



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Senate
Pasay City

Journal

SESSION NO. 68
Tuesday, February 28, 2017

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

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Tuesday, February 28, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:33 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Joel Villanueva led the prayer, beginning it with a quotation from *Psalm 23 (Psalm of David)* King James Version of the Holy Bible, to wit:

*Let us put ourselves in the presence
of the Lord.*

"The Lord is my shepherd; and I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths
of righteousness for His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou
art with me; thy rod and thy staff they
comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence
of mine enemies: thou anointest my head
with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all
the days of my life: and I will dwell in the
house of the Lord forever."

Thank You, Almighty God, for Your Word. Indeed,
they are life for those who find them and
health to all their flesh.

We come before You, humbling ourselves,
knowing that without You, we can do nothing.

Today, we ask that You forgive our sins in
words, in thoughts and in deeds, and help us
for our lives to become holy and acceptable
to You.

Remind us, O Lord, that life here on earth is
temporary and that we should continue to
invest in eternity in serving You, in loving
You, and in honoring Your Holy Name.

Bless everyone here; bless the entire Senate.
Bless our President, our Vice President, the
entire Executive and Judiciary as well.

And into Your hands we commend everything, as
we give back to You all the glory, all the
honor and all the praise.

In the Name that is above every Name, in the
Name of Jesus Christ, we pray.

Amen.



ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Senate President, the Secretary of the Senate, Atty. Lutgardo B. Barbo, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

Angara, S.	Legarda, L.
Aquino, P. B. IV. B.	Pacquiao, E. M. D.
Binay, M. L. N. S.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Drilon, F. M.	Pimentel III, A. K.
Ejercito, J. V. G.	Sotto III, V. C.
Escudero, F. J. G.	Trillanes IV, A. F.
Gatchalian, W.	Villanueva, J.
Honasan, G. B.	Villar, C. A.
Lacson, P. M.	Zubiri, J. M. F.

With 18 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senators Gordon, Hontiveros, Poe and Recto arrived after the roll call.

Senator Cayetano was on official business as indicated in the February 28, 2017 letter of the Senator's chief of staff.

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

DEFERMENT OF APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body deferred the consideration of the Journal of Session No. 67 (February 27, 2017) to a later hour.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR SOTTO

Senator Sotto manifested that Senate President Pimentel was in receipt of Senator De Lima's letter dated February 27, 2017, indicating her formal withdrawal from the Majority bloc in order to join the Minority bloc in the Senate.

Thereupon, Senate President Pimentel announced that with Senator De Lima's manifestation through a letter, 18 senators belong to the Majority bloc and six senators belong to the Minority bloc.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senator Sotto acknowledged the presence in the gallery of the following guests:

- Bert Lenten, deputy executive secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), with Tynon Carrie, administration and services officer;
- Theresa Mundita S. Lim, director of DENR - Biodiversity Management Bureau;
- Mayor Abdulwahid O. Sahidulla of the Municipality of Tongkil, Province of Sulu;
- Bishop Emeritus Ramon Cabrera Arguelles, former Lipa Archbishop, and company;
- Members of *Alyansa Tigil Mina*;
- Members of Global Catholic Climate Movement Philippines;
- Students from Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila School headed by Ms. Ria Clarissa Vicente;
- Students from Sienna College of Taytay led by Mr. Eduardo G. Evangelista; and
- Board members of Bukidnon led by Vice Governor Calingasan.

Senate President Pimentel welcomed 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. 1352, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR REGULATION, CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE, THE PHILIPPINE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Sotto III

To the Committees on Science and Technology; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1356, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE BALIK SCIENTIST PROGRAM APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Joseph Victor Ejercito

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

Senate Bill No. 1357, entitled

AN ACT EXPANDING THE PURPOSES AND APPLICATION OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION FUND (SEF) AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 272 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Joseph Victor Ejercito

To the Committees on Local Government; and Education, Arts and Culture

Senate Bill No. 1358, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FREE DORMATORIES FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES (SUCS), AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREOF

Introduced by Senator Joseph Victor Ejercito

To the Committees on Education, Arts And Culture; and Finance

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 303, entitled

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOTR) TO RE-EVALUATE THE REGISTRATION OF ALL BUSES IN THE COUNTRY

Introduced by Senator Sotto III

To the Committee on Public Services

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 304, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED DYSFUNCTIONAL AND DEFECTIVE NEW METRO RAIL TRANSIT (MRT) COACHES

Introduced by Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay

To the Committee on Public Services

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 305, entitled

RESOLUTION DECLARING VACANT THE OFFICE OF THE SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE AND ELECTING SENATOR RALPH G. RECTO AS SUCCESSOR THEREOF

Introduced by Senators Emmanuel "Manny" D. Pacquiao, Sotto III, Lacson, Honasan II, Legarda, Cynthia A. Villar, Richard J. Gordon, Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay, Grace Poe, Sonny Angara, Win Gatchalian, Joel Villanueva, Joseph Victor Ejercito, Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III, Cayetano and Zubiri

To the Committee on Archives

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter from the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs, submitting to the Senate the "Report to Congress on Assistance to Nationals" for the period January to June 2016, in CD digital format, pursuant to Section 33 of Republic Act No. 8042, otherwise known as Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995, as amended by Republic Act No. 10022.

To the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Foreign Relations

Letter from the National Irrigation Administration, dated 17 January 2017, submitting to the Senate the "CY 2016 Fourth Quarter Progress Report of Mindanao Sustainable Agrarian and Agri-

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culture Development Project (MinSAAD)," a DAR Foreign Assisted Project implemented by NIA in support to the successful implementation of CARP.

To the Committee on Agrarian Reform

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee Report No. 40, prepared and submitted jointly by the Committees on Health and Demography; Justice and Human Rights; and Ways and Means, on Senate Bill No. 1353, with Senator Risa Hontiveros as author thereof, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR THE REFUSAL OF HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS TO ADMINISTER APPROPRIATE INITIAL MEDICAL TREATMENT AND SUPPORT IN EMERGENCY OR SERIOUS CASES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 702, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DEMAND OF DEPOSITS OR ADVANCE PAYMENTS FOR THE CONFINEMENT OR TREATMENT OF PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CLINICS IN CERTAIN CASES" AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8344, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill No. 216.

Sponsor: Senator RisaHontiveros

To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

Committee Report No. 41, prepared and submitted jointly by the Committees on Health and Demography; Local Government; and Finance, on Senate Bill No. 1354, with Senators Sotto III, Legarda, Trillanes IV, Paolo Benigno "Bam" Aquino IV, Sonny Angara, Risa Hontiveros and Joel Villanueva as authors thereof, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH POLICY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENHANCING

THE DELIVERY OF INTEGRATED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, PROMOTING AND PROTECTING PERSONS UTILIZING PSYCHIATRIC, NEUROLOGIC AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL HEALTH SERVICES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill Nos. 9, 415, 522, 657, 1155, and 1190.

Sponsor: Senator RisaHontiveros

To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

Committee Report No. 42, prepared and submitted jointly by the Economic Affairs; and Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship, on Senate Bill No. 1355, with Senators Legarda and Win Gatchalian as authors thereof, entitled

AN ACT ADOPTING INNOVATION AS VITAL COMPONENT OF THE COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT POLICIES TO DRIVE INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT, PROMOTE THE GROWTH AND NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS OF MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill No. 38.

Sponsor: Senator Win Gatchalian

To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

MINORITY LEADER

Speaking on behalf of the Minority, Senator Aquino announced the designation of Senator Drilon as the Minority Leader.

The Chair took note of the manifestation.

ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER

On behalf of the Minority, Senator Drilon manifested that Senator Aquino is the designated Assistant Minority Leader.

The Chair took note of the manifestation.



**COMMITTEE REPORT NO.30
ON SENATE BILL NO.14**
(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 14 (Committee Report No. 30), entitled

AN ACT ADJUSTING THE AMOUNT INVOLVED, VALUE OF PROPERTY OR DAMAGE ON WHICH A PENALTY IS BASED, AND THE FINES UNDER ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED PENAL CODE.

Senator Sotto stated that the parliamentary status was the period of interpellations.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Drilon, sponsor of the measure, and Senator Lacson for his manifestation.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR LACSON

Prefatorily, Senator Lacson stated that he would no longer interpellate on the measure and that he would just seek some clarification and assurance from Senator Drilon, noting the latter's extensive knowledge and legislative experience, that there would be no distortion in the imposition of fines on offenses of similar nature as well as with the same effect and damage to either the offender or the offended party.

To cite an instance, he stated that under paragraph 1 of Article 217 of the Revised Penal Code, the crime of malversation of public funds or property has a penalty of *prisión correccional* in its medium and maximum periods (two years, four months and one day to six years) if the amount involved does not exceed P200 which under the proposed measure is adjusted to P20,000. Senator Drilon explained that the formula used is the amount stated in the present law divided by P2.50 and multiplied by 500.

Citing another instance, Senator Lacson noted that under Section 3 of Republic Act No. 3019, or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, the corrupt practices of public officers are punishable from six years and one month to 15 years without any amount involved. Comparing it with the crime he

earlier cited, he said that there is obviously inequality or distortion in the fines imposed on both offenses, the gravity and nature of which are somewhat similar.

Senator Drilon clarified that the bill only touched on the Revised Penal Code but not special laws. However, he acknowledged that the concept raised by Senator Lacson was acceptable and he gave assurance that it would find its way into future revisions such as possibly making a special adjustment that similar crimes should have approximately similar penalties.

Citing the penalty for treason as compared to the penalty for violation of Republic Act No. 9165, or the Dangerous Drugs Act, Senator Lacson noted that treason carries the penalty of *reclusion perpetua* to death and if the death penalty is imposed, it carries a fine of P100,000 by virtue of R.A. No. 7659 (Death Penalty Act), a fine which was originally at P20,000 in 1993, but is now proposed to be raised to P4 million; on the other hand, violation of the Dangerous Drugs Act also carries the penalty of *reclusion perpetua* to death with the fine being raised from P500,000 to P10 million. He noted that even though the gravity of the offense of the two crimes is somewhat similar, there is a distortion in the amount of fines. He said that he gave these examples in the hope that his proposed amendments would be accepted.

Reiterating that he had no problem with the concept, Senator Drilon explained that his Committee limited the amendments to the Revised Penal Code, but to show his sincerity and good faith in accommodating the suggestion of Senator Lacson, he said that he was willing to file, together with Senator Lacson, if necessary, a corresponding bill which will address the fines in these special laws. He also expressed his willingness to look into the feasibility of Senator Lacson's proposal being introduced as an amendment to the bill.

To further illustrate the distortions in the fines being imposed on certain offenses, Senator Lacson noted that an "impossible crime" such as a person shooting a dead person carries a fine of P200 to P500 which would be raised to P40,000 to P100,000, while a crime of "slight physical injury" does not have an alternative penalty of fine. He thanked Senator Drilon for accommodating his suggestion and expressed hope that he could work with him to introduce the corresponding individual amendments on the matter.

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Senator Drilon gave assurance that he would work with Senator Lacson to come up with a more equitable version of the bill, which is nothing more but an upgrading of the values of the money from 1930 to the present so that the penalties will not be considered as cruel.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INTERPELLATIONS

There being no other interpellation, upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body closed period of interpellations.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DRILON

Senator Drilon requested that he be allowed to submit the committee amendments at subsequent sessions given the proposed amendments and the manifestation of Senator Lacson which would be incorporated in their proposal as well.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR SOTTO

Senator Sotto requested the senators who have individual amendments on the measure to prepare them as soon as the committee amendments are brought forward.

COAUTHOR

Senator Drilon manifested that Senator De Lima was a coauthor of Senate Bill No. 14.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 14

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

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 8 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1233

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1233 (Committee Report No. 8), entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE COCONUT FARMERS AND INDUSTRY TRUST FUND, PROVIDING FOR ITS MANAGEMENT AND UTILIZATION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Senator Sotto stated that the parliamentary status was still the period of interpellations. He informed the Body that Senator Recto had withdrawn his reservation to continue with his interpellation on the bill.

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

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR PANGILINAN

Senator Pangilinan stated that Senator Recto had agreed to end his interpellations without prejudice to raising clarificatory questions during the period of amendments.

Senator Recto confirmed the manifestation of Senator Pangilinan.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 3:44 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:27 p.m., the session was resumed.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR GORDON

Senator Gordon said that the coconut industry represents 3.5 million farmers and about 20 million families who have remained poor. He asked if the reason for their remaining poor is the coco levy or because the government has not really provided the wherewithal on which they could improve their lives. Senator Pangilinan affirmed that the government has failed to provide the necessary interventions to enable the farmers to increase their income, for instance, through the introduction of the latest technologies to add value to their products because by and large, the main crop of the coconut farmers is still copra which is the lowest in terms of value adding for the coconut industry.

Asked by Senator Gordon whether there is a monopoly within the coconut industry that corners the price of coconut meat, Senator Pangilinan said that he was not aware of a monopoly, but he surmised that there are big players in the industry who control the price of coconut meat in the country.

To the information that there are three or four groups of big buyers of copra meat that manage to keep the prices low and keep the people poor because they buy low and then sell high, Senator Pangilinan said that there are indeed big players who buy the products and are able to bring down the price. Also, with an average farm size of only a hectare or $1\frac{1}{2}$ hectare, the coconut farmers are placed at the mercy of traders and buyers because they do not have the clustering which would allow them to have economies of scale.

Senator Gordon said that it is important to know what really ails the coconut industry and whether there are people cornering the market and keeping the farmers poor, just as some people corner rice, sugar, coconut and other agricultural products. He said he would want to be given information as to the identities of those who do such practice.

Asked by Senator Gordon how much land constitutes the coconut industry in the country, Senator Pangilinan replied that there are around 3.5 million hectares devoted to the industry.

Senator Gordon informed the Body that Indonesia has about three or four times more in terms of land area devoted to coconut farming from which it produces 18.3 million tons of coconut. However, he noted that the Philippines is second in Asia with 15,353 metric tons, which means that with limited land, it was able to produce much more than Indonesia which has larger tracts of land.

Senator Gordon lamented that government has not really been paying attention to the productivity and the value added that must go into the coconut industry and to the many products that could make the farmers rich. He further lamented that the farmers and even the players in the coconut industry stick to the small-scale retail market and could not compete with the bigger players in the field.

Senator Pangilinan said that because of the lack of support for them, the farmers are limited to supplying raw material, which is copra. He said that the strategy really would be to provide them with the necessary technology, training and capacity-building so that they can do value adding of their products instead of limiting themselves to copra which yields them only P50 per day. He said that they could venture into bigger-ticket products like coco nets, virgin coconut oil and coco water which have infinitely more value than copra.

Senator Gordon said that it is quite obvious that the problem lies in the fact that the government has not really supported the industry, not just the farmers but also those who want to invest in the coconut industry. He said that there are many rich people in the country who feel that coconut prices are too low and instead of giving the industry a break, they would rather invest somewhere else where they could get quicker returns. He opined that the solution to the problem would be to try to nudge the government into paying more attention to the coconut industry rather than coming up with another bureaucracy.

Asked who leads the coconut industry, whether it is the Philippine Coconut Authority, the DENR or the DA, Senator Pangilinan said it is the Philippine Coconut Authority which has the primary mandate to develop the coconut industry.

Senator Gordon lamented that the Philippine Coconut Authority has failed abysmally. Senator Pangilinan agreed with Senator Gordon's observation, recalling that when he took over the leadership of the Philippine Coconut Authority in 2014, 50% of the coconut trees were nutrient-deficient, around 18% were senile, and 80% of the coconut lands were mono-cropped. He said that the conditions could tell that, precisely, there was not enough done to address the challenges confronting the coconut industry and the farmers.

Senator Gordon said that in spite of the limitations, the country was still able to produce more coconut than anybody else in 2015. He surmised that if the country used the science of creating value added in the industry, it should be making a lot more money in coconut.

Senator Pangilinan informed the Body that the country is estimated to produce 15 billion nuts of coconut annually, so that if five coconuts can produce one liter of coconut water, divided by five, the country could produce three billion liters of coconut water annually. However, he lamented that with the lack of technology, capital and investments in the industry, the largest producer of coconut water in the country could only be producing anywhere between 300,000 liters to one million liter of coconut water a month.

Senator Gordon said that based on his data, Thailand produces more coconut water than the Philippines and ranks No. 9 in coconut production, while Brazil ranks No. 4.

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Senator Pangilinan said that almost three billion liters of coconut water are thrown away because of the primary practice of securing the copra, which is really so much wastage. Senator Gordon said that the country threw away a value-added commodity in favor of a low-value commodity.

Senator Pangilinan surmised that the lack of technology to make sure that the coconut water does not spoil, as well as the lack of capital for its processing, contributed to the unfortunate situation. He said that the processing and cold storage of coconut water would be similar to that of the milk industry which the farmers could not do unless they have the necessary technology, infrastructure and equipment.

Senator Gordon said that based on computations made by his staff, producing 5,000 kilograms of coconut per day would cost P10.8 million because it involves a composting facility and a coco water processing facility which would include drilling beans, drilling fresh water collection, receiving vessel, *kawa*, furnace, feedtank, and centri-feed processing.

Asked by Senator Gordon how much coconut water could be produced with 5,000 kilograms of coconut, Senator Pangilinan said that based on his data, there is one liter of coconut water for every five nuts. He said that he would not have the average weight of one nut but could provide Senator Gordon the data at a later time.

Senator Gordon said that another problem confronting the coconut industry would be the cost of transporting the produce which has contributed to the lack of entrepreneurship of the farmers who would rather have the middlemen buy the coconuts for the copra giants or the coconut big giants buy the coconut meat instead of transporting the coconuts to the coconut water facilities or to the coconut mills.

Senator Pangilinan said that the challenge would be to cluster the coconut farms because if they are clustered and the farmers are organized into a cooperative or an enterprise, they could spread the cost of a transport vehicle instead of just one farmer having to figure out how to transport the coconuts to bring to the mills.

Asked by Senator Gordon whether it would be a worthy endeavor to educate the farmers to plant black pepper or other agricultural products such as

cacao or coffee in between coconut trees, Senator Pangilinan replied in the affirmative. He said that scientists have discovered that the coconut tree is a social tree, in the sense that if there are more crops around it, it improves in yield. He said that he finds it ironic that 80% of coconut lands are monocropped.

Senator Gordon said that it would seem that the problems confronting the farmers have already been identified, such as the issue of transportation and the need to do value adding. He asked if the coco levy fund could be used for the aforementioned concerns.

Senator Pangilinan said that, precisely, the purpose of the measure is to use the coco levy fund for the Coconut Enterprise Development Program which would be included in a coconut industry development plan to be approved by the President.

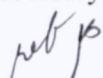
Senator Gordon believed that it would be better to force the PCA to create the coconut master plan instead of the government creating another bureaucracy.

Senator Pangilinan disclosed that there have been previous master plans that were put together with the help of the University of the Philippines Los Baños and the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) which went through the process of consultations in creating the road maps. However, he said that all these road maps were left untested so that it requires that the PCA put it together and execute it.

Senator Gordon pointed out that the government can actually utilize its agricultural education program so that all the solutions can be planned together, like the SUCs, the UP and the agricultural colleges meeting together to recommend course of actions to help the country's agricultural problems, going into multi-varied crops.

Senator Gordon believed that the PCA does not possess sufficient extension workers that could reach out to the farmers. Hence, he suggested that the more feasible way of doing things should be for them to have not just science but also the attitude, the philosophy, the culture and big plans to get bigger returns of their goals.

Senator Pangilinan agreed with Senator Gordon that the academe, particularly the SUCs, should play an important role in providing the necessary



technology or training in order to change paradigms in the coconut farmers mentality. He said that the Trust Fund Committee was precisely tasked to execute or implement the development plan which includes the role of SUCs in the coconut enterprise development programs.

Senator Gordon lamented that he does not want to create another bureaucracy since there is already an agency tasked to handle such matter. He said that this agency was even preempted by the private sector masquerading as a group working for the good of the farmers. He said that the group succeeded because they have a hundred billion; they have a bank controlled by the government; and they have the cultural center and the coconut place, among others. He said that although these were considered extravagance to some people, they were funded from the coconut fund.

He pointed out that if the coco levy fund would be utilized to overhaul the coconut industry, to provide transportation, to provide universities with all the necessary technology, to provide funds for research, and to conduct extension work for the farmers, then the country could produce a lot more. However, he lamented that the country could not even create its own coconut water that could be exported abroad. He believed that the solution to the problem is not to create another bureaucracy but to ensure predictability, consistency and continuity.

Senator Pangilinan disclosed that in the earlier interpellations of Senator Recto, the latter raised the question of whether or not the Committee was creating a new layer of bureaucracy and even suggested that the PCA be strengthened by lessening the number of members of the Trust Fund Committee. He said that he was willing to go along with the idea of strengthening the PCA so that during the period of amendments, the Committee would consider strengthening the existing bureaucracy instead of creating a separate one.

Senator Gordon said that he supports the suggestions of Senator Recto. He further suggested that the PCA concentrate not only on coconut products such as copra, but on activities that would strengthen transportation, multi-cropping, production of coconut water, among other things. Senator Pangilinan agreed.

Senator Pangilinan disclosed that when he was the chair of the PCA, he discovered a portion of a

premium coconut lumber which could actually last for decades. He said that the lumber was endemic and indigenous, even stronger than metal because they do not rust. He said that with the right technology and the right science, the country could actually use the coco lumber for homes that would be sturdy and long lasting.

As head of the Red Cross of the Philippines and governor of the International Federation, Senator Gordon said that with money from the international community of the Red Cross, they were able to buy coco lumber to build over 140,000 homes, of which 78,000 homes were for *Yolanda* victims. However, he disclosed that he had a hard time in getting the coco lumber because the PCA got in the way. He believed that in cases of disasters, humanitarian organizations that intend to build homes should be allowed to utilize coconut trees right away instead of the PCA giving them a hard time.

Senator Gordon also noted that when Senator Pangilinan was still with the PCA, typhoons struck several areas in the country, like typhoon *Pablo*, *Yolanda*, and *Nene* which made the coconut trees fell like pick-up sticks. He then asked Senator Pangilinan if the PCA immediately came up with a replanting program of coconut trees on those areas. He noted that he had never seen the PCA come up with an emergency program to allow the farmers to plant new trees or crops like black pepper, cacao, coffee, among others.

Senator Pangilinan replied that when he came in as chairman of the PCA in 2014, after the occurrence of typhoon *Pablo* and *Yolanda*, he was surprised to find out that there were still P1.8 billion funds available so that they had to do some catching up. He said that *Yolanda* felled 10 million trees and it took them sometime to clear the debris and that they have to employ a new technique to finally clear Region VIII. He said that since he had to go to the area every three weeks for four months to get the updates on debris targets, it really pushed the PCA to move and deliver. Senator Gordon noted that it really depends on the leadership.

To the report that there was underspending of the budget of the PCA when its appropriation expanded over P4 billion per year in 2014 and 2015, and that it lacks the capacity to absorb and utilize large funds, Senator Gordon said that the better way would be to delegate some of its powers to the SUCs



in the area so that they could immediately utilize the funds and make them accountable for it. Senator Pangilinan replied that the Committee is open to the proposal in order to strengthen or provide the necessary synergy between the PCA and other government agencies like SUCs.

Senator Gordon said that giving such kind of money to the SUCs would enable them to report how many farmers they have educated, how much they have distributed in terms of plants like black pepper, cacao or coffee, and the government would know that something good happened. Senator Pangilinan replied that the Committee is willing to accommodate proposed amendments regarding structure and organization at the proper time.

Senator Gordon noted that the Kaunlaran ng Bayan (KAANIB) coconut intercropping project has an allocation of P155.98 million which the organization raised to P200 million, the utilization of which the government did not even know. Senator Pangilinan explained that the KAANIB program is providing farm inputs and equipment like decorticating machines, fertilizers and seedlings. He said that the Committee is willing to accept proposed amendments that would strengthen the organization.

Senator Gordon informed the Body that the 15 million coconut trees that were destroyed by typhoon *Yolanda* were in the poorest provinces, namely, Maguindanao, Leyte, Quezon and Bicol; thus there is the urgency to address the problem.

Going back to the issue on the coco levy fund, Senator Gordon then presented to the Body documents from the United Coconut Planters Bank taken from UNICOM which appears to be like shares of stocks.

On another matter, Senator Gordon noted that the Supreme Court had ruled that the levies are in the form of taxes, and as such, they belong to the government. He then asked what should be done to the poor coconut farmers who were in a way swindled.

Senator Pangilinan confirmed that the Supreme Court had ruled that the levy was in the form of a tax and is, therefore, government fund. As such, he said that it could not be given to private persons. He recalled that the Supreme Court had also invalidated the issuance of the shares of stocks.

Asked what could be done for the farmers, Senator Pangilinan replied that a registry of all coconut farmers is now being obtained and that steps are being undertaken to ensure that the fund will be used to develop coconut enterprises, with coconut farmers' organizations as beneficiaries.

Senator Gordon contended that the issuance of the shares of stocks, which the Supreme Court ruled as invalid, was done right under the noses of the Securities and Exchange Commission and in violation of the Securities Law, which meant that the government was negligent and remiss in its duties and was responsible for the humongous swindle of coconut farmers.

In reply, Senator Pangilinan surmised that the issuance of the shares of stock could have been allowed at that time through the issuance of a presidential decree and the decision of the PCA Board. In such context, he surmised that there was a presumption of regularity until the courts intervened.

As to how farmers, who still hold shares of stocks which have become mere scraps of paper, could be helped, Senator Pangilinan said that the fund could not be allocated to the farmers individually but that Senator Villar has requested the Committee to put an appropriation for social protection that would indirectly benefit them in the form of healthcare assistance, insurance or scholarships, among others.

Senator Gordon asked on the possibility of government applying what the US government did to weed out fake Filipino World War II veterans benefits claimants. He said that through its so-called Missouri List, the US government listed down all the veterans, properly documented them and then properly recognized them. He recalled that during the outbreak of World War II, then US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issued a proclamation that any Filipino who takes up arms against the Japanese would be given benefits. However, he said that after the war, hundreds of thousands who did not fight the Japanese suddenly falsely represented that they did fight the war and sought veterans' benefits, prompting the US government to rescind the Roosevelt's declaration and come out with the Missouri List to ascertain the legitimate claimants.

Senator Pangilinan said that he was more than willing to look at proposals that should not, however, violate the ruling of the Supreme Court and should

not be declared unconstitutional. He said that the Committee favors one track, such as budgetary allocations for social protection in the form of scholarships and healthcare for the coconut farmers.

Senator Gordon then thanked Senator Pangilinan, hoping that the latter who he hoped would favorably act on his proposed amendments.

Senator Pangilinan said he would ask his staff and the committee secretary to coordinate with Senator Gordon's staff so that they could craft the amendments manifested during the latter's interpellation.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 5:11 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:15 p.m., the session was resumed.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1233

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

COMMITTEE CHAIARMANSHIP

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body elected Senator Pangilinan as chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Amendments and Revision of Codes.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 36 ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4631

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of House Bill No. 4631 (Committee Report No. 36), entitled

AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO REPUBLIC BROADCAST SYSTEM, INC., PRE-

SENTLY KNOWN AS GMA NETWORK, INC., AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7252, ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING THE REPUBLIC BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC. A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES."

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

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Poe, sponsor of the measure, and Senator Lacson for his individual amendment.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF SENATOR LACSON

On page 3, between lines 19 and 20, Senator Lacson proposed to insert the following paragraph:

PUBLIC SERVICE TIME REFERRED HEREIN SHALL NOT BE LESS THAN TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE PAID COMMERCIALS OR ADVERTISEMENTS PER HOUR, WHICH SHALL BE ALLOCATED BASED ON NEED TO THE EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE, JUDICIARY, AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSIONS. THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (NTC) SHALL ISSUE RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THIS PURPOSE.

Senator Poe commended Senator Lacson for his efforts to reform certain policies by the media with regard to allowing more public service announcements and giving equal exposure to all. However, she said that she would have to be cautious in accepting the proposed amendment because it applies to the franchise of GMA 7, but it would not bind other networks whose franchises are yet to be renewed. She presented another school of thought which is to have a separate broadcasting code that would cover other networks in order to comply with the same requirement as opposed to just tailoring the provision to the franchise under consideration. While the intended reform is good, she said that it should have been included in the Comelec law.

Senator Lacson explained that the proposed provision would apply to all franchise renewals in the

future, such as ABS-CBN whose franchise will be renewed in 2020.

To allay Senator Poe's apprehension that the provision would violate the equality clause, he cited Supreme Court decisions therein, such as the case of *Telecommunications and Broadcast Attorneys of the Philippines v. GMA*, and *GMA v. Comelec*, wherein the franchise grantee, GMA, was a party. He then read excerpts from the Supreme Court decision in the case of *Telecommunications and Broadcast Attorneys of the Philippines v. GMA*, to wit:

“... Art. XII, 11 of the Constitution authorizes the amendment of franchises for the common good. What better measure can be conceived for the common good than one for free air time for the benefit not only of candidates but even more of the public, particularly the voters, so that they will be fully informed of the issues in an election? [I]t is the right of the viewers and listeners, not the right of the broadcasters, which is paramount.”

In another portion of the decision, Senator Lacson said that the Supreme Court pointed out that:

“... the government must, of necessity, allocate broadcast frequencies to those wishing to use them. There is no similar justification for government allocation and regulation of the print media.

“In the allocation of limited resources, relevant conditions may validly be imposed on the grantees or licensees. The reason for this is that, as already noted, the government spends public funds for the allocation and regulation of the broadcast industry, which it does not do in the case of the print media. To require the radio and television broadcast industry to provide free air time for the COMELEC Time is a fair exchange for what the industry gets.”

In reply, Senator Poe said that indeed a franchise is a privilege granted by the government to the franchise holder. She said that in other countries, franchise holders would have to pay billions to the government to secure such franchise while in the Philippines franchise holders are not required to do so except to pay the taxes required.

She reiterated that she would rather be cautious in view of the elections in 2019. She asked whether GMA 7 would have to comply with the provision while other networks whose franchises are not yet

up for renewal would not be required to do so. She feared that the amendment might be disadvantageous to a network. She said she would rather have the entire Chamber decide on the amendment.

Senator Lacson stated that he is confident that he has the numbers should the amendment be put into a vote, adding that he had discussed the provision with the other members of the Body.

Asked by Senator Recto when the ABS-CBN and ABC 5 networks would renew their respective franchises, Senator Poe replied that ABS-CBN would renew their franchise in year 2020, while the franchise of station TV-5 would expire on March 30, 2020.

Asked whether the amendment of Senator Lacson, which seeks to impose an additional condition on the franchise of GMA 7, was related to the Fair Election Act, Senator Poe answered in the negative, saying that it would apply to the Executive, Legislative, the Judiciary and the constitutional commissions, including the Comelec.

Senator Lacson explained that the average period of paid commercials on a per hour basis is 20 minutes and the government would only ask for two minutes or 10% of the 20-minute paid commercial.

Asked by Senator Recto whether the amendment would be used in the 2019 elections, Senator Lacson answered in the negative. However, he revealed a Supreme Court ruling which incidentally involved the Comelec.

Senator Poe clarified that the rules and regulations drafted by the NTC should be applicable to all broadcasting companies, taking into account Section 4 (*Responsibility to the Public*), which is found in all broadcasting franchises. She believed that stations GMA 7, ABS-CBN and TV-5 should comply if the NTC issues implementing rules that would require other networks to do so even if it is not yet found in their franchise.

Senate President Pimentel asked if it is possible to come up with a law which would specifically state that the franchises of the following networks are deemed amended.

Senator Lacson maintained that through his proposal, this is the best time and opportunity to give what is due the government and that Congress

should not wait for another 25 years for another franchise renewal. He contended that it is only right that government be given at least 10% of the time allocated for paid commercials which, he said, is just a trickle in the budget of these broadcast media. As to whether there is constitutional infirmity with the proposed amendment to Section 4, he said that he had earlier read into the record the Supreme Court rulings on this matter.

He noted that the existing Section 4 of the bill only mentions "adequate and reasonable," terms which, he said, are very subjective and relative. Moreover, he informed the Body that the president and CEO of GMA 7 himself admitted that Section 4 of the House bill is vague, the reason why he would introduce an amendment that provides specificity to what constitutes public service time.

For his part, Senator Recto opined that the amendment would be an additional imposition, like an additional tax to GMA 7, which would not affect ABS-CBN and TV-5, until their respective franchises were renewed.

At this juncture, Senator Lacson expressed his willingness to yield to Senate President Pimentel, suggesting that a proviso be inserted, if legally possible, which would mandate that the application of the provision be suspended for two or three years, until such time that other stations could already renew their contracts.

Senate President Pimentel opined that an amendment to that effect can be crafted in a form of a law which would be applicable to all players in the industry. He then asked Senator Poe for a reply to the suggestion.

Preliminarily, Senator Sotto reminded the Body of his earlier disclosure regarding his relationship with GMA 7. He then expressed his support to the amendment of Senator Lacson, and he opined that all radio, TV and cable stations should be imposed the same, and not single out GMA 7 just because its franchise is under consideration. He asked what would happen to the franchises which would expire three years after. Saying that he supports the proposal, he said that he was citing the problem as regards the timing and the equality. He expressed hope that the Body could come to a middle ground on the matter.

Senator Lacson stressed that he is for fairness, the reason why he asked if it is legally possible to

suspend the implementation of the amendment if approved by the Body until the other players could renew their franchises.

For her part, Senator Poe stated that she sympathized with Senator Lacson and that she believed that he was able to solicit support from the members of the Chamber. However, she pointed out that if the proviso would be implemented three years after, there would be no guarantee that the amendment would still be applicable to other franchises, adding that the amendment might not be approved by the future Congress. Thus, she said that a separate law might be definitive. She pointed out that TV stations were making a killing out of the venture and the people and the government should also get a fair share of the profit that the stations are enjoying. So that there would be no doubt as to the position of each member, she said that the amendment be put to a vote.

Senator Recto asked on the airtime that GMA 7 allotted for news and public affairs programs, noting that the station not only pays taxes on income, VAT or local government taxes as it also withholds wages, creates jobs, provides public service and news programs. Senator Poe replied that during weekdays, eight newscasts, including documentary pieces, were set for the day between GMA 7 and its affiliate channels and each program would be allotted an average of one hour minus the commercials or at least 40 minutes per program. She added that the shows are considered public affairs programs.

Senator Poe clarified that the 10% provision asked by Senator Lacson would come from the ads sold, to which Senator Recto stated that he would look for a middle ground, like counting the number of public affairs program GMA 7 has and how many minutes would be for commercials. Senator Poe opined that the suggestion of Senator Recto was defensible because the stations could already see it as public service compliance; thus, it needs to be clear.

Senator Lacson pointed out that if the news affairs programs, including the live coverage of Senate hearings, were counted then the government might find itself indebted to the TV stations. Senator Recto clarified that he was not amending the bill to the effect that it would be the government who will be paying GMA 7. However, he said that the Body should also consider the public service programs of GMA 7 and the other broadcast stations so that they would not only be paying taxes but also providing

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content for public service or live broadcast of news to help educate the public.

Senator Poe assumed that such might be an on-demand time requirement by the government and is not at the discretion of the network because the news programs that they have would still be their prerogative. She said that the amendment would be a mandate by the government and that even the content of the show must also be decided by the government.

Senator Recto pointed out that TV stations also perform a responsibility to the public and they should devote a lot of their airtime for such purpose.

For his part, Senator Honasan assumed that Senator Lacson has a clear sense that his amendment has a regulatory intervention effect. On Section 4 on the Equality Clause, he suggested a reverse equality clause that would help solve the issue. He proposed to insert, on page 7, line 18 the proviso THE PUBLIC SERVICE TIME PROVIDED IN SECTION 4 HEREOF SHALL BE REQUIRED SIMILARLY FROM ALL OTHER RADIO AND TELEVISION FRANCHISE HOLDERS. He said that the proposed proviso might help direct TV stations towards overall self-regulation. He recalled that the concept of self-regulation was agreed upon during the deliberation of the Freedom of Information bill.

Asked whether GMA 7 was a member of the KBP, Senator Poe answered in the negative. Senator Honasan then asked how self-regulation or the equality clause would kick in for GMA 7 if the station is not a member of the KBP and why the station opted out of KBP.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 5:00 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

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

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR SOTTO

Upon resumption, Senator Sotto said that he had a discussion with Senators Poe and Lacson wherein the latter, the proponent of the amendment, has expressed that he would possibly accept the issue of

equality if the proposal would be effective two or three years after. He said that while it is usual to find sunset provisions in laws, he would propose a sunrise provision which he would submit to the Body for their concurrence. He also asked the legal office of the Senate Secretariat to look into the possibility of a sunrise provision in the proposed measure.

CLARIFICATION OF SENATOR LACSON

Senator Lacson stated for the record that he is not anti-GMA 7 but only pro-government. He disclosed that, in fact, the president of the network is his friend.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva stated for the record that he was ready to introduce his individual amendments. In reply, Senator Sotto said the amendments would be considered the following day.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4631

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 5:57 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:07 p.m., the session was resumed.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 16 ON SENATE BILL NO. 462

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 462 (Committee Report No. 16), entitled

**AN ACT REGULATING THE PRACTICE
OF SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY
IN THE PHILIPPINES, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

Proposed

Senator Sotto stated that the parliamentary status was the period of interpellations.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Trillanes, sponsor of the measure, and Senator Sotto for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR SOTTO

Asked by Senator Sotto what is meant by speech language pathology, Senator Trillanes stated that as defined in line 4 of page 1 of the bill, it is an allied medical profession devoted to the evaluation, diagnosis, management and prevention of human communication disorder.

Asked to give an example of such a disorder, Senator Trillanes said that this would include stammerers and stutterers as well as those suffering from Tourette syndrome – disorders which could be addressed by a speech language pathologist. Senator Sotto said that he was interested in the matter since one of his grandsons has Tourette syndrome.

Asked why it was necessary to regulate speech language pathology as a profession, Senator Trillanes explained that an estimated 20 to 23 million Filipinos suffer from the disorder and without a regulated profession, he feared that fake doctors might to take advantage and pretend to address the disorder.

Asked how many licensed speech language pathologists the country has, Senator Trillanes said that while there are no licensed speech language pathologists since the profession has yet to be regulated, the country has produced 800 speech language pathology graduates over the past 25 years. He added that the course is being offered mostly in private academic institutions but it is also taught in public institutions.

Asked how these professionals are being supervised considering that there are no licensed speech pathologists at present, Senator Trillanes explained that they are being supervised through an association of speech language pathologists.

On whether the bill makes registration as a speech language pathologist a prerequisite before one can practice the profession, Senator Trillanes explained that they would be registered and eventually take the board examination before they could be incorporated into the accredited integrated professional organization.

Since Section 15 allows a speech language pathologist to register without passing the examination, Senator Sotto expressed concern that the provision would defeat the purpose of having the examination and might also affect the quality of the speech language pathologist. Senator Trillanes believed that since the bill would be the first regulatory law on the profession, there would be a grandfather clause that those who are practicing speech language pathologists would initially be exempted, but succeeding graduates would need to take the board examinations.

Senator Sotto suggested that an amendment be formulated to clarify this matter.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 6:16 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:17 p.m., the session was resumed.

Senator Sotto hoped Senator Trillanes would be willing to accept an amendment to clarify Section 15 in the way that the latter had explained it to him.

Asked for the funding requirement for the implementation of the bill and if this was considered in the General Appropriations Act for 2017, Senator Trillanes replied that since the proposal was not included in the 2017 national budget, it would be covered in the 2018 GAA after its approval.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INTERPELLATIONS

There being no further interpellation, upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of interpellations and proceeded to the period of committee amendments.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

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

1. On page 1, line replace the word "medical" with HEALTH;

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2. On page 3, line 10, change the words "speech language pathologist" with ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONAL;
3. On page 7, line 26, between the words "language" and "disorders", insert AND COGNITIVE COMMUNICATION; and
4. On the same page, between lines 28 and 29, insert a new letter (H) which shall read as:
H) CLEFT LIP AND PALATE AND CRANIOFACIAL CONDITIONS;

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

There being no further committee amendment, upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of committee amendments and proceeded to the period of individual amendments.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Gatchalian for his individual amendments.

GATCHALIAN AMENDMENTS

As proposed by Senator Gatchalian and accepted by the Sponsor, there being no objection, the Body approved the following amendments, one after the other:

1. On page 1, line 2, replace "2016" with 2017;
2. On page 2, line 8, insert a new subsection "(d)", subject to style, to read as:

D) "SWELLING DISORDERS AS ADDRESSED BY SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS SHALL INCLUDE DIFFICULTIES IN MANAGEMENT OF A SOLID OR LIQUID BOLUS IN THE ORAL, PHRYNGENAL AND/OR LARYNGENAL STAGES OF FEEDING.

Thereafter, Senate President Pimentel directed the Secretariat to reletter the succeeding sections accordingly.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF SENATOR SOTTO

On page 8, line 22, after the word "organization," Senator Sotto proposed to insert a new proviso to read as: *PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE REGISTRATION WITHOUT EXAMINA-*

TION SHALL ONLY BE APPLIED TO THE GRADUATES OF SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY PRIOR TO THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Trillanes, the session was suspended.

It was 6:24 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:25 p.m., the session was resumed.

WITHDRAWAL OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Upon resumption, Senator Sotto withdrew his proposed amendment on Section 15.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS

There being no other individual amendment, upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of individual amendments.

APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 462 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, Senate Bill No. 462 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 462

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

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR SOTTO

Senator Sotto manifested that Senator Recto, in his letter, has indicated that he was withdrawing his authorship of Proposed Resolution No. 2 of both Houses, entitled "Resolution of Both Houses of Congress Proposing Amendments to Certain Restrictive Economic Provisions in the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, Specifically on Articles XII, XIV, and XVI Thereof."

The Chair noted the manifestation.

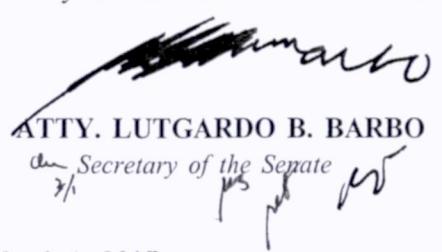
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ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

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

It was 6:27 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.


ATTY. LUTGARDO B. BARBO
as Secretary of the Senate
3/1 ps M

Approved on March 1, 2017.