



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
**Senate**  
Pasay City

# Journal

**SESSION NO. 50**  
Tuesday, February 4, 2020

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

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**SESSION NO. 50**  
Tuesday, February 4, 2020

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 4:48 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Vicente C. Sotto III, called the session to order.

**PRAYER**

Sen. Ronald “Bato” M. Dela Rosa led the prayer, to wit:

*Let us bow our heads and put ourselves in the presence of the Lord.*

Almighty and eternal God, we humbly implore Your light and guidance as we gather once more to start another session of service to our beloved nation.

We beseech You to fill our hearts and minds with wisdom, understanding and love, and use us as Your instruments in giving the Filipino people the best life that they deserve through the work that we do as the nation’s legislators.

Lord, remain at the center of our daily sessions as we discuss, deliberate and decide on issues and concerns with only the best interests of our countrymen foremost in our hearts.

Give us strength to overcome whatever challenges come our way and bestow on us the

ability to discern Your will as we seek the answers to the problems that beset our nation.

Almighty God, we implore You as well to bless and protect our countrymen and our public servants and keep us strong, united and resilient in facing the clear and present danger brought about by the entry of the novel coronavirus into our land. This virus may be so strong, but we firmly believe that Your divine power to cure and prevent the spread of this contagion is even mightier.

We thank You, Lord, for this opportunity to serve and we offer our service, our sacrifices and achievements for Your greater glory.

Amen.

**MANIFESTATION  
OF SENATE PRESIDENT SOTTO**

Senate President Sotto manifested that the session was convened at 4:48 p.m. and not the usual 3:00 p.m. because of a very urgent matter that was taken up by the Committee on Health and Demography.

**ROLL CALL**

Upon direction of the Senate President, the Secretary of the Senate, Atty. Myra Marie D. Villarica, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

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Angara, S.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Binay, M. L. N. S.	Pimentel III, A. K.
Dela Rosa, R. B. M.	Poe, G.
Drilon, F. M.	Recto, R. G.
Gatchalian, W.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Go, C. L. T.	Sotto III, V. C.
Gordon, R. J.	Tolentino, F. T. N.
Hontiveros, R.	Villanueva, J.
Lacson, P. M.	Villar, C. A.
Marcos, I. R.	Zubiri, J. M. F.
Pacquiao, E. M. D.	

With 21 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senator Cayetano was on official mission as “she had meetings with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Secretary Fortunato dela Peña and his team, Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Wendel Avisado, and some members of the House of Representatives regarding sustainable and innovative practices,” as indicated in the February 4, 2020 letter of her Chief of Staff.

Senator Lapid was on official mission abroad.

Senator De Lima was unable to attend the session as she was under detention.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journal of Session No. 49 (February 3, 2020) and considered it approved.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS**

At this juncture, Senator Zubiri acknowledged the presence in the gallery of former State senator of Connecticut, USA, Mr. Thomas A. Bozek, and Ms. Cecilia P. Celebran from Connecticut.

Senate President Sotto welcome the guests to the Senate.

#### **REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

The Secretary of the Senate read the following matters and the Chair made the corresponding referrals:

#### **BILLS ON FIRST READING**

Senate Bill No. 1308, entitled

**AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE TRADITIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8423, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “TRADITIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE ACT OF 1997”**

Introduced by Senator Pacquiao

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1309, entitled

**AN ACT MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT, MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF RAIN WATER HARVESTING SYSTEMS IN THE COUNTRY**

Introduced by Senator Pacquiao

**To the Committees on Public Works; Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1310, entitled

**AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT CORPORATE COUNSEL BY RATIONALIZING AND FURTHER PROFESSIONALIZING ITS ORGANIZATION, UPGRADING POSITIONS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

**To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1311, entitled

**AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF THE SOUTHERN ISABELA MEDICAL CENTER IN SANTIAGO CITY, PROVINCE OF**

PO. 004

ISABELA, FROM THREE HUNDRED FIFTY (350) TO SEVEN HUNDRED (700) BEDS, AND INCREASING ITS MAINTENANCE AND OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES

Introduced by Senator Binay

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1312, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONVERSION OF DINAPIGUE, ISABELA ROAD GOING TO DILASAG, AURORA INTO A NATIONAL ROAD AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Binay

**To the Committees on Public Works; and Finance**

Senate No. 1313, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A REGULAR LTO DISTRICT OFFICE IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF POLOMOLOK, SOUTH COTABATO, TO BE KNOWN AS THE "LTO LICENSING CENTER OF POLOMOLOK," AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Binay

**To the Committees on Public Services; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1314, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR STANDARDS FOR THE PRACTICE OF REHABILITATION MEDICINE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation**

Senate Bill No. 1315, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE REGISTRATION, REGULATION AND OPERATION OF COOPERATIVES BANKS AND OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

**To the Committees on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; Cooperatives; and Ways and Means**

Senate Bill No. 1316, entitled

AN ACT REORGANIZING THE OFFICES OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS AND RECLASSIFYING THE PLANTILLA POSITIONS IN THE AGENCY

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

**To the Committees on Electoral Reforms and People's Participation; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1317, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL OF THE PHILIPPINES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR THE PROMOTION OF RESEARCH WORK AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

**To the Committees on Science and Technology; Ways and Means; and Finance**

**RESOLUTION**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 313, entitled

A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING HIDILYN DIAZ FOR WINNING THREE GOLD MEDALS IN 2020 ROMA WORLD CUP

Introduced by Senator Pacquiao

**To the Committee on Rules**

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## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Committee Report No. 35, prepared and submitted by the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform on Senate Bill No. 1318 with Senators Pangilinan, Villar, Revilla, Jr. and Poe as authors thereof, entitled

**AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10068 OR THE ORGANIC AGRICULTURE ACT OF 2010,**

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill Nos. 34, 146, 648 and 773.

Sponsor: Senator Villar

### **To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

Committee Report No. 36, submitted jointly by the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; Constitutional Amendments and Revision of Codes; Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations; and Finance, on Senate Bill No. 974 introduced by Senator Gordon, entitled

**AN ACT DEFINING GOOD CONDUCT, INSTITUTING ADDITIONAL MEASURES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GOOD CONDUCT TIME ALLOWANCE, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE ARTICLES 97 AND 99 OF ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED PENAL CODE;**

Senate Bill No. 993 introduced by Senators Sotto III, Lacson, and Gordon, entitled

**AN ACT REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10592, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLES 29, 94, 97, 98 AND 99 OF ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED;**

Senate Bill No. 995 introduced by Senator Angara, entitled

**AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLES 29, 97, 99, 171, AND 174, AND CREATING A NEW ARTICLE 99-A UNDER ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE REVISED PENAL CODE";**

Senate Bill No. 998 introduced by Senator Zubiri, entitled

**AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLES 97 AND 99 OF ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE REVISED PENAL CODE";**

Senate Bill No. 1003 introduced by Senator Go, entitled

**AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLES 29, 97, 98, AND 99 OF ACT NO. 3815, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED PENAL CODE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES;**

and Senate Bill No. 1034 introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr., entitled

**AN ACT FURTHER AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED PENAL CODE,**

recommending the adoption of the recommendations and their immediate implementation.

Sponsor: Senator Gordon

### **To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

Committee Report No. 37, prepared and submitted jointly by the Committees on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; and Finance on Senate Bill No. 1319 with Senators Revilla, Jr., Pimentel III, Zubiri and De Lima as authors thereof, entitled

**AN ACT EXPANDING THE COVERAGE OF THE CENTENARIANS ACT OF 2016, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION TWO OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10868 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,**

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill Nos. 295, 1178 and 1212.

Sponsors: Senators De Lima and Revilla, Jr.

### **To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

Committee Report No. 38, submitted jointly by the Committees on Local Government; and Electoral

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Reforms and People's Participation on House Bill No. 4961 introduced by Representative Barzaga, entitled

**AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY H-2 IN THE CITY OF DASMARIÑAS, PROVINCE OF CAVITE,**

recommending its approval without amendment.

Sponsor: Senator Tolentino

**To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

Committee Report No. 39, submitted by the Committee on Local Government on House Bill No. 2998 introduced by Representative Puno, *et al.*, entitled

**AN ACT TRANSFERRING THE CAPITAL AND SEAT OF GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL FROM THE CITY OF PASIG, METRO MANILA TO THE CITY OF ANTIPOLO, PROVINCE OF RIZAL,**

recommending its approval without amendment, taking into consideration Senate Bill No. 1170.

Sponsor: Senator Tolentino

**To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

Committee Report No. 40, submitted by the Committee on Local Government on House Bill No. 5028 introduced by Representative Palma, *et al.*, entitled

**AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 24 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-WORKING PUBLIC HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY TO BE KNOWN AS "ARAW NG SIBUGAY",**

recommending its approval with amendment.

Sponsor: Senator Tolentino

**To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

Committee Report No. 41, submitted by the Committee on Local Government on House Bill No. 4960 introduced by Representative Romualdez (Y.M.), *et al.*, entitled

**AN ACT DECLARING NOVEMBER 8 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-WORKING PUBLIC HOLIDAY IN THE EASTERN VISAYAS REGION TO BE KNOWN AS THE "YOLANDA COMMEMORATION DAY",**

recommending its approval without amendment, taking into consideration Senate Bill No. 1229.

Sponsor: Senator Tolentino

**To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

**RESOLUTIONS**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 314, entitled

**RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING ALEXANDRA M. EALA FOR WINNING THE JUNIOR GIRLS' DOUBLES EVENT, TOGETHER WITH INDONESIA'S PRISKA MADELYN NUGROHO, IN THE 2020 AUSTRALIAN OPEN IN MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA ON 31 JANUARY 2020**

Introduced by Senator Zubiri

**To the Committee on Rules**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 315, entitled

**RESOLUTION URGING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH TO PROVIDE CONGRESS AN IMPACT RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT OF THE NOVEL CORONA-VIRUS EPIDEMIC AND PROPOSE A MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN THEREOF**

Introduced by Senator Marcos

**To the Committees on Economic Affairs; and Health and Demography**

PM 9/9

## SPECIAL ORDER

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 22 on Senate Bill No. 1174 from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders.

### COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 22 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1174

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading, Senate Bill No. 1174 (Committee Report No. 22), entitled

#### AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 185 OF THE OMNIBUS ELECTION CODE, AS AMENDED, BY ABOLISHING THE PRINTING OF THE VOTERS INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTION SHEET.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, with the permission of the Body, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, only the title of the bill was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

The Chair recognized Senator Marcos for the sponsorship.

### SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR MARCOS

Senator Marcos, as chairperson of the Committee on Electoral Reforms and People's Participation, submitted for the plenary consideration of the Body Senate Bill No. 1174 under Committee Report No. 22, otherwise known as the "Abolishing the Printing of the Voters Information and Instruction Sheet."

*Following is the full text of Senator Marcos' sponsorship speech:*

Almost 35 years ago, Republic Act No. 7904 amended the Omnibus Election Code to enjoin the Comelec to furnish every registered voter through registered mail with return card, personal service with corresponding receipt to be signed by the voter or any person who knows the voter, or any other practical means, with an unfilled official sample ballot, voter information sheet, and the list of all registered national, provincial,

and city candidates to be voted for in the said election.

While we today derive most of our news digitally, remaining online and interactive in real time through all our waking hours, and our children look forward to a future filled with the internet of things, Artificial Intelligence (AI) or artificial-aided near future, our Comelec is condemned by an antiquated law to reach each one of over 61,000,000 voters by mail—old unreliable regular snail mail.

Not only is this a major dent in our country's financers but an unconscionable waste of time, energy, and focus for each one of our election officers.

Today, I submit Committee Report No. 22 sponsoring therewith Senate Bill No. 1174, entitled "An Act Amending Section 185 of the Omnibus Election Code, As Amended, Abolishing the Printing of the Voters Information and Instruction Sheet," so that finally, together with the rest of the world, we enter the information age doing away with the mandatory printing and posting by mail of the said unfilled official sample ballot, voter information, and the list of registered national, provincial, and city candidates.

The elections last year are just the most recent example of the absurdity of the Comelec voter's information mandate. Despite spending P294,000,000 plus in 2019 for the printing of voter's information and instruction sheet, an additional P67,000,000 plus for the deployment and distribution of the same, such voter's information and instruction sheet resulted in so many mistakes in the 18,000 plus available positions up for voting with so many mistakes in the names and numbers of the numerous candidates that the Comelec had to issue Minute Resolution No. 190546 dated May 9, 2019, finally surrendering, giving up, and ordering that the manual correction of said voter's information and instruction sheets by the local election officer should please be done before distribution. Obviously, this was never actually implemented for lack of material time.

In fact, in far-flung areas of the archipelago such as Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga City, not a single voter's information and instruction sheet was mailed or received by even a single voter. Meanwhile, in Zamboanga Sibugay, only five of 16 municipalities mailed the voter's information to their respective voters.

In exasperation, the Comelec urged us during a public hearing in the Committee on Electoral



Reforms and People's Participation last October 8, 2019, recommending that we should finally do away entirely with the mailing of hard copies to individual voters and merely retain the posting of Voter's Information and Instruction Sheets at the barangay and precinct levels.

The proposed bill, therefore, is a simple and budget-saving solution, updating the Comelec requisite of informing the public by publication through broadcast, digital or electronic media, in addition to displaying the same information at conspicuous public areas including barangay halls. No regular or individual snail mail letters rife with errors and confusion with missing positions and misspelled names shall henceforth be utilized.

We cannot stand in the way of progress. Instead, let us harness technology to push our democracy and every single one of our electoral processes to the forefront of this digital information age. It is in the nature of the landscape to change, and it is in the nature of people to help that process along.

Today, I enjoin you all in our Chamber to help the process of electoral modernization along.

#### **SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1174**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

#### **SPECIAL ORDERS**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of the following to the Calendar for Special Orders:

1. Committee Report No. 40 on House Bill No. 5028 (*Araw ng Sibugay*); and
2. Committee Report No. 41 on House Bill No. 4960 (*Yolanda Commemoration Day*).

#### **COMMEMORATION BILLS**

With the consent of the Body, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the following House bills were considered on Second Reading:

1. House Bill No. 5028 (Committee Report No. 40), entitled

AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 24 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-WORKING PUBLIC HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA SIBUGAY IN COMMEMORATION OF ITS FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY TO BE KNOWN AS "ARAW NG SIBUGAY"; and

2. House Bill No. 4960 (Committee Report No. 41), entitled

AN ACT DECLARING NOVEMBER 8 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NONWORKING PUBLIC HOLIDAY IN THE EASTERN VISAYAS REGION TO BE KNOWN AS THE 'YOLANDA COMMEMORATION DAY.'

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, with the permission of the Body, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, only the titles of the bills were read without prejudice to the insertion of their full text into the Record of the Senate.

#### **OMNIBUS SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR TOLENTINO**

With the permission of the Body, Senator Tolentino delivered his omnibus sponsorship speech on House Bill Nos. 5028 and 4960 under Committee Report Nos. 40 and 41, respectively.

*The full text of Senator Tolentino's sponsorship speech follows:*

This humble representation rises to sponsor two local holiday bills. Specifically, we are sponsoring:

- 1) Committee Report No. 40 on House Bill No. 5028, entitled, "An Act Declaring February 24 of every year a Special Non-working Public Holiday in the Province of Zamboanga Sibugay in Commemoration of its Founding Anniversary To Be Known As 'Araw Ng Sibugay,'" which the committee, with the approval of the proponents, deemed better to rename as "Araw ng Zamboanga Sibugay,"
- 2) Committee Report No. 41 on House Bill No. 4960, "An Act Declaring November 8 of Every Year a Special Non-working Public Holiday in the Eastern Visayas Region to be Known as 'Yolanda Commemoration Day'."

Upon perusal of the records of the previous Congress, the Committee found it appropriate to



adopt the same criteria used by the last Congress in declaring nonworking holidays, to wit: 1) It is the founding anniversary of charter day of the LGU concerned; 2) It involves honoring a hero revered in the locality; 3) It involves commemoration of an event with historical or cultural importance subject to the favorable indorsement of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines; and 4) The number of existing legislated nonworking holidays in the locality does not exceed two.

For the holiday of “Araw ng Zamboanga Sibugay,” this meets criteria No. 1. As I mentioned, this is the province’s charter day. The Province of Zamboanga Sibugay was formerly part of the Province of Zamboanga del Sur until the new province was finally separated and created by Republic Act No. 8973, signed on November 7, 2000, and ratified through a plebiscite on February 24, 2001, the very day this bill seeks to declare as a holiday.

Likewise, this passes criteria No. 4 as, currently, there is no single nonworking holiday in the province.

Zamboanga Sibugay is composed of 16 municipalities and 389 barangays which serves as the home of approximately 630,000 Filipinos who are looking forward to celebrate their colorful history and showcase their distinct identity on the day, the founding day, the very birthday of the province they hold dear.

For the second holiday of the *Yolanda* Commemoration Day, this arguably meets criteria No. 3, for Filipinos do not need any certification from anybody to remind us of the significance and impact of typhoon *Haiyan*, or typhoon *Yolanda*, had in our lives six years ago. However, the monstrous typhoon *Yolanda*, known as *Haiyan*, a category 5 mega cyclone, with terrifying speeds of 150 to 180 miles per hour, left nothing but destruction on its path and devastated in its wake particularly the Visayan region. To date, the name sends a grim reminder of the events caused by the disaster.

In fact, the name *Yolanda* was stricken off the list of probable typhoons by the weather bureau.

Thousands died, thousands missing, death probably running up to more than 6,000 civilians and more, billions of pesos worth of damages in infrastructure, violence in the aftermath, and a grieving nation despite the proximity of the holidays, because that was already November.

The act of commemorating the deluge of *Yolanda* is to pay respects to the lives that have

been lost, to remember the bravery and heroism of those who risked their lives to rescue and provide relief to the victims, and also as a salute to the bravery, courage, and resilience of the survivors and the families left behind.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to pass these measures.

### **SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 5028**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

### **SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4960**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

### **COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 31 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1240**

*(Continuation)*

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1240 (Committee Report No. 31), entitled

### **AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING BAMBOO INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES, CREATING THE BAMBOO INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT CENTER (BIDC), APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

Senator Zubiri stated that the parliamentary status was the period of individual amendments.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Pimentel, sponsor of the measure.

### **PIMENTEL AMENDMENTS**

As proposed by Senator Pimentel, there being no objection, the Body approved the following amendments, one after the other:

#### ***Page 1***

1. On line 2, replace the figure “2019” with 2020;



***Page 2***

2. Replace lines 2 and 3 with the following subparagraph:
  - A) *BAMBOO* – REFERS TO A NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCT CLASSIFIED AS GRASS, WHICH USUALLY HAS HOLLOW CULMS AND LIGNOSECELLULOSE MATRIX, THAT IS USED AS TIMBER SUBSTITUTE AND AS RAW MATERIAL FOR BAMBOO-BASED PRODUCTS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO PULP AND PAPER, TEXTILES, HOUSE CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS, COAL, CUTLERIES, COSMETICS, DENTAL CARE, AND FOOD;
3. Replace lines 8 to 12 with the following subparagraph:
  - C) *BAMBOO INDUSTRY* – THE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PLANTING AND CULTIVATION OF BAMBOO AND BAMBOO-BASED PRODUCTS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO HANDICRAFTS, BAMBOO SHOOTS, BAMBOO UTILIZED FOR CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES, BAMBOO FOR INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION INVOLVING MECHANIZED PROCESSING OF LARGER VOLUMES OF CULMS, SUCH AS FOR FLOORING, LAMINATED FURNITURES, CHOPSTICKS, MAT BOARDS, CHARCOAL, PAPER AND PULP, TEXTILES, AND UNPROCESSED BAMBOO CULMS UTILIZED IN APPLICATIONS, SUCH AS SCAFFOLDING AND TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION;
4. On line 20, after the word “including,” insert the phrase BUT NOT LIMITED TO;
5. On the same line, after the word “handicraft” and the comma (,), insert TEXTILES;

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6. On line 6, after the word “building” and the comma (,) insert the phrase QUALITY ASSURANCE, TESTING;
7. On line 29, between the figure “879” and then comma (,), insert the figure S. 2010;

***Page 4***

8. On line 3, after the word “industry,” insert the words AS CO-CHAIR;
9. On line 9, before the semicolon (;), insert a comma (,) and the phrase DOST-PHILIPPINE

COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURE, AQUATIC, AND NATURAL RESOURCES RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT (DOST-PCAARRD) OR DOST-PHILIPPINE TEXTILE RESEARCH INSTITUTE (DOST-PTRI);

10. Delete lines 10 to 12;
11. Replace lines 15 to 18 with the following:
  - H) ONE (1) REPRESENTATIVE FROM BAMBOO FARMERS ASSOCIATIONS OR NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN THE BAMBOO INDUSTRY;
12. On line 19, after the word “industry,” insert the phrase AS BAMBOO PROCESSOR OR BAMBOO PRODUCT MANUFACTURER;
13. Reletter the subparagraphs accordingly;

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14. On line 9, after the word “formulate,” insert a comma (,) and the phrase UPDATE AND PUBLISH;
15. Replace the words, starting with the word “The” on line 23 up to the word “regulations” on line 30, with the following paragraph:

THE STAFF AND PERSONNEL OF THE SECRETARIAT SHALL COME FROM THE EXISTING PERSONNEL OF THE DTI. HOWEVER, SHOULD THERE BE NO AVAILABLE AND QUALIFIED PERSONNEL, THE DTI SECRETARY MAY PROPOSE THE CREATION OF NEW POSITIONS TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS OF THE CENTER. FOR THIS PURPOSE, THE SECRETARY MAY ALSO CREATE THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, STAFFING PATTERN AND COMPENSATION SCHEDULE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (CSC).

16. On line 30, replace the word “shall” with MAY;
17. On line 31, replace the word “by” with OF;

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18. On line 5, after the acronym DOST-FPRDI, insert a comma (,) and the words DOST-PCAARRD AND DOST-PTRI;
19. On line 7, after the acronym DENR, insert a comma (,) and delete the word “and”; after the acronym DOST-FPRDI, insert a comma (,) and the phrase DOST-PCAARRD, DOST-PTRI, DTI, AND THE DA;



***Page 7***

20. On line 26, after the word "activities," insert the phrase AND CAPABILITY TRAININGS;
21. On line 27, before the word "production," insert the preposition THE.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT  
OF SENATOR PIMENTEL**

Still on page 7, line 27, after the word "bamboo" and the period (.), Senator Pimentel proposed to insert a new sentence, to read as follows:

THE DENR SHALL LIKEWISE ALLOT NOT LESS THAN 25% OF THE BUDGET FOR THE EXPANDED NATIONAL GREENING PROGRAM UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 193, S. 2015, TO BAMBOO PLANTATION AND PROPAGATION.

At this juncture, Senator Drilon asked how much would be the equivalent of 25% of the budget for the Expanded National Greening Program. Senator Pimentel replied that it is P1 billion, which is 25% of the total Expanded National Greening Program budget of P4 billion.

Since it was expressed in percentage, Senator Drilon asked if the amount would correspondingly increase since the budget of the Expanded National Greening Program is increased yearly. Senator Pimentel answered in the affirmative.

Asked how the figure 25% was arrived at, Senator Pimentel replied that it was based on Executive Order No. 193.

But Senator Drilon pointed out that EO 193 referred only to the National Greening Program, and that it did not mention 25%. He said that the way the proposed amendment was phrased, a substantial allotment of P1 billion was being earmarked only for bamboo without any explanation and rationalization for such earmarking.

Senator Villar explained that the intent of the proposal is to institutionalize, through the law, the executive order that provides that 25% of the greening program should be planted with bamboo. She added that another executive order also mandated the DepEd "to buy 25% of their chairs made of bamboo."

Senator Drilon pointed out that the reference used was merely an executive order and that nothing

therein earmarked 25% for bamboo plantation. He noted that the executive order actually allocates 25% of the area and not of the budget.

Senate President Sotto stated that the question of Senator Drilon was how the figure 25% was arrived at.

Senator Pimentel acknowledged that Senator Drilon was correct that the executive order did not mention an amount. He expressed willingness to accept any proposed amendment by Senator Drilon as regards the percentage to be allocated to the bamboo industry.

However, Senator Drilon stated that the proposal was completely a new provision which was never discussed on the floor because it was not found in the original committee report. He said that he was not prepared to bargain because to him, that would be arbitrary. He said that he was willing to support the P1 billion proposal but that he would like to know how the P1 billion was arrived at.

Senator Lacson recalled that during the deliberation on the DENR budget, in response to Secretary Cimatu's request for some amount for the bamboo industry, there was an agreement that P1 billion would be taken out of the National Greening Program which, however, did not materialize and the P1 billion remained with the National Greening Program. He confirmed Senator Drilon's assertion that there was nothing in the executive order that 25% or P1 billion should be appropriated or allocated to the bamboo industry. He added that there was no law yet to the effect.

Senator Pimentel stated that precisely, the bill was proposing that the law mandates that 25% of the budget of the National Greening Program would go to the bamboo industry. He said that the proposal was purely a policy issue which could still be adjusted.

Senator Drilon disagreed, saying that it was a question of appropriating P1 billion. He believed that there was a basis for him to ask how the amount of P1 billion was arrived at.

Senator Villar explained that in her experience in the department, if Congress does not indicate the amount to be allocated, the department would not implement it; thus, if Congress wants to help the bamboo industry, it has to indicate in the law how

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much it would allocate. She reminded Senator Drilon that Iloilo is the bamboo capital of the Philippines and that they have the best bamboo plantation in the Philippines located in Maasin, Iloilo.

Senator Drilon asked Senator Villar to stop alluding to personal motives. He said that even if Iloilo does not get a single peso, he could support any amount as long as there is justification for it.

To clarify, Senate President Sotto said that Senator Drilon wanted to know how the figure was arrived at and suggested that the proposal be discussed further since it was not taken up during the period of interpellations.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the session was suspended.

*It was 5:40 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:53 p.m., the session was resumed.

#### MANIFESTATION OF SENATE PRESIDENT SOTTO

Senate President Sotto stated that before the suspension, there was an issue raised on page 7 of the measure, and to resolve the problem, there was an agreement that the amendment would indicate a percentage of the greening area without having to

place or earmark an amount or budget; however, given its implications on the other parts of the bill, Senator Drilon suggested that the executive order be incorporated so that it would no longer be touched later on.

At this juncture, Senator Pimentel requested to suspend the period of amendments until the next session day.

#### SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1240

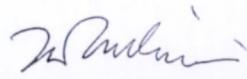
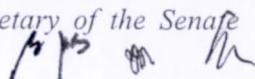
Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of the following day.

*It was 5:55 p.m.*

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

  
ATTY. MYRA MARIE D. VILLARICA  
*Secretary of the Senate*  


Approved on February 5, 2020