng isang grupo, kung hindi interes po ng ating mamamayan.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Sponsor. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Maraming salamat din po.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. I move that we recognize Hon. Janette L. Garin of the First District of Iloilo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The honorable Representative from the First District of Iloilo, Hon. Janette Garin, is recognized.

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, there being no other Member from the Minority who would wish to

ask questions in relation to the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman, we move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate as far as the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman is concerned.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Office of the Ombudsman.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Office of the Ombudsman is hereby terminated. (*Applause*)

Congratulations to the Ombudsman family. Congratulations din po sa aking kababayan na constituent ko sa Second District, kay dating Justice Edilberto Sandoval.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### PHILIPPINE CENTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we begin the consideration of the proposed budget of the Philippine Center for Economic Development.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Alfred Vargas to sponsor the proposed budget of the Philippine Center for Economic Development.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Bago ko po i-recognize ang kasama nating si Hon. Alfred Vargas, salamat po nang marami sa ating mga kasamahan at sa loob po ng isang oras ay nakapagpasa tayo ng walong budget, nakapagpa-terminate po tayo ng deliberations sa walong ahensiya ng gobyerno.

The honorable Representative from the City of Quezon, Hon. Alfred Vargas, is recognized to sponsor the budget of the Philippine Center for Economic Development.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo of the Second District of Marikina to interpellate the Sponsor on the proposed budget of the PCED.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the Second District of Marikina, Hon. Stella Quimbo, is recognized for her interpellation or manifestation with respect to the budget of the Philippine Center for Economic Development.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Speaker, if there is any institution with significant impact on economic policy in the country, it is the Philippine Center for Economic Development. So, with that, there are no questions from the Minority for the PCED and I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate on their proposed budget.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Philippine Center for Economic Development.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Philippine Center for Economic Development is hereby terminated.

Congratulations to the Philippine Center for Economic Development.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker may I request that we acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Romeo S. Momo Sr. of CWS Party-List. They are Datus of Mindanao—Datu Globo, Edimar V. Salcedo of Bukidnon; Datu Mapawa, Gabbie C. Ares of Ozamiz; Datu Laeh, Vencio Lauman of Ozamiz; Datu Macoy, Maxmiller M. Santiago of Cagayan de Oro; Datu Tagu-an, Pedro V. Villamor of Cagayan de Oro; Datu Bai Maya, Lita B. Villamor of Cagayan de Oro; Datu Sulo, Florito V. Malazar of Cagayan de Oro; and Datu Paghinsa, Gerelyn S. Hijosa of Cagayan de Oro.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Guests of Hon. Romeo S. Momo of CWS Party-List, welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

## PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to consider the budget of the Presidential Communications Operations Office, including its attached agencies and corporation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). You may proceed.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the honorable Vice Chair of the Committee on Appropriations, Hon. Jose Enrique “Joet” S. Garcia III of the Second District of Bataan.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). For what department will...

REP. BOLILIA. Presidential Communications Operations Office, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Joet Garcia from Bataan Province is hereby recognized to sponsor the budget of the Presidential Communications Operations Office.

REP. BOLILIA. In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the PCOO family led by Secretary Jose Ruperto Martin Andanar; Undersecretary George A. Apacible; Undersecretary Marvin Gatpayat; Undersecretary Lorraine Marie T. Badoy; Undersecretary Raquel R. Tobias; Assistant Secretary Ryan Vincent L. Uy; Assistant Secretary Ana Maria Paz B. Rafael; Assistant Secretary Florentino Y. Loyola Jr.; Assistant Secretary Omar Alexander V. Romero; Director Eugene Earle Jr.; Director Mark Anthony C. De Leon; Bureau heads—Rizal Giovanni P. Aportadera Jr., Director IV, Bureau of Broadcast Services; Director Florinda Princess Duque, Director IV, Bureau of Communications Services; Francisco V. Vales Jr., Director III, National Printing Office; Acting Head of the News and Information Bureau, Virginia R. Arcilla-Agtay; Deputy Director General of the Philippine Information Agency, Benjamin R. Felipe; and Executive Director III, Presidential Broadcast Staff-RTVM, Dennis Wilfred P. Pabalan.

For the Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations, we have Julieta C. Lacza, Network General Manager and COO of People’s Television Network, Inc.; Katherine Chloe S. De Castro, President of IBC 13; and Michael J. Dalumpines, Chairman and President, APO Production Unit, Inc.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). To the

Presidential Communications Operations Office family headed by Secretary Martin Andanar, welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I reiterate my motion to recognize Hon. Joet Garcia of Bataan.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). We are now recognizing Hon. Joet Garcia to sponsor the budget of the Presidential Communications Operations Office, including its attached agencies and corporation.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Carlos Isagani “Caloy” T. Zarate of BAYAN MUNA Party-List for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Caloy Zarate of BAYAN MUNA Party-List is recognized for his interpellation or manifestation with respect to the budget of the Presidential Communications Operations Office, including attached agencies and corporation.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Will the good Sponsor entertain some questions and interpellation?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Just one subject and it is my annual concern that I raise sa PCOO, in particular, doon sa budget ng National Printing Office. Every year, ang budget ng National Printing Office ay nalalagay sa alanganin at nalalagay sa walang kasiguruhan ang mga kawani ng National Printing Office dahil kada taon ang kanilang budget, particularly iyong kanilang budget for Personnel Services, ay tinatapyasan at hindi ibinibigay ng DBM. For example, for 2020, ang ni-request ng National Printing Office na budget nila for PS is P99 million pero ang ibinigay ng DBM sa kanila na nakalagay sa NEP is only P11 million, the same amount allocated for this year, 2019. In the previous year, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ang budget po, halimbawa, ng NPO noong 2017 ay P129 million. Then in 2018, it was reduced to P94 million. Worse, in 2019, P11 million na lang, at for 2020 ay P11 million din.

May I inquire, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ano po ang pagtingin natin sa kalagayang ito ng National Printing Office, lalong-lalo na sa interes ng mga kawani o empleyado ng National Printing Office kung tayo ay maglalaan lang ng ganitong pondo para sa kanila?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, tama po si Congressman Zarate in saying na ang approved budget for the NPO is only P10.384 million for the

year 2020 at ito po ay ang proposed budget under the National Expenditure Program, dahil po ang NPO ay isang government agency na kumikita pagdating po sa printing services na ibinibigay sa iba’t ibang ahensiya ng pamahalaan.

Nito pong mga nakaraang taon, Mr. Speaker, kahit po na hindi naibibigay sa kanila iyong budget para po sa total na pangangailangan pagdating sa Personnel Services ay hindi naman ho nagkakaproblema ang NPO sa pasuweldo sa kanila pong mga empleyado dahil sapat at higit pa ang kanila pong nade-derive o nakukuhang income mula ho sa kanilang printing services, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Totoo naman po iyon, bilang isang ahensiyang kumikita at ang sinasabi na ang kanilang pasuweldo sa kanilang mga kawani ay dapat kukunin doon sa kita nila, pero sa pagkakaalam ng Kinatawang ito, at siguro ay alam rin ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, taon-taon po ay paliit nang paliit din ang kinikita na ng National Printing Office. For 2019, for example, they were only allocated P11 million. Totoo, surviving sila dahil nitong 2019 ay nagkaroon tayo ng eleksiyon at maraming printing materials sa panahon ng eleksiyon na ginamit ng pamahalaan ay ipinasok sa National Printing Office. The good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, is also aware na, as it is now, napakarami pong printing contracts na dati ay nasa National Printing Office ngunit wala na po sa National Printing Office at napunta na sa isang government-accredited printing office, iyong APO.

Kaya gusto ko pong iparating dito na nalalagay na naman sa pagkakaalanganin at nababahala ang mga kawani natin sa NPO, and I hope that the good Sponsor understands their situation, at bilang Sponsor ng budget ng PCOO, including na ang NPO, ay magkaroon ng representation ang ating Sponsor na maibalik iyong kanilang ni-request. In fact, they are no longer requesting ng napakalaki, just like their budget in 2017 na naipabalik din namin na P129 million.

For this year, they are only requesting P99 million at kung kikita sila for this year at hindi nila maubos iyong P99 million na iyon ay walang problema. Ang ikinababahala po nila, kung lalagyan lang sila ng P11 million, paano po ang mangyayari sa kanila for the rest of the year 2020 kung walang kikitang ganoon kalaki ang National Printing Office, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, noong nagkaroon ng briefing ang PCOO, binanggit din po ng DBM na mayroon silang miscellaneous expense account na nakalaan para sa NPO kung sakaling magkakaroon po ng problema sa kanilang revenue at hindi po maibibigay

iyong nararapat para sa mga empleyado. Ganoon pa man, Mr. Speaker, ang NPO taon-taon ay nagsa-submit ng proposed budget na may halaga pong at least 50 percent ng kanila pong PS requirement, ngunit, katulad ng aking binanggit kanina, Mr. Speaker, dahil nga hindi ito na-u-utilize ng NPO for the previous years, hindi ho ito ibinibigay nang buo ng DBM. Mr. Speaker, the NPO, of course, would like to have an increase pagdating po sa budget katulad ng iba po nating mga ahensiya. Siguro, isa po ito sa puwede nating pag-usapan at i-propose sa tamang panahon.

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat, Mr. Sponsor. Sa 2020 po ang hinihiniling nilang kabuuang budget—actually, ang proposal nila is not P189 million kung hindi ako nagkakamali sa PS at sa katunayan, ang nire-request lang nila nga ay halos kalahati ng P189 million.

So, bilang panghuli na lang po, can we get the commitment of the Sponsor and the leadership of the NPO that they will make the necessary representation, para sa ating panukalang batas ng budget ay maipasok ang isang special provision, just like in the previous year, na tutugon doon sa pangangailangan ng kakulangan ng budget ng ating National Printing Office? May we get that commitment from the Sponsor and the leadership of the PCOO specifically the National Printing Office, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, ang Representasyong ito, kasama ang NPO, ay gagawin po iyong lahat para, hopefully, maisama po sa budget ng NPO iyong talaga pong nararapat, ayon na rin sa mungkahi ng atin pong mahusay na Congressman Zarate.

REP. ZARATE. With that commitment, Mr. Speaker, I have no other questions for the PCOO.

Maraming salamat, kagalang-galang na Sponsor. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu.). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Sarah Elago of the KABATAAN Party-List for her interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu.). Hon. Sarah Elago from the KABATAAN Party-List is hereby recognized for her interpellation on the budget of the Presidential Communications Operations Office, including its attached agencies and corporation.

REP. ELAGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Magandang hapon po sa ating distinguished

Sponsor at sa lahat ng ating mga kapwa Mambabatas at maging sa PCOO family.

Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, we have an obligation to be fair and to decide based on truthful, timely and reliable information. We do not want to be left in the dark. Hence, this Youth Representation welcomes the submission of the PCOO of the most recent update on their #RealNumbers campaign. However, Mr. Speaker, I have yet to receive the following documents requested by this Representation during the budget briefing on the PCOO, namely: the report on the Europe and US Truth Caravan trip where the PCOO spent about P3.4 million; second, the list of the members of the Spokespersons Guild; third, the terms of reference of their Development Communication Network; and lastly, the list of all the fora, seminars, and Kapihan conducted on the DILG federalism campaign.

May we know if there is an update from the distinguished Sponsor on the submission of the documents I just mentioned, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, iyong mga listahan o impormasyon na hinihingi ni Congresswoman Elago ay nandidito na po at maibibigay ko kay Congresswoman Elago.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, may I request a suspension to quickly review or read through the reports or the documents that are, according to our distinguished Sponsor, now ready for the scrutiny of this Representation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu.). The session is suspended.

*It was 2:20 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 2:23 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu.). The session is resumed.

Honorable Elago is recognized.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat po sa ating ginoong tagapagsalita ng lupon ng mga kinatawan.

Maraming salamat din po sa ating distinguished Sponsor sa maagap na pagbibigay sa atin ng ilan sa mga dokumento bagamat ito ay hindi pa rin po kumpleto, Mr. Speaker. Wala po rito ang hinihingi nating terms of reference ng Development Communication Network ng PCOO; pangalawa, ang list din ng lahat mga talakayan na

isinagawa ng PCOO na may kinalaman sa pederalismo; at panghuli, ang listahan ng mga miyembro ng members ng Spokespersons Guild. Kami po ay nagkaroon rin ng pag-uusap ng ating distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na maaari na dito na lamang pong tanungin sa interpelasyon na ito ang mga nais pang malinawan na mga issue ng Representasyon ng Kabataan.

First is the issue on the #RealNumbers Campaign of the PCOO. Mr. Speaker, in the President's 2017 Key Accomplishments, the PCOO stated in their #RealNumbers Report, which is their initiative to report the successes of the war on illegal drugs of the Duterte administration, they reported that there are 1.3 million surrenderers who were facilitated by our government agencies. Mr. Speaker, there are 3,967 drug personalities who died in anti-drug operations. The next figure, Mr. Speaker, and I am most concerned about this figure, there are 16,355 homicide cases under investigation (HCUI) from July 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017.

Mr. Speaker, the sources mentioned here were the PDEA, the Philippine National Police, the NBI and the Bureau of Customs. So, may I ask the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, where exactly did this figure come from since, based on the explanation submitted by the PCOO to this Representation, the reason they are not reporting HCUIs in the succeeding years is that they do not want to confuse the public when it comes to this big figure of HCUIs. So, again, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, where did the 16,355 HCUI, reported under the #RealNumbersPH on fighting illegal drugs as stated in the 2017 Key Accomplishments of the President, come from? That is my first question, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, this information or figure came from the PNP DIDM.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, so the distinguished Sponsor confirms that these 16,355 HCUIs are indeed related to the fight against illegal drugs?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, these are not related directly to the fight against illegal drugs.

REP. ELAGO. Then, Mr. Speaker, why is it included in the report on fighting illegal drugs? As I understand, Mr. Speaker, the #RealNumbersPH campaign is really about or was created to report on the activity, on the successes, the challenges to the war on drugs of the administration, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. Bakit po natin isinama doon sa parte na iyon, na nag-uulat tungkol sa laban sa droga, kung hindi naman po pala ito kaugnay sa laban po natin sa droga?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, ito po ay inilabas dito po sa ating #RealNumbersPH campaign to clarify, para po maging mas malinaw sa taumbayan iyong mga numero na nai-akyat ni Vice President Robredo noong siya po ay bumisita sa United Nations noong March 2017.

REP. ELAGO. All right, Mr. Speaker.

Ang pahina pong ito, ano, babalikan na lang po natin mamaya pero gusto ko rin pong maipakita sa distinguished Sponsor—it is on page 22 of the President's 2017 Key Accomplishments—ang heading po, "Fighting Illegal Drugs." There is a heading, "Fighting Illegal Drugs: #RealNumbers"; and then a sub-heading, "#RealNumbers" and there you can find the 16,355 figure.

So, kung ako rin po iyong kasamahan ng ating VP o kung ako po ay isa doon sa nagre-research para po sa kanyang opisina o kahit man po para sa ating mga Representasyon dito sa House of Representatives, talagang ang pagkakaintindi ko po dito, lahat po ng mga pigura na nakalagay sa pahina na iyon ay may kinalaman po sa illegal drugs.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to belabor this issue but I would like to really get the PCOO's commitment, kung sa tingin ninyo po ay nagkamali kayo sa report na ito noong 2017, na nailagay ninyo po sa pahina na iyon sa war on illegal drugs itong 16,355 na homicide cases under investigation, maaari naman po tayong mag-issue ng paglilinaw sa publiko, particularly on this figure po as reported in the 2017 Key Accomplishments of the President.

Can I get the commitment of the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, with regard to issuing a clarification on this matter? I am referring to, again, Mr. Speaker, not the 26,000 or the 29,000 HCUIs that we have now, but particularly, the 16,355 HCUIs reported under the #RealNumbersPH campaign in 2017.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, ito po ay nai-publish natin, ng atin pong pamahalaan, para po maging malinaw iyong distinction between the homicide cases at saka iyong atin pong mga operation pagdating po sa anti-illegal drugs. So, we had to clarify and we had to distinguish ito pong homicide cases from those of the anti-illegal drugs operations.

REP. ELAGO. All right, yes, Mr. Speaker.

Tayo, katulad po ng distinguished Sponsor, naniniwala rin po tayo na dapat po magkakahiwalay iyan para malinawan po ang ating publiko ngunit ang sinasabi nga po natin dito, itong 16,000 po na ito ay naka-lump nga siya sa ilalim noong section on the drug war. So, ang understanding ko po dito, kung babasahin mo lang iyong pahina na iyon from the accomplishment report, talaga pong aakalain mo, aba, itong 16,000 na



HCUIs na ito ay may kinalaman po sa drug war. Madali lang po itong i-check. It is on page 22 of the President's 2017 Key Accomplishments. So, again, I would like to get the commitment of the distinguished Sponsor to issue a clarification on the said figure.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Ang PCOO po, Mr. Speaker, has been doing its job in terms of clarifying the numbers that were mentioned as well as the other numbers that were included in the report. So, ang PCOO po ay committed para po ibigay kung ano po talaga iyong tamang bilang, the real numbers base po sa iba't ibang operations ng atin pong pamahalaan.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Next, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask about the PCOO's efforts to prevent grammar fails in their reports and all the publications po na nilalabas natin as official documents. I would like to cite this particular case: In March 2018, reporters of media outlets covering Malacañang were given identification cards containing glaring grammatical errors. Sayang po hind po natin mapapakita ngayon dito, pero alam ko po pamilyar po ang ating PCOO Secretary tungkol dito sa mga reported na grammatical errors na nakalagay mismo doon sa pinamigay po na ID, sa press ID ng mga reporters natin sa Malacañang. Sinabi pa po noong naturang buwan na iyon, Mr. Speaker, ng ating PCOO Secretary, and I quote, "They"—referring to the officials—"have to prove why they should not be slapped with an administrative case."

Mr. Speaker, may we be updated on the cited case referring to the grammatical errors in the press IDs po. May nakasuhan na po ba tayo? Ano pong ginawa natin para po hindi na po ito maulit pang muli?

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, the PCOO has already filed charges against those responsible for these errors and these are administrative charges. These were filed last year and these cases are currently pending.

REP. ELAGO. All right. Mr. Speaker, humihingi po ang Representasyon po na ito ng detalye po ng kaso na ito. Also, may we know, Mr. Speaker, what are the mechanisms in place so we can prevent such errors from taking place again. Lalong-lalo na po sa mga kabataan, Mr. Speaker, kami po ay palaging aktibo ring naghahanap ng inspirasyon, ng aming mga role models, and of course, ang atin pong mga lingkod bayan, ang mga public officials ay talaga pong tinitingala bilang mga reference sa mga partikular na research o homework, assignments, kaya kapag nakita po nila itong mga errors na ito, nakakabahala po.

So, are there any mechanisms po now in place to prevent such errors from happening again?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, currently, the PCOO has put in place a system wherein all these are submitted first to the Office of the Secretary, and it is now the Office of the Secretary that verifies these IDs before they are officially released.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, sa ID lang po ito. Pagdating po sa lahat ng mga inilalabas natin, iyong mga heads po ba ng mga attached agencies ang responsible kapag nangyari po ulit itong mga ganito pong tipo ng mga errors? Hindi lang po ito may kinalaman sa grammar, Mr. Speaker, pero pagdating din sa spelling or iyong mismong accuracy ng information na inilalabas po natin, sino po ang pinakaresponsible pagdating sa mga ganitong errors?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, there is now proper vetting within the PCOO. So, these go through the different editors. PCOO said that they go through these three times, or three times po bini-vet itong mga content or information that would be released. We believe, through this system that is in place, we would be able to prevent the occurrence of such incidents that had happened in the past.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

Ang sunod ko pong concern, may kinalaman po doon sa hiningi natin na listahan ng kanilang Spokespersons Guild. Ito raw po iyong nagbi-vet on all the articles they publish that are not from government officials, but are from different sources po. Nagsusulat sila ng mga artikulo na inilalabas din at binibigyan ng media mileage sa Philippine News Agency—we have the PIA, for example. So, nagtanong po tayo, sino po ba itong mga nag-uusap-usap sa loob ng Spokespersons Guild para po ma-determine kung ano po iyong mga ilalabas natin na information, labas doon sa mga official government sources natin?

Na-raise ko po ito, Mr. Speaker, dahil nailapit ko na rin po sa PCOO during the budget briefing na may nababasa rin po tayo na mayroon po silang mga personalities na ginagamit rin pong mga source para sa kanilang mga partikular na mga artikulo na inilalabas ng PNA at PIA at ito daw po, ang pagpili ng mga personality na ito, ang nagdedesisyon po diyan ay iyong mga miyembro ng Spokespersons Guild.

So, again, Mr. Speaker, who are the members of this Spokespersons Guild? Lahat po ba ito ay mga regular po na employee ng PCOO?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, first of all, just to make it clear, the Spokespersons Guild was created for

the spokespersons of the different departments to have constant communication with the PCOO. We release direct, accurate news updates regarding the department.

The Spokespersons Guild has yearly training for the designated spokespersons of each department and currently, there are more or less 25 spokesperson-members of the group who are regular employees.

REP. ELAGO. All right. Salamat, Mr. Speaker.

Nandito na rin po ang PCOO, hihintayin ko na rin po ang listahan na ibibigay ninyo na mga miyembro po ng ating Spokespersons Guild. Pakisama na rin po ang kung ano po iyong guidelines natin sa pagpili nang kung sino po iyong ating bibigyan ng media mileage, labas pa doon sa ating mga government officials o iyong mga sources po na galing sa ating government agencies.

Let me go to our next concern, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. What is the policy of the PCOO on social media use of its employees?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, the PCOO would have your PCOO proper and then the different attached agencies—each attached agency would have its own social media accounts and social media contents that are delivered regularly.

REP. ELAGO. All right. So, Mr. Speaker, ang PCOO po sa kasalukuyan ay mayroong guidelines in place pagdating sa social media use ng ating mga empleyado. Mr. Speaker, I raised this question because the PCOO has the mandate to provide accurate or reliable and timely information for all of us, maski po sa kanyang mga empleyado. Siyempre po, tinitingala po ng ating taumbayan kung anuman po ang kanilang mga ibabahagi na mga information lalong-lalo na iyong mga nanggaling mismo na mga artikulo sa PNA at sa PIA.

Nalaman din ng Representasyon na ito, Mr. Speaker, na ang DICT po ay mayroon silang initiative na mag-draft ng isang administrative order (AO) na magiging official guide ng lahat ng government agencies and offices pagdating sa paggamit ng social media platforms. Napakaganda po na hangarin ng AO na ito, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to quote: this official guide is created “to foster good governance, transparency and accountability, citizen participation, productivity and organizational performance and improvement of public service delivery.”

May we know, Mr. Speaker, if the PCOO has knowledge on the status of the said draft administrative order? I first read about this, Mr. Speaker, back in 2017, but as of 2018, as I believe, and as I have read based from our research, the AO remains in draft form. Baka po may magandang balita sa atin, Mr. Speaker, ang distinguished Sponsor, ang PCOO?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, maaari

pong malaman muli kung ano iyong partikular na administrative order na nabanggit?

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, wala po itong partikular na bilang, but this is an administrative order that will form the guidelines on social media use of all government agencies. Sobrang kinakailangan na po nito hindi lang po ang PCOO, kundi ang ating iba’t ibang mga ahensiya na mayroong Facebook accounts, they have Twitter, some even have Instagram pages. So, napakahalaga po na mayroon din tayong gabay pagdating sa kanilang paggamit ng social media, para maging ehemplo ng responsableng paggamit nito. So, mayroon po bang update ang PCOO tungkol dito?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, pagdating sa mga guidelines sa social media, ang in-charge po dito ay ang DICT at siguro iyong nabanggit po kanina na administrative order ay isa pa lamang draft tungkol sa kung papaano po dapat gamitin ng mga empleyado ng gobyerno ang social media at pati kung ano na rin iyong mga guidelines na mayroon sa bawat ahensiya. Ang PCOO po ay mayroon po silang guidelines in place sa kanila pong opisina. Mayroon pong mga naka-assign kung sino lang po iyong puwedeng mag-upload at mag-post ng iba’t ibang impormasyon sa social media.

REP. ELAGO. Opo. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, hihingi po tayo ng kopya ng guidelines na ito ng PCOO. Nais ko rin pong malaman, bilang huli ko pong katanungan sa PCOO, ano po ang maaari nating gawin para hindi na lang manatiling draft ang administrative order na ito? Nakakasama naman natin ang DICT, bakit hindi po natin itulak na mailabas na ito para po maging gabay, hindi lang para sa mga ahensiya ng gobyerno kundi maaari na rin po itong maging gabay sa mga kabataan at sa mga katulad po nating mga lingkod-bayan na pagdating po sa paggamit ng social media, tayo po ay magiging responsible?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, ito pong social media guidelines na atin pong napag-uusapan ay kasalukuyang nasa opisina ng Executive Secretary. Inaasahan po natin na ito po ay mapa-finalize at mailalabas para po sa lahat ng ahensiya ng ating pamahalaan, pati na rin ng atin pong mga kababayan.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, kailan po natin ito maaasahang lalabas?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Ito po ay napunta o nai-submit sa opisina ni Executive Secretary ngayong taon. Although hindi pa po natin masasabi kung kailan ito mapa-finalize at lalabas, the PCOO is committed in following it up nang sa ganoon ay agad tayong magkaroon ng basehan

or guidelines para po sa napakahalagang bagay katulad ng social media.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

My final topic is with regard to the P3.5 million spent for the US and Europe Truth Caravan wherein the PCOO was one of the participating agencies. Are there any more plans of such a Truth Caravan po for Fiscal Year 2020? How much are we going to spend for this, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

Gumastos po tayo ng P3.5 million sa taong 2019. Mayroon pa po ba tayong aasahan na pagkakagastusan na Truth Caravan for the year-end and for the next fiscal year, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, tama po iyong nabanggit na bilang na P3.5 million for 2019. Wala pa pong set amount para sa ELCAC Caravan ngayon pong 2020 pero mayroon pong inihahanda para po sa programang ito.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, magkano po ang proposed budget, the DBM–recommended budget for the MOOE of the PCOO Secretary for Fiscal Year 2020?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Ang budget po para sa ELCAC ay nanggagaling sa iba’t ibang mga ahensiya. Para po sa PCOO, ito po ay kinukuha nila sa kanilang pong MOOE na sa kasalukuyan ay wala pa pong eksaktong halaga.

REP. ELAGO. Salamat, Mr. Speaker.

I am not referring to the ELCAC’s MOOEs. I am asking about the PCOO’s DBM–recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2020 on the MOOE Expense Class. Magkano po ang MOOE proposed budget natin for Fiscal Year 2020?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Under the 2020 proposed program for MOOE, it is P719,400,000.

REP. ELAGO. All right. Mr. Speaker, kung mayroon pa pong mga caravan ang ELCAC na kasama ang PCOO, dito po tayo sa MOOE kukuha from the P700 plus million.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Tama po iyon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ELAGO. All right, that is all, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize

Hon. Gabriel H. Bordado Jr. of the Third District of Camarines Sur for his manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Gabriel H. Bordado Jr. from Camarines Sur is recognized for his manifestation.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, inasmuch as no other Member of the Minority intends to propound questions, may I therefore move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of PCOO.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, on the part of Majority, I join the Minority...

I move to recognize Hon. Jose L. Atienza Jr. of BUHAY Party-List for his manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Lito Atienza is recognized.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, may I therefore withdraw my motion.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Honorable Atienza is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). You may proceed, Honorable Atienza.

REP. ATIENZA. Yes. I would like to ask the Gentleman Sponsor of the Bill, Congressman Garcia (J.), some questions about the PCOO. If he is willing, I would like to ask and clarify certain matters.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). If the Gentleman from Bataan is willing, you may proceed.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Chairman, magkano po ba ang budget ng PCOO ngayon na hinihingi nila sa ating National Expenditure Program? How much is the total budget that we are talking about?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Para sa taong 2020, Mr. Speaker, ang budget ng PCOO ay P1.698 billion.

REP. ATIENZA. P1.6 billion? How many agencies are part of the PCOO family?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Kasama po dito ang PCOO

Proper, Bureau of Broadcast Services, Bureau of Communications Services, National Printing Office, News and Information Bureau, Philippine Information Agency at Presidential Broadcast Staff, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This Representation is a firm believer in the principle of effective communication—that any administration, whether local, provincial or national, would require effective communication for them to succeed. So, the Presidential Communications Office should make sure that they have effective communication so that President Duterte will succeed in his vision for a better life for the Philippines. Many times they have to resort to semi-propaganda strategies or community communications efforts and many other media of communication to deliver the vision of the President and this administration.

So, therefore, I am putting it on record and I am manifesting not only our full support for the functions of this office because we want them to succeed in giving the President effective communications to our people, but I am also taking note that P1.6 billion is a measly sum of money that cannot even compare with the budgets of major networks in the country. Kaya po dinadaig ang gobyerno sa maraming panig. With due respect to my colleagues who will think otherwise, communication is part of good governance. It cannot be separated from good governance.

So, please, and I am addressing the Committee on Appropriations—I am addressing the DBM, and I am addressing everybody who is equally concerned as this Representation—in next year's budget, if we cannot increase their budget now: one, let us not lower it and two, next year, let us even triple their budget so that the Philippines will become a successful economic power in this region of the world.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The manifestation is noted.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we again recognize Hon. Gabriel H. Bordado, Jr. of the Third District of Camarines Sur for his manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Once again, we are recognizing Hon. Gabriel H. Bordado, Jr. and we thank you for withdrawing the previous motion.

REP. BORDADO. Again, thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). You are now recognized by the Chair.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate my previous motion that inasmuch as no other Member of the Minority intends to propound questions, may I therefore move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the PCOO.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in its motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the PCOO.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) is approved.

Congratulations to the PCOO family. (*Applause*)

REP. GARCIA (J). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move for suspension of the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

*It was 2:56 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 2:56 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### MOVIE AND TELEVISION REVIEW AND CLASSIFICATION BOARD (MTRCB)

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the consideration of the proposed budget of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB).

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Alfred D. Vargas of the Fifth District of Quezon City to answer questions on the proposed budget of the MTRCB.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Alfred Vargas, Representative from Quezon City, is recognized to sponsor the budget for the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to acknowledge the presence of the MTRCB family: Chairperson Madam Rachel Arenas; Executive Director Atty. Ann Marie Nemenzo; Legal Officer Atty. Jonathan Presquito; Chief Administrative Officer Susan Bandolin; Budget Officer Erlinda Tirado; Planning Officer Jesusa Lorenzo; and Budget Assistant Leslie de Vera.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). To the family of Movie and Television Review and Classification Board headed by my sister, Chairperson Rachel Arenas, welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BONDOC. Mr. Speaker, we move to amend the previous motion closing the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Presidential Communications Operations Office, including its attached agencies and corporation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize the Minority Leader, Hon. Bienvenido M. Abante Jr., to interpellate the Sponsor on the proposed budget.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The distinguished Minority Leader from the City of Manila, Bienvenido M. Abante, Jr., is recognized for his interpellation or manifestation with respect to the budget of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the Sponsor.

Hindi na po ako magtatanong, Mr. Speaker, at ako po ay magbibigay na lang ng aking manifestation dahil nakita ko po iyong mother ni dating Congresswoman

Rachel at medyo natakot po ako kay Ate Baby kaya hindi na po ako magtatanong. Sinabi niya sa akin na, P41 million lang iyong budget, magtatanong pa ako. Ang sabi niya ay kayang-kaya niyang ibigay iyong budget na iyan sa MTRCB.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, I just would like to make a manifestation po dito po sa MTRCB sapagkat noong araw po, noong ako ay nasa dating Kongreso ay medyo magkaaway po kami ng dating Chairman ng MTRCB. Ito naman pong si Chairman Rachel Arenas ay magkaibigan naman kami niyan, ano po, kaya mga iilan lang po ang gusto kong maipabatid dito po sa ating plenaryo tungkol po dito. May mga tanong nga sana po ako subalit gusto ko lang pong idaan sa manipistasyon, opo, tulad po ng pagkakaso ng isang MTRCB board member, si Avelino “Billy” Andal, ano po, at sa kanyang pinaggagawa sa MTRCB, ano po.

Hindi lamang po iyan, kundi, the MTRCB is mandated to: 1. regulate and classify motion pictures, television programs, and publicity materials; 2. promote an environment leading to authentic and responsible self-regulation in the film and television industry; 3. initiate plans and cooperate with the movie and television industries as sources of fueling the national economy; 4. empower the Filipino family, particularly parents, and at the grassroots level, such that family members are able to evaluate and intelligently choose media and entertainment content; and 5. promote a value-based media and entertainment culture.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I would be filing a bill in the future amending the MTRCB Charter, na ito pong MTRCB ay hindi lang po ang mandato ay mag-classify ng motion pictures at idaan po ito sa edad kung sino ang manonood, sapagkat kahit po i-classify pa iyan sa television ay papanoorin din po ng mga bata iyan, ano po.

We also would like the MTRCB to have some censorship mandate upang hindi ipalabas ang mga pelikula na alam natin po na immoral and in bad taste. Katulad po ng alin? Ito po, ipinapakita po sa akin dito iyong *Los Bastardos*, na pinag-uusapan po ngayon sa social media. Ang tanong po ng marami sa social media, bakit nakakalusot sa MTRCB ito na may trending topic, top seven sex scenes? I hope that our Chairman would be able to give me a written explanation on this, ano po.

Gayundin po ang isang violent scene, tulad ng *Ang Probinsyano*, na kahit na po ang Philippine National Police ay umaangal na dahil sobra po ang violence sa mga television films na ito.

Tulad po ng Netflix, for example, Netflix and other online streaming platforms na covered din po ito ng regulatory powers of MTRCB, we would

like to find out, ano po ba ang mandato ng MTRCB dito po sa Netflix at iba pang mga online streaming platforms?

I hope na sa manifestation na ito, I have made my message clear that we would like to have more family-oriented films, especially on television, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

Iyon lamang po, at maraming salamat po sa inyo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you.

REP. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, may I be recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). ...that is only a manifestation, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. I move to recognize the Hon. Jose L. Atienza Jr.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize Hon. Jose L. Atienza Jr. of BUHAY Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Lito Atienza of BUHAY Party-List is recognized.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

We would just like to stress a fact. We are talking about the smallest budget in the National Expenditure Program. What have been mentioned earlier are the gigantic expectations and requirements that the country wants from them. I do not think they would be able to deliver the expectations of many because of a measly P41 million for its national annual budget. Bago tayo mag-expect ng anuman, siguro dagdagan natin ang budget nila. If I can only propose to make their budget P400 million, then maybe I will also make demands on their work and what we would expect them to do. At this point in time, I have nothing but praises for this Board for doing a fine job.

Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you, Honorable Atienza.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize the Minority Leader Rep. Bienvenido M. Abante Jr.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The distinguished Minority Leader, Rep. Bienvenido Abante is recognized.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, there being no more questions from the Minority, I move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate, Mr. Speaker.

I so move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SINGSON-MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the MTRCB.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board is hereby terminated.

Congratulations, sis, and to the whole family of MTRCB. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. VARGAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION AND CAREER EXECUTIVE SERVICE BOARD

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to consider the proposed budgets of the Civil Service Commission and Career Executive Service Board.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the Civil Service Commission family, headed by Chairperson Alicia Dela Rosa-Bala; Commissioner Leopoldo Roberto W. Valderosa Jr.; Commissioner Aileen Lourdes A. Lizada;

and Assistant Commissioner Ariel B. Ronquillo. From the Career Service Executive Board, may we also acknowledge the presence of Executive Director Maria Anthonette C. Velasco-Allones.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Majority Leader, are you referring to two agencies?

REP. BOLILIA. Yes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Civil Service Commission and the Career Executive Service Board.

REP. BOLILIA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). We will take that.

REP. BOLILIA. Yes, yes, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Okay.

To the family of the Civil Service Commission headed by Chairperson Bala, and the family of the Career Executive Service Board, welcome to the House of Representatives.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Vice Chair of the Committee on Appropriations, Hon. Jose Enrique “Joet” S. Garcia III of the Second District of Bataan, to sponsor the proposed budgets of the Civil Service Commission and the Career Executive Service Board.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Hon. Joet Garcia from Bataan, is recognized to sponsor the budgets of the Civil Service Commission and the Career Executive Service Board.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Ferdinand R. Gaité of BAYAN MUNA Party-List for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Ferdinand Gaité is recognized for his interpellation or manifestation on the budgets of Civil Service Commission and the Career Executive Service Board.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po.

Pahihintulutan ba ng kagalang-galang, kapitapitang Isponsor ng budgets para sa CSC at CESB

ang ilang katanungan bilang pag-clarify sa programa at budgets ng mga naturang ahensiya?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po.

Ang CSC ay itinuturing na central personnel agency ng buong pamahalaan at mandato nito ay to promote morale, efficiency, integrity, responsiveness, progressiveness and courtesy in the civil service, tama po ba, Mr. Speaker, ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Tama po iyon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. May katanungan po ako dito sa usapin kung paano ipo-promote ang morale, efficiency, integrity, responsiveness, progressiveness at courtesy sa civil service sa kalagayan na ang ating burukrasyang sibil ay umaabot na nang mahigit 2.4 million na mga kawani at opisyal batay sa Inventory of Government Human Resources na inilabas ng CSC.

Ang katanungan ko po ay iyong sa usapin ng napakalaking bilang na kontraktwal o hindi regular na mga empleyado sa naturang burukrasya. Ayon sa Inventory of Government Human Resources, sa kasalukuyan, ang ating tinatawag na job orders or contracts of service (COS) ay umaabot ng mahigit 661,000 na hindi itinuturing na mga empleyado—no employee-employer relationships—sa loob ng gobyerno. Hindi pa kasama dito ang humigit-kumulang na 127,000 na mga kawani na itinuturing na casuals or contractuels with employee-employer relationship. Kung susumahin natin ang kabuuang bilang na ito, huwag na natin isama iyong coterminous, huwag na natin isama iyong elective positions sa gobyerno, halos 800,000 out of 2.4 million government workers ay hindi regular, Mr. Speaker. Nakakabahala, bakit po? Sinasabi po ng istatistikang ito na 800,000 out of 2.4 million o isa sa bawat tatlong government worker ay hindi regular.

Kung maaalala natin noong 2016, sa kasagsagan ng kampanya for the presidential elections, ipinangako mismo ng ating Pangulong Rodrigo Roa Duterte na upon assumption to the presidency, that contractualization has to stop. Ipatitigil—at sabi niya “sa unang linggo ng aking panunungkulan, ititigil na ang mapagsamantalang patakaran ng kontraktwalisasyon.”

Sa halip na ipatupad ng Civil Service Commission ang pagpapatigil ng kontraktwalisasyon, nitong November 9, 2018, naglabas ang CSC, kasama ang Commission on Audit at ang Department of Budget and Management, ng Joint Circular No. 1 na inaamyendahan

ang nauna nitong inilabas na Joint Circular No. 1 din, ngunit sa taong 2017, naglalaman ito ng mga probisyon hinggil sa pagpapatuloy ng hiring ng mga contracts of service at job orders. Ang mas malubha nito, doon sa original nilang inilabas ng 2017, dapat starting 2019, ititigil na ang pagiging job orders at contracts of service at sa halip, ang gagamitin na ng gobyerno sa hiring ng mga government workers na hindi regular ay ang tinatawag na institutional contracts of service na kakaiba sa kasalukuyang patakaran na individual contracts of service.

Napakarami po na mga government workers na, noong inilabas ni Pangulong Duterte ang pangakong matitigil ang kontraktwalisasyon, naniwala sila na hindi lang ito aplikable sa ating mga manggagawa sa pribadong sektor kundi gayundin, Mr. Speaker, sa ating mga kasamahan na mga manggagawa sa loob ng gobyerno. Hindi po kaila sa inyo na kahit dito sa ating ahensiya sa House of Representatives, mayroon rin po tayong mga tinatawag na job orders at contracts of service.

Ngayon po, ang katanungan po namin, ito po bang issuances ng CSC, ng DBM at ng Commission on Audit, ay batay sa mandate ng CSC na i-promote ang morale, efficiency, integrity, responsiveness at progressiveness at courtesy sa loob ng civil service—by the way, I believe this month, tama, September ay Civil Service month. Would the Sponsor say that the CSC was able to perform this mandate for the past three years under the current President, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, bago ko po sagutin iyong katanungan ay gusto ko lang po ilinaw iyong mga numero na nabanggit po kanina.

Unang-una, pagdating po sa career employees, ang bilang po nito ay 1,543,820, kasama na po dito iyong first level, second level and third level; at iyong mga non-career ay umaabot po ng 186,750, kasama na po dito ang casual, contractual, coterminous at saka elective positions. Kaya ang total po na human resource in the bureaucracy ay umaabot po ng 1,730,570 as of May 31, 2019.

Iyong nabanggit po na mga job orders na umaabot naman ng 669,347 at 127,000 na casuals, although sila po ay naglilingkod sa iba't iba pong mga ahensiya, dahil wala nga po silang employee-employer relationship, sila po ay hindi nasasakop ng Civil Service Commission.

Ganunpaman, base po doon sa nabanggit—at inuulit ko, ito pong joint circular CSC/DBM/Commission on Audit amended Joint Circular No. 1, series of 2017—through CSC/COA/DBM Joint Circular No. 1, series of 2018, it allowed agencies to contract the services of

new COS and JO workers, and renew existing contracts until December 31, 2020. Ito po ay dahil sa hiling na rin ng iba't ibang mga ahensiya na ma-extend ito pong ating mga contracts of service at job orders dahil marami ho sa ating mga ahensiya ay mayroon pong mga proyekto na kinakailangan ang tulong ng ating mga contracts of service and JO workers. Nakasama rin po sa naging desisyon ay kung ano po iyong mangyayari sa dami po ng ating contracts of service and JO workers kapag talaga pong agad nating ititigil ito pong paghahire ng mga COS and JOs? So, kaya po pinayagan na ma-extend until December 31, 2020 base po dito sa amended joint circular.

Ganunpaman, Mr. Speaker, nakikita po ng Representasyong ito na para po paunti-unti ay mawawala na po ang mga contracts of service pero mabibigyan pa rin ng pagkakataon ang ating mga empleyado.

Unang-una, siguro iyong pag-aayos ng bawat ahensiya sa tamang bilang at sa mga empleyado na kanilang kinukuha na ayon din po sa kakayahan at sa trabaho na kinakailangan gawin.

Pangalawa, nagsimula na rin ang marami sa ating mga ahensiya para kunin ang serbisyo ng mga manpower agencies, lalong-lalo na pagdating po sa janitorial at security services. Nagsisimula na po ang ating pamahalaan para mabigyan ng mas magandang pagkakataon ang ating mga kababayan, sa pamamagitan po ng mga agencies na doon na lamang kinukuha ng gobyerno, both national and local, ang kanilang mga requirements pagdating sa janitorial at security services.

Siguro po, Mr. Speaker, ang kinakailangan pa natin ay mapag-aralan mabuti kung papaano talaga, anong klase ng mga programa at proyekto ng iba't ibang mga ahensiya ang talagang kinakailangan pa rin ng job orders, at ito po ay maging malinaw sa bawat ahensiya upang ito ay hindi naaabuso.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po sa kasagutan, Mr. Sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, nabanggit na nga na may nilabas na joint circular ang CSC kasama ang ibang ahensiya ng pamahalaan sa usaping job orders and contracts of service, at tama po kayo na na-amend ito para i-extend ang sinasabing deadline na dapat sa December 2019 pero na-extend until end of 2020. Tama po ito, pero ang tanong—na-resolba ba iyong problema ng kontraktwalisasyon sa gobyerno sa issuance ng circular na ito?

Ang sinasabi lang po ng ating Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ipagpapatuloy pa rin ang trabaho ng mga manggagawa para hindi maantala ang napakahalagang mga serbisyonig iginagawad ng ating mga kawani at manggagawa, ngunit ang katanungan po namin ay hindi iyong pagpapatuloy sa kanila bilang kontraktwal, kung hindi dapat sila ay gawing regular na empleyado sa



kalagayan na sila ay gumagampan ng regular na trabaho na necessary and desirable para sa serbisyo na kailangan para sa mamamayan. Dito sa issuance na circular na ito, ang sinabi ay ititigil o babawasan iyong tinatawag na individual contract na, sa totoo lamang at kung susuriin, kung gagamitin natin ang Labor Code bagamat hindi applicable nga sa government employees ang Labor Code, ito ay essentially labor-only contracting or job contracting. Ito ay illegal sa totoo lamang and yet, the government, which is tasked to enforce the policy against labor-only contracting, sila mismo ang nagpapatupad ng isang bawal dapat na patakaran.

Paano po maipapaliwanag, Mr. Speaker, ng ating Sponsor itong nilabas na memorandum circular ng CSC na sa halip na tupdin o gumawa ng mga kongkreto hakbang para sa regularisasyon, ay hindi pagpapatigil, pagpaparegularisa ng kasalukuyang mga empleyadong contractual o job orders. Iyong CSC/DBM/COA Joint Circular No. 1, sinasagot ba iyong isyu kung paano iregularisa ang daang libo nating kawani sa loob ng pamahalaan na hindi regular, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, ang Representasyong ito ay naniniwala na iyong amended joint circular ay makakatulong sapagkat sa pag-extend nito ay mabibigyan natin ng pagkakataon ang mga ahensiya para pag-aralan ang kanilang plantilla, pag-aralan po ang kanilang pangangailangan, at kung kinakailangan, ay mag-create ng mga bagong posisyon para sa ating mga empleyado na kasalukuyang nasa contracts of service or JO.

Sa katunayan, Mr. Speaker, ang DBM ngayon ay nasa proseso ng pag-create ng panibagong mga posisyon, especially pagdating po sa health sector, sa ating mga ospital, sapagkat paunti-unti na nilang nakikita iyong mga kinakailangang i-convert na job orders positions to plantilla items. Naniniwala po ang Representasyong ito, Mr. Speaker, na ito rin po ang mangyayari sa iba't ibang mga ahensiya sa mga darating na panahon. Sana nga po bago matapos itong ibinigay na extension na December 31, 2020, karamihan ng mga ahensiya ay talagang mapag-aralan at magkaroon sila ng rightsizing exercise nang sa ganoon ay maging malinaw kung ilan ang talagang kaya at kinakailangang mga empleyado sa bawat ahensiya.

Gusto ko rin pong banggitin, Mr. Speaker, na hindi po task ng Civil Service Commission iyong pag-create ng positions. Ito po ay nasa bawat isang ahensiya, kasama siyempre ang tulong ng DBM. Sila po iyong nag-aaral kung ano-ano iyong mga bagong posisyon na puwedeng ma-create at puwedeng pondohan.

Uulitin ko, Mr. Speaker, sa tingin namin ang ginawang amendment sa joint circular ay isa pong paraan para mabigyan ng panahon ang lahat ng government agencies upang mapag-aaralan mabuti ang kani-kanilang organization, at kung kinakailangan

po na makapag-create ng mga positions kung saan maaaring mag-apply ng ating mga contracts of service or job orders.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po sa kasagutan, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. However, I beg to disagree dahil ang pagpapanatili ng mga kontraktwal na manggagawa ay paglabag sa isang constitutional provision ng ating Saligang Batas. Article XIII, Section 3 of the Constitution states in part that "They shall be entitled to security of tenure, humane conditions of work, and a living wage." Masasabi po ba ninyo na may security of tenure ang ating job orders and contracts of service na gumagawa ng regular ng trabaho and yet, after one, three, six months, iyong kontrata nila ay magtatapos? Kaya ba nilang i-plano ang buhay nila sa tatlong buwan lamang, anim na buwan lamang, isang taon lamang kapag natapos iyong kontrata? Paglabag ito sa karapatan nila sa kasiguruhan sa trabaho kapag sila na naman ang matatanggal. Masasagot ba ng CSC/DBM/COA Joint Circular No. 1 ang usapin ng regularisasyon ng mga manggagawa? Salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, iyong nabanggit po na kasalanan sa batas, iyan po ay applicable sa private sector. Hindi kasama ang government workers. Katulad po ng sinabi ko kanina Mr. Speaker, ang nakikita kong dahilan at advantage nitong extension ng nasabing Joint Circular No. 1, dahil dito sa extension, patuloy na makakapagtrabaho ang mga nasa contracts of service and job orders until 2020.

Pangalawa, sila po ay mabibigyan ng pagkakataon na makapag-apply bilang isang regular na empleyado kung sakaling lalabas na makaka-create ang iba't iba nating mga ahensiya ng new positions.

Para sa Representasyong ito, Mr. Speaker, hindi man nito sinasagot ang problema pagdating po sa contractualization, ito ay nagbibigay ng dagdag na pagkakataon para sa ating mga empleyado, lalo na sa pamahalaan sa kasalukuyang job orders o contracts of service dito, para ma-extend pa ang kanilang pagkakaroon ng trabaho kaysa po agad na sila ay mawalan ng trabaho. Ngayon, mayroon silang pagkakataon para makapag-apply sa mga bagong posisyon na nakita na rin natin na binubuksan o ino-open ng iba't iba nating government agencies, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po, Mr. Sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, hindi po ganyan ang aking pag-unawa at pag-intindi sa ating Saligang Batas. Kahit sa Journal ng Constitutional Commission of 1986, nilinaw po na kapag sinabi at tinuring na "manggagawa," all workers—tinuring po ang manggagawa in both public and private sector. Hindi po ginawa ang definition na ito na applicable lang sa mga manggagawa sa pribadong sektor or else, magkakaroon tayo ng diskriminasyon sa

mga manggagawa. Ang pagkakaiba lang po ng mga manggagawa sa pribadong sektor ay nasa pribado sila, ngunit manggagawa pa rin sila. Ang pagkakaiba po ng manggagawa sa gobyerno ay nasa gobyerno lang sila, ngunit sila ay bahagi ng pagbibigay ng serbisyo, bahagi ng produksiyon at iba pang mga pangangailangan para ang ating ekonomiya ay gumana.

Kung kaya't hindi po tama ang sinasabing aplikasyon sa Saligang Batas na ito ay para sa pribadong sektor. Nilinaw po ng ilang ulit sa ating Saligang Batas na ang manggagawa, kapag sinabing manggagawa, both public and private sector workers, wala pong pagsi-sino. Hindi po nagkaroon ng pagkakaiba kung sino, kung ang may karapatang ito ay igagawad lamang sa government workers at ang karapatang ito ay para sa private sector workers lamang. Kung kaya't kung babalikan po natin sa nabanggit kong Article XIII, Section 3, ang sabi po dito, "lahat ng manggagawa." Kung ano ang proteksiyon para sa ating mga manggagawa sa pribadong sektor ay applicable po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sa ating government employees.

Hindi po ba isang malaking kuwestyon kung ang mga manggagawa sa pribadong sektor ay pinoprotektahan ang kasiguruhan nila sa trabaho, pero ang mga manggagawa sa gobyerno ay hindi pinoprotektahan mismo ng gobyerno sa kanilang kasiguruhan sa trabaho, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, kaisa po sa ating Congressman mula sa BAYAN MUNA Party-List, Hon. Ferdinand Gaite, ang Representasyong ito para po protektahan ang lahat ng manggagawa, pang-publiko man o pampribado, ngunit alam natin na sa kasalukuyan ay mayroon po tayong mga batas na nagbibigay din ng kapangyarihan para sa ating mga ahensiya, katulad ng local government units, para po mag-hire ng job orders na ayon na rin sa Section 77 ng Local Government Code, sa kadahilanang napakalawak ng sakop ng ating mga ahensiya, lalo na ng local government units. Maaaring hindi po permanente ang lahat noong mga functions kaya po they have to resort to the hiring of job orders, Mr. Speaker.

Kung titingnan natin iyong mga numero, doon po sa higit na 600,000 job orders, ang bulto ng bilang ng job orders employees ay nanggagaling nga po, precisely, sa local government units dahil na rin sa lawak ng sakop ng mga kinakailangang tutukan at gawin ng bawat isang LGU. Hindi rin naman basta-bastang magagawan ng permanenteng posisyon dahil iyong nature of work does not require the permanent creation of a position.

Gusto ko rin idagdag, sa 2019 GAA, Section 46, nandoon rin po nakalagay iyong paggalaw para sa employment ng contractual personnel para sa ating pamahalaan, especially sa iba't ibang mga proyekto.

Muli, inuulit ko, Mr. Speaker, na siyempre kung mabibigyan po natin ng permanenteng posisyon ang

lahat ng government employees, iyon po ang pinaka-ideal, iyon ang pinakamaganda, ngunit sa katayuan nga ng ating pamahalaan at sa nature of work ng iba't iba nating mga empleyado, mayroon po talagang mga trabaho na kinakailangan ng job orders at contractual employees.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po sa kasagutan, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Isa pong tanong—aware ba ang ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor sa impact at sitwasyon ng ating job orders at contracts of service employees?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Maaari pong malaman, Mr. Speaker, kung ano po mismo iyong tinutukoy na sitwasyon ng ating mga contracts of service at job orders employees.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, alam po ba ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor kung ano ang kalagayan sa sahod, sa trabaho, sa uri ng binabanggit ninyo na trabahong ginagawa ng ating job orders at contracts of service? Ano ang kalagayan nila sa benepisyo? Covered ba sila ng GSIS, Pag-IBIG, PhilHealth o SSS? Ano ang kalagayan nila sa usapin ng working conditions at iba pa? Aware po ba ang ating Sponsor sa kalagayan ng ating job orders at contracts of service employees, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Opo, Mr. Speaker, aware po ang inyong lingkod pagdating sa kalagayan o sa sitwasyon ng ating job orders pagdating sa bagay na ito. Unang-una, ang kanilang tinatanggap na sahod ay karaniwan po ipinapareho sa mga sahod ng permanent employees na mayroong similar na trabaho.

Pangalawa, pagdating po sa benefits, dahil ang turing sa mga job orders at contracts of service ay self-employed, hindi po talaga bahagi ng responsibilidad ng pamahalaan, ng ahensiya, ang pagbibigay ng iba't ibang benefits na mayroon ang permanent employees.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

Buti po nasagot ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor ang kalagayan sa sahod pero, na-leave out iyong usapin ng security of tenure. Alam po ba ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor na mayroon tayo o marami tayong job orders at contracts of service—hindi po tatlong buwan, hindi po anim na buwan, hindi po walong buwan, kung hindi ilang taon at ilang dekada na po na job orders at contracts of service na gumagampan ng regular, necessary at desirable na trabaho? Sa pagre-hire na lamang o pagre-renew ng kanilang kontrata ay pabalik-balik na lang sa gobyerno pero sa bawat pagtapos ng kanilang kontrata ay laging nangangamba, at natatakot na hindi na sila muling maibabalik sa opisina?

Sa kalagayan na iyong kanilang trabaho ay regular, necessary and desirable, ibig sabihin, kailangan ng ahensiya ang regular na ginagawa ng iba nilang k-employado sa naturang ahensiya. Bakit hindi nabibigyan pa rin ng kasiguruhan sa trabaho ang mga kawani at manggagawa na ito na kung ihahambing natin sa pribadong sektor, ayon sa Labor Code, na ang probationary employment ay anim na buwan lamang at kapag lumagpas ng anim na buwan, dapat ituring na silang regular? Ano po ang masasabi ng ating Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, sa problema ng kawalan ng kasiguruhan sa trabaho ng ating job orders and contracts of service, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, pamilyar po ang Representasyong ito sa kalagayan ng ating mga kawani na mga job orders, at gusto ko pong gawing halimbawa ang ating job orders sa local government units. Unang-una, mayroon po tayo, Mr. Speaker, na Personnel Services ceiling. So, alam po natin na sa mga local government units, hindi po maaaring umakyat ng 40, 45 or 55 percent sa iba pagdating po sa pondo o sa budget na napupunta sa Personnel Services.

Pangalawa, base na rin po, Mr. Speaker, sa aking karanasan, kung titingnan po natin iyong dami ng ating mga job orders employees, talaga pong hindi kakayanin na gawing permanente ang bawat isa. Kung susubukan po natin na gawin pong permanente ang ilan sa kanila, iyong mga kasalukuyang job orders ay mawawalan po ng trabaho. Kung tatanungin natin mismo ang atin pong mga empleyadong job orders sa iba't iba pong ahensiya, lalo na nga po sa local government units, kahit na iyong iba sa kanila ay 5, 10, 15 taon na nagtatrabaho ay mas gusto po nilang manatili na job orders dahil wala pa pong permanenteng posisyon, kaysa po mawalan ng trabaho. Kapag isinama po natin iyong sahod ng casual o kaya ng permanenteng empleyado, kasama po iyong kanyang benefits, kung hindi ako nagkakamali, baka halos doble ang magagastos po ng ahensiya.

So, Mr. Speaker, mas gusto po ba natin na iyong atin pong mga job orders—ang ilang mga job orders ay magkakaroon ng permanenteng posisyon pero iyong karamihan o bulto ng ating mga job orders ay mawawalan ng trabaho dahil po hindi kaya ng ahensiya? Iyong iba, maari pong hindi rin qualified para po sa mga permanenteng posisyon at iyong iba naman ay mayroon po talagang mga trabaho na project-based kaya hindi rin po mada-justify ang pagkakaroon ng permanenteng posisyon.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

Una po, nabanggit ninyo, totoo po na ang ating mga local government units, batay sa datos mismo ng CSC, ang may pinakamarami nitong tinatawag na job orders at contracts of service. Kung hindi ako nagkakamali, almost half of the 600 plus million—thousand, sorry, about—500,000 out of the 600,000 plus na job orders

and contracts of service can be found in the local government units. Tama iyong binanggit ninyo, may probisyon sa Local Government Code na mayroong tinatawag na Personnel Service cap, na may limitasyon doon sa amount na inilalaan ng local government bilang pasahod sa mga manggagawa kung kaya't may totoong limitasyon. Kaya ang Kinatawang ito ay nagtutulak nga na ang probisyon na ito ay matanggal para po sa pakinabang, hindi lamang ng mga kawani sa loob ng mga local government units, kundi para na rin sa serbisyong iginagawad ng mga local government units sa mga mamamayan.

Tanong, Mr. Speaker, ang gobyerno ay dapat model employer. Siya dapat ay uliran sa pagpapatupad ng mga patakaran o batas sa usapin ng pagkilala at pagrespeto sa mga karapatan ng mga manggagawa. Bakit ngayon, mismo ang gobyerno pa ang siyang nangunguna sa pag-violate ng mga basic rights na iyan? Bakit mismo ang gobyerno na nagpapatupad noong batas laban sa kontraktwalisasyon, tulad ng Department of Labor and Employment, na ang isang tungkulin ngayon ay hanapin itong mga tinatawag na illegal or prohibited labor-only contracting at dapat may utos rin sila na dapat gawing regular na itong matatagal ng empleyado na idinadaan—by the way, isang paraan rin para i-circumvent ang batas na ito, na nakita na ginagamit iyong proseso ng paggamit ng agency o service contractor, ngunit dahil nakita ng DOLE sa ilang panahon na ang trabahong ginagawa ay regular and therefore, hindi dapat ito i-outsource o i-subcontract o idaan sa agency. Bakit mismo ang CSC pa ang nagtuturo kung paano gawin at manatiling kontraktwal ang mga manggagawa? Base na rin sa circular na inilabas ninyo, ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ang paraan para panatilihin daw iyong mga manggagawa pero may kini-create na ilusyon na gagawin silang regular, pero hindi sa government agency. Gagawin silang “regular” doon sa service contractor or service provider na alam naman natin at nabanggit ng ating Sponsor.

Mayroon po dito kahit sa ahensiya—dito sa House of Representatives, mayroon po tayong mga security guards, dumadaan sa agency, mayroon po tayong mga janitors and other utility services, dumadaan rin sa agency, ngunit hindi sila directly empleyado ng naturang ahensiya—ang katangian ng trabaho nila, dahil hindi daw ito core functions ng ating ahensiya, ay puwede daw i-contract out. Ang masakit pa niyan. Kaya sinasabi dahil hindi ito ang main function ng ahensiya, puwede daw itong i-outsource. Matanong ko kayo, kung wala ba iyong ating mga janitors, malilinis bang maigi, maaayos ba lagi iyong ating mga opisina? Kung wala iyong ating mga security guards, hindi mababantayan ang kasiguruhan ng ating opisina? Medyo iyong pag-define which is “regular” and which is “core” ay naa-abuse, mga kasama, mga kagalang-galang na Congressmen at Congresswomen.

Kaya, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, malaking katanungan ito sapagkat nabanggit ng ating Sponsor na iyong usapin hinggil sa ating mga job orders at contracts of service, dahil hindi sila employees, no employee-employer relationship exists. Masakit ano? Sa Facebook, nakalagay daw diyan “not in a relationship.” Ibig sabihin, hindi sila itinuturing empleyado and yet, gumagawa sila ng trabaho na regular, gumagawa sila ng trabaho na ginagawa rin ng ibang regular na empleyado. Yet, sinasabi ng gobyerno ay hindi niya tungkulin na ibigay sa kanila iyong social insurance protection, hindi niya tungkulin na bigyan sila ng GSIS, Pag-IBIG, PhilHealth, dahil hindi sila empleyado ayon sa kontratang inilabas ng mga naturang ahensiya. Hindi po ba isang paglalapastangan sa karapatan ng ating mga manggagawa ito? Hindi ba iyong CSC/COA/DBM Joint Circular No. 1 ay lalo pang ini-institutionalize ang contractualization sa halip na gawin regular? Paulit-ulit ang ating Sponsor na binanggit, Mr. Speaker, na hindi kakayanin ng gobyerno ang gawing regular ang mga hindi regular na empleyado. Gusto ko malaman kung bakit po hindi kakayanin, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, unang-una, katulad na lang po sa ating mga local government units, bukod nga po sa ating PS limitations, alam din po natin na dumidipende ang ating mga LGUs sa kanila pong income na nanggagaling din po sa buwis na nakokolekta. Alam po natin na sa mga probinsiya, one of the biggest employers, dahil wala naman pong ibang malalaking pribadong kumpanya, ay ang atin pong local government units. So, lahat po ay gustong mag-apply sa atin pong mga LGU, pero dahil nga po sa kakulangan sa pondo—hindi lang naman sa PS pupuwedeng gumastos ang ating local government units dahil mayroon po tayong mga development funds, marami po ang ating operations, ano, so marami pong kinakailangang pagkagastusan. Kaya po kung titignan natin sa bilang po ng gustong mag-apply, sa bilang po ng gusto pong magtrabaho sa ating pamahalaan, marami pong ibang mga serbisyo ang hindi ho natin mabibigay kapag iyon po ang susundin natin. Ganunpaman, Mr. Speaker, kaisa po ang Representasyong ito kay Congressman Gaite sa mga paraan o sa mga pamamaraan na pupuwede po nating gawin.

Maaari po iyong pag-aakyat o pagtatanggal ng ceiling pagdating po sa PS. Maaari rin po sa iba pang mga paraan upang mabigyan ng mas magandang katayuan ang atin pong mga empleyado, lalo na iyong nasa pamahalaan. Kaya kung mayroon po tayong mapagtutulungan, Mr. Speaker, dito sa ating Kongreso, kaisa po ang CSC, kaisa po ang inyong lingkod, at siguro ang atin pong mga Miyembro para gawin po ito.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

Narinig ko sa sagot ninyo na ang isang problema po ay pondo ng gobyerno. Tama po, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Tama po iyon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Gusto ko lang pong sundan iyong nabanggit ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Kung wala pong pondo, ano po iyong ginagamit nating pambayad doon sa mga suweldo ng kasalukuyang job orders at contracts of service. Hindi po ba pondo iyon? Hindi po ba may inilalaan na sa kasalukuyan na pondo na galing din sa gobyerno bilang pambayad sa services na ibinibigay ng kawani o manggagawa? Tanong, wala ba talagang pondo, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Iyong mga ibinabayad po natin, lalo na sa local government units, para po sa suweldo ng ating mga job orders ay nanggagaling po iyan sa MOOE. Iyan po ay para nga ma-accommodate iyong iba’t ibang mga proyekto na kinakailangan gawin ng ating local government units na, ayon nga sa Local Government Code, kinakailangan at puwede naman po talagang gawin.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po.

Kasi nga po iyan ang naririnig nating paulit-ulit na argumento na walang pondo ang gobyerno para gawing regular ang mga empleyado, ngunit sa matagal din na argumento na hinaharap natin, mayroon pong pondo, mayroon pong ina-allocate. Tama po iyong binanggit ninyo na ito ay makikita, hindi sa Personnel Services o PS, pero makikita ito sa MOOE. Masakit ano? Kasi ang MOOE ay pambayad sa mga maintenance and other operating expenses.

Operating expense na lamang ang mga manggagawa, payment of contracts of service, ngunit “tao” po at “manggagawa” po ang gumagampan ng trabahong iyan na mahalaga para sa pagbibigay ng serbisyo sa bayan. Kulang na kulang, tulad ng binanggit ninyo. Nabanggit ninyo at natutuwa tayo na mayroong ginagawa na hakbang sa Department of Health, na alam natin na kulang na kulang, lalo na sa panahong naglipana ang iba’t ibang sakit mula sa dengue hanggang sa measles at napakarami pang ibang sakit na lumalabas po ngayon.

Kaya naniniwala po tayo na kung mismo ang CSC ay gagawa ng mga kongkretong hakbang, at susuportahan nila ang mga ganitong panukala, sa halip na gawing kontraktwal ang ating mga government workers—ito ang tanong ko po. Mayroon po ngayong na-file na bill ang Kinatawang ito para iyong ating mga job orders o contracts of service, isama na rin nating iyong mga casuals and contractuels na may employee-employer relationship, ngunit nabanggit na ang ilang suliranin sa kanila, wala silang tinatawag na civil service eligibility

na kailangan daw para makapasok sa gobyerno, kaya doon sa mga panukalang isinusulong po ng Kinatawang ito, kasama ang BAYAN MUNA at Makabayan, isinusulong po na bigyan na ng karapatan ang mga kawaning ito na magkaroon, una, nang kasiguruhan sa trabaho, iko-convert ang position nila from job orders at contracts of service or from being casual or contractual, into a regular position. Second, tulad sa pribadong sector, kung naka-anim na buwan na sa pagtrabaho sa gobyerno, sapat nang kwalipikasyon iyon para sila po ay gawaran rin ng civil service eligibility. Ano po ang tindig ng ating Sponsor sa ganitong panukala, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, ako po ay kaisa ng atin pong kasamahan mula sa BAYAN MUNA Party-List, Honorable Gaite, sa mga hakbang o panukala para pag-aralan kung paano po natin mabibigyan pa ng mas magandang kabuhatan o kinabukasan ang atin pong mga manggagawa. Ako po ay committed para po kasama siya na pag-aralan ito at malaman mula rin po sa iba nating mga Miyembro kung papaano po natin ito maisusulong.

REP. GAITE. Isang nakatutuwang rebelasyon iyan sapagkat po, Mr. Speaker, sa matagal na panahon noong ako ay pangulo pa ng COURAGE, everytime po maghi-hearing dito sa Kongreso at sa Senado at kami po naman nandoon as resource persons, ang tindig ng CSC ay palaging in the negative, lagi pong sumasalungat dahil doon sa mga nabanggit na argumento. Sana po, baguhin na natin iyong mindset, baguhin na natin iyong matagal nang pag-iisip na hindi karapat-dapat ang mga contractuales na gawing regular. Tama po ang ating Sponsor na dapat tingnan ito at dapat baguhin na iyong kasalukuyang patakaran.

Doon sa mga kasagutan sa usapin ng kontraktwalisasyon, maganda po iyong mga ilang nabanggit hinggil sa paano itutulak ang mga patakaran, kasama ang mga batas at mga panukala, para magkaroon na ng kasiguruhan sa trabaho ang daang-libo nating mga contractual workers at gayundin, ibigay sa kanila ang karapat-dapat na mga karapatan, sahod, benepisyo at ang pinakamahalaga, ang security of tenure.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, may ilan lang pa akong katanungan. Una po, iyong proseso po ng pagbigay ng Civil Service Commission ng approval sa mga na-process na employees from various government agencies. Nakarating po sa Kinatawang ito na sa Philippine Heart Center, napakatagal ng proseso doon sa application para sa pag-fill-up ng position. Hindi po ba na pagkatapos mabigay ang lahat ng requirements, qualification standards ng naturang ahensiya, ito po ay nasa-subject sa “attestation” ba ang tawag—attestation ng Civil Service? Ang tanong po nila, lumalaki ang

bilang ng mga pasyente nila pero hindi napupunan ang kanilang staffing dahil nakadepende sa CSC ang pag-a-approve ng mga bagong positions na regular staff. Hindi lang po ito sa Philippine Heart Center, naganap din ito sa iba pang ospital dito sa Metro Manila noong nakaraan.

Ano po bang rason at nagkaka-delay doon sa prosessing ng mga applications, kung mayroon mang delay, sa mga naturang items ng mga position na kailangan na kailangan ng hospital para maibigay ang serbisyong pangkalusugan na kailangan ng mamamayan, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, the moment na ma-approve ng ahensiya iyong kanila pong item o position, puwede na po magsimula sa trabaho ang empleyado na nag-apply po dito at tinanggap. Iyong attestation ay hindi naman po kinakailangan para kaagad pong magsimula ang ating mga empleyado.

REP. GAITE. Tanong ko po—ano pong epekto kapag hindi na-attest? Papaano po kapag upon evaluation ng CSC, hindi tumutugma doon sa requirement na standards o qualification standards na itinakda ng CSC, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Kung pasok naman po sa requirements ay wala po tayong problema, pero kung sakaling hindi po papasok doon sa requirements, kinakailangan nilang gawin iyong mga dapat pong gawin para ito po ay pumasok doon po sa nasabing requirements, ngunit patuloy naman po silang makakapagtrabaho habang ito po ay kino-comply.

REP. GAITE. Matanong ko po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ano ba po iyong cause ng delay? Iyon po ang problema na binabanggit ng ating mga kasamahan sa mga naturang ahensiya. Naaalala ko po ang CSC ay may programa na “Serbilis,” tama po? “Serbilis,” serbisyong mabilis. Iyong iba daw umaabot ng ilang buwan bago maaprubahan iyong kanilang mga attestation. Ano po ba ang problema kung bakit nagkakaroon ng suliranin o delay sa mga naturang prosesong ito, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Karaniwan po, Mr. Speaker, ay kulang iyong mga sina-submit ng kanilang human resource office kaya po maaaring tumatagal ang prosesong iyan. Kapag iyan po ay nakumpleto, mabilis naman pong naaksiyunan ng ating Civil Service Commission.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa kasagutan. Sana rin po ma-address ito sapagkat tama po iyong

observation ng ating mga kasamahan nasa mga iba't ibang opisina ay kulang na kulang na sila—understaffed na ang marami nating ospital at dahil naaantala, whether fault noong applicant or fault ng CSC, dapat facilitative po sana tayo. Ibig sabihin, hanapan ng pinakamainam na paraan para mapabilis at hindi na magkaroon pa ng tinatawag na ARTA (Anti-Red Tape) na dahilan sa mga ilang ahensiya ng gobyerno sa pagpo-process ng mga dokumento tulad nito. So, salamat po sa inyong kasagutan.

Mga dalawang huling katanungan na lang. Una po, sa usapin ng sahod. Ano po ang posisyon ng CSC hinggil doon sa panukala na itaas ang sahod ng mga government workers? Kanina nabanggit ko na mayroon talagang probisyon sa Saligang Batas applicable to both government and private sector workers at ang isinasaad nga ay entitled ang lahat ng manggagawa sa nakabubuhay na sahod. Ngayon, sa ilalim ng Executive Order No. 201 o iyong SSL 4 (Salary Standardization Law 4) na ipinatupad noong 2016 hanggang 2019, last tranche nga po itong sa 2019, ang sahod ng ating mga government workers sa national government agencies ay umaabot lamang ng P11,068 kada buwan. Ang ating mga guro, ang current na suweldo nila bilang nasa Salary Grade 11 ay umaabot lang ng mahigit P21,000, ngunit ang matataas na opisyal ng gobyerno ay matataas rin ang sahod. Ang ating Pangulo ay halos P400,000 a month ang kanyang sahod. Mas masahol nga doon sa nababanggit ninyo kaninang local government units. Kapag minalas-malas ka at nasa isang sixth-class municipality ka, you do not receive the same amount as that of your employees of the same position doon sa national government agencies. Ayon sa SSL, 65 percent lang ng suweldo, kung ikaw ay nasa sixth-class municipality, ang matatanggap mo. Hindi *once mil*, kung hindi, mas mababa pa—*siete mil* lang.

Masasabi ba ng ating Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na iyong sahod ngayon na tinatanggap—whether in the local government units, national government agencies, at iba pa—masasabi ba nating nakabubuhay ang sahod na ito?

REP. GARCIA (J). Mr. Speaker, unang-una, sang-ayon po ang CSC pagdating po sa mga hakbang at panukala para po tumaas pa ang sahod ng atin pong mga empleyado. Sa katunayan, nag-attend na ang CSC sa deliberation na ginawa po sa Senado para po sa panibago pong panukala pagdating po sa SSL, kaya welcome po ito sa kanila at susuportahan po nila kung ano man iyong maipapasa ng Kongreso ukol po sa sahod ng ating mga manggagawa.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po. Batay nga sa isinumiteng P4.1 trillion budget for 2020, mayroon nga kaming nakita na sa ilalim ng Miscellaneous

and Personnel Benefits Funds, pero nalulungkot kami sapagkat P31 billion lamang ang inilalaan. Medyo maliit iyon sapagkat ayon sa nakaraang 2019 budget for the implementation of the fourth and final tranche of the Salary Standardization Law 4 ay P51 billion ang inilaan na, kung kaya ang ating mga guro, ang ating mga taga-walis sa lansangan, ang ating utility workers at ibang laborers, ay nag-aalala na baka ang mangyayari na naman ay kakarampot na naman ang sahod ng mga maliit na kawani habang ang mga matataas na opisyal, sila na naman ang makikinabang sa increase. Nevertheless, kami ay natutuwa na sinusuportahan ng ating Sponsor ang panukalang ito.

Panghuli ay ang usapin ukol sa Collective Negotiation Agreement.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Reminder to the two Gentlemen that you only have five minutes.

REP. GAITE. Opo, winding up na po.

Tungkol sa Collective Negotiation Agreement, aware po ba kayo na mayroon pong pinirmahan ang Pilipinas sa ILO Convention No. 151 noong 2017 na nilalaman ang probisyon hinggil sa pagkilala sa karapatan ng mga government workers tulad na rin ng private sector workers, ng karapatan na freedom of association, right to collective bargaining at iba pa? Alam ba ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor ang naturang pagpirma ng Pilipinas sa naturang ILO Convention?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Alam po natin ito, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po.

Panghuli, hindi pa ba dapat napapanahon na rin na ma-address iyong mahahalagang usapin na nilalaman nito? Example po, iyong right to organize o the right to self organization o the right to collective bargaining and negotiations—at ito iyong napakahalagang usapin ng ating mga government workers, the right to peaceful concerted activities, including—the right to strike. Kahit sa loob lang ng CNA, mayroong provision sa Collective Negotiation Agreement (CNA) na dapat mayroong kaukulang benepisyo ring matatanggap ang ating manggagawa katulad rin sa pribadong sektor.

Naniniwala po ba ang ating Sponsor na karapat-dapat rin na ang ating government employees, sa ilalim ng Collective Negotiation Agreement, ay mabigyan rin ng kaukulang benepisyo, dahil sa alam naman natin na maliit nga ang sahod nila at ang CNA sana ang makakapagpuno sa mga kakulangan sa sahod at mga benepisyo na iginagawad ngayon sa gobyerno, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, maaari pong malaman muli kung ano po iyong katanungan ni Honorable Gaite?

REP. GAITE. Sinusuportahan ba ng ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor ang panukala na magkaroon ng implementation ng ILO Convention No. 151 na pinirmahan ng Pilipinas noon, bilang tratado ay pinirmahan ng Senado at ni Pangulong Duterte noong 2017—sang-ayon ba ang ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na bigyan ito ng flesh sa pamamagitan ng pagsasagawa ng batas o patakaran para iyong mga benefits ng tulad ng Collective Negotiation Agreement at iba pa ay ma-enjoy na rin ng ating mga government workers?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Sang-ayon po, Mr. Speaker, basta po ito ay pasok sa atin pong Saligang Batas.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa mgakasagutan. Naniniwala ang Kinatawan na ito na kasama po tayo sa layunin na ang kalagayan sa trabaho ng ating mga government workers tulad na rin ng mga manggagawa sa pribadong sektor, na sila ang mga produktibong puwersa ng ating lipunan, kaya napakahalaga na bigyan natin ng prayoridad ang kalagayan ng ating milyon-milyong mga government workers, hindi lamang iyong mga regular, kung hindi gayundin iyong ating mga job orders, contracts of service, at iba pa.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Maraming salamat po sa ating kapita-pitagang Sponsor ng budget ng CSC at CESB. Salamat po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Argel Joseph T. Cabatbat from the MAGSASAKA Party-List for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Honorable Cabatbat from MAGSASAKA Party-List is recognized.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I heard the news about 116 Civil Service examinees who automatically failed due to statistically improbable results. I would like to confirm if this is true, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, opo. Totoo iyong binabanggit po ni Honorable Cabatbat tungkol sa mga statistically improbable na resulta ng mga examination at kung maaari, babanggitin ko po iyong dahilan o iyong naging basehan dito po sa tinatawag na statistically improbable results.

So, para ho ma-determine ito, unang-una, at gusto ko po basahin ito:

If there is a clustering of responses (either right or wrong) of at least 50 % of the passers in the same room in at least 90 % of the total number of scored items.

Iyon po iyong una. Pangalawa:

If there is a clustering of responses (either right or wrong) of at least 90% of the passers in the same room in at least 50% of the total number of scored items.

Pangatlo:

If there is a clustering of responses (either right or wrong) of at least 50% of the passers in the same room in less than 90% of the total number of scored items but the standard deviation (SD) of the room is at least 50% lower than that of the testing center.

Pang-apat:

The existence of identified pair or pairs of passers seated close to each other with lopsided clustering of incorrect responses in at least 30% of the total number of scored items.

Panglima:

The existence of identified pair or pairs of passers with lopsided clustering of correct and incorrect responses in at least 75% of that total number of scored items.

The CSC proposes the results using an Item Response Analysis system that has high reliability and accuracy in determining statistically improbable results. The system evaluates and analyses the answer and date with examinees using a set of standards. The system tags the pairs of examinees with high answers/similarities from the report. The CSC captures test results of pairs that indicate a probability of less than one in a million comparisons.

For the Civil Service exam, this would translate to at least 30 percent or 45 numbers of matches on incorrect answers for a 150-item test, or at least 75 percent or 130 numbers of matches of all answers or one chance in a million. After identifying all pairs of examinees with statistically improbable results, the CSC assigns a default rating pursuant to its Resolution No. 1501302, dated October 9, 2015.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

If I understand it correctly, based on these standards, those examinees are probably cheaters. Is that correct, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. GARCIA (J.). There is a *prima facie* evidence, Mr. Speaker, based on the probabilities—based on the Anti-Cheating Law.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Since there is already a *prima facie* evidence against these examinees, I would assume there was some sort of due process or trial or reexamination conducted or revalidation conducted by the CSC for these probable cheaters?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Although, Mr. Speaker, mayroong *prima facie* evidence, hindi pa rin po siya part of a *prima facie* case. So, the system that the CSC had put in place is part of an internal system precisely, Mr. Speaker, to help them identify all these possibilities of cheating.

REP. CABATBAT. I suppose, Mr. Speaker, that this internal system includes office Memorandum No. 34 that discontinued the conduct of validating examination for Civil Service examinations. Is that correct, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. GARCIA (J.). So, it is not part of the law, Mr. Speaker, but it is part of the function of the Civil Service to administer the Civil Service exams.

REP. CABATBAT. I see, Mr. Speaker.

The reason I am asking these questions is I consider this office memorandum as unlawful. Mr. Speaker. Do not get me wrong. All of us here hate cheaters, but before we judge someone as a cheater, I believe that we should still observe due process because this office memorandum, Mr. Speaker, is tantamount to a bill of attainder. In the Constitution, under Article III, Section 22, “No *ex post facto* law or bill of attainder shall be enacted.” If we are going to consider this group as guilty of cheating, Mr. Speaker, that is akin to a bill of attainder.

So, may I ask for a comment on my position from the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, this is part of a CSC resolution dated October 9, 2015, and this is part of the management’s decision to implement such a system.

So, just the same, there have been no cases filed against these examinees, so it is part of the policy based on the CSC resolution which is also based on the rule-making power of the CSC.

REP. CABATBAT. Mr. Speaker, that is promising. Since no cases were filed, this strategy might be working, Mr. Speaker. Since we brought that up, that no cases have been filed so far about this issue, were those examinees aware that they passed the exam but they automatically failed due to statistically improbable results? Were they aware that they passed but they were disqualified or they failed eventually?

REP. GARCIA (J.). They were not aware, Mr. Speaker, but it is a default system which the Commission adopted.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So, there is a slim chance, Mr. Speaker, of an outlier who is a member of Mensa, who has an IQ higher than Einstein, who passed the Civil Service exam, but due to the improbable result was later disqualified. Can we discount that possibility, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, actually doon po sa binasa ko kanina na mga kondisyon, ang tinitingnan noong sistema ay iyong halos parehong correct and incorrect answers ng nag-take ng exam. So, doon po lumalabas o iyon po iyong na-tag o iyong na-flag ng sistema. So, Mr. Speaker, not necessarily ito po iyong mga masasabi nating Einstein na matatalino na talagang kaya i-perfect ang isang exam.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nonetheless, I would like the Civil Service Commission to revisit this memorandum in order to accommodate the rights of those who were disqualified without due process.

Going to my last question, Mr. Speaker, I received information about a building belonging to the Civil Service Commission located in Sorsogon which was demolished. Was this building demolished with consent or was this a collegial action or decision? Was there a resolution to that effect, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, puwede pong malaman kung aling building po iyong tinutukoy?

REP. CABATBAT. I believe it is located in Sorsogon, Mr. Speaker, the Civil Service building located in Sorsogon that was demolished.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, hintayin lang po natin iyong detalye mula po sa Director mula po sa area ng Sorsogon.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, may we request for a one-minute suspension of the session.



THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

*It was 4:20 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 4:20 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

REP. CABATBAT. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Honorable Cabatbat is recognized.

REP. CABATBAT. I would like to request instead the CSC to submit the report instead of suspending the proceedings, Mr. Speaker. I have no further questions, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARCIA (J.). The CSC will be submitting the required report.

REP. CABATBAT. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Victoria V. Umali.

Oh, I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. I move that we recognize Hon. France L. Castro from the ACT TEACHERS Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. France Castro from the ACT TEACHERS Party-List is recognized.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So, ilang mga katanungan lang po kaugnay noong sa mga JO, doon sa mga unfilled positions, guidelines on CNA renegotiation, results-based performance management system, at saka iyong promotion po noong mga senior high school teachers.

Unang katanungan, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, kung susundan ko po iyong ating kasamahan mula sa BAYAN MUNA, iyong tungkol po doon sa mga JO and COS. So, sa data po, as of December 2018, mayroong 661,169 na JOs: mula sa national government agencies, 127,459; GOCCs, 32,300; 30,300 po sa SUCs; 8,258 sa local water districts, at 462,847 po sa LGUs. Kino-confirm po ba, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ang data na ito?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Tama po iyon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Kanina po, narinig ko sa panayam ng ating Chairman ng Civil Service na may kaugnayan sa mga unfilled positions, sinabi niya po na mayroong 300,000 na mga unfilled positions sa ating gobyerno, pero sa kabila po ng mga unfilled positions na ito, mayroon tayong mga JOs and COS.

Puwede po bang, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, makakuha ang Representasyong ito ng data na kung saan-saan po iyong mga unfilled positions na ito para makita po natin, kung sakali, ilan sila dahil kanina po, sinabi natin na mayroon tayong gagawing mga pamamaraan para magkaroon o mabigyan ng mga regular positions iyong ating mga JOs.

So, puwede po ba makakuha ang Kinatawang ito noong data per agency at saka iyong kung ano-ano pong mga positions.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Agad pong ipapadala ng CSC, Mr. Speaker, ang data na ito.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Tama po ba, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, iyong 300,000 unfilled positions?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Ayon po sa pinakabagong impormasyon, nasa 254,000 ang unfilled positions.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Salamat po.

Puwede po bang makahingi ang Representasyong ito noong mga guidelines on CNA renegotiation dahil po nagkakaproblema po tayo sa mga union sa mga schools natin na kung saan binabago po ng mga administration or mga regional director iyong ating mga guidelines kaugnay noong CNA renegotiation.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Ibibigay rin po natin, Mr. Speaker, iyong guidelines.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Kaugnay naman po, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, on the guidelines sa promotion ng senior high school teachers, marami pong mga nakarating sa aking opisina kaugnay noong mga complaints about doon sa promotion ng senior high school teachers dahil may bago daw pong guidelines ang Civil Service kaugnay nito. Kasi po, marami pong mga junior high school teachers ang lumipat sa senior high schools. Ngayon, nahihirapan po sila sa promotion nila kahit mayroon silang mga qualifications patungo sa Master Teacher 1 and 2. So, mayroon po bang bagong guidelines o ibang guidelines ang Civil Service kaugnay nito?

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mayroon po, Mr. Speaker, na internal guidelines ang DepEd na maaari rin po nating ibigay kay Congresswoman France.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Sa DepEd po ba? Ang sinasabi ng DepEd, wala daw sa kanila ang guidelines. Iyong bagong guidelines po, Mr. Speaker, ay mula sa Civil Service.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Maaari po malaman, Mr. Speaker, kung ano iyong specific na hinihingi para po ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Guidelines on the promotion of senior high school teachers.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Mr. Speaker, wala pong guidelines na ginagawa o ini-issue ang CSC pagdating sa senior high school teachers' promotions.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, Mr. Speaker, samakatuwid, nililina ng Civil Service na wala silang ibang guidelines kaya ang guidelines po sa promotion, including those for the senior high school teachers, ay magmumula sa Department of Education.

REP. GARCIA (J.). Tama po iyon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay, so, ito na lang po, Mr. Speaker. Iyong ibang questions ko po ay sa DepEd na. Salamat po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Victoria Umali of the A TEACHER Party-List for her manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Victoria Umali from A TEACHER, INC. Party-List is recognized.

REP. UMALI (M.V.). Mr. Speaker, inasmuch as there is no other Member of the Minority who wishes to ask questions, I move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Civil Service Commission.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. BOLILIA. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Civil Service Commission and Career Executive Service Board. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Civil Service Commission and Career Executive Service Board is hereby terminated.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker,

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY,  
INCLUDING ITS ATTACHED AGENCIES AND  
CORPORATIONS, EXCEPT TESDA

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider the proposed budget of the Department of Trade and Industry, including its attached agencies and corporations. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Except TESDA?

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Not including TESDA, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Josie Sy Limkaichong—I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, Hon. Miguel F. Zubiri of Bukidnon to sponsor the ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). I think ...

REP. LACSON-NOEL. ... proposed budget ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). ... the Senate ...

REP. LACSON-NOEL. ... of the ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader cannot sponsor the Bill, but I think his brother will be the one to sponsor it, Hon. Manuel F. Zubiri.

Hon. Manuel Zubiri is recognized to sponsor the budget of the Department of Trade and Industry, including its attached agencies and corporations, except TESDA.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, before we proceed, we would like to welcome our guests from the Department of Trade and Industry led by Secretary Mon Lopez.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The

members of the Department of Trade and Industry headed by Secretary Ramon Lopez are welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

The Sponsor is recognized.

#### SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. ZUBIRI

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, my dear colleagues, and to all our guests, magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat.

I am here today to defend the budget of the Department of Trade and Industry. In spite of its miniscule budget, the Department is continuously trying to find ways and means to make sure that the lives of millions of Filipinos improve each day. Through their various programs, they have simply achieved so much. To cite some achievements: the Department has helped generate 826,000 jobs last 2018 and has helped bring down unemployment rate to 5.1 percent as of April 2019 and underemployment rate down to 13.5 percent as of April 2019.

Our beloved country ranked 56th in the 2018 Global Competitive Index, up 12 places compared to its 68th position in 2017.

The agency implemented 43 reforms and submitted 10 data corrections to the World Bank to improve its Ease of Doing Business 2020 ranking. Over 1,000 Go Negosyo Centers were established nationwide; and 3.2 billion in loans were released nationwide through 343 micro-finance institutions with 85,956 beneficiaries. Hence, they did so much with so little budget.

Nevertheless, I am hopeful that their budget will be approved or better yet, increased. In the end, I am a strong believer of “input equals output.” As part of the tip of the spear in nation-building and development, the DTI will always be here to support us not just through thick or thin, but through thick or thick, no matter the time and day.

Now, it is my privilege to sponsor the budget of the Department of Trade and Industry in the amount of P5.848 billion for the Fiscal Year 2020.

Mr. Speaker. I am ready to entertain any questions and concerns for this very important and hardworking Department.

Mr. Speaker, andito po ako.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, we would like to welcome the DTI family.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). We already acknowledged the presence of the Department of Trade and Industry family.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, we would like to greet the individual members of the DTI family.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Okay.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. They are Secretary Ramon Lopez, Undersecretary Rowel Barba, Undersecretary Ruth Castelo, Undersecretary Ireneo Vizmonte, Undersecretary Adbulgani Macatorman, Undersecretary Rafaelita Aldaba, Undersecretary Blesila Lantayona, Assistant Secretary Mary Jean Pacheco, Assistant Secretary Ameenah Fajardo, Assistant Secretary Demphna Du-Naga, Assistant Secretary Ann Claire Cabochan, Director Luis Catibayan, Executive Director Ma. Corazon Dichosa, Executive Director Maria Rita Malute, DDG Teodoro Pascua, EVP Malevin Abanto, Engr. Robert Arceo, Ms. Mary Sierra, Ms. Alison Cruz, Mr. Marvic Palencia, Mr. Martin Base, Ms. Theresa Montemayor, Dir. Maria Asuncion Cruzada, Ms. Gemma Manlangit, Mr. Elmer Ubaldo, Mr. Antonio Reblora, Ms. Michelle Fordan, Ms. Armida Babalcon, Ms. Julie Flojo, Mr. Crisologo Rigunay Jr., Atty. Marco Maat and Ms. Mary Anne Pinlac.

Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Minority Leader, Hon. Bienvenido M. Abante Jr., of the Sixth District of Manila, for his interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The distinguished Minority Leader from the Sixth District of Manila, Bishop Benny Abante, is recognized for his interpellation or manifestation.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, I would like to welcome the Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry, Secretary Lopez, and the DTI family, and thank them for being with us today. Also, I would like to ask our good Sponsor if he would be willing to answer some clarificatory questions?

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am ready to answer whatever questions may arise, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, Philippine Statistics Authority data show GDP growth has been slowing virtually throughout the first 11 quarters of the Duterte administration, from 7.1 percent in the third quarter of 2016 to 5.6 percent in the first quarter of 2019. There was a momentary increase to 7.2 percent in the third quarter of 2017 but growth fell rapidly after this. Notably, economic growth has been slowing down long before the national government's 2019 budget impasse, and the ban on infrastructure spending in the run-up to the mid-term elections. This is also despite record levels of foreign investments, US\$10.3 billion in 2017, and then dropping slightly to US\$9.8 billion in 2018. My question is, why is it that investments in

the Philippines have decreased for the last three years and the country's economic growth is slowing down? Ano po ba ang ginagawa ng Departamento tungkol sa mga bagay na ito?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, I believe that there was a slight increase in the figures, but the problem really is not just in the ASEAN Region but it is global, between America and China. The relations between America and China has affected our country. As far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, there are about 10 big countries that are now showing signs of a slowdown and iyon po, naapektuhan din po ang Pilipinas. So iyan po ang rason kung bakit bumaba po iyong mga figures na iyan, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. So, ibig sabihin po niyan dahil po ang ibang mga bansa ay nagkaroon din ng slowdown, tayo po ay sumabay doon sa pag-slowdown na iyon?

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, sumabay po tayo sa slowdown pero hindi naman po all the way, medyo na-buffer po. Iyong BOI investment ay may 120 percent growth since January to August po, based on the figures given to me, Mr. Speaker, so hindi po nag-slowdown. Iyong growth natin ay mas malaki pa po kaysa sa iba *vis-a-vis* what is happening outside the country. Makikita po ninyo ang investment grade ng bansa natin, umakyat pa po. So, meaning to say na mas maganda po iyong takbo natin kaysa sa ibang mga bansa, especially sa ASEAN Region. Ang export growth ay umakyat po ng 3.5 percent noong July 2019 at 3.3 percent noong June 2019.

REP. ABANTE. So, comparing po sa ibang bansa na nabanggit ninyo mas maganda pa po iyong katayuan natin, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Okay. Well, based on the PSA data available in the websites, the BPO for example, was growing rapidly in the period from 2005 to 2009, averaging 43 percent annually, pero pagdating po ng 2010 to 2016, it slowed down, averaging, you know, still high, 15 percent annually. Then, it slowed down further in the period of 2017 to 2018, averaging just 2.7 percent annually. Ano po ba ang nangyari dito, Mr. Speaker? Why is it that the BPO sector is also declining despite investment incentives given by the government?

REP. ZUBIRI. Actually, iyong growth po ng BPO ay nasa 43 percent, three out of 11 countries, mataas pa po iyong ating growth at saka iyong higher base. The problem is due to uncertainty kasi hindi pa po naipapasa

iyong CITIRA, as per our economic managers, kaya nandoon lang po tayo. Kapag naipasa na po iyong CITIRA, as per our economic managers, that will now rise to a better percentage po, na mas mataas iyong growth ng BPO companies o industry.

REP. ABANTE. Okay. Well, my third question would be this—para bagang, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sa pagkakarinig ko po, nagkakaroon yata ng kaunting disagreement ang DTI Secretary at ang PEZA Director General, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZUBIRI. Are you talking about PEZA? Mr. Speaker, PEZA or TESDA?

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, PEZA.

REP. ZUBIRI. PEZA?

REP. ABANTE. Opo.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, as far as the DTI is concerned, they are looking at it as a whole. They want harmonious systems and procedures po, dahil hindi po puwede na isa-isa o iba-iba iyong systems and procedures at saka iyong mga nabibigay po na mga incentives. So, naghahanap po sila ng paraan na, in the long run, will benefit the country. That is why ang proposal po ng DTI ay iyong pagtanggap po ng mga incentive o ang pagbaba po ng mga incentives, ay gradual. From five years, gusto nilang gawin pong 10 years and so, it would be gradual. It will now help these companies to make more money within that timeframe. So, iyan po iyong ginagawa nila.

At the same time, it is only the PEZA that has different views. Iyong policy direction is very clear, discussed and approved in the Cabinet, and mandated by the President. In making those statements, the policy direction of the PEZA Director General ay kanya lamang, hindi po ito views ng lahat ng bumubuo ng PEZA.

So, iyan ang problema po natin diyan—we are for time-bound, performance-based incentives. Maybe, she does not understand that those principles are very rational economic principles that government policymakers must adhere to. After hearing the inputs from the locators, we also made representations in many forums and discussed these internally with concerned agencies to have a longer transition to soften the landing.

So, iyong views po ng mga locators, as per my discussion with the Secretary, Mr. Speaker, hindi po the same views of the one in charge of the PEZA. Iyan po ang nabanggit dito sa DTI at iyan po iyong views ng iba, hindi po ng just one but a lot of other locators sa PEZA areas, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Ang ibig sabihin po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, na ang DTI Secretary is proposing a new charter for PEZA, but the PEZA chief is supposedly bypassing that. Totoo po ba iyon? Bina-bypass po ba ng PEZA chief iyong proposed new charter ng DTI Secretary?

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is correct. Ito po ang ginagawa ng lahat, ang DTI ay kasama po, at naka-align po dito lahat—ang DOF, NEDA and all the economic agencies, Mr. Speaker. That is true and correct.

REP. ABANTE. So, Mr. Speaker, how can we help the declining BPO sector and the slowing growth rate of investments if the people in charge are squabbling, supposedly, among themselves?

REP. ZUBIRI. Actually, Mr. Speaker, iyong BPO, they are being retrained to use AI systems which will improve the service. So, babalik po iyong porsiyento ng investment na pupunta dito, kasi ang trend ngayon is—if we will not follow the trend, baka mawala po sa atin iyong negosyo ng BPO.

REP. ABANTE. Well, DTI Secretary Lopez had previously said that PEZA pushed for the proposal despite his objection as Chair of the Board. Totoo po ba iyon?

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker, totoo po iyon.

REP. ABANTE. Ang question, bakit kaya ang lakas ng loob ng PEZA Director na ito na suwayin ang Department Secretary niya?

REP. ZUBIRI. Iyong sagot po diyan, Mr. Speaker, iyong Director po ng PEZA, iyon po ang opinyon niya at saka hindi po ito ang opinyon ng mga economic managers at saka po ng buong Board ng PEZA. Iyan po ang totoo po diyan, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Well, huli na lamang po, you can answer or not, but the PEZA Director General Charito Plaza said that it is about time that its charter is amended to improve the operations of economic zones and make them globally competitive, at ang narinig namin, ang gusto niyang amendment ay alisin ang DTI Secretary bilang Chair niya—iyon po ang narinig namin.

Alam ninyo, naniniwala po tayo na in unity, there is strength, hindi po ba? So, why are we allowing this squabbling among our officials while the sector that they are supposed to manage is declining as a result of seeming petty quarrels? Sabi ko “seeming” kasi sa

pagkakilala ko kay Secretary Mon Lopez ay parang napakabait ng Sekretaryong ito kaya sabi ko, “seeming petty quarrels.” Ano po ba ito?

REP. ZUBIRI. I think, Mr. Speaker, to answer that simply, she is acting on her own. Si DTI Secretary po, Mr. Speaker, is in line with all of the economic managers and with all of the economic—how do you call this—iyong mga agencies po that are handling the economy of our country. So, in line po si Secretary Lopez, Mr. Speaker. Just to cite an example po, iyong sa TRAIN 1 tumaas po iyong ating inflation and I was against it, I fought against the TRAIN 1 or whatever happened to us last year with high inflation, but in effect, nakita po natin bumaba naman ngayon, nasa 1.0 plus percent. So, in the end, ang tinitingnan po ng mga economic managers at saka ni Secretary Lopez ay iyong effect po in the long run, hindi po iyong short-term effect. In the end, we want to see the nation growing steadily and becoming stronger year in year out. Iyan po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Sponsor for his very good answers to my questions and the DTI family for responding sufficiently to my queries. Diyan po nagtatapos ang aking mga katanungan.

Maraming salamat po.

REP. ZUBIRI. Marami pong salamat, Minority Leader. Thank you very much, Sir.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize Hon. Jose L. Atienza, Jr. of BUHAY Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Lito Atienza from BUHAY Party-List is recognized for his interpellation or manifestation.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). You may proceed, Honorable Atienza.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you. Mme. Majority Leader, before I even dare ask any question, may I request the Majority Leader to give importance to the presence of some officials of Leyte Province who are here with us and they have been with us.

So, can we ask the Majority Leader to mention the attendance of Southern Leyte officials who are with us this afternoon?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to acknowledge the presence of the guests of Hon. Florencio G. Noel of AN WARAY Party-List and former Congressman, Hon. Roger G. Mercado. They are Mayor Nikko Mercado, Vice Mayor Maloney Samaco, the 10 Councilors and the 59 Barangay Chairmen of Maasin City. *(Applause)*

Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). To the guests of Hon. Florencio G. Noel and Hon. Roger G. Mercado, welcome to the House of Representatives. *(Applause)*

Hon. Jose L. Atienza, Jr., you are now recognized for your interpellation or manifestation. You now have the floor.

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker, Mme. Majority Leader.

With the kind permission of the Gentleman sponsoring the measure, this Representation would like to ask him some questions on the very important functions of this Department.

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am ready to answer my dear colleague.

REP. ATIENZA. To start, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the question asked by many of our consumers. Is the DTI in charge of monitoring the prices of prime commodities in the country?

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, it is in the Price Act, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. So, therefore, it is the primary agency that we expect to monitor the prices of prime commodities like food.

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, definitely, Mr. Speaker, not just food, but the top 10 to 20 items that are being used by the populace in the whole country, the most important items that are needed to be monitored.

REP. ATIENZA. Are they empowered to enforce disciplinary action if and when any supermarket, store or outlet violates the so-called price ceiling or suggested retail price imposed on their establishment? Do they have that power or not?

REP. ZUBIRI. They only have the power when profiteering comes in and during state of calamities.

Mr. Speaker, hindi po sila puwedeng mag-impose ng penalties on a day-to-day basis. During calamities, they are allowed to impose penalties and, I guess, bring them to court if needed.

*At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abu relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Michael L. Romero, PhD.*

REP. ATIENZA. You just said they are primarily responsible for price monitoring, to inform all of us of any unusual price differential or price movement. Tama po ba iyon?

REP. ZUBIRI. Tama po iyon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. I do not think we can ask the Department of National Defense or the Department of Health or any other department when we have complaints regarding the prices of commodities.

REP. ZUBIRI. That is true and that is also my clamor, Mr. Speaker, that there should be, I guess, a stronger response when profiteering comes in. Right now, because of the Price Act, they cannot impose penalties on a day-to-day basis, Mr. Speaker, unless we amend or legislate new laws to make it a more stringent and stricter structure.

REP. ATIENZA. We would appreciate it, therefore, Mr. Speaker, if the Secretary and his diligent staff will prepare any kind of amendment to the law, so that our consumers who are, on many times, given a more difficult time to exist on their measly income, will be given ample protection. Hindi puwede po iyong kami ang mayroong kapangyarihan, pero wala po kaming kapangyarihan mag-disiplina. As executives of the price monitoring agency, they should accept the challenge that, indeed, they should do everything they can to protect our hard-hit consumers on price movements.

Ang presyo po ng bilihan ay talagang pataas ng pataas. Ako nga, narinig ko ang Secretary natin sa radyo minsan at sabi niya ay hindi raw tumataas ang presyo. That was quite disappointing for me because I just did my marketing that morning and saw differences in the prices. Yet I heard my Secretary saying that there are no price increases happening today. That was a big, misleading statement from the DTI.

As one who has worked with them and as one who has monitored prices in Manila, I cannot accept that kind of a double-talk, na kami ang in-charge pero hindi rin kami ang in-charge. Sino ang in-charge?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. You know that kind of talk will not lead to an efficient government today. Well, I asked a direct question, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZUBIRI. I think...

REP. ATIENZA. Iyong presyo ng sardinas sa ibang tindahan ay P27 per can, an unprecedented increase but it is now existing. The price of a can of sardines in many big supermarkets is only P17. I asked myself, ano ang depensa ng ating mga consumers kung P27 dito at P17 naman doon? Mayroon ba rito tayong gobyerno? Bakit po nangyayari iyon?

REP. ZUBIRI. I am with you.

REP. ATIENZA. Ano po ba ang maaaring isagot natin sa ating mga consumers? Itong ating pinag-uusapang pesos and centavos will not amount to anything if our people will not be protected in their daily needs.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, iyong sagot po namin diyan ay "Yes." We have a proposal to enact laws or amend po the Price Act and give it more teeth, especially for the DTI so they can be stricter and be stringent in monitoring and imposing penalties anytime when needed. Mas maganda po iyan at okay po sa kanila iyan.

Right now, the problem ngayon po sa Price Act or Republic Act No. 7581 is that they can only impose penalties during a state of disaster, state of calamity, state of emergency, state of rebellion, state of war, martial law, and if writ of habeas corpus is suspended. Hindi po on a day to day basis.

REP. ATIENZA. Hindi po ba iyong malakas na bagyo ay state of calamity?

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, I believe so. For me, in my opinion...

REP. ATIENZA. Noong araw na iyon...

REP. ZUBIRI. ...I believe that it is a state...

REP. ATIENZA. ... ako ay nag-ikot sa mga supermarket...

REP. ZUBIRI. ...of calamity. Yes, po.

REP. ATIENZA. ...at humahampas po ang bagyo kaya doble ang epekto sa akin. Papaano iyong mga bumili roon sa maliit na tindahan—P27 pesos.

Obviously, there was an advantage being taken of by that particular store. Then I went to a supermarket, it was only P17 pesos, meaning the owner of the supermarket had a bigger heart for social justice. Ano ang ginagawa ng gobyerno kapag ganoon kalaki, a P10 difference in the price of one item? Are they not aware of this? I would like to ask that question now. Are they not aware that this is happening everyday? If they are not aware, then I am saying it now that it is happening today.

Ang presyo ng sardinas sa maraming tindahan, lalo na sa maliliit na tindahan, ay mataas. Para ninyong binigyan ng advantage iyong mga supermarkets ng mayayaman. Ang dapat nating babaan ang presyo ay iyong maliliit na tindahan—the neighborhood stores, dahil doon mataas ang presyo. Iyong puhunan ng mga mayayaman ay puwedeng magbaba dahil they buy in bulk but the DTI does not seem to care whether malaki ang diperensiya sa presyo.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, I am one with my dear colleague and this is the same question I asked as Vice Chairman of Trade and Industry. Their budget—ang reklamo po nila ay number one, iyong budget po nila para sa staff nila ay medyo maliit. Tapos, iyong sakal po sila kasi iyong mandate po nila ay only during times of calamities, and at the same time, iyong DTI covers only until Tier 2, meaning to say, supermarkets and bigger groceries po. Iyong maliliit na mga tindahan ay hindi po kontrolado ng DTI. Iyong mga manufacturers which is Tier 1, hindi din po kontrolado ng DTI as per the law. If we change the law and give it more teeth to do their job, then definitely, they would be willing to do that. Mr. Speaker, they have the proposal right here and we just need to help them out with that proposal, not just the proposal in terms of legislating the right law to protect our people, but also in the budget that they need.

Just for the information of everyone, the whole budget of the DTI is only 27 percent of our P4.1 trillion budget, Mr. Speaker. We have the smallest in the ASEAN. For more information, Mr. Speaker, in 2018, P5.3 billion ang DTI budget po dito sa Pilipinas pero doon po sa Indonesia ay nasa P20 billion; Malaysia has the same, P20 billion, and I believe Thailand has P 48 billion pesos. Tayo po ang pinakamaliit dito sa buong ASEAN, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, the Gentleman is not answering my query squarely. He is going around the bush but in reality, he is not committing the DTI to anything. My question is, who is in charge of price monitoring? That is a basic question. Can you not answer that with a "yes" or "no"? Is it DTI or not? We do not need to beat around the bush. Is the DTI the agency that people can depend on...

REP. ZUBIRI. Okay.

REP. ATIENZA. ... when it comes to the protection of their rights as consumers?

REP. ZUBIRI. Under the Price Act, Mr. Speaker, the DTI is obliged to monitor canned fish and other marine products, processed milk, coffee, laundry soap, detergents, candies, bread, salt. Iyong DA—sorry, prime commodities like flour, processed and canned pork, beef and poultry meat, locally manufactured instant noodles, vinegar, patis, soy sauce, toilet soap, potable water in bottles and containers, paper, school supplies, cement, clinker, GI sheets, hollow blocks, construction nails, batteries, electrical supplies, light bulbs and steel wire.

The DA, on the other hand, is mandated by law to monitor rice, corn, cooking oil, fresh/dried fish, and other marine products, fresh eggs, fresh pork, beef and poultry, meat, fresh milk, fresh vegetables, root crops, sugar, prime commodities, fresh fruits, dried pork, dried beef, and poultry meat, fresh dairy products not falling under basic necessities, onions, garlic, fertilizer (chemical or organic), pesticides, herbicides, poultry, swine, cattle feeds, veterinary products for poultry, swine, cattle, livestock, and then dito pa po sa DOH, drugs and medicines are included in the current edition of the *Philippine National Drug Formulary* Essential Drugs List.

Sa DOE naman po, household liquified petroleum gas at saka kerosene. Iyan po iyong mandated by law. So, hindi lang po ang DTI ang may responsibilidad nito, pati iyong DOE, DOH at saka DA din po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. My dear colleagues, we should thank the Gentleman for educating us on the items that should be taken care of by the DTI. So, let me go back to my original question—ang sardinas po ba ay canned fish?

REP. ZUBIRI. Opo.

REP. ATIENZA. Ang tanong ko po kanina ay tatanungin ko ulit. Iyong sardinas, bakit hindi nila mai-report sa consumers na ito ang gagawin nila, na dahil mahal ang singil sa kanila sa mga tindahang ito, kapag P27 ang isang lata pero sa mga supermarkets ay P17 lang. Iyong mga ganoong klaseng serbisyo, malaking tulong iyan sa isang mahirap kaya ang aking iginigiit, kapag hindi ginawa ng DTI na bigyan ng proteksiyon ang consumer, wala nang matatakbuhan ang isang Filipino consumer. We are all reliant on their performance, and the budget that they are asking for is quite big. Hindi ito katulad ng budget ng mga pinag-usapan natin earlier. Malaki po ang kanilang pondo, may mga inspektor sila at kapag

kayo ay nahabol ng inspektor ng DTI ay malaki ang problema ninyo. Kaya hindi ako naniniwala na wala silang magagawa kung mataas ang presyo sa isang tindahan compared to the others. Kung ganyan ang ating attitude, wala na tayong magagawa sa pagsasamantala sa ating mga kapwa tao. I would like to ask a simple question and I would want a simple answer. Is the DTI an agency that can be relied on with price monitoring? Hindi na iyong price control, price monitoring man lang and we should get the accurate reporting on a daily basis.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, ito po iyong pinag-usapan din po namin sa Committee on Trade na, sa totoo lang, kulang iyong kanilang budget. Iyong kanilang personnel po sa buong bansa, what they could afford, because what was given to them is such a miniscule budget especially for enforcement, nasa 150 personnel for 108 million Filipinos.

This is why, I believe, that the budget for this Department is too small. Sa PS lang po, nasa P 154 million lang. Sa MOOE, nasa P 57 million. Iyong Capital Outlays po is at P 1 million. Iyong mga testing the standards of the products and the items that we use everyday, iyong nabigay po na Capital Outlays is only P 1 million pesos. What equipment can you buy for P 1 million pesos, Mr. Speaker?

Definitely, just to answer the question of my distinguished colleague, nasa 151 po ang nagmomonitor nationwide. Kaya po, pinagsabihan ko po sila and I have spoken to them and I said kung puwede iyong monitoring ninyo ay puwede tayo magdagdag at hahanap tayo ng budget kung puwede, para magdagdag para sa monitoring of prices not just in the National Capital Region, but all the way down to the Mindanao area, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Again, Mr. Speaker, let me react by saying the question has not been answered. Is the DTI accepting the challenge of monitoring the prices of prime commodities...

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. ... enumerated by the Gentleman.

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker. That is a big yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Can we expect them to recommend to the public, especially in times of calamity as you had mentioned?

REP. ZUBIRI. Right now, Mr. Speaker, they are doing market monitoring per week, 600 markets po.



Per DTI, they can do more but since they have less, their budget is really small, ito po iyong nagagawa po nila every week, 600 markets. They will take on the challenge, Mr. Speaker, and definitely, that is a big yes.

REP. ATIENZA. Mr. Speaker, this is not just a question of manpower or money, this is a question of genuine commitment to public service and protecting the rights of the consumers in the country. Do not give me a number of 600 market outlets to be checked. I would like to remind you that there are 1,600 mayors in the country whom you can deputize so that you will have the ample manpower to exercise your duties. If you tell us that you need more money when you do not even accept the fact that you have to do something about price manipulation and price fixing, especially in times of calamity, hindi rin po ninyo magagawa ang trabaho.

I would expect the officers of the DTI, and maybe the Secretary himself, to go around and check whether I am telling the truth, whether I am accurate, or whether I am just making up the issue.

Businessmen and merchants are into money-making ventures. The DTI is public service. Let me stress that. Kung hindi tayo magkatugma diyan, hindi tayo magkakatumagmaski na saan, and I will not relent on this question as I know very well that the DTI is empowered to do its job, wala po silang kakulangan sa kapangyarihan.

I do not believe what you just said. If you have any suggestion, I am willing to accept any proposal coming from them to even strengthen their powers over price manipulation and taking advantage of our poor people. If they cannot even accept that challenge and that responsibility, I may be constrained to move ...

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. ... for a deferment of their budget until they realize what they are supposed to do.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, the commitment is there and they will recommit and they promise to do the best they can, Mr. Speaker, but they are asking us, they have a proposal, if we can amend the Price Act so they have more teeth, they have more power to implement all our requests, Mr. Speaker. Definitely, yes, and I am with my distinguished colleagues in terms of making sure that the prices of basic commodities are kept to a minimum because if they are hurting the NCR, definitely, they are hurting us all the way down in Mindanao. That is my answer, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Are they accepting the fact that they are expected to monitor prices?

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker, they do that every day but they are also accepting the fact that we all need to do more and definitely, they will make sure that they will do everything they can ...

REP. ATIENZA. Well, thank you.

REP. ZUBIRI. ... if given the power ...

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you for that candid answer.

REP. ZUBIRI. ... to revoke licenses, et cetera, Mr. Speaker. They will do more.

REP. ATIENZA. Thank you for your candid answer because that is what I am expecting from the very beginning. If you want to run around in circles and catch your own tail, I will help you do that, but this session will be wasted because I will move for the deferment of their budget, unless they accept their full responsibility of price monitoring and protecting the rights of Filipino consumers.

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes. Again, definitely, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Well, let me shift to another topic, then. Ngayon mayroon po tayong problemang malaki, iyong pagkalat ng African swine flu. Narinig na po ba nila iyan? Nabalitaan na po ba nila iyon? Are they aware that there is a threat now in our country of spreading African swine flu affecting the pork industry? Or are they not aware? Then, I will skip the question and shift to another one.

REP. ZUBIRI. They are very much aware, Mr. Speaker. They are working with the DA to make sure that African swine flu does not affect majority, or meaning to say, it does not affect the supply chain of, not just the NCR, but the whole country, Mr. Speaker. It is their mandate to work hand in hand with the DA right now, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Dear colleagues, the threat of the African swine flu will affect all of us, eventually. The DTI should be on top of all of these developing problems, otherwise, the pork industry could be eradicated in the country. We will all suffer from either too low prices or unreasonable prices. The movement of the prices of pork will have to be very, very monitored closely, na hindi lamang lip service kung hindi bantayan nila kung ano ang kahihinatnan nito. If they are coordinating

with the Department of Agriculture, fine. If they are coordinating with the Department of Health, good, but they should also do their task of monitoring the market. Kung hindi ay kawawa naman tayo sapagkat hindi natin malaman ano ang nangyayari at ano ang mangyayari pa. Siguro hindi sila namamalengke. Ang inyong lingkod ay namamalengke pagkatapos kong maglaba. Isa-suggest ko kay Secretary Lopez, who is here now, and to the Lady, very ably assisting the Gentleman Sponsor, to handle the problem of the spread of African swine flu. Kung hindi po ay kawawa na naman tayo sa presyo ng bilihin, at iyong mga negosyante puwedeng mabura kung mawala ang bibili ng karneng baboy sa palengke. Kung hindi nila nakikita iyan, iyon ang aking idinidiin kanina pa. Sila ay lutang, hindi nakalubog sa katotohanan.

So, tatanungin ko na lang para naman po sa aming maiuuwing impormasyon sa aming mga pamilya at kapitbahay, iyon po bang African swine flu ay nakalalason ng tao o hindi?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, hindi po nakakalason ng tao po it—it is safe for human consumption.

REP. ATIENZA. Hindi nakakalason. Wala po bang epekto iyan sa kalusugan ng isang taong kumain ng isang infected piece of pork na mayroong African swine flu?

REP. ZUBIRI. As per DA as per Secretary of DAR, hindi po nakakalason ng tao, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Ang DTI po, mayroon din silang mga technical department, section, specialists who can provide the necessary information to the Secretary, including the senior officers of the Department para naman pumanatag kami kung walang panganib. Huwag lang sana iyong katulad ng sinabi ni Secretary Lopez na “walang pagtataas ng presyo.” Noong na-check ko ang presyo right after hearing him, ang taas-taas naman ng presyo, pero kapag sinabi niyang “walang panganib ang African swine flu,” malaking bagay po iyan sa mga namamalengke, bumibili ng pagkain at kumakain ng karneng baboy.

Is he saying now in this hearing that we should relax and we are not in any way exposed to any medical problem, health problem, kung tayo ay kakain ng baboy na mayroon nang infection?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, iyong monitoring, especially ng pork, nasa DA po. They are working with the DA to help them identify, especially sinasabi po nila kung bibili tayo ng karne o pork products, dapat may NMIS, which is a National Meat Inspection Service certificate, kasi mayroon po dapat iyan sa palengke.

Iyan po ang mino-monitor nila to make sure that the necessary documents are available to the public. Of course, nandoon po ang FDA na tumutulong sa atin tungkol sa mga problema sa African swine flu, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, they are working with the DA, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, and definitely, as per my information, for as long as it is cooked properly, it is safe for human consumption. Nevertheless, binabantayan po natin ito at talagang mino-monitor ng DTI, together with the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ATIENZA. Salamat po sa sagot.

Iyon po naman ang dapat isinagot dahil kung walang sasabihin ang Department of Trade and Industry, wala tayong kakatigang katotohanan. Kapag ikinalat ng mga kalaban ng gobyerno na mayroong epekto sa kalusugan ang pagkain ng baboy, maaaring tumagilid ang ating ekonomiya kapag ang baboy at mga namumuhunan sa baboy o piggery ay malugi na at mabangkarote.

There is a crisis going on and I hope that the DTI does not shirk away from their responsibility, but rather confront the issues of the day. This is not a light matter; it is a very serious issue that could engulf our poor nation still suffering from dengue, leptospirosis and other diseases which give our people a lot of suffering—rising prices, the price differential that I have just mentioned and now, the threat of African swine flu affecting the industry of, maybe, the manufacture of any pork product.

I would expect them to be a primary agency in this regard. They are correct in saying that the Department of Agriculture should be a major part, but more than the Department of Agriculture, I would expect that the Department of Trade and Industry to be interested in it, at please, huwag ninyong ilagan ang katanungan ng bayan. Ito po ba ay may panganib o wala, ang sagot ninyo ay “wala.” We will rely on that and that is a very reassuring statement coming from a responsible department as far as the consuming public is concerned.

At this point, as I said, the pesos and centavos are not the essential issues in this discussion.

It is your heart, it is your concern, ang inyong tunay na pagmamalasakit para sa ating mga mamamayan at pagmamahal sa ating bayan ang dapat na inyong ginagamit sa inyong pagtatrabaho.

Maraming, maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to have held a friendly discourse with my good friend, Congressman Zubiri, who has been with me in many issues, but he finds himself defending an indefensible issue. Maraming, maraming salamat din sa kanya, and I look forward to having his proposal and his recommendation followed in this discussion.

Thank you.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, marami pong salamat. Malaki po ang aking respeto for our distinguished colleague na si ex-Mayor Lito Atienza.

Definitely, Congressman Atienza, we will do our best and we will do our oversight as part of the Trade Committee, together with Congressman Gatchalian na sigurado po magpapa-hearing tayo para, at least, mapakinggan po natin ang DA, together with the DTI, on issues regarding the African swine flu, and the rest of the other concerns of our country.

Rest assured, I am with you and of course, the Department is behind me in terms of making sure that the lives of the Filipino people are protected at all times, and with everything we have and with all means, Mr. Speaker.

Iyon lang po. Marami pong salamat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, before I call on the next to interpellate, allow me to please greet our former colleague here in the House of Representatives, former Cong. Neri Colmenares.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Congressman Neri Colmenares, you are welcome, of course, to the House of Representatives.

Let us give Cong. Neri Colmenares a round of applause. *(Applause)*

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, please allow me to acknowledge the guests of Hon. Weslie T. Gatchalian in the gallery, the Minister for Valenzuela Progress with their President, Reverend Edwin Enguero. *(Applause)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Will the distinguished guests of Honorable Gatchalian stand up and be acknowledged. *(Applause)* Welcome to the House of Representatives.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we now recognize Hon. Sabiniano S. Canama of COOP-NATCCO for his manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Sabiniano Canama is recognized.

REP. CANAMA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Majority Leader.

Good afternoon po, my esteemed colleague, the distinguished Sponsor.

This is a very brief manifestation regarding sa CDA or the Cooperative Development Authority, which was

attached to the Department of Trade and Industry last October 2018.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I am aware that the budget of the DTI is small, but we are sad to note that the budget of the CDA was reduced compared to the 2019 GAA. It was reduced by 7 percent or equivalent to P43 million.

My manifestation, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I appeal that the budget of the CDA, instead of being reduced, be increased. It is because the CDA is the primary agency which takes care of the regulation and development of the 26,000 cooperatives in the country. If we reduce the budget of the CDA, it means that they will be greatly affected in their mandate to regulate and to make more cooperatives develop. I would like to reiterate, for and in behalf of the CDA, and of the 26,000 cooperatives in the country, we appeal that the budget of the CDA be increased instead of being reduced.

Thank you and good afternoon po.

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are for it. I am a believer of cooperatives and I believe it should be increased. I believe that the DTI also believes that it should be increased, Mr. Speaker. Yes, definitely, we will accept.

Marami pong salamat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I now move to recognize Hon. Bayani F. Fernando from the First District of Marikina for his manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Hon. Bayani Fernando is recognized.

REP. FERNANDO. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Actually, in the pre-plenary meeting attended by the Department, the good Secretary made a presentation, and in that presentation, I really saw his ardent and burning desire to help our poor entrepreneurs and manufacturers. I want to have a piece of that action and so I thought of this.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, are you aware of the issuance of the DTI Department Order No. 1901, series of 2019? It has the subject of Guidelines in the Issuance of Preference for Domestic Bidders Participating in Government Procurement Project.

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are very much aware of it.

REP. FERNANDO. Thank you. What is the real

intention of the Department in issuing these guidelines, and am I correct to presume that this will help our local manufacturers or producers promote our own local products.

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes. This is to promote local products and to give preference to locally-manufactured goods, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FERNANDO. I am asking this, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, because yesterday, with the financial managers, I brought to this august Body's attention a possible amendment to the General Provisions which I would like to introduce and that is to make it mandatory in the procurement by all government agencies, including the local government units, of their needed supply – that they have a minimum of 70 percent local-added value. What would be your stand on this, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. ZUBIRI. We wholeheartedly agree with you, Mr. Speaker, my dear colleague. Definitely, anything for the Filipino and everything for them, we will do and we agree, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FERNANDO. May I request then the agency to submit to this Representation the potential impact in terms of figures, if we institutionalize a local 70 percent added value requirement to all purchases made by agencies of government. May I be furnished this study?

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Mr. Speaker. It will be given to you. Definitely, this will promote local manufacturing, and we are very much okay with it, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FERNANDO. I believe, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, that the provisions of Commonwealth Act 138, which was given life by Department Order 1901, is worth reinstating in the procurement process of our government. In this way, we can promote our domestic products and help our local manufacturers and producers.

Mr. Speaker, for the record, I would like to inform the good Sponsor and the DTI that this Representation, at the proper time, will introduce this amendment to the General Principles and Provisions in the General Appropriations Bill or House Bill No. 4228, to effect this provision and will seek the full support of the agency in its implementation and monitoring.

Can I be assured then by the distinguished Sponsor and the DTI family that they will seriously look into this matter for policy reform?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, definitely, not just the

DTI family, but the Committee on Trade and Industry will also fully support the measure. We will make that a priority, together with the DTI, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FERNANDO. With the assurance given to this Representation by the honorable Sponsor, the DTI and of course the Chairman of the Committee on Trade and Industry, I am confident that there will be a brighter future for our local industries, especially in the areas of garments and shoes, which are very close to my heart.

I rest my case, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. ZUBIRI. Marami pong salamat, Mr. Speaker, my distinguished colleague. That will create more jobs, and definitely, we will work with you when it comes to that measure.

Marami pong salamat, mabuhay po kayo. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Arlene D. Brosas from the Party-List GABRIELA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Representative Brosas from GABRIELA Party-List is hereby recognized.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the honorable Sponsor be amenable to a few questions of this Representative, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ZUBIRI. Definitely, Mr. Speaker, I always agree, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, honorable Sponsor.

Noong nakaraan po sa DBCC ay itinanong natin ang ibinaba ng expenditure program by sector sa economic services, particularly sa agriculture at agrarian reform. Ito po ay bumaba mula 2018 sa 3.46 percent ang total; 2019, sa 3.65 percent; at 3.48 percent naman for the 2020 budget. Ganoon din po ang ibinaba ng DTI or ng Trade and Industry Department mula noong 2018, 0.39 percent; 2019, 0.28 percent; at on an all-time low ngayong 2020 na 0.25 percent.

G. Ispiker, G. Isponsor, ngayon po ay ipinasa ang batas na RA 11203 o ang Rice Liberalization and Tarrification Law. The full importation of rice from other countries resulted in the plunging prices of local rice benefitting the rice-eating populace but hurting the livelihood of many Filipino farmers. Bumagsak po ang presyo ng palay. Mataas pa rin ang presyo ng bigas.

Ngayon po lumalabas na ang naging resulta ay ang pagbagsak ng industriya ng palay at ng bigas sa ating bansa. Tinatayang P95 billion na income ang nawala, at napakahirap ng kalagayan ng mga magsasaka sa kasalukuyan. Alam naman po natin na kung gusto natin ng pangmatagalan na solusyon para sa ating mga magsasaka, nangangailangan talaga ito ng genuine agrarian reform para sa tunay na food security at self-sufficiency ng ating bansa.

Ang kahilingan po ng mga magsasaka ngayon ay farm inputs, irrigation, appropriate farm equipment at post-harvest facilities para sa kanila. Iyon pong subsidy po para sa mga magsasaka, hindi pautang, na sa ngayon ay sinasabi na nasa-RCEF o SURE Aid na tinatawag, na P15,000 lamang kada magsasaka at ilang daang libo lamang ng magsasaka ang makikinabang sa milyong magsasaka na mayroon tayo sa ating bansa.

Ngayon po, nais ng Kinatawan na ito na malaman dahil ang Department of Trade and Industry ang siyang nagmo-monitor ng rice prices natin. Ang mga importers ng bigas natin, baka maaari pong malaman, mula sa DTI, kung sino-sino ang mga importers ng bigas natin at ilan po sa kasalukuyan ang importers ng bigas?

REP. ZUBIRI. Marami pong salamat, Mr. Speaker, my distinguished colleague.

Itong nagawa po ng DTI—actually, to be honest, iyong DA po ang dapat mag-monitor ng rice dahil sa Price Act, mandated po iyong DA. Iyong sagot po ng DTI na ang ginagawa po nila, iyong price, for example, mino-monitor din nila even in spite of the fact na sa DA po, sa mandate ng Price Act, sila po ang nagmo-monitor. Iyong presyo po before ng rice was at P50; now it is P34 to P39.

Number two po, iyong RCEF, iyong support fund para sa mga farmers, iyong P10 billion, dapat ma-download na po iyan para makatulong po sa pag-mechanize para mag-yield nang mas malaki para sa ating mga rice farmers. May pondo po na P10 billion.

Number three, the NFA will start buying at P19 per kilo, palay po ito, Mr. Speaker. So, may ginagawa naman po iyong gobyerno para hindi naman bumagsak iyong negosyo ng ating mga farmers. Kasi hindi rin po tayo papayag doon, we need to support them because I know, for a fact, doon po sa amin sa Bukidnon, minsan iyong palay po nasa P8 to P10 na lang. We are also trying to find ways and means to bring up the price. As for the NFA, I believe gagawin po naman nila ito, they will start buying at P19 per kilo.

Number four, ilan po iyong mga importers ngayon? Free importation, no permit required, not passing through NFA, then, definitely, Mr. Speaker, the DTI will get the data of the DA and the Customs and then, puwede po namin kayong balikan if you want the data.

Ma'am, definitely I am with you, I agree with you. Hindi po tayo papayag na iyong palay mababa pero iyong presyo ng bigas mataas pa rin. Hindi po puwede iyan. So, maghahanap po tayo ng paraan para makakita po ng solusyon para sa ating taumbayan, Mr. Speaker, my distinguished good friend and colleague.

REP. BROSAS. Yes, thank you, honorable Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, kanina po ay sinabi ng honorable Sponsor iyong ilan sa mga pangangailangan at kahapon nga po, sa interpelasyon sa DBCC, in fact, kahit po iyong nag-sponsor ay nagsabi na nangangailangan talaga ng pagtulong ngayon para sa agrikultura, sa mga programa at, in fact, nag-agree na pataasin ang budget para sa agrikultura kasi iyon ang kailangan ng mga magsasaka at gusto po natin na mabuhay ang mga magsasaka sa kasalukuyan dahil ang ipo-produce nila ay para sa bayan natin at hindi para sa pansarili lang na pangangailangan. Iyong NFA budget po na binabanggit ninyo ay, in fact, buffer stock lang po ang mayroon ngayon diyan, hindi nga pinapayagan na bumili ng bigas. So, maganda po iyon kung magkakaroon talaga ng mandato ang NFA na bumili ng palay mismo ng mga magsasaka.

Sa tanong ko po kung ilan iyong nag-i-import at sino-sino po ang top importers na mayroon tayo, dahil iyan ay mandate ng DTI, gusto nating malaman iyon.

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Ma'am, to be honest and to be truthful, hindi po mandato ng DTI iyan, at sa DA po tayo magtatanong. Kung gusto ninyo po, ako mismo ang magtatanong, ako po mismo ang kukuha ng information at ibibigay ko po sa aking distinguished colleague. Wala po iyong figures dito ng DTI, dahil hindi po kanilang mandato ito, Mr. Speaker, but definitely, I will get you all the figures, my distinguished colleague.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor. Importante po iyong figures. Importante din na malaman kung sino-sino para mabusisi natin iyong mga kasunod na tanong kaugnay diyan at malaman po natin kung sino-sino iyong top importers. Actually, dapat nga, di ba, mayroong monitoring kahit yung pagpasok ng mga imported na bigas sa ating bansa, kung ilan na pong metric tons ang naipapasok sa ating bansa, et cetera.

Now, I understand, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, na wala sa inyo iyong data at sinasabi ninyo ngayon ay hindi ninyo maibibigay ito. So, pupuwede naman po na at a later time ay ibigay ninyo iyong mga details na iyon.

Now, I would like to go to my next question, kasi iyong mga tanong ko po ay kaugnay doon sa data na ibibigay sana ninyo. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, kapansin-

pansin na mula 2018 ay papaliit ang bahagdan o share ng budget ng DTI sa pangkabuuang pambansang budget. Sinabi ko po kanina, mula 0.39 percent noong 2018, naging 0.25 percent na lang ang DTI budget sa proposed 2020 national budget. Sang-ayon po ba ang G. Isponsor sa pagliit ng share ng DTI budget sa total national budget?

Halimbawa, hindi ba puwedeng kaysa compartmentalized iyong ating pagmo-monitor ng mga prime commodities, et cetera at iyong presyo ng bigas at presyo ng iba pang mga pangangailangan, ay isentro na lang sa DTI? Iyon po at bigyan ninyo ng pondo para talagang mapanghawakan na ma-monitor ang mga ito. So, iyon po iyong katanungan ko, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, yes, we agree, give them the right law so that they do not end up in jail doing their job because they will do it. Give them the teeth to do it. I-amend po natin iyong Price Act. Let them be the one to impose the penalties, whatever penalty is necessary, and tutulungan po natin, Mr. Speaker, Ma'am, my distinguished colleague. Definitely, because nagkakamot din ako ng ulo kung bakit 150 employees lang to monitor—ilan ba tayo—106,108 million Filipinos? Hindi po kaya ito ng 150 personnel.

So, talagang totoo po, masyadong maliit, ilang beses na po namin napagdebatehan ito sa aming Komite at saka iyan po ang aming assessment—masyado pong maliit—nasa 0.25 ng total budget ng buong Pilipinas ang DTI. Ito po ang dapat maging tip of the spear of nation building. Kulang na kulang po ang kanilang budget. Totoo po iyon. I am with you, my distinguished colleague, and definitely we will work hand and hand to make sure that the lives, especially of the poor people, are going to be protected at all times, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

REP. BROSAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, hindi po tumutugma iyong papaliit na budget ng DTI gayong higit na kailangan na pondohan iyong mga programang mangangalaga sa mga consumers at susuporta sa mga maliliit na negosyanteng Pilipino.

Sa BESF data po, lumalabas sa operations, by programs ninyo, halimbawa, ang mga nag-negative po o bumaba iyong budget: iyong Industry Development Program, nag-negative ng P24,034,000 na decrease, mula P441,805,000 ay naging P417,771,000. Bumaba po ng negative 24. Ganoon din iyong MSME Development Program, ito po iyong mga maliliit, micro, small and medium enterprises, bumaba po ito ng P18,875,000, mula P1,357,212,000 ay naging P1,338,337,000. Iyong Consumer Protection Program, bumaba po ng negative P18,336,000, mula P449,309,000,000 ay naging P430,973,000,000. So, ibig sabihin po, ang trend, pababa doon sa

mga importante po na mga programa. Gaano nga ba kaimportante ang mga programa na ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, my distinguished colleagues, tama po iyan. I am with you, at definitely, kulang na kulang. Noong naimbita po namin si Secretary and the whole team, iyong kanyang proposed budget, doon sa aming Komite, we were there for hours, scratching our heads. Bakit naman iyong proposed budget is P8 billion pero P4.7 billion ang nabigay sa DTI? That is why I feel that this budget is very small for this Department and definitely, let me point out what my distinguished colleague is saying, that we need the funds, especially for the small enterprises and for the small businessmen, we need them to thrive. It is simple—input equals output. How can they do their mandate or do their job kung ganito lang po ang budget nila? Kaya po my proposal is, definitely, to find a way to increase the budget of this Department as the expectation and the demand from DTI is very high because of its name, Department of Trade and Industry.

As what I have said, sa pangalan lang, ang tingin ng tao, nandoon sila sa tip of the spear in nation building, but they need resources to be able to do that job and to penetrate whatever they need to penetrate, to be able to soar or to grow and at the same time, to help our countrymen.

Tama po, ang sinasabi ninyo, my distinguished colleague, because kung ako po magtatanong, I will ask the same question. I believe what you are saying and definitely, they will do it given the right amendment to the Price Act and at the same time, given the right budget, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, we go to the specifics para mas maunawaan ng publiko kung ano iyong implikasyon ng pagbaba ng Industry Development Program, MSME Development Program at Consumer Protection Program sa susunod na taon. Ano po iyong implikasyon nito sa pagsubaybay ng DTI sa mga presyo ng mga bilingin at pagmo-monitor ng suggested retail price, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. ZUBIRI. Just to shed light on the budget, Mr. Speaker. For example, iyong Consumer Education and Advocacy Program, Mr. Speaker, nasa P83 million lang para sa buong bansa. Iyong sa, for example, standards po ng mga kailangang i-test na mga items o goods, iyong equipment po, Capital Outlays, P1 million, so talagang maliit po. Even the Department is having a difficult time, I guess, trying to plan the projects and programs for 2020 with this amount of budget. So, tama iyon, Ma'am. I am not sure if—maybe we can answer specifically kung ano po iyong gusto na masagot ng distinguished colleague natin pero definitely, Ma'am,

based on what I am pointing out, sa Capital Outlays pa lang, P1 million, masyado pong maliit kasi para sa equipment po. One million, ano mabili po ng isang milyon, Mr. Speaker? So, if we go line item per line item, bumaba po lahat, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, mahalaga pong malaman ng publiko kung ano-ano ang mga programa at interbensiyon ng DTI, lalo na noong ipinatupad ang TRAIN Law. Sa harap ng tuloy-tuloy na pagtaas ng bilihan, sa susunod na taon, papalo na naman ang dagdag na excise tax sa langis at iba pang bilihan dahil sa TRAIN Law. Papaano ba nagpapatupad ng price monitoring at SRP o suggested retail price ang DTI? Hanggang saan ang puwedeng maging interbensiyon nito?

REP. ZUBIRI. Number one, noong nag-kick off ang TRAIN Law at saka umakyat po iyong inflation, kasabay po tayo, Mr. Speaker, kasabay din po kami nagreklamo. Iyong ginawa po nila, number one, price monitoring, micro finance. Dati, wala ito, zero ito. Lahat ng tao natin ay walang pera, nagpa-‘5-6.’ Ngayon, we are able to lend P3.2 billion na po sa ating mga small businesses, sa small businessmen, Mr. Speaker, para bumaba po iyong cost nila.

Number two, iyong Consumer Protection Program.

Number three, testing centers. They started with the testing centers. I think it is working because today, based on the figures that I have read, I believe totoo naman itong figures. It has generated about 826,000 jobs. The inflation rate, I was skeptical about it, as last time, it went up to over 0.6 percent as per PSA. As per the agency, below 2 percent or 1.5 or 1.6 percent, Mr. Speaker—I am not so sure of the exact figure but it is below 2 percent as of June or July. So, mayroon naman pong nagawa iyong DTI with regard to iyong kanilang mandate and with regard to doon sa nangyari po sa TRAIN Law, Mr. Speaker. At the same time, mga ibang mitigating measures, Ma’am, in support of the monitoring efforts are being done by the DTI. The Department of the Interior and Local Government issued Memorandum Circular po No. 201124 2018-128 last August 14, iyong Reactivation of Local Price Coordinating Councils or LPCC, at saka ito, iyong appeal of the Department to hold off any price increase for the next three months or until Q1 of December 2018.

Number four, iyong DTI expanded its lists of suggested retail prices o SRPs of manufactured basic and prime goods from 162 SKUs to 241 SKUs. So, as much as possible, based on the budget, maski na maliit na po, they were trying their best to make sure na na-soften po iyong blow doon sa ating mga kapwa Filipino.

I think right now, medyo nag-ease po iyong inflation. Mas maganda na po iyong takbo ng ekonomiya ngayon and at least, bumaba na po iyong inflation. Mas mura na po iyong bilihan ngayon, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor. Katulad po ng tanong ko kanina, paano naipatatupad ang price monitoring and suggested retail price ng DTI? Pumupunta po ba ito sa palengke? Ilang palengke po ang napuntahan na? Ano po ang naging kanilang report o ulat sa mga pagtaas o pagbaba ng presyo na iyon? Ano na pong interbensiyong nagawa? Tayo po ba ay nagreklamo na? Nagkaroon na po ba tayo ng sanctions and penalties doon sa mga lumabag? Kailangan pong malaman natin ang mga ito dahil iyong effectivity po ng monitoring ay mahalaga sa atin. Hindi ba? So, titingnan po natin sa pamamagitan nito, nagko-comply ba sila o ano ang nangyari sa mga interbensiyon na ginagawa ng DTI, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, to date, they have been going around 600 markets already. Sa NCR alone, nasa 600 na po. Iyong problema po, based on the law, again, let me repeat, nasa Tier 2 lang, meaning to say, supermarkets and big grocery stores. Iyong mga profiteering ng mas maliit at iyong mga manufacturers, ay nasa Tier 1 at saka Tier 3 kaya hindi po nila kontrolado. So, kung babaguhin ho natin iyong batas, bigyan po natin sila natin ng—I guess, give more teeth to the law and empower them to impose from Tier 1 all the way to Tier 3, mas maganda po iyan para all-encompassing iyong kanila pong pag-monitor at pag-impose ng penalties, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, supermarkets lang at iyong tinatawag nating Tier 3, mga maliliit na palengke, mga ganoong example, Mr. Speaker—maaari bang sabihin na may pag-atras lalo? Hindi na nga natin namo-monitor iyong sinasabi ninyong ganyan, tapos ngayon ay may pag-atras sa gagawing price monitoring program ng DTI sa susunod na taon kaugnay ng pagtapyas ng pondo para sa Consumer Protection Program.

Parang ganito po iyon, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor. Hindi mo na nga namo-monitor lahat, mababawasan pa ang pondo para doon sa pag-monitor noon, ano ang ireresulta nito? Hindi ba lalong kainutilan ito sa pagmo-monitor noong mga kailangan natin, iyong mga pangangailangan natin na ma-monitor iyong presyo ng mga bilihan.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ito po iyong inaalala ng Kinatawang ito. Kung hindi na nga namo-monitor iyong buo, paano pa kaya ngayon na binabaan mo iyong pondo?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, mabuti pa nga dito

sa NCR namo-monitor, may 600 markets na namo-monitor. Doon po sa amin sa Bukidnon—that is why I agree, maliit po iyong pondo, 150 personnel lang po to monitor. Hindi po tayong papayag. That is why we will find ways and means to be able to give them the right budget. We need to help them out, Mr. Speaker. We have to increase the monitoring teams nationwide.

Ano pong nagagawa sa Visayas, sa Mindanao? Kulang din po iyong pondo nila. Kaya, Mr. Speaker, I assure you, basta mabigyan po ng right amendment of the law or the right law and the right budget, we will trigger our oversight function doon sa Trade Committee o sa Oversight Committee dito sa Congress to make sure that monitoring is not just being done in the NCR but all the way from Batanes down to the last city in Mindanao. So, totoo po iyon, I totally agree with my dear colleague, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, ang halaga po ng Consumer Protection Program iyong inaalala natin dito, na hindi mananamantala o iyong walang magsasamantala sa atin in terms of pricing kaya po mahalaga iyong monitoring system ng DTI. Ngayon po, kung ginawa ngang tapyasan iyong pondo para diyan ay hindi na nga niya nae-encompass iyong buo, malaki rin po ang problema sa ganoon. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, kaugnay naman po sa mga MSMEs, may nakita ba ang DTI na epekto ng TRAIN Law? Ano iyong mga naging intervention ng ahensiya kaugnay dito sa TRAIN Law and MSMEs? Ano ang epekto ng TRAIN Law sa MSMEs natin?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, iyong effect po as per our Secretary, positive po iyong effect ng TRAIN Law because iyong consumer spending po as per their monitoring, as per their statistics, umakyat po, especially for the lower income bracket kasi natanggalan po ng buwis iyong lower income. So, mas marami pong naka-avail po o ang spending power po nila ay lumaki at saka nakita nilang lumago po iyong MSMEs kasi maraming pondo para doon sa kanilang small businesses, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, gusto po nating makita iyong concrete data ng sinasabi ninyo na paglaki at mga interventions sa MSMEs para malaman natin kung tunay nga ba na umunlad o naging productive kasi sabi ninyo nga ay positive, samantalang ang inaangal nga ng mga maliliit na negosyo natin ay nalulugi sila sa ganitong system, lalong-lalo na at taon-taon tumataas iyong excise tax natin sa fuel na iniresulta ng TRAIN Law. Kaya po to be specific, mangangailangan po kami o magre-request kami ng concrete data ng MSMEs natin na nagsasabi ng ganito, na ayon sa inyong monitoring ay positive samantalang ang mga report sa atin ay nalulugi at nahihirapan sa

ganitong kalagayan ngayon because of the TRAIN Law. Iyong TRAIN Law nga po, ang epekto nito ay lahat bubuwisan mula sa maliit hanggang sa malaki. Kaya ito pong TRAIN Law, gusto nating makita iyong concrete o iyong direktang epekto sa MSMEs natin.

REP. ZUBIRI. My apologies, Mr. Speaker, can you repeat the question?

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, I was just saying na iyong data ay mahalaga para malaman natin kung totoo na positive ang sinasabi nila na epekto sa kanila ng TRAIN Law at walang ginawang offset measures or intervention measures ang DTI dahil hindi umaangal ang ating MSMEs at sinasabi na ang TRAIN Law ay nakatulong pa sa kanila samantalang ang pinakaproblema ng mga tao ay binubuwisan nga sila. Ang tawag po namin dito ay regressive taxation because mula sa pinakamahihirap hanggang sa pinakamayayaman ay bubuwisan nang pareho lang din ng porsiyento. Iyon po ang TRAIN Law so, mahalaga pong makita natin iyong epekto nito.

So, first, we are requesting the data para malaman ito, and iyon nga po, kung mayroong interventions or offset measures kayong ginawa noong nakaraan sa MSMEs para matulungan sila dito sa epekto sa kanila ng TRAIN Law.

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, just to cite an example—and definitely the rest of the data will be submitted to your office, my dear colleague—just to put things into perspective, last 2017, 900,000 iyong registered small businesses at ngayon po, as of 2018, nasa 1.4 million na iyong nag-register for small business. Meaning to say, there were 500,000 new small businesses that developed from 2017 to 2018. So, kukunin po natin lahat ng data sa DTI para i-submit po namin sa ating distinguished colleague at saka po training po sa SSF. Sa microfinancing, marami pong naka-avail at nasa 3.2 billion na ang naibigay po ng gobyerno para sa ating mga kababayan at saka may SSF pa, at saka iyong training ay hindi lang po sa TESDA nanggaling kundi pati sa DTI na rin, Mr. Speaker. Definitely, we will submit to my distinguished colleague all the data that she requires, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, later sa pagbigay ng data. Going to my next point po, nabanggit sa Budget Message—it is another point—ang paglalaan ng P512 million sa DTI para sa mga Negosyo Centers. Paano po sa kongkreto gagamitin ang pondong ito? Paano itong Negosyo Centers papakinabangan ng mga maliliit na negosyanteng Pilipino, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor?



REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, iyong P512 million na iyon is part of the MOOE to operate 1,073 Negosyo Centers.

REP. BROSAS. One thousand seventy-three—Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, paano po ito mag-operate at paano po gagamitin iyong pondong P512 million nang kongkreto? Ito po ba ay idi-disperse doon sa 1,073? Ano pong program ng Negosyo Centers ang mayroon tayo at paano po ito papakinabangan ng mga maliliit na negosyanteng Pilipino?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, iyong P512 million is to operate the 1,073 Negosyo Centers. If you want, I can explain to you iyong kanila pong trabaho dito po sa opisina ng Negosyo Center. Ito po ay specialized center kung full po, meaning to say, ito po iyong isang negosyo center na tinatawag na full Negosyo Center which is ideal for highly urbanized cities and first-class municipalities, complete with a PVR kiosk for electronic registration and with ample space for the conduct of business consultations and trainings in addition to the working area of the business counselors. It is supported by at least three business counselors, a center manager, an information officer, a receptionist, and a messenger. The area of the space required is at least 50 square meters.

Number two, advanced Negosyo Center is a center equipped with computers for online research and access to e-resources, various information materials, and product samples. It has a reception area, dalawang business counselors, may manager, may information officer, may sukat na 30 square meters—mas maliit pa po ito—at saka may basic—this type of Negosyo Center may be adopted by fifth- or sixth-class municipalities which will provide basic business registration, advisory information and advocacy services. This type of center is supported by a business counselor or desk officer which may be housed in the municipal office.

My dear Speaker, I think iyong tanong po ng ating distinguished colleague tungkol sa P512 million, ano po iyong balik sa taumbayan nitong P512 million? Ano po iyong peso value for that P512 million? So, we will have that written down and we will submit it to you, Mr. Speaker, my distinguished colleague. Ibibigay po namin, ma-identify na lang po namin kasi masyadong malaki.

REP. BROSAS. Yes, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor. To expedite, hihingi na lang po ako ng kopya ninyo niyan.

REP. ZUBIRI. Yes, Ma'am.

REP. BROSAS. Going to my last point po, the DTI has been vocal in its support for the immediate

passage of the CITIRA, iyong corporate income tax po, pagpapababa ng corporate income tax or what we call before as the TRABAHO Bill during the Seventeenth Congress. We know that the part of CITIRA is the rationalization of the fiscal incentives. Aside from the lowering of corporate income tax, may we know if the DTI and its attached agencies have programmed funds for tax expenditures under its proposed 2020 budget?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, can you repeat the question and explain it to us, Mr. Speaker, Ma'am.

REP. BROSAS. Yes. May we know if the DTI and its attached agencies have programmed funds for tax expenditures under its proposed 2020 budget? Tax expenditures po kung saan naka-allot, saan naka-prioritize ngayon, kung mayroon po ngayong 2020, saan po iyon nilalagak sa ngayon ng gobyerno?

REP. ZUBIRI. Wala po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Kung wala, iyong fiscal incentives ng 2020 sa projection, saan po iyon mapupunta?

Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, ang DTI ay nagpalabas ng statement to support the CITIRA.

REP. ZUBIRI. Wala pong naka-earmark para sa DTI, Mr. Speaker. Nandito po iyong author ng CITIRA. Wala pong naka-earmark.

REP. BROSAS. For 2020? Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, it is unfortunate that the share of the DTI's budget to the total national budget has been declining over the years despite the need to beef up the programs—for Consumer Protection Program and support to MSMEs. With this, we fear that consumers and small local businesses are made more vulnerable to the impact of increased trade and services liberalization under a series of the neoliberal reforms which the Duterte regime is pursuing. Next year, papalo na naman ang dagdag na excise tax sa petrolyo bunsod ng TRAIN 1, and we expect another domino effect on the prices of basic goods and services. Unfortunately, the Duterte administration has no intention at all to beef up DTI's price monitoring at the very least.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, honorable Sponsor.

REP. ZUBIRI. Marami pong salamat, my distinguished colleague. Marami pong salamat, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Gabriel H. Bordado Jr. of the Third District, Camarines Sur, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Hon. Gabby Bordado of the Second District ...

REP. BORDADO. Third District, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). ... Third District of Camarines Sur is recognized.

REP. BORDADO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Congresswoman Brosas, Mr. Speaker, has come up with most of the hard-hitting questions. So, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, let me just propound some clarificatory questions.

Mr. Speaker, under the Consumer Education and Advocacy Program, I cannot help but observe that your FY 2020 target for the level of consumer awareness is 2 percent lower than that of Fiscal Year 2019. Does this suggest, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, a decrease in the efforts of the Department to increase the awareness level of the consumers?

REP. ZUBIRI. Despite the miniscule budget, yes, they have increased the level of awareness, Mr. Speaker, my distinguished colleague. Right now, sa kanilang budget, nasa P83 million po sila.

REP. BORDADO. Okay. So, this will not decrease the efforts in the awareness level of the consumers?

REP. ZUBIRI. Sisikapin po nila, Mr. Speaker. In spite of the small budget, they will do their best even if the budget is not increased, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, comparing your Fiscal Year 2018 target with the actual report under this program, I found out, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, that you are 9 percent short of the target. Can you explain this to us?

REP. ZUBIRI. Iyong target po was 81 percent, at nasa 78 percent po sila, as per the DTI.

REP. BORDADO. What happened, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. ZUBIRI. Based on the survey—dito po kasi, iyong sinasabi po ng distinguished colleague natin, based, I think, on the Pulse Asia survey. Sa kanilang survey po iyong target of 81 percent. Nasa 78 percent po sila, so, ito po iyong kanilang figures na ginawa po nilang survey from within the Department, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. So, ...

REP. ZUBIRI. May disparity po iyong survey ng iba at saka iyong survey ng DTI, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. So, 9 percent talaga ang kulang?

REP. ZUBIRI. Based on the figure of the DTI, you are looking at 3 percent off-target, Mr. Speaker, my dear colleague.

REP. BORDADO. Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, even more alarming is the comparison between the targeted and actual report in FY 2018 or Fiscal Year 2018, on the number of consumer awareness and advocacy initiatives undertaken. Can you explain this, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, I think the target was quite high and it was difficult for them to achieve that target. Nevertheless, they tried their very best, that is why they are down, based on their figures, by 3 percent, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. I am just concerned about this because we are focusing on the consumer awareness, so this involves the consumers.

REP. ZUBIRI. Dito po sa Consumer Welfare Enhancement, nasa P544,432,000. Iyong sa NEP po, nasa P514,455,000 po, so negative 6 percent. So, lumiit pa po iyong kanilang budget dito po sa Consumer Welfare Enhancement, Mr. Speaker, my distinguished colleague.

REP. BORDADO. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, does the DTI intend to address these concerns?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, ito po iyong figures: 2019, nasa P95 million po for Consumer Education and Advocacy Program; for 2020, nasa P83 million. So, yes, they are short. Definitely, they will have a difficult task of making sure or iyong consumer awareness program would be hampered if they are not given the exact budget po, Mr. Speaker. Nevertheless, they will try their very best even with an P83-million 2020 budget, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BORDADO. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

I do hope that the DTI can really come up with the schemes, steps and measures to address this concern.

Now in 2018, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, a significant portion of the DTI Office of the

Secretary's total appropriations came from the budgetary adjustments, totaling 17.14 percent, specifically from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund in relation to the Yolanda Rehabilitation Program and the implementation of the Task Force Bangon Marawi Sub-Committee on Business and Livelihood, chaired by the DTI Secretary. Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, can the DTI further expound on how these programs are to be funded this year and in 2020?

REP. ZUBIRI. Mr. Speaker, compared to the rest of the agencies—doon po tayo, for example, sa Marawi fund, nasa 40 percent po iyong kanilang spending absorptive capacity, ang utilization po ng kanilang pondo compared to the other agencies' which are below 18 percent, 20 percent, 30 percent. Sa kanila po, 40 percent, pero sisikapin po nila na talagang i-utilize iyong kanilang pondo para sa mga disaster-stricken areas or areas of conflict, Mr. Speaker, my dear distinguished colleague.

REP. BORDADO. So, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, what is the current status of the Yolanda Rehabilitation Program and the Task Force Bangon Marawi Sub-Committee?

REP. ZUBIRI. One moment, Mr. Speaker, my distinguished colleague.

As per the Department of Trade and Industry, iyong utilization po para sa Yolanda is 100 percent, Mr. Speaker, my dear colleague.

REP. BORDADO. Okay. How about that of the Task Force Bangon Marawi?

REP. ZUBIRI. Ongoing pa po iyan. As of today, nasa 43 percent, Mr. Speaker, my dear colleague.

REP. BORDADO. Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZUBIRI. Marami pong salamat, Mr. Speaker, my dear colleague. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we recognize Hon. France Castro for a short manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The honorable Rep. France Castro is hereby recognized.

## MANIFESTATION OF REP. CASTRO (F.L.)

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Manifestation na lang po dahil exhausted naman na po iyong interpellation about MSMEs at saka iyong tungkol doon sa mga programa.

Nakita natin na lahat po ng programa, except for Go Negosyo, lahat po ay may budget cuts, kaya ang panawagan din ng Representanteng ito, sana ay madagdagan iyong budget ng DTI. *(Applause)*

Pangalawa, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, iyong relasyon po o magiging epekto noong ating mga programang ito, lalong-lalo na po sa MSMEs baka dapat pag-aralan ng DTI iyong mga batas na naipasá natin dito—like iyong PIFITA, iyong FIA, at iyong tinatawag nating “Package 2” o iyong CITIRA—sa magiging epekto po nito sa MSMEs. Sana ay magkaroon ng thorough study ang DTI dito kasi malaki po ang magiging epekto nito.

Pangatlo, magbibigay po ako ng isang concrete example. Naipasá na natin iyong Foreign Investments Act na ang ibig sabihin, magbaba ng P5 million na investment para doon sa foreign investors with 15 employees.

Alam po ba ninyo, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, lumapit po sa amin iyong mga maliliit na negosyanteng Chinoy. Alam po natin iyong mga negosyanteng Chinoy, iyong Filipino-Chinese, particularly iyong Bicol Chamber of Commerce. Hindi pa nga natin naipapatupad iyong FIA, ito na ang sabi nila: Iyong mga Chinese po na pumupunta dito—I am not against the Chinese as a race. Ang gusto ko lang po ay iyong proteksiyunan ang ating sariling mga Chinoy, iyong Filipino-Chinese retailers, at saka iyong mga negosyante. Sabi nila, mayroon daw mga Chinaman na nagpapanggap na magtatrabaho sa POGO pero they are venturing into the retail industry. Ang ibig sabihin nito, pumapasok na sila sa retail industry, kaya kailangang i-monitor ito ng DTI.

Pang-apat, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, in terms of quality noong mga products na napupunta rito, well, magki-Christmas season na naman, makakakita na naman tayo ng products—dapat magkaroon din po ng monitoring ang ating DTI na mabantayan at maparusahan ang sinumang lalabag doon sa mga batas natin kaugnay ng consumer protection. Halimbawa lang po, Mr. Speaker, itong mga nasa Divisoria. Sa Divisoria, makikita natin na winalis ang mga tindero at tindera sa kalye. Nasaan na sila ngayon? Ang makikita ninyo sa mga department store o sa mga buildings na nasa Divisoria ay mga Chinese na

hindi man lang marunong magsalita ng Tagalog o mga Thai na hindi marunong magsalita ng Tagalog. Kailangan tayo pang mga Filipino ang mag-a-adjust sa kanila. So, ano po iyong gagawin ng DTI sa mga ganito? Paano nilang imo-monitor ang mga ito?

Ito lang po iyong gusto nating i-manifest, Mr. Speaker, at sana makakuha tayo ng report, siguro soon, mula sa DTI kung paano nila imo-monitor at gagawan ng paraan na maproteksiyunan naman iyong ating maliliit na Pilipinong negosyante.

Salamat, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZUBIRI. Marami pong salamat. Very welcome po iyong manifestation po of our dear colleague, France Castro.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, Cong. France Castro.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, I now move to recognize Hon. Janette Garin.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Honorable ...

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, Janette Garin, from the Minority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). ... Janette Garin is now recognized.

REP. GARIN (J.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There being no other Member from the Minority who wishes to further interpellate on the proposed budget of the Department of Trade and Industry, including its attached agencies and corporations, except TESDA, we move that the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the DTI, including its attached agencies and corporations, be terminated.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. LACSON-NOEL. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Department of Trade and Industry, including its attached agencies and corporations, except TESDA.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). *(Applause)* There is a joint motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Department of Trade and Industry, and its attached agencies and corporations, except TESDA.

Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of DTI, and its attached agencies and corporations, except TESDA, is hereby terminated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### AUTHORITY OF THE FREEPORT AREA OF BATAAN

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the consideration of the proposed budget of the Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, may we first acknowledge the presence of the AFAB family: Chairman Emmanuel D. Pineda, Alewijin Aidan Ong, Charles Ramones, Cristina Rodrigo, Sixto Inales, Anne Ramirez, Gladys Sereja, Jerome Yumul, and Sunshine Policarpio.

Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda, the Sponsor of the budget of the Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The presence of the officers and officials of the Freeport Authority of Bataan is hereby acknowledged by the House of Representatives.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. SALCEDA. Mr. Speaker, since I was recognized, may I ask for ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Hold on. I will recognize you, Honorable Salceda.

Honorable Salceda is hereby recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. SALCEDA. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will just ask for a three-minute suspension of the session to allow the DTI family to be congratulated properly.

Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The session is suspended.

*It was 6:38 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 6:39 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Janette L. Garin.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Janette Garin is hereby recognized.

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, there being no Member from the Minority who wishes to interpellate on the proposed budget of the Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan, we move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the said agency, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). There is a joint motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan is hereby terminated.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the consideration of the proposed budget of the Department of Justice and its attached agencies.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga of the Second District of Compostela Valley, Vice Chairperson of the Committee on Appropriations, to answer the questions on the proposed budget of the Department of Justice and its attached agencies.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Sponsor, Rep. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga, is hereby recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to acknowledge the presence of the officials of the DOJ family: DOJ Secretary Menardo I. Guevarra, Undersecretary Mark L. Perete, Undersecretary Adrian Ferdinand S. Sugay, Undersecretary Deo L. Marco, Undersecretary Emmeline Aglipay-Villar, Undersecretary Juliana G. Sunga, Assistant Secretary Adonis P. Sulit, Assistant Secretary George O. Ortho II, Assistant Secretary Neal Vincent M. Bainto, Assistant Secretary Sergio Emano Yap II, Assistant Secretary Margaret V. Castillo-Padilla, Assistant Secretary Ma. Nerissa M. Carpio, Prosecutor General Benedicto A. Malcontento, OIC Chief State Counsel Ruben F. Fondevilla, the Bureau of Corrections Assistant Secretary Melvin Ramon G. Buenafe, Head of the Bureau of Immigration Commissioner Jaime H. Morente, Land Registration Authority Administrator Renato D. Bermejo, National Bureau of Investigation Director Dante A. Gierran, Government Corporate Counsel Elpidio J. Vega, Solicitor General Jose C. Calida, Parole and Probation Administrator Manuel G. Co, PCGG Chairman Reynold S. Munsayac, and Public Attorney's Office Deputy Chief Anna Lisa Soriano.

Mr. Speaker, this is the Department of Justice family.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The House of Representatives welcomes the Department of Justice family, led by Sec. Menardo I. Guevarra, and all officials of its attached agencies. We welcome you to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga of Compostela Valley has the floor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Representative Gonzaga is hereby recognized.

REP. GONZAGA. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my honor to defend the proposed budget of the DOJ and its attached agencies.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Janette L. Garin, the Sr. Deputy Minority Leader, to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the DOJ.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Sharon Garin is hereby recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. I am sorry—Hon. Janette L. Garin.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Janette L. Garin is hereby recognized.

REP. GARIN (J.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, good evening to the honorable DOJ family and the honorable Speaker.

May I inquire, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, if you can again educate this august Body with regard to the mandate of the Public Attorney's Office.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the Public Attorney's Office is a creation of Republic Act No. 9406. The authority of the Public Attorney's Office was gained from the said law. Basically, that is the authority of the Public Attorney's Office.

REP. GARIN (J.). To be more specific, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, does the law that you had mentioned, Republic Act No. 9406 or the PAO Law, include in its mandate investigative functions, including the creation of a forensic laboratory?

REP. GONZAGA. The PAO or the Public Attorney's Office, I should say, has investigative powers because it is an attached agency of the DOJ. Being a member or an attached agency of the DOJ, therefore, it has the power to investigate, provided that it has authority from the Secretary of the DOJ.

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, again, we are here talking about laws. May I repeat the question—what is the basis of the mandate of the Public Attorney's Office insofar as the creation of a forensic laboratory is concerned?

The distinguished Sponsor has mentioned that the authority emanates from the fact that it is an attached agency of the Department of Justice. Does that mean that the mandate of the other attached agencies, let us say, the NBI or the PAO office, they also have the same mandate as the Bureau of Corrections simply because they are attached agencies of the Department of Justice?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the laws, Republic Act No. 9406, Republic Act No. 9745, and Republic Act No. 9262 authorize the PAO to do such work.

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, can we request our honorable colleague here to specifically point the provisions stating such?

Mr. Speaker, this is recorded and I will take it upon the Sponsor not to tell a lie.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, Section 14, paragraph (A) of Republic Act No. 9406 states, and I quote:

Powers and Functions. – The PAO shall independently discharge its mandate to render, free of charge, legal representation, assistance, and counselling to indigent persons in criminal, civil, labor, x x x

REP. GARIN (J.). Point of order, Mr. Speaker, my question is very simple. Please cite the specific section that creates the PAO forensic laboratory. We do not need lectures here. We just need the honorable Sponsor to please indicate the specific provision of the PAO Law.

REP. GONZAGA. Republic Act No. 9406 allows the PAO to take a case build-up. That is why in one of the cases ...

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, with due courtesy to the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, my question can be answered with a "yes" or "no."

Is the creation of a PAO forensic laboratory indicated and explicitly mentioned in the PAO Law? Let us not run around the bush.

The PAO Law says there are five line divisions, namely: Administrative, Financial and Management, Special and Appealed Cases, Legal Research Statistics, and Field Services Division. Where is that provision that the honorable Sponsor is referring to?

REP. GONZAGA. You are correct there, Mr. Speaker. The express provision of RA 9406 does not provide the PAO the power to conduct laboratory forensic examinations but I should admit that the DOJ, particularly the DOJ Secretary then, Vitaliano Aguirre, issued a department order for the PAO to conduct such forensic examination. That is the basis.

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, the Sponsor here is a colleague, a Member of Congress of the Republic of the Philippines. Is he saying that the Secretary of Justice can perform the mandate that is vested upon the Congress of the Philippines,

because if he is saying that the Secretary of Justice can create an office within his Department, then that simply means, we do not have reason to exist, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to be clarified. The Secretary of the Department of Justice has no power to create an office because that is an act of Congress, but with regard to the creation of the forensic laboratory division within the Office of the PAO, that is not the act of the Department Secretary, that is the consequence of another Republic act. Now, ...

REP. GARIN (J.). Which, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker? Okay, isa-isahin ko na, Mr. Speaker. In the PAO Law, lima po ang line divisions: a) Administrative; b) Financial and Management; c) Special and Appealed Cases; d) Legal Research and Statistics; e) Field Services Division.

Okay, doon po sa lima, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, saan po doon pumapasok ang creation ng forensic laboratory?

REP. GONZAGA. You are correct, Mr. Speaker, RA 9406 is very specific, but just like any other law, Republic acts passed by Congress in 2018 can be repealed or amended by another Republic act, say for example, in 2019, RA 9406 ...

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, mawalang-galang na po, iyong batas po na sinasabi ninyo created three divisions and six line divisions. Mr. Speaker, I respect our very good friend here and our colleague, but if we will be given answers that are actually running around the bush, klaro naman po ang batas. Kongreso po ang gumagawa ng batas. Kung ako po ay sasagutin ng mga sagot na hindi naman po totoo, then, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ...

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN (J.). ...while I do respect you, I am constrained to call for the suspension of the deliberation for a few minutes, Your Honor.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, ito po ang sagot ko.

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, I have a pending motion, may I have the ...

REP. GONZAGA. Republic Act No. 11260, particularly Section 87, and I would like to read this for the good Lady, Mr. Speaker. Section 87 provides, this

is Republic Act No. 11260, "Organizational Structure and Staffing Pattern Changes. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary and within the limits of the appropriations authorized in this Act,"...

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ...

REP. GONZAGA. ... "the President ..." —may I be allowed...

REP. GARIN (J.). ... may I have the title of the law, please.

REP. GONZAGA. ... to finish, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GARIN (J.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, again, may I have the title of Republic Act No. 11260.

REP. GONZAGA. This is the General Appropriations Act. This is included in the Special Provisions of the General Appropriations Act.

REP. GARIN (J.). Okay. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, he is referring to the budget of the Republic of the Philippines which says, that offices can be created within your mandate, but in this case, Your Honor, huwag na po nating paikut-ikutin iyong utak ng mga tao. We are spending taxpayer's money. The question is very clear. Tumatangal po tayo, isa lang po ang tanong natin.

Ang tanong ko po, nasa mandato po ba ng Public Attorney's Office ang creation ng forensic laboratory? It was very clear na lima po ang mandato ng ating Public Attorney's Office, again: 1) Administrative 2) Financial and Management 3) Special and Appealed Cases 4) Legal Research and Statistics and 5) Field Services Division. Malinaw pa po sa sikat ng araw, wala po doon ang creation ng forensic laboratory.

My point, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, is this: may I request that we consider the deliberation on the budget of the PNP? Can the Secretariat please play? Para naman po maliwanagan tayong lahat kasi mahirap po kung dito-dito, tayo-tayo lang, nagsisinungaling pa tayo.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to finish the provision of the law.

REP. GARIN (J.). I have the record, Mr. Speaker. Can we listen please?

*(Video presentation)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

## SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. AGLIPAY. I move for a few minutes suspension of session, Mr. Speaker.

The session is suspended.

*It was 6:56 p.m.*

## RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 7:00 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of the budget of the Department of Justice and its attached agencies, and we move to the next agency.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

## SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the consideration of the proposed budget of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. I move that we acknowledge the presence of the SBMA family: Atty. Wilma Eisma, Ramon Agregado, Marcelino Sanqui, Renato Lee III, Marco Estabillo, Kenneth Lemuel Rementilla, Lilia Elizabeth Escusa, Gary Fernandez, Editha Marzal, Karen Magno, Genie Rose Vicente, Lilibeth Baza and Elmer Libo, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The House of Representatives welcomes the officers of the SBMA family. Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*)

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda to sponsor the proposed budget of the SBMA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Joey Salceda is hereby recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Ferdinand R. Gaité of BAYAN MUNA Party-List to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Representative Gaité from BAYAN MUNA is hereby recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, sa ating kagalang-galang na mga kasamahan sa SBMA at gayundin sa ating Sponsor, Cong. Joey Salceda.

May kaunting katanungan lang po ako hinggil sa proposed budget ng BCDA, lalo na patungkol doon sa ating mga kawani ng naturang ahensiya, doon sa SBMA, hindi po iyong mga locators ng empleyado. Napag-alaman po namin several years ago na significant ang bilang ng ating mga contractual workers sa naturang ahensiya. May malaking bahagi na binabanggit na hindi pa rin regular sa matagal nang panahon.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ano ho ba ang status ngayon ng employment sa naturang ahensiya? Ilan po ang bilang ng ating mga regular at gayundin, ilan ang bilang ng mga contracts of service, job orders, o iyong hindi mga regular na empleyado sa naturang ahensiya?

REP. SALCEDA. As of June 30, 2019, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, the SBMA has 2,430 employees or workers. There are 1,640 of them that are in the plantilla, in short, are permanent; and due to the lack of items, 790, of course, with notice and prior approval of the Civil Service Commission, are under contracts of service.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, mayroon ho bang plano dito sa naturang ahensiya na i-convert ang mga posisyon sa regular considering na, sa aming nakuhang information, marami sa ating mga kawani at manggagawa rito ay matagal na sa serbisyo sa SBMA. Mayroon ho bang plano na i-request sa mga ahensiya tulad ng DBM na ma-convert ang posisyon na ito para naman sa proteksiyon ng mga kawani at manggagawa sa naturang ahensiya, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I think that is the direction that the SBMA management will follow. In fact, we will provide you with a letter by the SBMA management, of



course, with the approval of their Board, to the DBM, requesting 2,430 plantilla positions essentially involving the creation of 790 new plantilla or permanent positions.

*At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Romero relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Aurelio “Dong” D. Gonzales*

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Salamat po doon sa information na iyan dahil nabanggit na sa amin noon na maraming mga empleyado na job orders ang nangangamba na hindi na mare-renew ang contracts nila, at dahilan din ito kung bakit sila nag-o-organisa, pero bunga ng mga ilang usapin sa Department of Labor, hindi kinilala iyong kanilang unyon na itinatag. Doon sa information na mayroong balak pala ang SBMA na sila ay gawing regular, ito ay positibong mga hakbang para maprotektahan nga iyong ating manggagawa.

Ngayon po, sinasagot po iyong ating katanungan hinggil sa mga kawani sa loob ng SBMA, kasi naalala ko po, very active po kami noong kabataan ko estudyante ako, the SBMA including the Clark Air Base, before the termination of the treaty, nagkaroon kami ng malaking kampanya, 1990-1991, na ibasura na iyong tratado para ipahintulot ang pananatili ng mga base ng Clark at Subic, at ang magandang sinabing argument noon ay hindi maganda in the sense na ito ay makasasama mismo sa mga nakatira sa SBMA, at kapag umalis ang mga Amerikano, lilikha ito ng malaking negatibong epekto sa usapin ng employment, job opportunities, businesses at iba pa.

Alam pa ba ng ating mga kinatawan ngayon ng SBMA, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, kung noong panahon ng mayroon pang US military base pa sa Subic, ilan na ang naempleyo noon...

REP. SALCEDA. Thirty-two thousand.

REP. GAITE. ... at puwede ho kayang ihambing kung ilan ang naempleyo nang buo, kasama ang locators, kasama iyong hina-hire ng US Armed Forces noong panahon ng US military bases, at ngayong marami nang locators, marami nang mga businesses na nilikha, doon lang, kahit sa base lang, huwag na nating isama iyong job opportunities and businesses na na-create sa labas pa nang naturang base?

REP. SALCEDA. Before, under the US, 32,000. Now, under Filipinos, 137,430.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po.

Ito po iyong isang napakahabang argumento na pilit na sinasabi na isang malaking kawalan kapag

nawala ang mga Amerikano, ang base militar na ito. Patunay na kung magtutulong-tulong iyong mga manggagawa at mga mamamayan, lalo na ryan sa lugar ng Olongapo at iba pa, ay kayang ibangon ang lugar na ito para sa kabutihan ng ating mamamayan na naninirahan dito. Natanggal din iyong oportunidad ng mga hindi magagandang uri ng negosyo tulad ng—alam naman natin noong panahon ng Amerikano, maraming mga honky-tonk bars diyan at laganap ang prostitusyon. Naniniwala ang Kinatawang ito na malaki ang kabawasan nito at naging malinis na iyong Subic.

Ang SBMA ay naituring na isang hub ng negosyo kung kaya’t nabanggit na lumaki ang bilang ng empleyo, at masasabi natin na isang success story ito, at least, insofar as the number of workers ngayon na nabigyan ng job opportunities. Hindi pa kasama ryan iyong nasa labas mismo, iyong nasa Olongapo at iba pang mga lugar karatig ng Subic, ng SBMA, na ngayon ay nagkaroon ng ganitong pagkakataon na magkaroon ng magandang hanapbuhay.

Kaya ko lang po naitanong ito ay naalala ko po kasi noon, doon sa dating local government ng naturang lugar, ang isang paraan para magkaroon ng pagsasaayos ng Subic Bay sa paglisan ng mga Amerikano ay ang pagkakaroon ng maraming volunteers. Karamihan nitong mga volunteers ngayon ay tumulong para maitatag at maitaguyod ang SBMA ngayon. Marami pa ba o wala na iyong mga volunteers na binabanggit na tumulong? Kung maaalala ninyo, as the term “volunteer” implies, hindi ho sila binayaran, tumulong sila para maitaguyod muli ang Subic Base na bigla na lang nawala iyong pinaka-patron, iyong mga Amerikano, pero ngayon, may opportunity nang buhayin ito dahil nagtutulong-tulong. Kumusta na po iyong ating mga volunteers? Are they still part of the SBMA as an agency or not?

REP. SALCEDA. Yes, Your Honor. In fact, iyong isa sa mga volunteers ay Chairman na ng SBMA—ito, katabi ko.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po. So, iyon po ay isa lang sa nakuha naming impormasyon. Totoo na marami sa mga volunteers ay na-hire ng SBMA pero may masama ring balita, dahil mayroon ding mga natanggal. Apparently, iyong ilang empleyado rito, dahil contractual iyong arrangement, ay hindi na nabigyan pa ng pagkakataon ng long-term employment. Totoo ba iyong nakuha naming impormasyon na mayroong mga empleyado, dahil nga hindi ganito, walang katiyakan sa trabaho, ay hindi na napagpatuloy pa sa pagtatrabaho sa ahensiya? Nabanggit nga—hindi ko na maalala ang exact figure—pero significant din daw iyong bilang noong panahong iyon, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Your Honor, that is quite close to the real figure, but the 80, we count about 60, so it is very close—no need to debate on that, but as a percentage of the total, well of course, Your Honor, that is very small, less than one-tenth of 1 percent of the total 137,430 permanent employees inside Subic Base.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po. Ito namang panghuli ko pong katanungan ay patungkol naman sa budget na nire-request ng kabuuan ng BCDA na mayroong special provision ang BCDA na hinihiling na P80 million bilang power subsidy. Ang tanong, bakit po natin binabayaran ito? May P80 million na power subsidy na bahagi ng special provisions ng BCDA. Bakit natin binabayaran ang kuryente para sa locators ng BCDA? Tama po ba ang pagkakaintindi namin?

REP. SALCEDA. Tama po.

REP. GAITE. Ginagamit para sa locators ng BCDA, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Mayroon po tayong mga batas na pumapayag na ang Presidente ay may kakayanang lumaban upang tapatan kung anuman po—dahil po ito ay isang napakalaking investment, kaya po kaya pong tapatan sa pamamagitan po ng—at naka-base po ito sa masasabi nating—it can be objectively computed na differential between the power cost in China versus the power cost in the Philippines. So, iyong difference po, iyan po ang tinatawag nating naka-charge na International Competitiveness Fund o ICF. Right now po, bayad na iyon, wala na po iyon, wala na, ubos na po—there are no more subsidies anywhere in the entire special economic zones.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, wala na po itong sinasabi ninyong subsidy? Kasi nag-aalala po kami dahil ang pagkakaunawa namin mismo diyan sa SBMA ay may mga gambling o casino facilities, at kung ito ay sina-subsidize po natin...

REP. SALCEDA. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, this is the last—P80 million, so that was the last installment.

REP. GAITE. Installment po ito, mayroon pong amount na P80 million. Ito nga po, bilang pagklaro, Mr. Sponsor, kagalang-galang na Speaker, ay para sa power subsidy, tama po? Tama po ba ang aming pag-unawa?

REP. SALCEDA. Can you repeat? Too many people are talking behind me. Can you repeat the question?

REP. GAITE. Sige po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Ano po iyon?

REP. GAITE. Kung iyong binabanggit na P80 million na power subsidy ay bahagi pa rin ng nire-request na budget ng BCDA. Ang tanong nga namin po ay bakit pa natin ito binabayaran, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Unang-una, dahil ito po ay ipinangako natin sa kanila para dito sila mamuhunan. Pangalawa, Your Honor, iyong halagang P80 million na iyan, 1,500 workers po ang nasuportahan. Kung titingnan ninyo po, halimbawa, ayaw ko na sanang mapasok pa ang comparison, halimbawa, sa isang ordinary na electronic sa loob po ng PEZA, ang ginagastos po natin ay P484,000 in subsidy from the national governments, in various forms, but essentially, through tax exemption. So, kung bibilangin po natin itong 1,500, Your Honor, divided by 1,500, umaabot lang po ng P53,000 per worker, so, masasabi ko po na from a cost benefit analysis, Your Honor, mukhang abante po tayo sa desisyon ng atin pong administrasyon. Desisyon po ng Pilipinas na sumugal o lumaban—ang naging kalaban natin noon ay China, so, kalaban po natin doon sa investment na iyon po ay China. So, tinapatan lang po natin.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker. Ang pagkaunawa ko dati, we are trying to wean away from subsidies.

REP. SALCEDA. Tama po.

REP. GAITE. Sa mga nag-iisip nitong mga agendang neoliberal, ang subsidy daw ay isang four-letter word. Tama po ba, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Tama po.

REP. GAITE. Ang subsidy ay four-letter word. Tama po ba, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Lampas po. Yes, your Honor.

REP. GAITE. Ang point ko lang, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor ay ito. Kapag nakakarinig ng subsidy sa kahit sa ganitong uri ng industriya, sabi nga dahil malayang kalakalan, kailangang mag-survive sila on their own; meaning, they should be able to stand alone without the support or just a minimal support from the government, although sa unang tingin, parang maliit iyong P80 million dahil ang pinag-uusapan natin ngayon na budget ay bilyon. Still, these are funds that could have been channeled to other basic services ngayon, lalo na iyong serbisyong pangkalusugan, pabahay, pagkain at edukasyon ay

kulang na kulang. Kung kaya't nagtataka lang ang Kinatawang ito kung bakit may ganitong probisyon sa ating pondo ng BCDA na may mas maraming maaari pang paglaanan na higit na pangangailangan ng ating mamamayan sa kasalukuyan, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Iyong kinita po ng mga workers, P124 million agad, Your Honor, so abante na po tayo dahil P80 million lang po ito.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa mga ilang kasagutan at irereserba ko na lang iyong ibang katanungan sa ibang ahensiya na nasa ilalim din ng budget support for other government agencies tulad ng Clark at iba pa. So, maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Maraming salamat sa aking kaibigan.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po, Mr. Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo of the Second District of Marikina.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Hon. Stella Quimbo is recognized.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Speaker, there being no other Member from the Minority who wishes to ask questions on the budget of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate on their proposed budget.

*At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Michael L. Romero, PhD.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the SBMA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). There is a joint motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the SBMA is hereby terminated.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### BASES CONVERSION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the consideration of the proposed budget of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we welcome the family of the BCDA: President Vivencio Dizon, Jake Bingcang, Lourdes Rulona, Noel Mananquil, Alvin Tabag and Alizaido Paras, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The House of Representatives welcomes the BCDA family, headed by its President Vince Dizon. Welcome to the House of Representatives. (*Applause*) The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda to sponsor the budget of the BCDA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Joey Salceda is hereby recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Stella Luz A. Quimbo from the Second District of Marikina for her interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Representative Quimbo is hereby recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Speaker, there being no Member from the Minority who wishes to ask questions on the budget of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation and debate on their proposed budget. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the BCDA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). There is a joint motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the BCDA.

Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the BCDA is hereby terminated. (*Applause*)

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session for a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The session is suspended.

*It was 7:22 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 7:26 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the consideration of the proposed budget of the Department of Justice and its attached agencies.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Ruwel Peter S. Gonzaga from the Second District of Compostela Valley to answer the questions on the proposed budget of the Department of Justice and its attached agencies.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Ruwel Gonzaga is now recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. AGLIPAY. May I ask for a few minutes suspension of the session, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The session is suspended.

*It was 7:27 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 7:28 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Ruwel Gonzaga from the Second District of Compostela Valley to answer the questions on the proposed budget of the Department of Justice.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Representative Gonzaga is now recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Sr. Dep. Minority Leader, Hon. Janette L. Garin, from the First District of Iloilo to interpellate the Sponsor on the proposed budget of the Department of Justice.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Janette Garin is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. GARIN (J.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Let me go back to my first question, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. May you please read to us, distinguished Sponsor, the mandate of the Public Attorney's Office as contained in Republic Act No. 9640.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, may I read the mandate of the PAO. It states:

The PAO shall be an independent and autonomous office, but attached to the Department of Justice in accordance with Section 38(3), Chapter 7 of Book IV of this Code for purposes of policy and program coordination.

The PAO shall be the principal law office of the government in extending free legal assistance to indigent persons in criminal, civil, labor, administrative and other quasi-judicial cases.

That is the mandate of the Public Attorney's Office, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN (J.). In the mandate of the Public Attorney's Office, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, is it categorically and explicitly stated that they are mandated to create a forensic laboratory?

REP. GONZAGA. In this mandate, there is none, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN (J.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I just reiterate the statement of Secretary Año during the budget deliberations of the Department of the Interior and Local Government where he mentioned that “in the Courts, the only acceptable results are those coming from the PNP Crime Laboratory and the NBI Forensic Laboratory.”

Let me move forward, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, to my next question. May I please have my first slide—the first slide, please.

Is the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, aware of this press conference of the Public Attorney’s Office?

REP. GONZAGA. I am not aware. This is the first time that I saw the slide, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN (J.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

It categorically states and was released in January 27, 2010:

The Public Attorney’s Office (PAO) launches today x x x its new Forensic Laboratory. Recently strengthened by the new PAO Law, the PAO established the laboratory to provide support to public attorneys, x x x clients, other government agencies x x x. Aside from the usual capabilities of forensic laboratories in forensic medicine and forensic microscopy, the PAO Forensic Laboratory has expertise in Forensic Osteology and Osteometrics, Forensic Odontology, Forensic Archaeology, Bloodstain Pattern Analysis and Crime Scene Reconstruction, Evidence and Forensic Photography.

In the said PAO Law, again, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, are these medical science expertise incorporated or stated in the mandate of the Public Attorney’s Office?

REP. GONZAGA. Based on the mandate, there is none, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN (J.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

It further states in that press release that Dr. Erfe has been designated as Director of the Laboratory, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Would the Sponsor know of the qualifications of Dr. Erfe that make him fit to head this illegally created office as compared to the experts that we have with the National Bureau of Investigation and the PNP Crime Laboratory?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, I have read the details of Dr. Erfe’s profile, but I am not in a position to tell

Congress if he is, indeed, qualified for the said position. However, I would like the DOJ to reassess, reevaluate and study the qualifications of Dr. Erfe, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN (J.). Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Can I please proceed to my next slide?

Mga kasamahan, sa atin pong kagalang-galang na Miyembro ng Kongreso, this is the highly publicized case of Kian Delos Santos being played at the right and the left. Ang nakapagtataka po, bakit iba ang findings ng NBI as compared to the findings of the PAO Forensic Laboratory, if they call that a laboratory? Ang sabi po ng mga eksperto sa NBI, who are actually recognized by our Courts and our government, and again, allow me to reiterate who has the mandate for such office. The NBI says:

Only two bullets entered the victim’s head, one behind the left ear and one through the ear itself. The two bullets were shot downward, adding that the minor could have been shot at a distance of more than 60 centimeters away from the tip of the barrel. There were also no gunshots in his body and there were no bruises found on his body.

The PAO findings or Erfe’s findings on the other hand says:

Kian sustained three gunshot wounds, two in his head and one gunshot on the back of his body, and bruises are found on his body.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, as a doctor, this will actually point to the proximity of the assailant, and I believe the Department of Justice, being composed of many lawyers, would know that this has a lot of implications with regard to the cases.

Will the Sponsor agree on this, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, I have noticed, with regard to Kian Delos Santos case, based on the slides presented by the interpellator, the findings of the NBI and also the findings of the PAO.

My position there, Mr. Speaker, is that I would like to have these two findings submitted to the Office of the DOJ, and the DOJ will conduct a further study and an investigation on what happened to the Kian Delos Santos case.

REP. GARIN (J.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, if you will allow me, can the Secretary of Justice find out who gave the correct forensic result?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN (J.). Next slide please.

Let us now move to a murder that was highly publicized in Cebu.

Cebuana ni, bata ni, ato ni kuyog, Bisaya ra pud ni, Mr. Sponsor, distinguished Speaker.

When the case of Christine Lee Silawan became celebrated, immediately Doctor Erfe and Attorney Acosta held press conferences right and left. The PAO's findings said that she was raped. They found abrasions and signs of hematoma on the victim's private parts. Burn marks were found on Christine's eyes, and the suspect was the 17-year-old boyfriend of Christine; however, the Lapu-Lapu City Prosecutor's Office has dismissed the complaint based on lack of evidence.

Surprisingly, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, the PNP Crime Laboratory's findings were entirely in contrast to the Erfe-Acosta findings which said that the victim, Christine Lee Silawan, was not raped. There were no traces of mixed DNA found on Silawan's private parts, and there were also no signs of hematoma, which refers to any injury or trauma on the girl's private parts. Christine's cornea remained intact. The cornea is actually in our eyes and it simply says there was no use of sulfuric acid.

The suspect turned out to be Renato Llenes, 43 years old, found by the NBI to have contacted Christine Lee Silawan through Facebook, and he admitted that there was an attempt, but Christine resisted. He accidentally killed Christine and peeled the skin off her face with a pair of scissors to let it appear that it was a heinous crime.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, napakalaki po ng sampal na ito sa ating gobyerno. Kawawa naman po iyong disisiyete anyos na boyfriend na ikinulong dahil lang po sa mali-maling sinabi ng Public Attorney's Office. It is not even the office. It is just a few people inside the PAO who are actually meddling in the work of the NBI and the PNP.

Pangalawa po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, paano naman itong totoong pumatay kay Christine, baka makawala ito, kasi hindi mo naman makuha iyong kanyang DNA or iyong kanyang sperm sa loob ng katawan ng babae dahil walang rape na nangyari. It was also very clear that the corneas were intact, meaning, wala pong sulfuric acid.

Let us proceed to the third case, Mr. Speaker, with the due indulgence of our distinguished Sponsor. Ito naman pong si Kulot, at ikinalulungkot ko na hanggang ngayon, hindi pa natin alam kung nasaan na po si Reynaldo "Kulot" De Guzman. Ang sabi po ng PAO, noong agad na may nakitang bangkay—when a cadaver was found in Nueva Ecija, PAO immediately rushed to the media and again said, "This is Reynaldo De Guzman."

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, during the PNP budget deliberation, no other than the PNP crime

lab said, sa una pa lang, ayaw na nilang paniwalaan. In fact, it is in the video. Unfortunately, I cannot play it, but allow me to mention the response of the PNP crime lab. Noong pagdating po ng SOCO doon sa site, ayaw nilang paniwalaan na si Kulot ito dahil hindi po circumcised iyong bata na nakita, but again, Erfe and Acosta allegedly claimed that the cadaver is circumcised with an overgrowth. The PNP Crime Lab's finding, however, is to the contrary. They insisted that a DNA test be conducted because the cadaver found was not circumcised.

Mga kasamahan ko po dito sa Kongreso, my apologies for this. Eh, pasensiya po sa sasabihin ko, pero, sino po ba rito ang natuli na pero bumalik sa original iyong natuli nang parte ng kanilang katawan? Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, as a doctor, a male who has been circumcised remains to be circumcised until death. Itaga ninyo po iyan sa bato. Kaya nakapagtataka po, ngayon lamang po namin nalaman na kung PAO Dr. Erfe ang sasabihan, kinikilala po nila na kapag ikaw ay natuli o na-circumcised na, eh puwede pong tumubo ulit iyong balat na tinanggal na.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, may I hear your comment on this.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, I do not know if these cases, the Kulot De Guzman as well as the Christine Lee Silawan are pending cases, but as I have observed, there are two findings: one, from the PNP Crime; and second, from the PAO findings, which are conflicting. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that these cases be taken up by the DOJ and for them to study, reassess, evaluate and give Congress a report, if there is any, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN (J.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

I welcome very much that investigation because I believe that it is the Secretary of Justice who can put order in the Department of Justice by allowing the NBI to pursue its mandate and by policing the Public Attorney's Office insofar as their mandate is concerned at baka naman pupuwede para huwag naman po nating sayangin ang pera ng bayan, iyong binabayad ni Juan at ni Maria, eh bakit hindi na lang po natin pagsamahin ang NBI Crime Laboratory and the PAO Forensic Laboratory, but of course, headed by qualified, experts duly recognized by courts and the medical societies?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, I will take note of that.

REP. GARIN (J.). Do I get the commitment from the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes.

REP. GARIN (J.). The Department of Justice will look into this.

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN (J.). Lastly, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, may I request—because if the PAO Forensic Laboratory was created in 2010 based on the press statement of the Public Attorney’s Office, may I request for a comprehensive report as to where they got the funds to buy equipment, where they charged the travels, and the MOOE of the Forensic Laboratory including the travels of Dr. Erfe because, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, our obligation to oversee the coffers of the Republic of the Philippines is an obligation that has been vested by the people who gave us this mandate. May I seek the approval of the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, I think that is the best thing for the Secretary to do—to conduct studies on the matters raised by the good interpellator. I would assure that the DOJ will give us a report as soon as they have it, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN (J.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

I would be waiting for the reports that will be submitted to my office. Of course, my kudos to the Secretary of Justice who I believe would have the expertise to thresh this out and may I inquire if there will be no objection if, at the proper time, we will make the necessary motion to transfer the PAO Forensic Laboratory and combine it with the NBI Crime Laboratory just to put order in the House.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, with regard to that, the DOJ will conduct a further study and after that, they will give us again the report as to the request of the good interpellator.

REP. GARIN (J.). Maraming salamat po distinguished Sponsor. Naniniwala po ako na sa administrasyon ni Pangulong Duterte ay wala pong lugar ang mga pasaway, wala pong lugar ang redundant na trabaho, at wala pong lugar ang korapsyon.

Thank you, Mr. Sponsor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Maraming salamat po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we

recognize Hon. Mohamad Khalid Q. Dimaporo of the First District of Lanao del Norte to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the Department of Justice.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Representative Dimaporo is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, will you allow me to make a manifestation and ask a few questions?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First, I would like to thank the good Sponsor and the DOJ family for helping us find closure in the province of Lanao del Norte. It is often misconceived that the province of Lanao del Norte is a Muslim province because I, First District Representative, am a Muslim. My counterpart in the Second District, Abdullah Dimakuta Dimaporo, is a Muslim. My mother, the Governor Imelda “Angging” Quibranza-Dimaporo, is a Muslim, but the province of Lanao del Norte is actually a 60-percent Christian-dominant province. Which is why we were always the target of the MILF.

My experience with the MILF was in 2008 when the Supreme Court decided against MOA-AD. Automatically, Commander Bravo went down to the municipalities of Kolambugan and Kauswagan. We had a hundred thousand evacuees running, fleeing to Iligan City, Ozamiz City, Tangub City, Misamis Occidental.

I will never forget the number of bodies that I had to recover as a Provincial Governor. The number of caskets that we had to buy as a provincial government—77 caskets. The worst of which was a four-year-old baby girl, a little girl. You could not recognize her anymore because they emptied out an entire M-16 clip in her body, wasak na ang mukha niya. We had to wrap her in a newspaper and presented her with a closed casket. That was our experience in 2008.

Ten years later, we have come full circle with the enactment of Bangsamoro Organic Law and the beginning of the peace process.

Now, this is my policy question, honorable Speaker. Now that the MILF have started to be decommissioned and will, hopefully, be fully decommissioned, do the MILF combatants who have pending cases in our courts—will their pending cases automatically disappear? Will those pending cases automatically be dismissed? Will they automatically be pardoned? What is the policy of the Department of Justice and the national government in regard to the MILF combatants with pending criminal cases?

REP. GONZAGA. It is not only the policy of the Department of Justice, but it is the rule of law. If there is a case filed before the court and such, like for example, as you have raised there is a decommissioning of the MILF, it will never erase the crime that they have committed. If there is a pending warrant, the pending warrant will be served. That would be the policy of this government and that is the rule of law.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you, honorable Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. For the record, I would like to read the cases of Commander Bravo that are pending in Iligan City, and I would like to thank the honorable Sponsor for giving me this information. I would like to read this again for the benefit of my constituents in the province of Lanao del Norte. These are the following cases pending in the Hall of Justice of Iligan City:

Case No. 14161 – Murder; Case No. 14151 – Arson; Case No. 14396 – Murder; Case No. 14437 – Arson; Case No. 14436 – Arson; Case No. 14121 – Murder and 200 John Does ; Case No. 14106 – Murder; Case No. 14104 – Arson; Case No. 14105 – Arson; Case No. 14102 – Arson; Case No. 14099 – Arson; Case No. 14109 – Murder; Case No. 14108 – Frustrated Murder; Case No. 14110 – Murder; Case No. 14107 – Robbery; Case No. 14112 – Arson; Case No. 14114 – Arson; Case No. 14115 – Frustrated Murder and 200 John Does; Case No. 14118 – Murder and 168 John Does; Case No. 14002 – Arson; Case No. 13988 – Frustrated Murder and 150 John Does; Case No. 13978 – Slight Illegal Detention; Case No. 13996 – Murder and 175 John Does; Case No. 10176 – Rebellion; Case No. 14438 – Arson; Case No. 14439 – Arson; Case No. 14440 – Arson and 150 John Does; Case No. 14441 – Arson and 150 John Does; and Case No. 770-07-2010 – Rebellion.

These are the court cases that are pending in the Hall of Justice of Iligan City, and I would like to get a confirmation from the honorable Sponsor that these cases are still pending in the said courts.

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the 19 cases are still pending in the regular courts.

REP. DIMAPORO (M.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Next, I would like to place on record that the “Commander Bravo” that attacked the province of Lanao del Norte, as part of settlement—because the “No” vote won in the province of Lanao del Norte and the six municipalities that the Bangsamoro Autonomous Regional Government wanted to be included in the

Bangsamoro Autonomous Regional territory were not allowed to enter, so as part of the appeasement of the—and this is what I believe, my personal opinion of our good Secretary of the OPAPP, Charlie Galvez—he worked it out that our Commander Bravo in Lanao del Norte be made part of the Bangsamoro Parliament. He was able to be appointed by Malacañang because he has secured an NBI clearance.

I would like to place this on the record, Mr. Chair, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, and I say this without prejudice.

The reason why he was able to ascertain an NBI clearance was because, in the cases that I mentioned, his name is “Abdulrahman Makapaar, a.k.a. Commander Bravo.” When he applied for an NBI clearance, he applied under the name “Abdulah Makapaar” who we all know is Commander Bravo, and that is the reason why he holds an NBI clearance and he is serving now in the Bangsamoro Parliament.

Now, what will happen with that information? As far as our institutions are concerned, in the Justice system, I leave that to the powers that be.

I would like to state tonight in this plenary, in front of the Department of Justice family, that as far as the province of Lanao del Norte is concerned, we will never forget what the MILF have done to us, but we are also compelled to move forward. There is no other choice. This is for the benefit of our future generation that we find ways to bring peace to our province. We will support the Duterte administration in all aspects that we establish peace and order, not only in the province of Lanao del Norte, but also in the Region of Mindanao.

I would like to state that for the record, Mr. Chair, but I would like to also request the good Sponsor, the good Secretary of the Department of Justice, as far as the MILF combatants are concerned, that there should be no shortcut in our justice system. Due process should be observed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, honorable Sponsor, for allowing me to make this manifestation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Minority Leader Bienvenido “Benny” M. Abante Jr. of the Sixth District of Manila to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the Department of Justice.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Romero). Rep. Benny Abante, the Minority Leader, is hereby recognized to interpellate the Sponsor of the DOJ.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, Sponsor.



Unang-una po, I would like to thank the DOJ family, led by our good Cabinet Secretary, for being here since one o'clock in the afternoon and for being so patient in waiting. Thank you very much.

So, to the honorable Sponsors of the budget of the Department of Justice and its attached agencies, and to my esteemed colleagues in the House, mag-a-alas otso na po ng gabi.

For the past few weeks, the Department of Justice and one of its attached agencies, the Bureau of Corrections, had been at the center of a controversy that has resulted in a miscarriage of justice with the premature release of over a thousand inmates convicted of heinous crimes. These are the criminals, Mr. Speaker, that should not have benefited from the Good Conduct Time Allowance Law or the GCTA; however, hearings conducted on the application of the law have revealed irregularities and exposed the corrupt officials behind it.

The revelations in the past days are disturbing, distressing and disgusting. They highlight the vulnerabilities of our criminal justice system and how the rich, the powerful and the corrupt are able to exploit these weaknesses in order to escape the punishment meted out to them by our courts.

What is worrisome, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, is that this may not be the only example of such irregularities. Now, we have learned that even hospital passes are for sale to prison inmates, and naturally, we in the Minority want to find out if there are more examples of such criminal acts.

That are being said, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the honorable Sponsor a few questions with regard to what I have mentioned and to its attached agencies.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, is it true that it was General Bato Dela Rosa, who is now a Senator, who asked for the authority to release the inmates under GCTA?

Now, I do not know if you have seen or read the Memorandum dated June 4, 2018 from Undersecretary Dela Rosa, Director General of BuCor, requesting for the grant of authority for Director General to approve or act on the request for release of inmates on GCTA under Department Order No. 953?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the letter existed. That is true, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Second, Mr. Speaker, under DO No. 953, signed in November of 2015, the Justice Secretary must be the final approving authority for the release of an inmate sentenced to life imprisonment. The BuCor Chief can only grant releases to a prisoner with an expired sentence; otherwise, the DOJ has to be notified. My question is, has this rule been amended or modified?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker, there is that the Department Order No. 953.

REP. ABANTE. Was this rule modified or amended, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. GONZAGA. It was not, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Okay. I am not a lawyer as I have always insisted. I have a very limited knowledge of law. I have a doctorate degree in Theology. I know what Jewish law is but not Philippine law, but perhaps, this can even be related. The question is this: Is it legal for the DOJ or the BuCor to arrest or reimprison those already released under GCTA? Released—they did not escape but they were released. If it is legal, what will be the legal basis to imprison them again? I am asking as a layman who only has a very limited knowledge of Philippine law.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, there are two views on the matter. First, if the PDL released through GCTA followed the processes of the release, that means that the computation is correct, everything is legal, no lagayan, and after the call of the President for them to surrender, then he will not be arrested; but if the process of his release through GCTA is a consequence of an illegal act, therefore, he should be rearrested because an illegal act has no consequence at all; it is not valid and, therefore, he remains a prisoner.

REP. ABANTE. That is a good answer, Mr. Speaker, but how can that be known?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. ABANTE. How can that be determined?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago or a week ago, the President made a statement, "Lahat kayo, 1,914, go to the nearest police station or to the detachment of the Armed Forces. Make yourselves available, report to legal authorities, have your GCTA recomputed." Ang sabi niya, kapag okay iyong processes nila sa labas, sa GCTA, then they should not be afraid. Pero kung lahat na konsekwensiya ng paglabas nila ay galing po sa iligal na proseso, therefore, they have to serve the remaining period of their term of imprisonment.

REP. ABANTE. Siguro po, sa pagtatanong kong ito, I would represent the lay people on the ground, na ang kanilang sinasabi, na-release na iyang mga iyan, bakit magsu-surrender pa, ano po? Iyan po iyong mga pinag-uusapan sa labas. Marami pong mga ganyang pinag-uusapan na gusto lang natin, kahit po dito sa

plenary hall ng Kongreso, bilang Representante ng ating bayan, dapat malaman ng taumbayan kung ano po ba ang talagang opinyon ng ating legal luminaries tungkol sa mga bagay na ito sapagkat ito po ay nakagugulo ng kaisipan. For example, saan dapat magkaroon ng tinatawag nating due process of law? Ako po ay nagtatanong bilang isang layman, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, it is provided for in the Constitution, due process must be given to every Filipino. In every stage of criminal proceedings, there is what we call due process, but if we refer this to GCTA, the fact that the President called the 1,914 PDLs released through GCTA and to go to the legitimate legal authority, that is, in fact, a due process given to them. Walang order po na rearrest kaagad sila. Walang order na hulihin sila kaagad. All the released PDLs were given the benefit of the doubt. Pupunta kayo doon, recheck your computation of the GCTA, that is due process in effect, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Salamat po sa clarification, Mr. Speaker.

Ilan po bang mga inmate ang na-release na under the GCTA Law since 2016?

REP. GONZAGA. One thousand nine hundred fourteen, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Since 2016, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, we would like to qualify if the question refers to the PDLs convicted of heinous crimes.

REP. ABANTE. Well, ang susunod ko pong katanungan is, how many of them were convicted of heinous crimes? Sapagkat ...

REP. GONZAGA. As of this moment, Mr. Speaker, I have no data to that effect. We can produce that later, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Well, Mr. Speaker, ito po ang nakalagay, ang released po daw ay 18,885 according to my colleague here and 2,160 were convicted of heinous crimes only. Now, narinig ko po sa aming budget briefing, nabanggit po ng ating kagalang-galang na Secretary na talaga pong walang tunay na definition ang “heinous crimes.”

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the definition of the “heinous crime” is provided for another law, RA 7659, or the heinous crime law. This is the law that entails a consequence of death penalty. So, everything written

there that has a consequence of death is considered heinous. That is where the definition of “heinous crimes” comes from.

REP. ABANTE. Sa palagay ko, doon po sa binabanggit mong batas na ngayon po ay ni-repeal na, hindi ba, wala na pong death penalty, ano po?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker. The provision being repealed there is the death penalty provision.

REP. ABANTE. Is the death penalty a provision?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Oo, pero iyong mga nakalagay po doong mga crime or heinous crimes do not actually have a proper definition?

REP. GONZAGA. The position of the DOJ, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. ABANTE. Totoo po ba ito bilang isang magaling na abogado?

REP. GONZAGA. The position of the DOJ there, Mr. Speaker, is that all the crimes in the said law are considered heinous crimes.

REP. ABANTE. Okay. Siguro kinakailangan po nating pag-aralan iyan bago natin mai-deliberate po dito ang pagbabalik ng death penalty.

Isa pa pong tanong, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Gusto ko pong malaman, is it legal for the DOJ to suspend the implementation of the GCTA Law?

REP. GONZAGA. The DOJ can suspend the processes of GCTA. That means ...

REP. ABANTE. The what, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. The processes.

REP. ABANTE. The processes?

REP. GONZAGA. The processing.

REP. ABANTE. The processing?

REP. GONZAGA. The processing of the GCTA.

REP. ABANTE. ... of GCTA?

REP. GONZAGA. GCTA.

REP. ABANTE. But not the law itself.

REP. GONZAGA. But not the law itself.

REP. ABANTE. Yes. That is because, you know, the next question should be: Can the DOJ decide not to implement a law enacted by Congress? I think you have answered that.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the DOJ cannot do that.

*At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Romero relinquished the Chair to Dep. Speaker Johnny Ty Pimentel.*

REP. ABANTE. Okay. Now, next would be, recently, the Ombudsman has asked Senator De Lima and former Senator Mar Roxas to explain the IRR that they have written. I would like to ask for a comment and an opinion of the DOJ Secretary on the Office of the Ombudsman requesting Senator De Lima and former DILG Secretary Mar Roxas to clarify the Implementing Rules and Regulations that they drafted for the early release of prisoners based on good conduct credit.

Now, I would like to say na ako, I have very much reservations on what De Lima and Roxas did, but I just would like to ask the opinion of the DOJ concerning this matter.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the GCTA Law provides an exception to the application of the GCTA before the classification of PDLs: recidivists, habitual delinquents, escapees, as well as those convicted of heinous crimes.

In the IRR, there is no statement to the effect that GCTA will apply or will not apply it to the four classifications of PDLs. The position of the DOJ is that the Ombudsman would like to ask the two personalities to clarify the matter why they failed to include in the IRR the four classifications of PDLs.

REP. ABANTE. Okay, dalawang questions na lang po, and this time sa iba namang dako. Alam ninyo, nakalulungkot po sa Pilipinas na ang corruption ay hindi lang po sa gobyerno at hindi lang sa negosyo kundi pati sa relihiyon. Opo, kaya gusto kong itanong iyon pong Kapa, oo. Ang NBI na po ang nagsampa ng kaso sa DOJ, pero after five months, nasa preliminary investigation pa rin ito ang DOJ. Iyon po ang gusto kong itanong sapagkat bilang isang religious leader, ako ay nagpapasalamat sa ating Pangulo na in-expose po ito. Aba ay dapat talaga pong imbestigahan iyan. Wala akong pakialam kung relihiyon po iyan. Oho, isang pagpapasalamat na gusto kong sabihin. Kaya po ang aking tanong, is it true that a certain Pastor Joel Apolinario, along with other officials of the controversial Kapa Community Ministry International,

Inc. did not show up during the hearing on the charges filed against them by government regulators before the Department of Justice?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, there are cases against the Kapa but the three complainants withdrew their cases. Therefore, the prosecution cannot proceed to any stage of the investigation because there are no more complainants, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Wala po bang irregularity doon sa ganoon pong pangyayari, you know. Kahit na po nag-withdraw iyang mga complainants pero nakita po ng NBI na mayroon pong prima facie case kaya dapat po itong Kapa ay imbestigahan. Is there not any irregularity on this?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, there are two kinds of cases filed with regard to the violation of securities and it will proceed, but with regard to estafa, swindling or other cases, defined under the Revised Penal Code, it can no longer proceed. Why, Mr. Speaker? It is because when it reaches the court, still, there are no witnesses. That is really the process, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, that would be the limitations and loopholes of some of our laws. Anyway, maraming, maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, Mr. Sponsor, and thank you so much, DOJ family.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Abdullah D. Dimaporo of the Second District of Lanao del Norte to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the DOJ.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Hon. Abdullah Dimaporo is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. DIMAPORO (A.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank our Speaker for giving us, the good Secretary of Justice and me, the opportunity to speak at noon today. I tried to have an appointment with him twice, but I understand he is a very busy person and that is why I am thankful for our meeting today.

I would like to manifest my reaction to our meeting, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the province of Lanao del Norte, because of the fighting of Muslims and Christians in the past, we have four primary programs: first is peace and order; second is unity of Muslims and Christians;

third is development of our province in order to raise the economic status of our constituents; and last is good governance. Without good governance, we will not be able to do the first three programs.

In all these three programs, we fear that our good Secretaries are not supportive of us. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I asked the Philippine National Police to give us a listing of the political killings in the province of Lanao del Norte. The PNP Regional Director for Region X could only give one, which was the killing of the mother of our candidate in the municipality of Salvador, which was our subject with the good Secretary of the Department of Justice. He failed to mention that their own, retired Coronel Amor Masbud was killed in the municipality, in Barangay Pala-o of Iligan City, after he announced that he was going to run in one of our municipalities. That was on December 11, 2014. After that, his son, who wanted to continue what his father died for, was also killed in Barangay Basagad in the municipality of Baloi. Our incumbent mayor, Mayor Exchan Limbona, was killed at the national highway in a barangay in Iligan City, Barangay Dalipuga, on December 30, 2016. These and other political killings were not reported by the Regional Director of the Philippine National Police; meaning, we are not getting support from our Philippine National Police. Not even the incident report and also the investigation report could be given to me. Only the military supports our peace and our drive in the province of Lanao del Norte. They are also helping us unite the Muslims and the Christians.

Another is that we have seen that we are also supported by the Department of Justice. In 2016, our mayoralty candidate, Bebot Umpa, was killed. His killing was not reported by the PNP. The mother was also killed.

This is the only report that we have received from the Philippine National Police, and I am surprised, Mr. Speaker, that the National Bureau of Investigation, under the Department of Justice, had an investigation on the killing of the mother of our candidate and they found evidence with their team from their national office in Manila, their team in the Regional Office of NBI in Region X, and also their team in the city of Iligan—a mixture of their agents. This mixture found two of the killers and they gave testimony that they were asked to shoot at the house of our candidate, Bebot Umpa. The Secretary of Justice then formed a panel of prosecutors in order to validate the finding of the National Bureau of Investigation. The formed body of prosecutors found that there was probable cause, but then one of the undersecretaries of the Department of Justice spoke with the lawyer who defended the respondents in the panel of prosecutors. The Undersecretary believed the lawyer whom the panel of prosecutors did not

believe, and the Undersecretary also overturned the decision of the panel and decided that the case against the respondents should be dismissed. I do not see any reason why the lawyer of the respondents should be more accurate than the agents of the National Bureau of Investigation. Again, we find ourselves asking ourselves where to turn to.

In the case of the incumbent Mayor of Pantar who is now suspected of having killed the candidate who was proclaimed the winner by the Commission on Elections, he was found with illegal firearms in his house in Cagayan de Oro City by the military and by the police; but because of someone, the police and the military did not file a case even if the newspaper has shown that there were illegal guns found in his house. Then, there was the second raid of the military and the police in his house in his municipality in Pantar. Again, there were illegal firearms found and that was the reason why he was kept for some weeks in the military camp. If there were no illegal firearms, why was he kept in the camp for some weeks? Later, it was decided that all of the firearms were legal because they were licensed. Why were the licenses not produced earlier? Then, last, for the third time, he was found carrying illegal firearms at a checkpoint of the PNP at Iligan City by the police, the PNP. He was brought to the headquarters of the PNP and there he was found innocent again of possessing illegal firearms, but why would the police bring him to the police station if he had no illegal firearms?

Again, Mr. Speaker, we do not know whom to go to in order to protect ourselves from again having problems of fighting between the Muslims and the Christians, especially in the municipality of Salvador where the mother of Bebot Umpa was killed. In that municipality, about two-thirds of the constituents are Christian. We are protecting the Christians because they make-up majority of our population in Lanao del Norte. If we do not, we will again be seeing the Christians and the Muslims fighting each other in Lanao del Norte.

I hope that these statements of ours will be heard by the President, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you and good evening to all of you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Lawrence “Law” H. Fortun of the First District of Agusan del Norte to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the DOJ.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Hon. Law Fortun is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. FORTUN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed 2020 General Appropriations Bill shows an increase, although not so significant, in the budget of the Department of Justice, from nearly P23 billion in the current year to P23.2 billion in 2020. The proposed budget, however, Mr. Speaker, assigns the DOJ an enormous responsibility of producing swift and fair administration of justice, consistent to the President's Budget Message that says, "combating criminality and terrorism means that perpetrators must be brought to justice swiftly but fairly and squarely."

Some of the key issues that require utmost attention and, hence, sufficient budget are the substantial delays in case development, long-standing congestion in jail facilities, backlog in the resolution of cases, and the insufficient number of public prosecutors and public attorneys.

On the issues of case-development delays and backlog in the resolution of cases, may I know from the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ano po ba talaga ang mga primary reasons bakit mayroon tayong substantial delays sa development ng cases at saka backlog sa mga resolutions ng mga kaso? Ano iyong mga pangunahing dahilan?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, there are many factors related to that. One, like for example, in our province, Compostela Valley, there is a backlog in the cases because the complainants cannot find the witnesses. In one case, there was a complainant in one municipality and the witness comes from another province. So, it takes time. That is one of many factors why there are so many backlogs in the cases. Second, we admit that there are unfilled positions because there are no takers. Like, for example, prosecutors in far-flung provinces, walang tatanggap sa posisyon because napakalayo ng probinsya. Second, there are qualifications, like being a degree holder. So, walang nag-a-apply dahil hindi kuma-qualify. That is on the part of the prosecution.

Another case, another factor is on the Judiciary, one RTC, in one sala has so many cases. For example, in our province, one sala has 3,000 cases. There are only 365 days in one year, less the Sundays, the Saturdays, the holidays. Iilan na lang po ang hearing day ng judge na iyan? There are so many cases, Mr. Speaker.

So, sa tingin ho namin there are compilations of reasons as to why there is a backlog in the cases.

REP. FORTUN. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, nabanggit na rin kasi iyong unfilled positions, gusto ko na lang sundan din iyong issue na iyan. It is alarming that it has been a consistent trend, and the same is worsening over the years in terms of increase in the number of unfilled positions in the DOJ. I have here with me data: in 2016, there were about 3,849 unfilled positions; in 2017, the figure increased to 5,283;

in 2018, the figure increased to 5,615; in 2019 and the current year, 5,762; and in 2020, the unfilled positions are expected to increase to about 6,151.

Ano po ba ang nangyari sa nagdaang tatlong taon? Naiintindihan po natin na may unfilled positions dahil talagang mayroong mga posisyon na walang nag-a-apply, pero sana naman, sa pagdaan ng mga taon, there should be at least decreases in the number of unfilled positions. But from 2016 to 2020, there has been a consistent increase. And we are not talking of slight increases; these are substantial increases. From 2016 to the current year, up to 2020, the unfilled positions would double already from 3,000 to 6,100-plus. How are we addressing this issue, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the data show that there are 6,151 unfilled positions. They are, from the Office of the Secretary, which is represented by the national prosecution, 1,656 unfilled positions; in the BuCor, as of 2019, as of this moment, 130; BuCor Uniformed Personnel, 712; Bureau of Immigration, 741; LRA, 1,007; NBI, 565; OGCC, 27; OSG, 220; PPA, Pardon and Parole Administration, 295; PCGG, 71; PAO 338. That is the breakdown of the 6,151.

As I have said earlier, Mr. Speaker, the main reason is, wala pong taker dahil dito mayroon mga qualifications; pangalawa, maliit din ang suweldo compared to private companies or in private employment. So, the DOJ is taking care of this. Probably, another salary standardization would entice or invite more individuals, Filipinos, to take employment in the mentioned offices, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, malaki-laki na rin iyong inangat na mga sahod ng mga nasa gobyerno in light of SSL 3, at saka maraming step increments noong mga nagdaan na mga taon. We can surmise that, substantially, salaries of those in the government have already increased very significantly. What I am just alarmed about, Mr. Speaker, is that there has been a consistent increase and the increase in the number of unfilled positions is not negligible. These are substantial increases over the years. Just imagine, in a span of three years or the increase in the number of unfilled positions was doubled. How do we expect to address issues that affect the administration of justice if we do not see prospects of decreases in the number of unfilled positions?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the position of the DOJ is, one, it gives the assurance to the good interpellator that we shall take the cudgels for inviting new employees to the DOJ and its attached agencies. Second, all prosecutors, heads of offices in the provinces, in regions—their attention shall be called to invite more

employees to the family of the DOJ. To sum it up, the DOJ gave the assurance that it will do its best to lessen the unfilled positions from now on, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, we hope that the DOJ would be able to come up with viable measures to address this immediately, kasi napakaimportante ng mandato niya, 'no.' Kung mabagal tayo sa pagdi-decrease ng unfilled positions, lalong mas mabagal din iyong ating administration of justice.

Sundan ko lang po iyong isang issue pa. Another key issue would be the issue of long-standing congestion in its jail facilities. Aside from the construction of more jails to address this urgent concern, we note that reform of the system of penology is very critical, and part of this would be the implementation of laws on the modernization of the Bureau of Corrections, and the reform of the laws on recognizance, probation and good conduct time allowance (GCTA).

Let me just go to the issue of GCTA since this was discussed by our distinguished Minority Leader and has become very controversial in light of supposedly illegal releases of convicts of heinous crimes. The BuCor has presented data on the number of convicts of heinous crimes that have been released supposedly on account of good conduct. Recently, no less than the President himself ordered those who have been released to surrender immediately—those that have been illegally or erroneously released, if we are to interpret Section 1 of R.A. 10592 as not covering those convicted of heinous crimes.

We note that the basis for the order is the interpretation of Section 1, that not only those charged with but also convicted of heinous crimes are not covered by the Act but, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, we also note that Section 1 mentions as well other persons not covered, aside from those charged with heinous crimes. The exceptions include recidivists, habitual delinquents, and escapees. Ang tanong ko lang po, are these people also not entitled to good conduct time allowance?

REP. GONZAGA. Well, Mr. Speaker, the first view was that the GCTA will apply to all convicts—be it a person or a convict, a PDL convicted of a heinous crime, be it a recidivist, habitual delinquent, or an escapee, that was the first interpretation of the GCTA. When the scandal erupted, there was serious scrutiny and study of the GCTA law. In Section 1 of RA 10592, there is that provision that states, “recidivists, habitual delinquents, escapees and persons charged with heinous crimes” shall not be included, shall not be covered by this Act. We have to harmonize this with the old law, the Revised Penal Code (RPC). In Article 29 of the RPC, there is no mention of the four PDLs. Therefore, in the GCTA

Law, RA 10592, there are mentions of the four PDLs. That is why the DOJ takes the position that the correct interpretation would be that the GCTA will apply with an exception to those four classification of PDLs.

REP. FORTUN. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask, does that order cover only those convicted of heinous crimes and released on account of good conduct under the GCTA?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the statement of the President does not distinguish. Therefore, all convicts released through GCTA shall proceed and present themselves before the PNP or the Armed Forces for further validation of the processes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. Mr. Speaker, are we saying all of those who have been released?

REP. GONZAGA. All convicted of heinous crimes.

REP. FORTUN. So, that is clarified. Kasi napakarami po noon.

REP. GONZAGA. Yes. I already mentioned that earlier, Mr. Speaker, the 1,914 convicts of heinous crimes.

REP. FORTUN. So, they are the ones that are being ordered to surrender.

REP. GONZAGA. Yes. I stand corrected, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. Okay. Since recidivists, habitual delinquents and escapees are also not qualified to avail of Good Conduct Time Allowance, why are those recidivists and habitual delinquents or probably escapees who have been released because of GCTA not included in the order to surrender?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the statement of the President gave priority to PDLs convicted of heinous crimes, but it does not include those recidivists, habitual delinquents and escapees.

REP. FORTUN. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, if we are to strictly apply the law, since the law says that those that are not covered are not only those convicted of heinous crimes, but also those recidivists, habitual delinquents and escapees, are we not supposed to order also the surrender of the recidivists, habitual delinquents and escapees who might have been released by reason of their good conduct under GCTA?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, as what I have said, there is a priority, but it does not mean they will not report or surrender. Those are also included.

REP. FORTUN. Do we have, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, data on the number of recidivists, habitual delinquents and escapees that might have been released under GCTA?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, there and data, Mr. Speaker, but as of this moment, the data are not in our possession; but we can provide you with that, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. May we have the commitment, Mr. Speaker, of the DOJ or the BuCor for that matter to provide Congress with that data.

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. Now, the DOJ has been saying in the Committee hearings, both in the Senate and the House, that there is probably a necessity or a need to review RA 10592. It is not only a question of the IRR and the manual, but probably there is a need as well to revisit the law because the law might have some flaws. I myself, based on my humble observation, have noticed very significant flaws.

Now, if we are to introduce reforms to the GCTA law, gusto ko lang tingnan ito kasi medyo parang hindi just and equitable iyong paglalagay ng parehong class ng convicted of heinous crimes at saka recidivists, habitual delinquents and escapees, maybe, but particularly, habitual delinquents and recidivists, because a “recidivist” under the Revised Penal Code is simply defined as any person who has been convicted of two crimes falling under the same title.

So, for instance, Pedro has committed illegal betting on a horse race, and subsequently, convicted of illegal cockfighting. Since these crimes fall under the same title, he now becomes a recidivist and because he is a recidivist, he is not entitled to avail of the Good Conduct Time Allowance law, and yet, under the law, RA 10592, Pedro is placed in the same category as Antonio Sanchez who has been convicted of seven counts of rape with homicide.

My question, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, is: would the DOJ recommend that in the determination of those who are not covered by the law on GCTA, there is a need to revisit especially the enumeration of PDLs recidivists? For example, the habitual delinquents, if I remember correctly, these are convicts who are again convicted within 10 years from his last conviction or release of the same crime. Sa loob ng 10 taon ay na-convict ulit siya, pero may specific enumeration like theft, robbery, falsification and estafa—only those crimes. Outside that, they are no longer habitual delinquents.

Again, why would you put in the same category somebody who has been convicted of theft twice within 10 years in the same class as that of a person convicted of heinous crime?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, I sympathize. You are correct there, but on the other hand, iyong sinabi mo na illegal betting or illegal cockfighting, kung may kaso na ganoon, say, for example, ako, convicted ako niyan and after that, convicted na naman ako sa isang illegal cockfighting, remember the penalty there is not afflictive. It is not even correctional. That means if the case filed against me and I am convicted of illegal betting or illegal cockfighting, that is below six years imprisonment, that means, it is probationable. You are not included in the computation of GCTA, because, automatically, you can apply for probation.

What is the spirit of the law? Let me say this as an example. I am convicted of murder, *reclusion temporal*, or *reclusion perpetua*, as the case may be, and again, after years, I am convicted of homicide. That is the interpretation of the law, but as I said, Mr. Speaker, it needs another revisit. I agree with you on that, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. Yes, Mr. Speaker, because masyadong malawak iyong recidivist, lahat kasi iyon at saka iyong usaping probation, puwede kasing hindi siya mag-avail ng probation. What if he does not avail of probation dahil gusto niyang iapela ang kanyang kaso? So, papasok na naman siya doon, lalabas na naman siya doon. What I am saying is, perhaps, if we are trying to include those who may have the tendency of committing, time and again, similar crimes, kailangan kasi nating tingnan, among klaseng krimen. Hindi lahat and we should take note of the fact that there are also social issues sa crimes. Mayroong mga poverty-engendered pong mga crimes. Halimbawa, ang isang mahirap na tao, although—this is not an excuse—he is forced by circumstances to commit theft and again commit theft also by force of circumstance, iba iyong kanyang kalagayan sa rapist because there is no social excuse for rape, hindi ba? So, I think, part of the consideration when we revisit the law is the category of the PDLs.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I would like to proceed to another point. Gusto ko lang itanong kasi medyo kulang ang ating budget, lagi nating sinasabi, mayroon sanang mga revenues that the Bureau of Corrections could have earned and we are talking of substantial amount that would have been used to fund programs for addressing jail congestions and certain requirements of our inmates.

I would like to ask about certain contracts that the Bureau of Corrections entered into, kung kumusta na po iyong mga nangyari dito. Let us take for example the case of the joint venture agreement of the Bureau

of Corrections with TADECO which, according to the Commission on Audit, cost the government about P460.3 million in revenues because of the grossly disadvantageous provisions of the joint venture agreement. Malaki-laking pera iyon, pwede nang pampagawa ng maraming jails iyon.

The Commission on Audit said that actions have been taken for the cancellation of the May 2, 2003 joint venture agreement and to make appropriate representations with TADECO for the amendment of the JVA.

May I know, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, the update. What is the recent development on this issue?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the review on the contract of BuCor and TADECO was completed. The process now is for submission of the report to the Secretary of Justice.

REP. FORTUN. There are also other contracts, Mr. Speaker, iyong ibang lease contracts with tenants, BuCor employees and private concessionaires that were not renewed and because these were not renewed, they continuously occupy these premises without paying the rentals, iyong mga pina-lease ng BuCor.

Ang year-end total delinquency niya amounted to about P5.6 million. I am talking about the Iwahig Penal Farm, Mr. Speaker. The verification of the Commission on Audit disclosed that the contract with the BuCor employees and private concessionaires was already expired or was not renewed; however, despite the non-renewal of the said contract, they continued to operate and failed to pay the corresponding rentals which at year-end totaled to about P5,606,940.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the renewal of the contract has just started. I have with me a copy of the report from the Bureau of Corrections, which I will provide you with, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are there efforts to recover the rentals for the years na hindi na-renew iyong kontrata? Because, during those years na hindi na-renew iyong kontrata, wala kasing rentals na binayaran at sabi ng COA umaabot ito ng mga P5 million. Aside from just merely renewing the contracts, are there efforts to recover the arrears, supposedly?

REP. GONZAGA. The position of the BuCor is that the process of renewing is ongoing and they are also in the process of collecting the rents that have not been paid, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One more, Mr. Speaker, doon sa lease rental with the Iwahig River Firefly-Watching Ecotourism, the lease rental was not collected from the operators of the Iwahig River Firefly-

Watching Ecotourism from 2008 to 2018. So, we are talking here of 10 years of uncollected rentals and this is contrary to the Public Land Act or Commonwealth Act No. 141 under the Revised IRR of RA 10752. Kumusta na po ito, paano po ito make-claim ulit? Sampung taon nang hindi po nagbabayad?

REP. GONZAGA. With regard to Iwahig Prison Farm and Penal Colony, prior to the firing of the President of BuCor Director General Faeldon, he started to renegotiate with the concessionaires. So, right now, there is a stalemate because there is no authorized representative of the BuCor to renegotiate or to represent the BuCor in the negotiation of the concessionaires with the Iwahig Prison Farm and Penal Colony.

REP. FORTUN. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Balikan ko lang iyong TADECO. The estimate of COA was that we lost about P460 million because of the grossly disadvantageous contract. Is there still a way that we could recover at least part of the P460 million?

REP. GONZAGA. The DOJ will assess, study, and after that, the findings will be given to us, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Pahingi na lang din po kami ng detalye ng developments noong mga kontratang ito and we hope that the BuCor will cease to enter into contracts that are grossly disadvantageous to the State. Sayang itong mga perang ito. Iyong P300 million na increase ng budget ninyo, sobra-sobra pa po sana iyong kinita ng BuCor dito.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, susundan ko lang po iyong itinanong kanina ng ating Sr. Minority Leader, interesado lang ako ng kaunti.

Iyon po bang Forensic Laboratory Unit ng Public Attorney's Office, ilan pong positions ang mayroon doon sa division na iyan?

REP. GONZAGA. Eight plantilla positions.

REP. FORTUN. May I know what exactly are these plantilla positions? Your Honor.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, they are the Medico Legal Officer with a Salary Grade 25; Medical Specialist with Salary Grade 23; Medical Specialist with Salary Grade 22; Medical Legal Officer III with Salary Grade 22; Dentist III with Salary Grade 20; Medical Technologist II with Salary Grade 15; Nurse II with Salary Grade 15; and Laboratory Aide II with Salary Grade 4; total of eight plantilla positions, Mr. Speaker.



REP. FORTUN. Thank you, Your Honor.

Forgive my curiosity, Mr. Speaker, but may I know the respective qualifications of each of these personnel in the Forensic Laboratory Unit.

REP. GONZAGA. The letter of the DBM did not specify the respective qualifications. Mr. Speaker, if I may, I would like to ask the PAO office to provide a copy of the qualifications of the mentioned positions, then after that we will give it to this Congress, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Not just the qualifications of those that are already holding those positions, but the qualifications required in order for one to be able to apply for these positions.

May I know, offhand, if any of these positions require that he or she must at least be a forensic pathologist? Is there any one of the positions that require that the applicant or the holder thereof must be a forensic pathologist?

REP. GONZAGA. As to the eight plantilla positions, there is none, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. There is none. So it is possible, Your Honor, that none of the eight who are part of the Forensic Laboratory Unit is a forensic pathologist, since there is no requirement that any of those be a forensic pathologist.

REP. GONZAGA. With regard to the eight positions, there is none, Mr. Speaker.

REP. FORTUN. There is none.

Thank you, Your Honor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the DOJ, good evening.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Hon. Solomon R. Chungalao of the Lone District of Ifugao to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the DOJ.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Hon. Solomon Chungalao is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. CHUNGALAO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the honorable Sponsor.

I do not know if it is worth the wait just for me to ask one or two questions only. To the honorable Sponsor, I just wanted to inquire. What is the position of the Department of Justice including the Office of

the Solicitor General when the government exercises its power of eminent domain through expropriation and when the government acquires a private property for public use? Is it not a fact that what should be used to pay just compensation should come from the government coffers?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CHUNGALAO. Is it allowed—I would like to know the position of the DOJ and the Solicitor General, can a private person be the one to pay the just compensation when the government agency exercises expropriation?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, just compensation will apply only if the government will intervene. That means the government will use the property. So, that is the time; there is this which we call the application of the just compensation.

REP. CHUNGALAO. Precisely, in an instance when a government agency gets a private property, supposedly for private use, is it allowed that a private person will be the one to pay the just compensation?

REP. GONZAGA. With your question, Mr. Speaker, that is not allowed because the government pays the just compensation if the property will be used for public.

REP. CHUNGALAO. Okay. What is the position of the Office of the Solicitor General, because I believe the Solicitor General is the proper Body that will file the expropriation and then they proceed with it. Do they have the same position with the DOJ that in the expropriation proceedings no private money will be used to pay just compensation?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, it is not only the Office of the Solicitor General that is mandated to use the power of expropriation. Even the local government unit can file expropriation cases in the appropriate court. If there is an expropriation case and the appropriate court will order the expropriation, then that would be the time when there would be computation of valuation and that would also be the time when there would be payment of just compensation. But the money for the just compensation will not come from a private individual; it will always come from the government funds.

REP. CHUNGALAO. Thank you, that is what I am after. I do not know if the law was amended. True, local governments can expropriate, but it must always be initiated by the Office of the Solicitor General who will eventually turn over or give authority to the prosecutor, whatever. This is a national agency that

had expropriated properties, pero noong dumating sa bayaran, pera na ng private corporation. That is why I just wanted to ask that, and if that happens where an agency is used to expropriate private property, then it is a private person that pays the just compensation.

May I know the position of the DOJ or this Office of the Solicitor General. Will they agree with me that something is fishy, and that it should not be allowed?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, I agree with you, Mr. Speaker

REP. CHUNGALAO. I would like that to be placed on record because this is a matter that I will take up also with the Department of Agrarian Reform, the National Irrigation Administration, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, because some government agencies were practically used to expropriate private property of poor farmers from my place, pero pagdating sa bayaran, ang private person or private corporation ang nagbabayad. So, something is wrong. Is that not possibly a case that can be brought to the attention of the Office of the Ombudsman?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will bring that to the attention of the Ombudsman.

REP. CHUNGALAO. May I see the nod of the Secretary of Justice and the Solicitor General? Are they agreeing with your statement?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CHUNGALAO. That is all—that is just what I wanted. I waited this long pero ito, it shortcuts all processes na kasi, ito ang rason nila daw—only one more question. Is there any instance when the power of eminent domain was exercised in expropriation where a private corporation is allowed to pay just compensation? Is there any?

REP. GONZAGA. As far as this DOJ is concerned and as far as my opinion is concerned, there is none. If that is the case, that is no longer a power of eminent domain, and that is no longer a power of expropriation; that is what we call “private donation.”

REP. CHUNGALAO. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I got what I wanted to be put on record in this Eighteenth Congress, which I can use perhaps to defend my poor farmers who are victimized.

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the honorable Sponsor and thank you for the DOJ family and for those answers on record. Thank you. Good night.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Representative from the Party-List BAYAN MUNA, Hon. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate, to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the DOJ.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Hon. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the good Sponsor and to the DOJ family, magandang gabi po. Puwede bang magtanong sa ating kaibigan na Sponsor ng budget ng DOJ?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Interpellator.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. Mayroon lang pong tatlong mahahalagang punto na laman ng aking katanungan, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Una, isa sa malaking kampanya ng kasalukuyang administrasyon noong pumasok ito noong 2016 ay ang kampanya laban sa droga. Katunayan, ito ay isang very controversial campaign. Dito nakilala sa buong Pilipinas ang katagang “Tokhang,” at ang katagang “Oplan Double Barrel,” na nagresulta sa maraming pagpaslang ng ating mga kababayan. Depending on which source we are citing or sources that we will cite. Mayroong sinasabing aabot na sa 20,000 to 30,000 ang namatay sa anti-drug campaign, but the PNP said, and its official records state that there are at least, 5,526 from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019, that have been killed in drug operations.

Now, my first question along this line, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker is, how many members of the PNP, to the knowledge of the Sponsor and to the agency, the DOJ, how many members of the PNP have been criminally charged in court for any of these 5,526 deaths of individuals?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, there are 28 complaints and there are 18 cases filed before the appropriate courts.

REP. ZARATE. Twenty-eight.

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Twenty-eight cases filed.

REP. GONZAGA. Twenty-eight complaints.

REP. ZARATE. Twenty-eight complaints and only ...

REP. GONZAGA. Eighteen.

REP. ZARATE. Eighteen cases filed in different courts all over the country. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. As a follow-up question, is the Sponsor certain that these 28 complaints and 18 cases filed in different courts relate to the 5,526 deaths and not of other offenses committed by policemen, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, I am not really sure of the figure but the DOJ will provide you with copies of the exact data on that matter.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

So, this Representation expects a detailed report of the 28 complaints and the 18 cases filed in different courts.

Now, my next question, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, yes, the data that you have asked is also the data that had been asked by Representative Elago. So, the DOJ will provide you the said data.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Now, my next question is, how many PNP members involved in these 5,526 deaths are currently undergoing preliminary investigation still?

REP. GONZAGA. As of this moment, Mr. Speaker, we are not certain, but we will provide you copies on the number of PNPs involved in the 5,526 deaths, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you. We will certainly appreciate that.

According to the PNP Manual, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, in cases where a death results in police operations, the PNP team leader must submit the incident for inquest before an inquest prosecutor, before removing the body from the scene of the crime. That is stated in their PNP Manual. My question now is, out of these 5,526 deaths, how many inquests have been conducted by the DOJ as required by the PNP Operations Manual?

REP. GONZAGA. As of this moment, Mr. Speaker, we do not have the data. We will provide you with the data, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Will the Sponsor provide that this evening, because the people from the DOJ are certainly present tonight?

REP. GONZAGA. The DOJ commits to a period of five days, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Five days from today?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Now, this is a theoretical question, if the PNP operation team leader did not call for an inquest and did not bring this case to an inquest fiscal as required, will the Sponsor agree that this PNP personnel incurred either administrative or criminal liability? Will you agree with that, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Will the Sponsor hazard an information to this Body on the possible liabilities of this PNP personnel who failed to comply with a specific requirement in their own PNP Manual that there must be an inquest proceeding, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, if that would be the question, of course, administrative liability follows, but under the hierarchy of—under the DILG, Mr. Speaker, not under the DOJ.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Now, on a related matter, there had been killings of activists and members of progressive organizations, all those publicly red tagged by stage agents as terrorists, and as NPA communists such as those, for example, in Negros where in two police operations, 14 individuals were killed in the wee hours of the morning.

According to KARAPATAN, a human rights organization, there were 266 persons that had been killed after the government state agents had red tagged them or vilified them, and 155 of them are human rights activists, according to KARAPATAN.

So, my question now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor is, how many of these cases are pending preliminary investigation before the DOJ or other prosecution offices in the different parts of the country?

REP. GONZAGA. In a particular case, the Sagay case, there is one, the Sagay massacre. There is one.

REP. ZARATE. Only one. I did ask that because, again, based on the PNP operations, ...

REP. GONZAGA. That is only for the case of Sagay. In other cases, we will provide you data on that.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Of course, the Sponsor is also well-aware that there are extrajudicial killings or you may call it extralegal killings, not related to the campaign against drugs or Tokhang; for example, the killing of human rights lawyer and my colleague, Atty. Ben Ramos, lawyer of the Sagay massacre; Attorney Trinidad, also in Negros; Councilor Bobby Jalandoni, also in Negros; and our City Coordinator in Negros Escalante City, Councilor Toto Patigas who was killed during the campaign.

I did ask that so that the Sponsor and the DOJ can include in their report how many of these kinds of killings are pending preliminary investigation, how many inquest proceedings were conducted by the PNP after their operations, and the like? Can we get a commitment from the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker. We will provide you all the data available on the mentioned cases.

REP. ZARATE. I want to make it very certain, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, when I inquired whether there are cases filed against policemen, because these cases happened during police operations when deaths resulted during such operations, and just like the Tokhang cases, ang kanilang sagot ay nanlaban. Nanlaban itong mga taong ito when we supposedly served a search warrant issued by the court. Can we get that commitment, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the cases are still before the prosecution office or under preliminary investigation. So, by now, cases are yet to be filed.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Now, on another related item, the President, as the Sponsor, is well-aware, publicly threatened to kill drug suspects on several occasions, on TV and in several functions. Now, theoretically, a person who publicly threatens another with a crime incurs criminal liability. Is that correct, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the President made qualifications on that kind of statements when he said "shoot to kill." It follows that the PNP will only do that if there is danger to his life and limbs. That is the qualification of the President.

The President is a lawyer and knows the laws of the land, so there is no liability whatsoever, because there is qualification on the statement, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

What do you think, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, is the impact of statements like these on the DOJ when they prosecute the accused, those accused of killings, drug suspects or activists? Since the President has control and supervision over the DOJ, these statements, definitely, impact on the conduct of preliminary investigation. Will you agree, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the commitment of the DOJ is, of course, the rule of law. So, whatever cases are involved, we will follow the law. The commitment is above all the application of the rule of law.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZAGA. So, lahat susundin para wala po namang problema.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat, G. Isponsor, G. Ispiker.

Tama po kayo, pero higit sa lahat, more than the rule of law, I think it has to be emphasized here that the rule of justice must also prevail, dahil minsan po iyong rule of law na sinasabi natin ay natatabunan at natatapan ng pera kagaya ng nangyayari ngayon sa BuCor. Rule of law—na-release iyong mga ikinulong na tried and convicted of heinous crimes, but because of their influence, as admitted already by some officials during the conduct of these investigations, pinalabas sila dahil may nagbayad, maging iyong nagpaospital ay nagbayad para lang they can also continue with their drug trade. Again, more than the rule of law. I think we have this Chamber, tayo bilang mga Mambabatas, dapat pairalin natin iyong rule of justice.

On another topic, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, of late it was also announced that the President ordered the transfer of some high-value detainees from the Bureau of Corrections to Fort Bonifacio. May I inquire, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, what was the reason behind the transfer of these high-value detainees?

REP. GONZAGA. The reason, Mr. Speaker, is one, security, because there are threats to the lives of the PDLs.

REP. ZARATE. Was there a court order allowing such transfer, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, there is no need for that considering the Philippine Marines is considered as an extension of the Bureau of Corrections because of the memorandum entered into by both parties.

REP. ZARATE. Just for the record, when was this

memorandum of agreement entered into between the Marines and the Bureau of Corrections, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, we will provide the memorandum itself to this Congress, ...

REP. ZARATE. Thank you.

REP. GONZAGA. ...together with all the documents that you have asked earlier.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

On my last subject, after the President went on his fifth trip to China, an official State visit to China, one of the highlights was the signing of a joint oil and gas exploration. There was I think a memorandum of understanding, and in the terms of reference of that memorandum of understanding, there was an intergovernmental steering committee created. On the Philippine side, one of the members of the intergovernmental steering committee is the Secretary of Justice. My question in relation to this—there was a statement mentioned by the President just yesterday that it will already set aside the arbitral ruling that was issued in the Hague, saying that Scarborough Shoal, for example, and the Reed Bank are part of our exclusive economic zone. My question in relation to this, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, is: *tama po ba na papasok tayo sa isang kasunduan sa Tsina* for a joint oil and gas exploration and we will just set aside that arbitral ruling, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the arbitral ruling is already part of international law. We cannot do away with that, but with regard to the statement of the President, the DOJ will re-study it and, again, if there is a finding or a report on it, we will submit this to Congress.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, because very clearly, in that arbitral ruling, *sinasabi doon na ang Scarborough Shoal or ang Reed Bank*, as far as that arbitral ruling is concerned, *hindi na disputed iyan*. These are part of our exclusive economic zone. Now, if you will say that we will set aside that arbitral ruling, *hindi po ba nalalabag nito ang ating Saligang Batas dahil ang sinasabi ng ating Saligang Batas*, *ang lahat ng teritoryo lalo at higit na kabahagi ng ating exclusive economic zone*, *tayo ang may kontrol dito*, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker? May we get an answer, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. You are correct there, Mr. Speaker, as mentioned.

## SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the session be suspended for a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The session is suspended.

*It was 9:27 p.m.*

## RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 9:39 p.m., the session was resumed with Deputy Speaker Aurelio "Dong" D. Gonzales Jr. presiding.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize the Representative from the ACT TEACHERS Party-List, the Hon. France L. Castro, to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the DOJ.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Hon. France Castro from ACT TEACHERS Party-List is recognized.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. I withdraw that motion, Mr. Speaker. We have the continuation of the interpellation of Cong. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Congressman Zarate, please continue.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Just before the suspension of the interpellation, I did ask the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, about the role of the DOJ in the memorandum of agreement and in the intergovernmental steering committee created as a result of that. May we get an answer from the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, yes, indeed there is this MOA signed by both heads of the countries. During the last State visit of President Rodrigo Duterte to China—yes, there was an MOA signed, but with regard to future contracts just arising from the general framework on what we called the MOA, that would be the time the DOJ had a role. Just like what happened in Malampaya, that contract would be subject to the review of the DOJ, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

That would be my last interpellation and question. I just hope, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, that in so doing, the DOJ again, gusto nating i-emphasize dito na kailangang proteksyunan natin iyong kung ano ang nakasaad sa ating Saligang Batas, na sinasabi doon na kailangang ang ating—halimbawa, ang ating Exclusive Economic Zone, ang ating sovereign rights over these territorial waters at iyong naipanalo natin sa International Tribunal ay talagang ipaglaban at tindigan ng ating pamahalaan.

Iyon lang po. Salamat, Mr. Sponsor. Salamat, Mr. Speaker, sa pagkakataong makapagtanong sa budget ng DOJ.

Magandang gabi po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. France L. Castro of Party-List ACT TEACHERS to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the DOJ.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Hon. France Castro of ACT TEACHERS is recognized.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Puwede po bang sumagot ng ilang mga clarificatory questions ang ating Sponsor kaugnay sa budget ng DOJ?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Ma'am.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, during the interpellation of Congressman Zarate about the MOA or memorandum of agreement between the BuCor and the Marines about the 10 who were detained or transferred in the Marines Barracks due to security. You have said that—I am clarifying that the MOA is the legal basis for the transfer of those prisoners who are convicted of heinous crimes and they are in the maximum detention. Is the MOA the only legal basis? Because, Mr. Speaker, medyo hindi naman po ako abogado. Ang akin pong kaalaman sa mga legal matters ay iyong sa experience at pagbabasa lang ng mga kung anu-ano at nakikita natin sa mga karanasan natin, okay. So, ang tanong, Mr. Speaker, iyon lang po ba iyong legal basis, iyong memorandum of agreement?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the reason why there was a transfer is that there is a threat to the lives and limbs of the PDLs, and that is security reason. The MOA only allows—it only legalizes the transfer of the PDLs to another jail, and that is what we call the

Marines Barracks, kasi bawal naman i-transfer iyong mga PDLs doon sa kahit saan na lang. So, because of the MOA, there is this legal transfer of the PDLs to the Marines Barracks, because the Marines Barracks is considered an extension of the BuCor. But with regard to the security reason, well, primarily, the security of the PDLs, there is a threat to their lives and limbs.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). With due respect po doon sa ating Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, hindi ko naman po itinatanong iyong reason bakit na-transfer. Ang itinatanong ko po, Mr. Speaker, ako na hindi nag-aral ng law, hindi ko maintindihan kung itong piece of MOA lang po ba, itinatanong ko ang legal basis sa pagta-transfer ng detention nitong mga high-valued PDLs, hindi po iyong reason.

Tanggap naman natin kung mayroong security problems, okay, pero sa batas po ba, nakaano rin po ba itong MOA na ito?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay.

REP. GONZAGA. ... I maintain my answer, and in addition to that, because the President is the Chief, because the President has all the authority to call the shots with regard to the transfer of the PDLs—so iyon ang mga legal basis.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. So, ang legal basis, malinaw na po sa akin na ang pagta-transfer ay dahil lang doon sa MOA, kasi, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, kasi iyong mga simpleng mga prisoners, halimbawa, na gustong magpagamot, halimbawa po, iyong mga political prisoner na talagang sickly na na gustong, halimbawa, pumunta doon sa ospital, dumalaw ng graduation or whatever, nanghihingi ito ng court order, kaya parang naguguluhan ako na para bang itong 10 na ito na high-valued PDL na kayang-kayang mai-transfer due to the President's order lang, dahil ito nga, sinasabi nga sa mga report na ilan dito ay mga witness doon sa case ni Senator De Lima. Tama po ba, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor? With threat iyong kanilang buhay at kaya sila nailipat.

Kasi nakikita natin, Mr. Speaker, wala ba ritong parang special treatment sa mga 10 prisoner na ito? Kasi kapag pangkaraniwang prisoner, ang hirap-hirap kumuha ng permiso maospital or whatever na mahalagang kailangang gawin ng prisoner.

So, iyon lang po, Mr. Speaker. Hindi ko naman kailangang kuhanin, pero ako po, bilang pangkaraniwang mamamayan na nakikita natin iyong ganito, sa tingin ko parang mayroong something like special treatment sa mga ito.

Okay. According po doon sa report about doon sa

mga pinakawalan or ni-release due to GCTA, nasabi ko na rin po ito, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, na iyong GCTA, kung gagamitin lang ito nang tama, walang mga tiwali na gagamit nito para sa sariling kapakanan, ay maganda ito dahil marami sa ating mga PDL ay talagang nag-serve naman nang maayos, naging mabait sa loob, talagang nag-serve ng through their hearts, na talagang nag-serve ng kanilang sintensya. Pero ginamit nga ito, nakita naman natin doon sa pagdinig sa Senado.

Dito po sa sumuko dahil sa utos po ng Presidente na lahat ng mga na-release due to GCTA—mayroon po bang data ang ating DOJ, Mr. Sponsor, kaugnay nito? Ilan na po ba ang mga sumukong mga prisoners due to GCTA as of the moment?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, as of now, there are, more or less, 200 PDLs.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Itong 200 na ito, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, may mga napanood kasi akong nakakaawa iyong talagang kalagayan ng mga prisoners na ito na, halimabawa, P200 lang worth of shabu ang mayroon siyang possession, 26 years na. Sumuko siya at ilan pa na mga sumusuko na nakikita nating mga mahihirap naman ito na talagang ipiniresenta nila ang sarili nila voluntarily. Pero may mga high-valued na mga PDL na nakinabang dito sa GCTA na according to the report, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, hindi lang apat ba o lima na mga foreigners na involved po sa heinous crimes lalung-lalo na po sa drugs, mga Chinese, mga Malaysian, mga Taiwanese, mayroon pang taga-UAE, according to the report na nakita ko sa newspaper. So puwede bang i-confirm ng ating distinguished Sponsor kung ilan na ba talaga sa mga foreigner na ang napakawalan due to GCTA?

REP. GONZAGA. Out of the 17 foreign nationals, Mr. Speaker, there is only one released and she was released because of an order coming from the Court of Appeals, but the remaining 16 foreign nationals are still in the custody of the Bureau of Immigration.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay, marami pa pala. Marami pa pala kasi according to the report, mayroon pong 15. I-enumerate ko po: Hong Kong local, mayroon tayong seven. Lahat po ito ay mula June 2017 hanggang 2019 sila na-release. So, ibig sabihin panahon po ito ng kasalukuyang administration mula June 2017 to 2019. For their safety, hindi ko na lang po sila papangalanan, pero sa Hong Kong, pito. Ang kanilang kaso ay illegal drugs. Lahat itong pito ay from Hong Kong. Mayroon din po tayong mga Malaysian, lima ang Malaysians. Lahat po ito ulit, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor ay kinulong due to illegal drugs. Panahon ulit ito mula October 2018 up to July 2019. At ang panghuli

po ay mga Taiwanese, tatlo po sila. Mayroon isang Singaporean, convicted din ito lahat sa droga. Ni-release sila nito nang 2018 to 2019. So, Mr. Speaker, paano po nangyayari ito na mga high-valued, mga foreigner involved sa illegal drugs, samantalang mula 2016 hanggang ngayon, relentless ang kampanya ng ating Pangulo against illegal drugs, pero itong mga foreign nationals na ito, muntik nang mapakawala o na-release na nga through GCTA.

So, totoo ba iyong kampanyang ito ng ating Pangulo regarding doon sa war on drugs or kahipokritohan lang dahil alam naman nating 55,000 na ang namatay or 30,000 sa ibang source, pero itong mga drug lords, mga convicted na mga foreigner ay buhay at puwede pang makawala through GCTA kung hindi lang ito na-found out, Mr. Speaker. So, bakit nangyayari ito?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, with regard to the seven who were allegedly released from June 2017 to June 2019, five Malaysian, three Taiwanese and one Singaporean, the BuCor has no, I should say, no data as of this moment. The BuCor would like to ask for a period of five days within which to submit to Congress, as well as to the good interpellator, the records of the mentioned and alleged PDLs who have been released, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Ah, okay, Mr. Speaker, siguro hintayin natin iyong report from the BuCor dito sa mga foreigner na ito na na-release, pero sabing ganoon, hindi ba sabi naman ng ating Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ang mga ito raw ay nasa detention pa ng BI, tama po ba?

REP. GONZAGA. The DOJ, Mr. Speaker, clarifies that the four Chinese nationals involved in the illegal drugs are still in the custody of the Bureau of Immigration.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay, so ibig sabihin, Mr. Speaker, iyong tatlo ay pinakawalan na? Seven kasi iyong nasa report.

REP. GONZAGA. We will try to check on that again, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to ask the good interpellator to give the BuCor time to submit to you the complete data on these seven foreign nationals.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Tapos, Mr. Speaker, iyong mga Malaysian, Taiwanese and Singaporean?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Sige, Mr. Speaker. As regards this, katulad nga po ng nasabi ko, thousands po ang namatay na mga Filipino kaugnay ng giyera kontra droga ng ating gobyerno, pero itong mga foreigner na

involved sa drugs ay madaling nakakalabas through this GCTA or na-detain pa or whatever—magre-reconcile pa kami ng record, Mr. Speaker.

Ang gusto ko lang sabihin dito, nakita natin kung paano ang GCTA, na isang maganda sanang batas para sa ating mga pangkaraniwang mga mamamayan, ay ginamit sa korapsyon, ginamit sa pekeng ano—sa kriminalidad at marami pang na-involve na mga opisyal at nakita naman natin kanina na kinasuhan na.

So, iyon po, Mr. Speaker, mag-aano na lang po tayo ng records kaugnay niyan. Mayroon po akong hininging records or mayroon po akong hiningi sa DOJ, last na po ito, Mr. Speaker, kaugnay doon sa ginawang interview kay Palparan sa BuCor. Kung ang DOJ po ay nag-conduct na ng investigation kaugnay po nito, puwede po ba kami, ang Representasyong ito, Mr. Speaker, na makakuha ng update kaugnay nito, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the DOJ is checking on the documents and after they are checked by the good Secretary, the DOJ will submit the documents that you have asked.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mr. Speaker, follow-up lang po, so hindi pa po nasisisulan mula noong nagkaroon tayo ng briefing sa budget ng DOJ?

REP. GONZAGA. It has started, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. So aasahan po, Mr. Speaker, ng Representasyong ito iyong update kaugnay noong interview o another naman ito, sa tingin ko, Mr. Speaker, special treatment na naman sa isang PDL na mayroong na-convict on heinous crime.

Sana magsilbing aral ito, or lesson sa atin ngayon itong mga nangyayaring ito para in the future ay magkaroon na sana ng equal treatment sa ating mga PDL.

Thank you very much, Mr. Sponsor. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Arlene D. Brosas of the Party-List GABRIELA to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the DOJ.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Hon. Arlene Brosas is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, will the honorable Sponsor yield to a few questions from this Representative?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Ma'am.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor.

Last September 2, nagpadala kami ng sulat requesting the BuCor for a copy of the results of investigations regarding former Mayor Sanchez' violations of prison rules and a copy of the aforementioned memorandum of release duly signed for him. Then before the DOJ's budget briefing, on September 5, we followed up on the said documents to no avail. Nag-request pa nga ang Kinatawang ito ng listahan ng lahat ng released convicts by virtue of the GCTA law.

Yesterday, September 10, nag-follow up ulit kami pero pinagpasa-pasahan lang kami, from the BuCor office to ADCA, then to the DOJ and back again, at pinagpasa pa kami ng panibagong letter regarding the request. Ngayon, may dumating na mga document sa aming opisina pero hindi naman ito ang ni-request namin. So, walang kahit anong documents then regarding GCTA.

So, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, for the record po, sana po katabi ninyo iyong mag-e-explain para makapag-explain explicitly kung ano ang nangyari sa following documents that were requested mula po sa inyong opisina. In fact, this is the third time po na ire-request ko iyong mga document because the first was when there was a Committee meeting here in Congress noong September 2, then after noon ay iyong sa Committee hearing po ng DOJ, then this is the third time po na tatanungin ko iyon.

So, iyong first po, I have here the letter na ipinasa namin sa inyo. This is directed to Secretary Menardo Guevarra and to Asec. Melvin Ramon Buenafe. Iyong listahan po ay iyong certified true copy of the results of the investigations held regarding Sanchez' violation of prison rules. May the good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, explain kung ano po ang nangyari dito sa nire-request na document?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, ginagawa ho iyong request ng good interpellator pero ang nangyari, kasi iyong mga tao sa BuCor na may hawak ng dokumento ay nasuspinde, so I think that is the problem. At any rate, Mr. Speaker, the BuCor representative is assuring you na maibibigay natin iyong mga papeles na hinihingi ninyo.

REP. BROSAS. Okay. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, itinanong ko na rin naman iyan, na nandiyan naman iyong mga documents dahil, supposedly, hindi ba mayroong safekeeping or record-keeping ang ating Ahensiya, ang lahat naman ng ahensiya ay mayroong ganoon. So, ang nagbago lang naman ay ang mga official or ang mga OIC ngayon. Ang hindi po natin maintindihan ay kung bakit hindi mai-release iyong



certified true copy of the results of the investigations held regarding Sanchez' violations of prison rules.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the suspended officials in the BuCor, iyong mga nasuspinde, wala pa hong kapalit, wala pa hong designation, so walang responsable na magpirma o mag-release ng mga dokumento in the process, iyong mga puwedeng ipalit sa mga nasuspendeng mga opisyaes ng BuCor.

REP. BROSAS. Okay. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, iyong pangalawa po na hinihiling natin, this is a certified true copy of the memorandum of release order signed by former Usec. Nicanor E. Faeldon for the former Calauan Mayor Antonio Sanchez. Ito po na-present na rin sa Senate hearing at ngayon ay nire-request natin, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, according to the BuCor, iyong sa Senado mayroon na pero sabi nila naipuslit. So, until now, hindi mailabas iyong certified true copy kasi iyong taong involved, iyong taong designated for the certification of authenticity or the truthfulness of the document ay nasuspinde, so kailangan talaga siyang palitan.

REP. BROSAS. So, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, ano pong mangyayari dito sa mga papeles na ito? Hahanapin po ba ito or ano po ang ine-expect natin? Matatanggap pa ba natin ito? Makikita ba natin ito? Nawawala ba ito? Anong nangyari dito, Mr. Sponsor and Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the BuCor will try to find out the specific document that you are asking for.

REP. BROSAS. Again, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

REP. GONZAGA. According to the BuCor, Mr. Speaker, kung mayroon nang OIC designated, that would be the time na talagang hahanapin na iyong dokumento. Wala hong responsible na maghanap ng dokumentong iyan because wala siyang awtoridad na hawakan iyong dokumento. So, kailangan na mayroong isang opisyal ng BuCor na ma-designate as OIC doon sa specific na office where the paper can be taken from, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. So, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, wala tayong maaasahan for now dahil wala pang nakatakdang opisyal para dito?

REP. GONZAGA. By Friday, Mr. Speaker, there will be officials in the BuCor replacing the suspended ones, and that designation will become official on Friday. So, doon pa tayo magsisimula para magiging

valid naman iyong paglabas ng dokumento na hinihingi natin.

REP. BROSAS. Okay, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ibig sabihin po, itong dalawa ay doon maaaring i-release kapag mayroon nang OIC sa Friday. Itong Friday na ito, this coming Friday?

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Meanwhile, sino po ang nagpapatakbo ng opisina ng BuCor?

REP. GONZAGA. The Officer-in-Charge is here, Sir Buenafe, but with regard to the releases, iyon pong sinasabi nating releases ng mga dokumento ay hindi po hurisdiksiyon ni Sir Buenafe. May tao pong assigned doon, who is one of those nasuspinde kaya kailangang palitan, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Okay. Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor. Iyong pangatlo pong kahilingan ay sasabihin ko na rin para alam na ninyo kung ano pa iyong mga nire-request. Iyong pangatlo po ay certified true copy of the list of all convicts released by virtue of the Good Conduct Time Allowance or GCTA law.

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, same answer, Mr. Speaker. Iyon pa rin ang problema. By Friday, masisimulan na po kung may designated official na to handle your request.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, maaari po bang kumuha ng commitment or categorical answer para malaman kung ibibigay ang mga dokumento na ito sa Representative na ito?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, sa Friday ay maitatalaga iyong bagong officer. Iyong pangatlong dokumento na hinihingi ninyo ay 700 na pahina po iyon, so they will be asking for more or less, they are asking for five days from September 15, Mr. Speaker. Friday ho itatalaga iyong official na papalit sa nasuspinde. Saturday at Sunday ay walang trabaho. So, from Monday, there will be five days so that would be five days from September 15, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, G. Isponsor. G. Isponsor.

On to my next point po, sa last budget hearing with the DOJ, itinanong ng Kinatawang ito ang posisyon ng DOJ sa husga ng korte kay Sanchez to pay P1 million for the damages done to the victims' families, at ang isinagot po ni Secretary Guevarra ay wala raw silang magagawa tungkol doon dahil it is an issue between two private entities. Aaksiyon lang daw sila bilang government

agency, bilang mediator, and if it concerns the people of the Philippines. Pero hindi ba heinous crime lalo na at convicted of rape itong si Sanchez? Ang kaso nya mismo ay versus the people of the Philippines. Hindi ba kasama ang DOJ sa pagpapanagot sa pagtulak that he complies? Paano magagampanan ng DOJ ang mandato nila para i-ensure ang hustisya para sa mga mamamayan at mabantayan ang mga ganitong klaseng krimen?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, natatandaan ko po iyong sagot ni Secretary Guevarra diyan na kung kriminal na aspeto, they will represent the people of the Republic of the Philippines pero nanalo na iyong mga kalaban ni Sanchez, iyong Sarmenta, nanalo na sila. So, ang gagawin natin diyan, because iyong civil aspect po iyong kabila, iyong damages, so, magfa-file sila ng motion for execution on that aspect. So, hindi na ho trabaho ng DOJ iyan. Iyon po ang sagot ni ...

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, wala bang gagawing paraan para tulungan ng DOJ ang pamilya na makapagbayad nga iyong other party kung ganoon iyong mga klase ng cases, kasi hindi ba, to pursue iyong hustisya na kailangan ng pamilya para diyan. Is there any?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, if the Sarmenta family is still interested and they have no money to pay for a private lawyer, then they will go to the PAO so that the PAO can file a motion for execution based on the judgment of the RTC that convicted Mayor Sanchez. Iyon po ang proseso diyan.

REP. BROSAS. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor.

On to my third point po, ayon kay Secretary Guevarra, ex-BuCor Chief Bato sought power to release heinous crime convicts. He wanted the authority to release convicts sentenced to life imprisonment to be transferred from the Justice Secretary to the BuCor Chief. Ibinigay po ba explicitly ng DOJ ang authority na ito?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, there was no action taken by the Department of Justice.

REP. BROSAS. Kung wala pong action taken, nag-release po ba ang BuCor Chief at that time ng mga convict?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, it is public knowledge that there was an admission of the good Senator. Ang sinabi niya sa publiko, I think that is 120. So, his admission answers the question.

REP. BROSAS. My next question, Mr. Sponsor,

Mr. Speaker, does this constitute a breach and violation of the DOJ Chief's authority kung ganoon po iyong nangyari?

REP. GONZAGA. As I have answered earlier, Mr. Speaker, there are two views: one, the previous view on the matter na iyong GCTA will apply to all—convicted of heinous crimes, escapees, habitual delinquents, and those what we call recidivists.

Now, there was an IRR released by then Secretary De Lima and DILG Secretary Mar Roxas. The IRR failed to contain the four classifications of PDLs. So, after the Sanchez case, pumutok na siya, there was this what we call—another interpretation of the GCTA law and DOJ found out that the four classifications of PDLs shall not be included in the Good Conduct Time Allowance. So, from there, iyon na po.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Actually, iyon lang iyong itatanong ko. A short answer lang talaga doon. Anyway, follow up ko na lang po iyong last, ito na po iyong last na tanong ko. It is a follow-up request para doon sa privatization of the New Bilibid Prison. Ito po iyong ibinigay sa amin. Iyong document na ibinigay sa amin are: list of the NBP residents, list of informal settlers, and plans for the NBP property. Kung maaalala ko po, ang tanong ko po noon ay iyong tungkol sa NBP Master Development Plan that aims to privatize the NBP's compound, 366.7 hectares of land for mixed use projects. This is part of the BBB Program of the Duterte administration. Thirty thousand residents po will be affected by the demolition some of whom have lived in the NBP for 30 to 40 years. Residents who lived in the compound before 2009 said they had been paying through a Community Mortgage Program o CMP that would allow them to have rights or own the land. Their homes were built after they completed paying the mortgage.

A period of around 30 years, the CMP was replaced by the use of rough agreement and reportedly recorded their payment back to zero. The BuCor moved to cut the water and electricity, and prohibited water and consumption supplies inside the area to allegedly drive away the residents. So, hinanap ko po.

Kaya po ako sumulat para itanong kung ano na ang situation nito, but what happened was, iyong list of employees recognized by the—NBP residents po ang ibinigay sa akin at saka ito pong plano na hindi malinaw. So, humihingi po tayo ng malinaw na—ano ang nangyari dito sa privatization ng NBP na hindi—iyong ibinigay ninyo pong klase ng ano ay hindi naman maintindihan. So, ang gusto po sana natin kung mayroong mga recording or minutes or whatever ng pag-uusap kaugnay dito. Baka puwede po tayong mabigyan, ano? At ano ang plano talaga doon sa NBP, doon nga po sa sinasabi na 30,000 residents and the 366.7 hectares?

REP. GONZAGA. Well, first, sa dokumento na hinihingi ninyo, there is an assurance from the BuCor na magbibigay sila ng bagong copy.

Second, doon naman sa 30,000 settlers na nandoon sa area ng NBP, well, iyong mga relevant agencies na involved at saka the local government unit, pinag-uusapan po kung anong gagawin diyan. If there is a need for relocation, then that would be the work of the inter-agencies group, including the LGUs—how to resettle and how to solve the problem. So far, wala pa naman pong resulta doon sa ginagawa ng agencies and the LGUs.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Siguro, ang maganda, kung may plano nga or whatever it is na mayroon kayo, ay maibigay iyong ganoong mga reports or ulat sa amin. Maaari po ba iyon, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. GONZAGA. The BuCor assures you that whatever the results of the inter-agency plus the LGU's actions may be, ibibigay ho namin sa inyo.

REP. BROSAS. Yes, and if there will be dialogues, Mr. Speaker, G. Isponsor, sana po ay makadayalogo ang mga residente na nakatira doon.

REP. GONZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Ferdinand R. Gaité of the Party-List BAYAN MUNA to interpellate the Sponsor of the proposed budget of the DOJ.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Gonzales, A.). Honorable Gaité of BAYAN MUNA is recognized.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Pahihintulutan ba ng Sponsor ng budget ng Department of Justice na mag-clarify ng ilang mga katanungan, Mr. Speaker, our distinguished Sponsor.

*At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Gonzales (A.) relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Johnny Ty Pimentel.*

Una sa lahat, ina-acknowledge po namin iyong mga receipts noong kabibigay lang, habang nandito po ako

sa ating Bulwagan, na report na hiningi namin during the hearing. At ang report na ito ay ukol doon sa mga hakbang na ginawa ng Bureau of Immigration regarding the supposed corruption concerns, issues involving office employees of the Bureau of Immigration. Although, hindi ko po masyadong nabasa lahat, there were two reports as regards allowing Chinese nationals' entry to the country, and another set regarding the Korean nationals in escort facilitation services. Ang ilang pangalang nabasa ko rito were a certain Mark Red Mariñas, Meynardo Mariñas, Fidel Mendoza, Erwin Ortañez, Glenford Comia and others—13 of them. Pero doon sa kabila, napansin ko na may isang set din na ang involved naman, 15 Korean nationals sa isang law enforcement operation, a certain Adonis Porpetso, Isidro Jonathan Tayag, Gilbert Macapagual, and so on and so forth.

Ang matanong ko lang po, iyong isang set, iyong Korean national involved doon sa extortion ng Korean nationals, who were all meted with preventive suspension, pero doon sa isang set, it involve Mark Red Mariñas and Meynardo Mariñas, and apparently, hindi nabigyan ng preventive suspension. Puwede ho bang maitanong, bakit iba ang pagtrato dito sa isang set ng officers na involved supposedly sa katiwalian? Naalala ko noon, sabi ni Pangulong Duterte, even just a whiff of corruption will be meted with the appropriate action against erring officials. Puwede ho bang malaman bakit iba ang treatment doon sa mga naturang officials, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session for a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The session is suspended.

*It was 10:24 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

*At 10:30 p.m., the session was resumed.*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). The session is resumed.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Ferdinand Gaité.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Pimentel). Please proceed.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Your Honor.

Mr. Speaker, kanina po bago po tayo mag-suspend, itinanong ko lang po, based dito sa kasa-submit lang na report galing po sa Bureau of Immigration na ni-request po namin during the briefing on the DOJ budget, ang tanong lang po namin—although hindi pa namin nababasa ito entirely dahil katatanggap lang po namin—mayroon na ho bang sinampahan ng mga kaso sa mga na-involve sa katiwalian, lalo na sa usapin ng escort facilitation at iba pa doon sa ibinigay sa ating opisina from the BID? Nagtatanong lang po kami dahil two sets ang mga kinasuhan na mga empleyado at opisyal. Iyong isang set involved sa allowing Chinese nationals' entry to the country or through escort facilitation, and there was another set of employees and officials who were investigated regarding the alleged extortion of Korean nationals and escort facilitation services. One set, the first one involving the Chinese nationals, hindi sila binigyan ng preventive suspension. Although, sa nababasa kong document, may mga ilang recommendations sa kanila, tungkol sa violation ng non-submission of Statement of Assets and Liabilities, mga travels na hindi kinukwestyon iyong kanilang pagbiyahe abroad, at iba pang bagay regarding investigation of their suspicious absences or arrivals. So, ang napansin namin, hindi po dito nagkaroon ng preventive suspension.

Naalala ko nga po, sabi ni Pangulong Duterte, just a whiff of corruption ay basis na para gumawa ng karampatang hakbang sa mga tiwaling opisyal. On the other hand, dito sa isang set ng mga officials, doon sa first set, nabanggit iyong mga ilang pangalan, a certain Marc Red A. Mariñas, Grifon Medina, Daniel Binsol, Anthony Lopez, Edward Mendoza—a total of 13. Doon naman sa isang kaso na may 18 kasama po iyong Adonis Porpecho, Isidro Jonathan Tayag—a total of 18. Iyong isang set na ito ay binigyan o pinatawan ng preventive suspension habang iyong isang set na naunang nabanggit ay walang ganoong kaukulang suspension sa kanilang kalagayan.

Matanong lang po namin, bakit parang may dalawang sets ng standards sa implementation ng preventive suspension? Kung maaalala ninyo, nabanggit na kanina sa deliberation sa budget ng Bureau of Corrections iyong mga officials na involved doon sa sinasabing release for cash ay kagyat na pinatawan ng preventive suspension. So, matanong lang po, bakit may parang two sets of standards sa pag-implement nitong preventive suspension, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, iyong one set, ito iyong kay Medina, itong kasong ito ay galing po sa report ng *Manila Times*, so *motu proprio*, pini-pick up ng Bureau of Immigration and ang recommendation nila ay magko-conduct ang NBI ng investigation. So, hindi mo makita iyong automatic suspension kasi galing po ito sa isang dokumento from the *Manila Times*. Ibig

sabihin, hearsay iyong ebidensya na nasa kanila pero kahit na hearsay iyong ebidensya, still, the BI acted *motu proprio* and recommended an investigation on the alleged trafficking.

Ito naman pong sa kabila, the second set, itong 18, iyong lahat ng JO diyan, 11 to 18 were dismissed already and 1 to 10 were suspended kasi may testigo, Korean nationals, na extortion ito. Kaya, iba iyong treatment ng klaseng imbestigasyon at iba rin iyong ibinigay na parusa. I have to make it clear na the 18 involved in the extortion of Korean nationals, ito po ay may mga testigo, hindi hearsay.

Ito namang kabila, *Medina et al.*, wala hong parusa kagaya noong 18 kasi hearsay iyong source kaya ang rekomendasyon ng BI is for the NBI to conduct further investigation on the matter. Wala ho namang special treatment dito po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po sa inyong paglililaw. Sana po ay mabigyan ng pagkakataon pang mapag-aralan iyong nabanggit na isinumiteng mga kaso sapagkat nababahala kami na, apparently, marami pang ibang kaso na kailangan pang imbestigahan ng Bureau of Immigration, lalo na doon sa usapin ng POGO, iyong Philippine Offshore Gaming Operations, sapagkat sa pagkaintindi po namin, ang BI ang siyang pangunahing ahensiya ng gobyerno na nagmo-monitor ng pagpasok ng ating mga dayuhan, mga originally visitors pero batay na nga doon sa proseso ng pag-issue ng special work permit ay napapahintulutan silang magtrabaho sa ating bansa.

Mayroon bang eksaktong bilang ang BI kung ilan na po ang Chinese visitors na nakapasok at ilan na rito ang nag-apply for work permit sa ating bansa, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, the total arrivals, tourist arrivals in our country in 2017 o 2018: Chinese nationals, in 2018, 1,115,085; Korean nationals, 1,649,900; American nationals, 348,000; and, Japanese nationals, 560,868. They are the top four, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po.

Doon sa sumunod na katanungan po, ilan po rito ang nag-apply na po for work permits under the SWP?

REP. GONZAGA. From January to August 31, the Chinese nationals who have been given working visas, Mr. Speaker, totals 42,624, and the number of Chinese nationals given Special Working Permits, which are valid only up to August 2019, is 21,128.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker, at sa ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor.

Papaano po nabibigyan ng special work permit ang ating mga dayong mga mamamayan? Kunyari po, iyong ating mga Chinese applicants for SWP.

REP. GAITE. Ayon sa Section 1 ng Special Work Permit na inilabas ng BI, ang Special Work Permit ay ibinibigay lamang sa 14 na mga professional athletes, international performers, artists, at iyong huli, consultants at specialists, so 14 iyan, iba-iba. May hakbang bang ginagawa ang BI para ma-validate o ma-confirm kung gumagawa nga ba ito ng consultancy work or does the BI simply rely on what they write on their forms, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na na Sponsor?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, may pamamaraan po iyong BI. In fact, it is not only the BID that is doing the job, but it includes the Department of Labor and Employment or DOLE. As of the moment, Mr. Speaker, as of August 2019, there are 20,474 Chinese nationals with Special Working Permits working in POGO. The process for Chinese nationals working in POGO, who come here in the Philippines, is they have tourist visas. When they come here inside our territory, an employer will apply for them for that alien employment, so there will be an employer or company who will stand for them or who will be the sponsor of these Chinese nationals. If the BI finds that the sponsors can guarantee that the Chinese nationals who are here have good moral character, that would be the time there would be an issuance of the Special Working Permit, but this Special Working Permit has been eliminated last August 2019 for the POGO. So, there have been no Special Working Permits since August 2019 and so on. There will be provisional working permit for the Chinese nationals who want to work here in the Philippines. So, iyon po ang update sa mga Chinese nationals na nandito ngayon particularly working doon sa POGO.

*At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Pimentel relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Raneó "Ranie" E. Abu.*

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Kaya lang, Mr. Sponsor, may mga ilan kasi kaming nakuhang mga impormasyon hinggil sa binabanggit na packages na sa halip na dumaan sa lugal na pagbayad ng mga naturang cost sa pagbayad sa permits na binabanggit, ay mayroon daw bribe money ranging from P3,000 to P5,000 per person para sa ACR I-Card, gayundin sa SWP na umaabot daw ng P1,000 kada tao. Doon sa 9G Visa ay P10,000 per person, at may concerns pa kung bakit may dalawang ahensiya ng gobyerno na, apparently, nagre-release ng dalawang permit, ang Department of Labor and Employment na nag-iisyu ng Alien Employment Permit na bunga noong kanilang tungkulin na magkaroon muna ng market test. Meaning, kailangang malaman kung ang manggagawang pumapasok sa ating bansa ay walang ibang Pilipino na may kakayanan na gawin ang trabahong ito, and yet, through this policy ng BI, apparently, marami nga ang

nabanggit ninyo na mga tourists, originally tourist visa na nako-convert to working visa.

So, puwede ho bang i-clarify sino ba talaga ang ahensiya ng pamahalaan ang may tungkulin na magbigay ng ganitong uri ng visa sa mga dayuhang pumapasok sa ating bansa?

REP. GONZAGA. First, doon po sa perang kinokolekta, hindi po totoo iyon. Pangalawa, doon po sa DOLE na nag-i-issue ng Alien Employment Permit, natural po iyon, kasi ang DOLE ang nagko-control o nagre-regulate ng employment sa ating bansa. Kaya nga lumabas iyong Joint Memorandum Circular ng DOLE, BI, DOJ, NBI, BIR with regard to the issuances of the Provisional Working Visa para ma-regulate at ma-check iyong issuances na iyan, kaya nagiging istrikto po iyong pagpasok o pag-issue ng mga Provisional Working Visa.

So, kabaliktaran po iyong alegasyon na pumasok iyong DOLE para pahirapan, it is not true. Pumasok iyong DOLE para ma-regulate iyong employment dito sa ating bansa. Pumasok iyong BI, pumasok iyong DOJ, pumasok iyong BIR para naman may Tax Information Number or TIN, para masigurado na iyong koleksyon ng buwis galing sa mga working Chinese na nandito sa atin.

So, to sum it up, mayroong joint circular para sa proteksyon ng mga local Filipinos, para sa proteksyon ng mga Chinese nationals na pumasok dito at para naman sa koleksyon ng buwis para sa ating bansa.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, kagalang-galang na Sponsor.

Actually, iyong panghuli na lang, ito ay sa usapin pa rin ng katiwalian. Ayon sa report ng *Manila Times* ni Ramon Tulfo, liban dito sa naisumite ninyong reports na ginawa ng BI sa dalawang sets ng mga officer na involved sa katiwalian, mayroon pang binabanggit doon sa report na wala dito iyong pangalan. By the way, it involved a certain Immigration Commissioner—sorry, a certain Arnulfo Maminta, Alex Recinto and Justin Joy Valdez na may alleged corrupt activities.

May ginawa na bang hakbang ang ating Ahensiya ng BI dito sa mga nabanggit na reports? Mayroon na bang in-initiate na investigation? Ayon kasi sa report, ganoon din, na involved daw ang mga ito sa bribery ng mga Chinese nationals at umabot daw ng P270 million pesos a month base sa computation na ginawa ng reporter na ito, and they did it for several months.

So, ang tanong ko lang po, mayroon na ho bang ginawang hakbang dito sa mga sinasabing suspects? At ang sabi pa rito, one of the three suspects is supposedly still working inside the Bureau of Immigration. Mayroon po bang ginagawang hakbang ang Bureau para mag-respond sa ganitong mga alegasyon ng katiwalian sa naturang Ahensiya, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZAGA. Mr. Speaker, noong nabasa po ng BI iyong report from the *Manila Times* with regard to certain Maminta and Recinto, gumawa po ng hakbang ang BI. Gumawa sila ng sarili nilang *motu proprio* na imbestigasyon. Ang resulta naman, tinanggal na si Maminta at tinanggal na rin si Recinto. And still, isinubmit ng BI doon sa NBI for further investigation on the matter. So, may hakbang po na ginawa ang BI tungkol po sa issue na iyan.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat, Mr. Sponsor.

Ang dahilan kung bakit itinatanong natin ito dahil isa sa ang mga programa ni Pangulong Duterte ay iyong sinasabing paglaban sa katiwalian, pero dito sa BI, at least mayroong three sets na in a span of a few months na na-involve lalo na dito sa influx ng Chinese workers sa ating bansa. Alam naman natin na kapag may regulation, laging nariryan ang opportunities for corruption. Of course, we are not anti-Chinese, we are non-racist, pero iyong problem ng matinding kawalan ng trabaho habang nagko-compete sa mga Chinese workers, may Pilipino rin na kayang gumampan ng gawaing ito. Ito ay lumilikha ng isang sitwasyon ng kawalan ng oportunidad ng trabaho sa ating mga Pilipino. Gayundin iyong posibleng mga nawawalang bilyong piso dito sa mga posibleng income tax from the Chinese nationals who are working now in our country.

So, hindi lang iyan, maraming report kahit sa Department of National Defense na iyong mga Chinese nationals na pumapasok sa Pilipinas ay posibleng threat sa ating pambansang seguridad at soberanya.

Kaya po itinatanong ng Kinatawan na ito na maraming usapin, lalo na sa katiwalian at korapsyon na ipinangako ng pamahalaan na dapat daw, just a whiff of corruption, eh hindi na ho ito whiff, umaalingasaw po iyong katiwalian kung kaya't inaasahan ng Kinatawang ito na mas gagawan ng kongkretong hakbang para iyong katiwalian sa isang Ahensiya ng gobyerno, ang BI, ay kundi man mawala, ay maibsan.

Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, at sa ating kagalang-galang na Kinatawan na Sponsor ng budget ng Department of Justice.

Maraming salamat po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ABANTE. With leave of the House, I move to recognize the honorable Minority Leader, Rep. Bienvenido M. Abante Jr. of the Sixth District of Manila.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With leave of the House, the distinguished Minority Leader is recognized.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, there being no more questions to be asked by the Minority, I move to terminate the period of interpellation and debate, Mr. Speaker. I so move. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. On part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the proposed budget of the Department of Justice and its attached agencies.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Department of Justice including its attached agencies is hereby terminated.

Congratulations to the family of the Department of Justice.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the Additional Reference of Business.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General will please read the Additional Reference of Business.

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

*The Secretary General read the following House Bills on First Reading, Message from the President, and Communications, and Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:*

#### BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 4407, entitled:

“AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT APPROACH AS A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND SOCIAL PROTECTION, MANDATING ALL NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, INCLUDING THEIR ATTACHED AGENCIES, OFFICES AND BUREAUS, LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, AND OTHER GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES TO IMPLEMENT THEIR COMMUNITY-

BASED PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND  
PROJECTS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS  
THEREFOR”

By Representative Dalog  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL  
SERVICES

House Bill No. 4408, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE FORESTLAND  
BOUNDARY OF MOUNTAIN PROVINCE”

By Representative Dalog  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL  
RESOURCES

House Bill No. 4409, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING THAT PUBLIC  
UTILITY VEHICLE DRIVERS WHO  
ENCOUNTER FORTUITOUS VEHICULAR  
MALFUNCTIONS OR BREAKDOWNS  
WHILE ON DUTY SHALL BE PROVIDED  
WITH IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY  
ASSISTANCE, AND SHALL NOT BE  
CONSIDERED AS A TRAFFIC OFFENSE”

By Representative Bautista  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 4410, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT  
OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND  
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, DEFINING  
ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS,  
REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7796,  
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE TESDA  
ACT OF 1994 AND APPROPRIATING  
FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Defensor (Michael)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT  
REORGANIZATION AND THE COMMITTEE  
ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL  
EDUCATION

House Bill No. 4411, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 284 OF REPUBLIC  
ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS  
‘HEALTH ALLOCATION ACT OF 2019’ ”

By Representative Defensor (Michael)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 4412, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE SIXTH DISTRICT  
ENGINEERING OFFICE IN ISABELA  
PROVINCE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS  
THEREFOR”

By Representative Dy (Faustino Inno)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS  
AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 4413, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE REVISED  
WAREHOUSE RECEIPTS LAW OF THE  
PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Romualdo  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND  
INDUSTRY

House Bill No. 4414, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SPECIALTY  
HOSPITAL IN CEBU CITY TO SPECIALIZE  
IN KIDNEY AND ALLIED DISEASES TO  
BE KNOWN AS THE VISAYAS KIDNEY  
INSTITUTE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS  
THEREFOR”

By Representative Lagon  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Bill No. 4415, entitled:

“AN ACT RENAMING MARIANO MARCOS  
STATE UNIVERSITY (MMSU) AS  
FERDINAND E. MARCOS STATE  
UNIVERSITY (FEMSU), EXPANDING  
ITS CURRICULAR OFFERINGS AND  
STRENGTHENING ITS GOVERNING  
BOARD, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE  
PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1279”

By Representative Barba  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND  
TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 4416, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING ALL BARANGAY  
OFFICIALS, INCLUDING BARANGAY  
TANODS, MEMBERS OF THE LUPON NG  
TAGAPAMAYAPA, BARANGAY WORKERS  
AND BARANGAY DAY CARE WORKERS, A  
LUMP SUM RETIREMENT PAYE EQUIVALENT  
TO ONE (1) YEAR HONORARIUM,  
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION  
393 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, AS  
AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE  
‘LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991’ ”

By Representative Bagatsing  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 4417, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF  
TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS  
DEVELOPMENT, DEFINING ITS POWERS  
AND FUNCTIONS, REPEALING  
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7796, OTHERWISE  
KNOWN AS THE TESDA ACT OF  
1994 AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS  
THEREFOR”

By Representative Salceda  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT  
REORGANIZATION AND THE COMMITTEE  
ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 4418, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE SPECIAL SHARI’A  
BAR EXAMINATION AS CIVIL SERVICE  
EXAMINATION, AMENDING FOR THE  
PURPOSE R.A. 1080 ENTITLED ‘AN ACT  
DECLARING THE BAR AND BOARD  
EXAMINATIONS AS CIVIL SERVICE  
EXAMINATIONS’”

By Representative Sangcopan  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE  
AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

House Bill No. 4419, entitled:

“AN ACT PROMOTING THE USE OF WASTE-  
TO-ENERGY TECHNOLOGY, AMENDING  
FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT  
NO. 8749, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE  
CLEAN AIR ACT OF 1999”

By Representatives Suarez (David), Villaraza-  
Suarez and Suarez (Aleta)  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT  
MALACAÑAN PALACE  
MANILA

September 4, 2019

THE HONORABLE SPEAKER  
and Members of the House of Representatives  
House of Representatives  
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pursuant to Section 27(1), Article VI of the 1987  
Constitution, I am returning herewith without my  
signature the consolidated enrolled Senate Bill No. 2124  
House Bill No. 9023, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING PRESIDENTIAL  
DECREE NUMBERED 1341, OTHERWISE  
KNOWN AS ‘THE CHARTER OF THE  
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY OF THE  
PHILIPPINES.’”

While I recognize the noble objective of the measure  
to promote, foster, nurture, and protect the right of all  
citizens to accessible quality education. I have serious  
reservations on the suitability of the means chosen  
to attain this end, namely, granting the Polytechnic

University of the Philippines (PUP) the status of a  
national polytechnic university, with all the benefits  
and privileges such status entails. I cannot disregard the  
fact that the PUP, despite its stature in our education  
sector, is but one of many state universities and colleges  
(SUCs) in the country. As such, its proposed designation  
as national polytechnic university needs to be reassessed  
in light of its current performance ranking among other  
SUCs. The comparative performance of its satellite  
campuses and extension programs needs to be similarly  
evaluated before granting the PUP system as a whole  
such privileged status.

A reassessment is all the more needful considering  
that the enrolled bill provides for the grant of fiscal  
autonomy to PUP, which departs from the adopted  
policy of granting only institutional autonomy to  
SUCs. The proposed provision on appropriations  
would also have a significant fiscal impact on the  
government, which may be avoided only if the PUP  
budget would continue to be subject to the need for  
prioritization and the usual budgetary and monitoring  
processes.

In view of these considerations, I am constrained  
to veto the above mentioned Enrolled Bill.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE  
President

Copy furnished:

Sen. Vicente C. Sotto III  
Senate President  
The Philippine Senate

Sec. Adelino B. Sitoy  
Head  
Presidential Legislative Liaison Office  
2/F New Executive Bldg.  
Malacañang, Manila

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter dated July 30, 2019 of Eduardo M. Año, Secretary,  
Department of the Interior and Local Government,  
submitting the Department’s CY 2019 Performance  
Challenge Fund 1st Quarter Progress Report.  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT

Letter dated 1 August 2019 of Arsenio M. Balisacan, PhD,  
Chairman, Philippine Competition Commission,  
providing the House of Representatives a copy



of their 2018 Annual Report with the theme “Disrupting Unfair Market Competition”.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Letters dated August 7, 2019 of Delfin N. Lorenzana, Secretary, Department of National Defense, submitting the reports on the implementation of Martial Law in Mindanao covering the period of 1 January 2019 to 30 April 2019 and 1-31 May 2019.  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

Letter dated 7 August 2019 of Ramon M. Lopez, Chairperson, Export Development Council (EDC), submitting the EDC Consolidated 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Report for 2019.  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Letter dated August 9, 2019 of Mario G. Lipana, Director III, Officer-in-Charge, Regional Office No. IV-A, Commission on Audit, furnishing the House of Representatives with a copy of the CYs 2016-2018 Annual Audit Report (AAR) on the Santa Cruz Water District, Santa Cruz, Laguna.  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated August 9, 2019 of Minerva I. Morales Ed. D, SUC President III, Catanduanes State University, submitting to the House of Representatives the Budget Accountability Report (BAR-1) as of June 30, 2019 of the CSU, generated from the DBM – Unified Reporting System.  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated August 22, 2019 of Maria Gleda E. Lim, State Auditor V, Supervising Auditor, Audit Groups CGS I & II – Water Districts and Other CGS Stand Alone Agencies, Regional Office No. VI, Commission on Audit, furnishing the House of Representatives a copy of the Annual Audit Report on the Patnongon Water District, Patnongon, Antique for the years ended December 31, 2016, 2017, and 2018.  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated August 22, 2019 of Lucas P. Bersamin, Chief Justice, Supreme Court of the Philippines, Manila, presenting to the House of Representatives a copy of The 2018 Judiciary Annual Report.  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

Letter dated August 22, 2019 of Maria Lourdes L. Agustin, CESO III, Regional Director, National Capital Region (NCR), Department of the Interior and Local Government, providing the House of

Representatives a copy of their 2018 Annual Report, containing accomplishments in the implementation of the Department’s PPAs in NCR.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Bureau of the Treasury-Proper Agency Action Plan and Status of Implementation on the Audit Observations and Recommendations for the calendar year 2018.  
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated August 22, 2019 of Michael G. Aguinaldo, Chairperson, Commission on Audit, furnishing the House of Representatives with copies of the 2018 Annual Audit Reports (AARs) on the following government agencies:

A. Consolidated AARs

1. Commission on Population and Development;
2. Department of Health;
3. Department of Information and Communications Technology;
4. Department of Science and Technology;
5. Department of Social Welfare and Development;
6. National Nutrition Council;
7. National Telecommunications Commission; and
8. Philippine Science High School System.

B. Individual AARs

1. Advanced Science and Technology Institute;
2. Council for the Welfare of Children;
3. Food and Nutrition Research Institute;
4. Industrial Technology Development Institute;
5. Inter-Country Adoption Board;
6. Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council;
7. Metals Industry Research and Development Center;
8. National Academy of Science and Technology;
9. National Council on Disability Affairs;
10. National Privacy Commission;
11. National Research Council of the Philippines;
12. Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration;
13. Philippine Council for Health Research and Development;
14. Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development;
15. Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology;
16. Philippine Nuclear Research Institute;
17. Philippine Textile Research Institute;
18. Science and Technology Information Institute;

19. Science Education Institute; and
20. Technology Application and Promotion Institute.

## TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated August 22, 2019 of Michael G. Aguinaldo, Chairperson, Commission on Audit, furnishing the House of Representatives with copies of the CY 2018 Annual Audit Reports (AARs) on Government-Owned or -Controlled Corporations (GOCCs) in the National Capital Region and Management Letter to a GOCC which did not submit its CY 2018 Financial Statements:

- A CY 2017-2018 Annual Audit Reports
1. Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA);
  2. Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSOP);
  3. Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP);
  4. Human Settlements Development Corporation (HSDC)-(CY 2018);
  5. Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP);
  6. Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA);
  7. National Development Company (NDC);
  8. National Food Authority (NFA);
  9. National Irrigation Administration (NIA);
  10. Natural Resources Development Corporation (NRDC);
  11. People's Television Network, Inc. (PTNI);
  12. Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR);
  13. Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO);
  14. Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA);
  15. Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA);
  16. Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth);
  17. Philippine National Construction Corporation (PNCC);
  18. Philippine Ports Authority (PPA);
  19. Philippine Postal Corporation (PPC);
  20. Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corporation (QUEDANCOR);
  21. Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA);
  22. Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA); and
  23. Tourism Promotions Board (TPB).

## B CY 2017-2018 Management Letter

1. Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC).

## TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letters dated August 22 and 28, 2019 of Salvador C. Medialdea, Executive Secretary, Office of the President, Malacañang, transmitting two (2) original copies each of the following Republic

Acts which were signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte:

1. R.A. No. 11410, entitled:  
“AN ACT GRANTING THE MAGNUM AIR (SKYJET) INC. A FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT SERVICES”;
2. R.A. No. 11411, entitled:  
“AN ACT GRANTING IGNITE TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INCORPORATED A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES”;
3. R.A. No. 11412, entitled:  
“AN ACT GRANTING THE GOLDEN NATION NETWORK INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS WITHIN THE PHILIPPINES”;
4. R.A. No. 11413, entitled:  
“AN ACT EXTENDING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO PACIFIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7967, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE PACIFIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC., A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS WITHIN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ ”;
5. R.A. No. 11414, entitled:  
“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO RAJAH BROADCASTING NETWORK, INC. TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED FORTY-FIVE HUNDRED AND FIVE, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED EIGHTY-ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR”;
6. R.A. No. 11415, entitled:  
“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO RADYO PILIPINO CORPORATION UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8145, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE RADYO PILIPINO CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT,

INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS, SATELLITE AND CABLE STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES’ ”;

7. R.A. No. 11416, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO PHILIPPINE RADIO CORPORATION UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8032, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE PHILIPPINE RADIO CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL RADIO STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES’ ”;

8. R.A. No. 11417, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO RT BROADCAST SPECIALIST PHIL. INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8126, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE R.T. BROADCAST SPECIALIST PHILIPPINES A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN MINDANAO’ ”;

9. R.A. No. 11418, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO ULTIMATE ENTERTAINMENT, INC., UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8102, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE ULTIMATE ENTERTAINMENT, INC., A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE RADIO BROADCASTING STATIONS WITHIN THE PHILIPPINES’ ”;

10. R.A. No. 11419, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING THE CADIZ RADIO AND TELEVISION NETWORK, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE WESTERN VISAYAS AREA”;

11. R.A. No. 11420, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING THE BASES CONVERSION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, LEASE, OWN, MANAGE AND MAINTAIN DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS FOR THE CONVEYANCE OF ELECTRIC POWER TO END USERS IN SELECTED AREAS COVERED UNDER

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7227, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘BASES CONVERSION AND DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1992’ ”;

12. R.A. No. 11421, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO VIMCONTU BROADCASTING CORPORATION, UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8116, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE VIMCONTU BROADCASTING CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS WITHIN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ ”;

13. R.A. No. 11422, entitled:

“AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO SWARA SUG MEDIA CORPORATION UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8122, ENTITLED ‘AN ACT GRANTING THE SWARA SUG MEDIA CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES’ ”;

14. R.A. No. 11423, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY ALAMBRE, TORIL DISTRICT, DAVAO CITY TO BE KNOWN AS ALAMBRE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

15. R.A. No. 11424, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE HIGH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT OF STA. ROSA INTEGRATED SCHOOL IN BARANGAY STA. ROSA, MUNICIPALITY OF CONCEPCION, PROVINCE OF TARLAC, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS STA. ROSA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND RENAMING THE SURVIVING SCHOOL AS STA. ROSA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

16. R.A. No. 11425, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN BARANGAY SAN ISIDRO, JARO DISTRICT, ILOILO CITY TO BE KNOWN AS USWAGSAN ISIDRO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

17. R.A. No. 11426, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) DISTRICT OFFICE IN THE 2<sup>ND</sup> DISTRICT OF CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

18. R.A. No. 11427, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE MIDSAYAP EXTENSION OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) LOCATED IN MIDSAYAP, NORTH COTABATO INTO A REGULAR LTO DISTRICT OFFICE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

19. R.A. No. 11428, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A REGULAR DISTRICT OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF MORONG, PROVINCE OF RIZAL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

20. R.A. No. 11429, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A LICENSING BRANCH OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE CITY OF PARAÑAQUE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

21. R.A. No. 11430, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A REGULAR DISTRICT OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE CITY OF TANAUAN, 3<sup>RD</sup> DISTRICT OF BATANGAS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

22. R.A. No. 11431, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SATELLITE OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF GUIMBA, PROVINCE OF NUEVA ECIJA AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

23. R.A. No. 11432, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SATELLITE OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN SAN JOSE DEL MONTE CITY, PROVINCE OF BULACAN AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

24. R.A. No. 11433, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN EXTENSION OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF INFANTA, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

25. R.A. No. 11434, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE QUEZON LICENSING CENTER OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION

OFFICE (LTO) IN LUCENA CITY, PROVINCE OF QUEZON INTO A REGULAR LICENSING CENTER TO BE KNOWN AS THE ‘LUCENA CITY LICENSING CENTER’ AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

26. R.A. No. 11435, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SATELLITE OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KIBAWÉ, PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

27. R.A. No. 11436, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A DISTRICT OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF MAMBURAO, PROVINCE OF OCCIDENTAL MINDORO AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

28. R.A. No. 11437, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A REGULAR DISTRICT OFFICE OF THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF RONDA IN THE 7<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF CEBU AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

29. R.A. No. 11438, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) EXTENSION OFFICE LOCATED IN CAUAYAN CITY, PROVINCE OF ISABELA INTO A REGULAR LTO DISTRICT OFFICE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”;

30. R.A. No. 11439, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE REGULATION AND ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC BANKS”; and

31. R.A. No. 11440, entitled:

“AN ACT RECOGNIZING THE OBSERVANCE OF JULY 25 OF EVERY YEAR AS THE NATIONAL CAMPUS PRESS FREEDOM DAY”.

TO THE ARCHIVES

Letters dated 3 September 2019 of Janice G. Ayson-Zales, Deputy Director, Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), furnishing the House of Representatives with duly certified and authenticated BSP issuances, to wit:

1. Circular Letter No. CL-2019-062 dated 20 August 2019;
2. Circular Letter No. CL-2019-063 dated 27 August 2019; and
3. Memorandum No. M-2019-022 dated 22 August 2019.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move for the approval of Journal No. 17, dated September 9, 2019.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; Journal No. 17, Monday, September 9, 2019, is hereby approved.

The Majority Leader is recognized.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. AGLIPAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session until tomorrow, Thursday, September 12, 2019, at one o'clock in the afternoon.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the session is suspended until tomorrow, Thursday, September 12, 2019, at one o'clock in the afternoon.

*It was 10:57 p.m.*