



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Senate
Pasay City

Journal 1

SESSION NO. 85
Tuesday, May 23, 2017

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

SESSION NO. 85
Tuesday, May 23, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:19 p.m., the Senate President Pro Tempore, Hon. Ralph G. Recto, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Francis "Kiko" N. Pangilinan read the prayer from the *Book of Psalms 112:1-10*, to wit:

"Praise the Lord.

Blessed are those who fear the Lord,
who find great delight in His commands.

His children would be mighty in the land;
the generation of the upright will be blessed.

Wealth and riches are in his house,
and his righteousness endures forever.

Even in darkness light dawns for the upright,
for the gracious and compassionate and
righteous man.

Good will come to him who is generous and lends
freely, who conducts his affairs with justice.

Surely he will never be shaken;
a righteous man will be remembered forever.

He will have no fear of bad news;
his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.

His heart is secure, he will have no fear;
in the end he will look in triumph on his foes.

He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor,
his righteousness endures forever;
his horn will be lifted high in honor.

The wicked man will see and be vexed,
he will gnash his teeth and waste away;
the longings of the wicked will come to
nothing."

In the Name of Jesus, we pray.

Amen.

ROLL CALL

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

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Angara, S. | Pacquiao, E. M. D. |
| Binay, M. L. N. S. | Pangilinan, F. N. |
| Drilon, F. M. | Poe, G. |
| Ejercito, J. V. G. | Recto, R. G. |
| Honasan, G. B. | Sotto III, V. C. |
| Hontiveros, R. | Villanueva, J. |
| Lacson, P. M. | Villar, C. |
| Legarda, L. | Zubiri, J. M. F. |

pop net

With 16 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senators Escudero, Gordon and Trillanes arrived after the roll call.

Senator Aquino was on official business “to attend a Summit on #EndHunger hosted by Gawad Kalinga and participate in a forum which will discuss legislative proposals on ending poverty and hunger” as indicated in the May 23, 2017 letter of the Senator’s legislative unit chief.

Senate President Pimentel and Senator Gatchalian were 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 Sotto, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journal of Session No. 84 (May 22, 2017) and considered it approved.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

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

- Delegates from the Parliamentary Institute of Cambodia headed by Dr. Darif Path;
- Mayor Bai Reshal Ampatuan of Datu Unsay, Maguindanao; and
- Vice Governor Casada David of Tarlac, together with Board Members Verner Villanueva, Saturnino Mandal, Carlo Sawit, Harmes Sembrano, Tony Boy Cervantes and Henry de Leon.

Senate President Pro Tempore Recto 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:

BILL ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1467, entitled

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SECURITIES
AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

**(SEC) OFFICE IN KORONADAL
CITY AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR**

Introduced by Senator Emmanuel “Manny” D. Pacquiao

To the Committees on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; and Finance

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 384, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM GILAS PILIPINAS FOR CLINCHING THE GOLD MEDAL IN THE 2017 SEABA MEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP

Introduced by Senator Sonny Angara

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 385, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING MILAN MELINDO FOR WINNING THE INTERNATIONAL BOXING FEDERATION JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT TITLE AGAINST AKIRA YAEGASHI AT THE ARIAKE COLOSSEUM IN TOKYO, JAPAN

Introduced by Senator Emmanuel “Manny” D. Pacquiao

To the Committee on Rules

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Report No. 104, prepared and submitted by the Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship, on Senate Bill No. 1466, with Senator Zubiri as author thereof, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE IMPOSITION OF EXPIRY DATES ON GIFT CHECKS, CERTIFICATES OR CARDS BY ISSUERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill No. 1340.

Sponsor: Senator Zubiri

To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR LEGARDA

Avaling herself of the privilege hour, Senator Legarda delivered her speech as the nation celebrated the International Day for Biodiversity and while there was an ongoing Biodiversity Congress in Metro Manila.

The full text of Senator Legarda's sponsorship speech follows, details of which were accompanied by a series of slides shown on the screen:

Our biodiversity and the ecosystems that it helps function are essential to all forms of life on Earth.

The Philippines is very fortunate to be in the center of the center of biodiversity, one of the megadiverse countries, as proven in various expeditions where scientists and researchers have been able to discover new and endemic species in the country.

In 2015, Terry Gosliner of the California Academy of Sciences led an expedition on the Verde Island Passage and discovered more than a hundred species that are likely new to science.

Gosliner said, "The Philippines is jam-packed with diverse and threatened species—it is one of the most astounding regions of biodiversity on Earth."

Following an expedition in the mountains of northeast Mindanao in 2016, Rafe Brown of the University of Kansas' Biodiversity Institute said, "The terrestrial biodiversity of the Philippines is amazing, and this part of Mindanao is the center of the center of that diversity."

Brown's team discovered a total of 126 species, including 40 frogs, 49 lizards, 35 snakes, a freshwater turtle, and a crocodile.

We have an abundance of natural resources. But all this wealth is at great risk.

Development activities, land degradation, overgrazing and deforestation, pollution, over-fishing, hunting, land-use change, and the overuse of freshwater, have pushed ecosystems to the limit. Our country has become one of the world's top biodiversity hotspots, with a large number of species threatened with extinction.

Biodiversity is the web of life. But the development around us has caused many to think we can live on our own and disconnect from the web, forgetting that biodiversity feeds and heals, provides us air and water, and is a source of livelihood and recreation.

Further endangering the precarious situation of our country's biodiversity is the challenge of climate change. Among the projected impacts of climate change is the loss of thousands of species, along with significant changes in the natural ecosystem.

The rise in average global temperatures will render many species unable to adapt quickly enough to these new conditions or to move to regions more suitable for their survival. A 1.5 to 2.5 degrees Celsius rise in temperature in the next 50 to 100 years would render 30% of species at risk of extinction according to the IPCC.

We actually have numerous laws already that define the policies and programs to promote environmental protection. Some of these laws date back to the 1970s; but 40 years since, our environment seems to be in no better state.

Paradoxically, many of life's comforts happen at the expense of sustainability but nature has a way of reminding man of the repercussions of the savage abuse of the natural environment.

The Philippines has been issued its fair share of warnings through disasters such as the Payatas trash slide tragedy in 2000; the 2004 mudslides in Real and Infanta, Quezon Province; and many devastating typhoons like *Ondoy*, *Pablo*, *Sendong* and *Yolanda*, and just recently, the severe flooding in Cagayan de Oro caused by the residents' non-segregation of waste resource, recycling and composting.

Today, disasters loom worldwide with accelerated global warming. People need to understand that there is a price to comfort, safety, and convenience.

In the global effort to address environmental issues, numerous international instruments have been adopted like the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the more recent Paris Agreement on Climate Change which this whole Chamber concurred in.

These international agreements are helpful, but they cannot guarantee results by themselves. Only people can deliver their outcomes. Leaders and community members give life to these policies.

For example, the residents of the “purok system” in San Francisco, Camotes Islands have exercised their vigilance in implementing the ESWM and participated in the rehabilitation of their own watersheds. Something very close to home is my own barangay in Potrero, Malabon, where I was born and which used to be notorious not only for its informal settlers but also open damps. Now, it has been transformed into a model barangay which won the Clean and Green Award of the MMDA by doing strictly “Door-to-Door” and “No Segregation, No Collection” policies wherein a team monitors the implementation while eco-aides make rounds using pushcarts instead of garbage trucks to ensure proper segregation. So, we are able to prove that a barangay, although not belonging to an affluent community, can actually be an exemplary barangay for solid waste management.

In the private sector, the Cravings Group, a well-known chain of restaurants, promotes a zero waste lifestyle. The core of their programs is complying with the 5Es of the ESWM — Engineering, Education, Enforcement, Entrepreneurship and Eco-valuation. They run their own materials recovery facility (MRF) and have reached at least 95% diversion rate from the dumpsite. I hope the administrative officers in the Philippine Senate are listening so that the institution would correctly implement the MRF.

On the tourism front, the El Nido Resorts in Palawan promotes environmental stewardship through its Environmental Code of Conduct called “Ten El-NiDos,” reminding guests about environmentally sensitive protected areas and the appropriate behavior to ensure conservation.

These examples, whether in tourism, in the private sector or in local institutions, show that all of us can be part of efforts to promote resilience and sustainability. We do not need to go into the depths of our forests and dive into the oceans to protect our biodiversity. We only need to adopt a lifestyle that would not harm other living things that we share the Earth with.

In terms of legislation, we have more than enough legislation and I congratulate Senator Villar for having passed yesterday the National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act which many of us coauthored as well. I hope this will be passed by Congress soon because out of 240 protected areas, 113 have been proclaimed but only 13 have been legislated in the post-EDSA Congress. So, 100 would be covered by the ENIPAS Act.

I also filed a resolution urging the Senate to lead the conduct of an environmental audit of

relevant government agencies and local government units in relation to their compliance to and enforcement of environmental laws. And I am glad that the local legislators of the province of Tarlac are present today, Vice Governor David and his board members, so they can strictly implement all the environmental laws that we have named in the PowerPoint.

Our goal is to introduce measurable targets, identify where implementation can be supported, and encourage public accountability of all officials. While it is hard to convince people in protecting the environment, climate change and protected areas, we are tasked as elected leaders of the nation to guide our people in renewing their commitment as stewards of the Earth.

We are confronted with the task of protecting our country’s unique, and at the same time, endangered biodiversity. Pursuing a kind of development that has genuine regard for the state of our natural wealth has never become more crucial than today, especially with a world power like the United States, which has a remote possibility of withdrawing from a very important climate change agreement.

Senator Legarda ended her privilege speech with an anecdote about a devoted and passionate lady in her 60s whose job was to walk six hours every morning to monitor the birds in Dagatan Lake, Tayabas, Quezon, which, she said, was a protected area not by legislation but in itself. The lady, she said, is a member of a biodiversity monitor team called LIKSI, a community-based NGO of six barangays which committed to count the dwindling number of birds brought about by climate change. She said that LIKSI is not being paid to monitor the birds but is doing it as a legacy for the generations to come.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

As he commended Senator Legarda’s inextinguishable passion for the environment, Senator Zubiri also made special mention of a colleague of his, Indira Lacerna-Widmann, a Filipina married to a German who was also counting birds in Rasa Island. He said that Indira, who is a member of the Philippine Cockatoo Conservation project in Rasa Island of Narra, Palawan, has won a Whitley Award – a green Oscars for the environment.

Senator Zubiri related that in his personal capacity, he started assisting the foundation 12 years ago on Rasa Island to protect 20 Philippine Red-Vented



Cockatoos, one of the rarest cockatoos in the world which are critically endangered. He said that out of the efforts of said conservation project, there has become an overcapacity of 400 birds in the island that they had to translocate parrots to El Nido and other areas of Palawan.

In closing, Senator Zubiri expressed hope that the Senate would recognize the biodiversity conservation efforts of Ms. Indira during her visit to the Senate on Wednesday.

For her part, Senator Legarda noted that biological diversity monitoring is part of the Green Jobs Act which had recently been passed into law. She added that since cleaning the sewers and canals as well as creating community food gardens is also covered by the Act, all that is needed is some creativity to create one million environment-related jobs which could be funded either by the community or by local and foreign organizations.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Chair referred the speech of Senator Legarda primarily to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and secondarily to the Committee on Local Government.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 53 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1391

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1391 (Committee Report No. 53), entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY PHILHEALTH COVERAGE FOR ALL PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (PWDS), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "MAGNA CARTA FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1391

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

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUEST

At this juncture, Senator Sotto acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Dr. Gordon Creek of Germany.

Senate President Pro Tempore Recto welcomed the guest to the Senate.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 103 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1465

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1465 (Committee Report No. 103), entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FREE IRRIGATION SERVICE TO SMALL FARMERS, REVOKING FOR THE PURPOSE THE CORPORATE STATUS OF THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR LEGARDA

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the cosponsorship speech of Senator Legarda on Senate Bill No. 1465 was considered read into the Journal and Record of the Senate.

Following is the full text of Senator Legarda's cosponsorship speech:

It is with great pleasure that I register my full and unequivocal support to the passage of Senate Bill No. 1465 under Committee Report No. 103 which seeks to provide free irrigation services to small farmers by exempting them from

P 88

the payment of irrigation service fees for water derived from national irrigation systems and communal irrigation systems that were and are funded, constructed, maintained and administered by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) and other government agencies, including those turned over to irrigation systems.

I would like to note that this August Chamber first approved the provision of free irrigation service under the 2017 General Appropriations Act with the amount of two billion pesos (P2,000,000,000) being allotted to cover the irrigation service fees expected to be paid by farmers' associations to the NIA.

With the imminent passage of this measure, I am confident that we will be able to address the plight of the small farmers in the country and lower their production costs in order for the country to achieve food security and improve farmers' incomes.

At the same time, by limiting the scope of free irrigation services to small farmers and exempting farmers with more than five (5) hectares of land, corporate farms and plantations, and fishponds, among others, we are addressing concerns that this measure will encourage the inefficient and wasteful use of our water resources.

In view of these reasons, passage of the said measure is earnestly requested.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR EJERCITO

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the cosponsorship speech of Senator Ejercito on Senate Bill No. 1465 was considered read into the Journal and Record of the Senate.

Following is the full text of Senator Ejercito's cosponsorship speech:

This afternoon, it is my privilege to cosponsor a bill that seeks to abolish irrigation service fees collected by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) and the institutionalization of a genuinely just program that will accelerate irrigation development nationwide.

I am referring to Senate Bill No. 1465 under Committee Report No. 103 or An Act Abolishing the Imposition of Irrigation Service Fees and Such Other Related Fees, Amending for the Purpose Certain Sections of Republic Act No. 3601, Presidential Decree No. 552 and Presidential Decree No. 1702.

As coauthor of this measure, allow me to present some salient points that highlight its benefit for Filipino farmers.

At least 30% of the Philippines' total workforce are agricultural workers. These workers make the most of the 32% out of the country's total land area devoted for agriculture industry, arable, and permanent croplands. Agriculture also contributes as much as 10% to the country's GDP share as reported by the Philippine Statistics Authority in 2014.

Yet despite the agriculture sector's economic value, we have seemingly neglected it and has been in a sorry state for several years. Other factors such as the relentless stream of cheaper imported products further aggravated the decline in production of local agriculture products. Unfortunately, this situation is expected to worsen with the full implementation of the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement.

The challenges emerged when the government started to liberate restrictions and has opened its gate to international trade through the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement or AFTA. As a consequence, we are now facing a questionable capacity in competing with the prices of locally-produced agricultural commodities against the products of our neighboring countries like Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and other signatories of AFTA. Other issues such as smuggling of agricultural products in the country further compound the challenges we face with the implementation of the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement.

In the Committee on Agriculture, we have identified irrigation as a major factor affecting the price of production of agricultural products since it is one of the primordial costs in the structure for different agricultural products. It highly affects the cost and volume in agricultural productivity and is crucial in the production of basic local commodities.

Irrigation service fees is a huge burden for Filipino farmers. *Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas* estimates that our farmers pay on average P4,500 pesos or 5 cavans of palay per hectare per year for the National Irrigation Administration to irrigate their farms. In as much as we encourage more Filipinos to engage in or go back to farming, this would be very challenging for us if we do not improve the income of small farmers with all these costly production fees.

This 2017, we have allotted P2-billion out of the P3.3-trillion national budget for the government to subsidize irrigation fees. This interven-



tion in the budget is a great start for us to make free irrigation services as a policy of the government.

Having said these, I appeal to this honourable body for the swift passage of the Free Irrigation Services Act of 2016. It is about time that the government foster rural and agricultural development and prioritize the welfare of Filipino farmers.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

With the permission of the Body, the session was suspended.

It was 3:44 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:45 p.m., the session was resumed with Senator Honasan presiding.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR RECTO

As cosponsor of Senate Bill No. 1465, Senator Recto delivered the following speech:

If the middle class's patriotism is soluble in taxes, the one of farmers can also dissolve in irrigation fees.

For years, farmers have been clamoring for a moratorium on irrigation payments.

Basically, what they seek is parity—to be treated the same way that conglomerates have been showered with tax incentives by government.

Indeed, if many projects by those who have made it to the Forbes billionaires' list are kept afloat by fiscal freebies, then why can't they, who are having a hard time making it to the next meal, receive free water?

Irrigation fees paid by those who till the land may be a small drop in the bucket for those whom they feed.

The going rate is two cavans of rice per hectare during the wet season, and three cavans during the dry months. One year's worth of café latte money for those who want to avail of free WiFi.

But for those who work the land in never ending penury, those three cavans could spell the difference between famine or feast.

For those bowed by the weight of back-breaking, *maraming kahig, walang tuka* labor, three cavans could mean that their children will go to bed on a full stomach, instead of going to school on an empty one.

So if we are giving tax breaks to the idle rich on the belief that money retained in their pockets are better spent by them than by the government, the same benefit should also be extended to the working poor.

Making irrigation water free is a kind of tax break for farmers, but of the liquid kind.

True, it may not make all of them financially liquid overnight. It will not get them rich, but it will help them get by.

As we are on the cusp of granting tax breaks to the salaried, professionals and businessmen, I think it would be wise to compare the exemptions sought to be given to compensation earners against the cost this bill would entail.

Perhaps showing this comparative scale of generosity would tilt those who have reservations on this bill to its side.

The projected income foregone from lower personal income tax rates is at least P180 billion a year.

This bill, on the other hand, would waive P1.5 billion in annual irrigation fees, the amount the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) collected last fiscal year.

The disparity is not on the income forfeited alone.

In fact, it grows bigger on the number of beneficiaries: 7 million compensation earners to 8.9 million farmers and farm laborers.

In short, we will be helping many, with less.

In terms of what aid to give to our farmers, free irrigation is the low-hanging fruit.

We do not have the money to cover every square meter of land with fertilizer, or build solar dryers on a fraction of them.

We do not have enough money to wipe out the deficit in paved farm-to-market roads (FMRs). In fact, if we sustain current annual spending of six billion pesos on FMRs, it will take us at least 30 years to turn all rural roads from dirt to concrete.

The same is true with post-harvest facilities and other farm machinery. We are light-years away from making mechanical combines a fixture of the rural scenery.



Postharvest wastage remains a stubborn enemy. The volume of palay lost to poor handling in a year is enough to sate the unli-rice cravings of 17.1 million Filipinos.

But irrigation water, it is something that is already there, seeping through furrows in many farms, lapping onto the yards of farmers. It is something which has already been delivered. The only thing left is to waive the bill.

And how much are we writing off? P1.5 billion a year.

Well, some will see this as an unrecoverable expense. I see it, however, as a recoupable investment with a high yield.

It is an anti-poverty tool. Agriculture absorbs 27 percent of jobs, and is home to the 40 percent of the poor. What better way to fight raging poverty in the countryside than by dousing it with water.

Hopefully, with other farm initiatives, it will lead to more affordable food.

This is important because food eats up 60 percent of the budget of the bottom 30 percent of families – that sector called the GNP, or the *Gutom Na Pilipino*, is on the rise.

Kaya nga ang gusto ng tao ay makatikim ng murang pagkain, at hindi lang mura mula sa Pangulo. Hindi extrajudicial killing, kundi extra rice at extra ulam.

As to the amount foregone, it is small compared to other expenses with fewer benefits the government is splurging on.

Compare the P1.5 billion to the P6.7 billion in intelligence funds, or the P17.9 billion in travel expenses of bureaucrats this year.

It is 1.5% of the P102 billion we allocated this year in pension for retired soldiers and policemen.

Gusto nyo pa ng isang halimbawa? Central Bank has requested P150 billion in additional capitalization, a request Congress will likely accede to.

Ano ibig sabihin nito? That banks are too big to fail but irrigation is too big to fund?

But this is not to say, my dear colleagues, that this bill is the cure-all to what ails the farm sector.

It only forms part of the cocktail of solutions, one of which is to end the perpetual El Niño in farm appropriations.

The other is to balance our urban-centric development view with rural imperatives.

If we are raring to build a Metro Manila subway worth gazillions of pesos, then we should also apply the same bold thinking in bringing billions of gallons of water to our farms through more waterways.

Hindi naman po ito mahirap. Ang annual rainfall sa atin ay 7 feet, 7 inches, lampas tao. Sa Australia, 21 inches, o hanggang binti. Sa Bahrain, isang bansot na 3.8 inches, o hanggang sakong.

Despite two dozen typhoons dumping water that transforms large swaths of our land into a Waterworld, including Manila roads into rapids, we are lagging behind in storing this water for the dry months.

Rain is a matter of God's grace. Storing it is a matter of good governance.

Unfortunately, we are failing on the latter. At present, of the three million hectares of irrigable land, only 1.7 million are irrigated, leaving a backlog of 1.3 million hectares.

That is, however, on paper, but in reality, many irrigation systems are in need of repair.

The following data underscore the urgency of rehabilitation and expansion:

Only about 568 thousand hectares administered by the NIA, under its national irrigation program, were reached by water in 2015, below the 836 thousand hectares in its reported service inventory.

Water also reached just 362 thousand hectares covered by many community irrigation systems, which, on record, claim to service 638 thousand hectares.

Sadly, funds to expand the service area remain a drop in the bucket of what is needed.

For 2017, for example, we have budgeted P38.4 billion to bring water to 29 thousand hectares of unirrigated farmland and to restore 18 thousand hectares presently served by the NIA, among others.

At the rate we are appropriating, which is compounded by the slow utilization of funds, it will take us 45 years—almost half a century—to wipe out the deficit.

Clearly, we are bringing water to farms at a glacial pace.

It should instead “flow like a river” and be “an ever-flowing stream,” to borrow a line from the Good Book.

Such a Biblical reference is apt because providing water to farmers is truly a matter of justice, not just to farmers but to Filipinos yet to be born.

We can't future-proof our country through a drip-drip of funds to irrigation and agriculture.

Irrigation doubles farm yield. That's neither fake news or alternative fact.

We can only coax six tons of rice out of an hectare of unirrigated land. With irrigation, production rises to 8.6 tons, on account of two to three harvests a year.

So as water supply increases, food imports recede, and malnutrition retreats.

Lampas tatlong daang bilyon po ang ating food import bill, yung deklarado, hindi kasama ang smuggled, tulad ng pinuslit na bawang. Irrigation is an unpostponable exercise because water is a non-substitutable input in growing food.

Through hydroponics, plants can grow without soil. They can live in greenhouses bathed with artificial light. But they can't survive without water.

Thus, the old-age mantra: Without water, there is no agriculture. Without agriculture, there is no food. Without food there is no life.

So basically, this bill is about life, which is why I am calling for its urgent passage.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR GORDON

In cosponsoring Senate Bill No. 1465, Senator Gordon delivered the following speech:

As a person like many of our colleagues who earnestly seek to improve the lives of our countrymen, I stand before this Chamber to cosponsor Senate Bill No. 1465, not just part of a campaign promise but also to realize that in our country, we have to recognize the role of farmers in feeding our country. I therefore join coauthors Senators Ejercito, Gatchalian, Lacson, Legarda, Recto, Villanueva, Villar and Zubiri in supporting this bill.

For one, I know this bill will bring a lot of difference and change in the lives of Filipino farmers. This bill seeks to remove the payment of irrigation service fees from small farmers having no more than five hectares, and it seeks to condone unpaid irrigation service fees and its corresponding penalties. Moreover, the loans of

irrigation associations from the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) are also to be condoned including their corresponding interest and penalties.

A study shows that our rural population is 56% of the country's population. Out of that percentage, 35% of the rural population are poor. The incidence of poverty is significantly higher among agricultural workers at 42.2% compared to all workers at 23.4%. Therefore, it cannot be denied that there really is a need to alleviate poverty in rural areas where the main source of livelihood is farming which accounts for 30.4% of the total employment of the Filipinos.

So hindi tayo magtataka na talagang hindi makaangat ang ating mga kababayan na mag-sasaka sapagkat maraming pabigat sa kanila. Nariyan na iyong mga middlemen na nagpapautang ng mataas ang interes at kapag magbabayad na, mahaba ang bayad. So it is important that we realize also that it could be more productive if the government pays attention to irrigation, especially on the 500,000 hectares that are in constant disrepair and are still growing. *Ang sabi nga kanina ni Senator Recto, marami talagang irrigation na sira at hindi mapagawa.* In fact, *kung ipagagawa iyan, it would mean that our country would probably be self-sufficient and will no longer import or mag-angkat ng bigas sa ibang bansa.*

In contradistinction, we are all aware of the fact that from 1940s after the war, the Japanese government and the Japanese people have always protected their farmer. *Ang farmer sa Japan is on a special pedestal; they are subsidizing farmers per koku of rice which must be protected at all cost.* That is why, *mahal ang bigas pero walang nagra-riot sa Japan. Dito, itaas mo ang presyo ng bigas, magkakagulo na tayo.* This created a situation of total dependence and total lack of effort to improve and become entrepreneurial.

Now this Representation will also be sponsoring the Agricultural Free Patent law which shall free our farmers with agricultural free patent rights to about a hectare of land and therefore, allow them to have more access to credit and to capital.

And in this light, the Irrigation Law, as already described, will help alleviate the suffering of our farmers and it is important that we show our countrymen that the Senate and leaders of the country care for the people who supply us with rice.

Upon the passage of this bill, therefore, small farmers will surely benefit from lower costs

in every agricultural production. At least, they will not bother with such additional cost and they may instead focus more on mechanization and technology which other countries have found very useful, and, according to Senator Villar, is really the key to addressing global competitiveness in the market.

Ultimately, this bill will help in ensuring a stable and progressive agricultural economy for our country that would lead to better food sufficiency, equitable access to opportunities and sustained productivity to raise the quality of life in rural areas and attain overall national developments.

In other words, if the job of the leadership of this country is to uplift the level of economic situation of the many who are poor, the many who are poor are in the countryside and they are called *magsasaka* or farmers.

With that, I fervently ask the urgent passage of Senate Bill No. 1465 which, I know, will greatly help and assist our small Filipino farmers in the further growth and development of our agricultural economy.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 4:01 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:02 p.m., the session was resumed.

COSPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF SENATOR POE

Senator Poe manifested her support for the bill that would provide free irrigation services to small farmers.

Senator Poe pointed out that water is the lifeblood of farmers. She noted that without free irrigation and water, farmers could only harvest once a year, earning less than P20,000 per hectare harvested, but with free irrigation they could harvest more than two, or even five times, in two years. She lamented that the farmers earn so little, that they even incur loans to plant rice. But the irony of it all, she said, is that they are themselves consumers of their own products because of insufficient harvest.

Senator Poe urged everyone to be vigilant because the administrative costs of free irrigation might eat up a large portion of the budget. She stressed the importance of ensuring that the budget would be used for free irrigation for the benefit of the farmers.

Finally, Senator Poe said that along with providing free irrigation services, providing technical support in terms of mechanization to farmers is equally important.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1465

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

SPECIAL ORDER

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 104 on Senate Bill No. 1466 from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 104 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1466

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading, Senate Bill No. 1466 (Committee Report No. 104), entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE IMPOSITION OF EXPIRY DATES ON GIFT CHECKS, CERTIFICATES OR CARDS BY ISSUERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

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

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Senator Zubiri, on behalf of the Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship, submitted

for plenary consideration Senate Bill No. 1466, entitled “An Act Prohibiting the Imposition of Expiry Dates on Gift Checks, Certificates or Cards by Issuers and for other purposes,” under Committee Report No. 104.

The full text of Senator Zubiri’s sponsorship speech follows:

This bill is the final outcome of a series of public hearings, technical working group meetings and consultations we have conducted with stakeholders from both the public and private sectors.

As a brief backgrounder, the Department of Trade and Industry, in its Administrative Order No.10-04, series of 2010, has set guidelines on the issuance, use and redemption of gift checks, certificates or gift cards in accordance with Republic Act No. 7394 or the Consumer Act of the Philippines. Said department order prohibits all suppliers, issuers, distributors and sellers from issuing and/or selling gift certificates/checks/cards with an expiry date, but exempts gift certificates/checks/cards that are distributed to consumers under awards, loyalty or promotional programs. Further, the department order allows that goods and services purchased with gift certificates/checks/cards be qualified in promotional sales activities, loyalty programs, warranties, return policies for cash purchases, and discounts for senior citizens and/or persons with disability.

This policy stems from the general idea that, since gift checks are bought with cash, and cash has no expiration date, it should follow that the same value stored inside the instrument, be it a certificate/check/card, should likewise not expire.

With this bill, we seek to institutionalize the mechanisms already established by the above-mentioned department order, and add more teeth to its implementation by subjecting the violators with fines and penalties.

We have before us a measure that aims to promote the general welfare of the consumers and protect their interest by ensuring that they are not deprived of the right to enjoy their hard-earned money. I enjoin our colleagues to support the measure and hope for the immediate passage of this bill.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1466

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

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 23 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1281 (Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1281 (Committee Report No. 23), entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING THE FARMERS AND FISHERFOLK ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

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

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR PANGILINAN

Senator Pangilinan stated that Senator Recto, who previously manifested his intention to interpellate, had withdrawn his reservation.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INTERPELLATIONS

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

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1281

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

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 59 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1431 (Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1431 (Committee Report No. 59), entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING A PHILIPPINE LABOR FORCE COMPETENCIES

**COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAM,
ESTABLISHING FREE ACCESS TO
TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL
TRAINING PROGRAMS AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES.**

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

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Villanueva, sponsor of the measure, and Senator Drilon for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR DRILON

Asked by Senator Drilon to explain the rationale of the *Tulong Trabaho* Act, Senator Villanueva replied that the bill seeks to institutionalize and legislate for perpetuity a fiscal allocation in the budget to be provided to TESDA in order to fully capacitate the Philippine Labor Force Competencies Competitiveness Program. He explained that the institutionalization of the *Tulong Trabaho* Fund would ensure sustainability and access to TESDA training programs, particularly for those who will not be able to afford the financial requirements of the training programs. He further stated that the training programs that would be available are those to be determined by the TESDA Board based on pertinent job market reports and studies to be provided by the DOLE to address the challenges of job and skills mismatch. He said that the bill lays the foundation for future programs that would strengthen the TVET programs of TESDA by encouraging collaboration with the private sector, institutionalizing a system for determining job qualifications and other engagements to ensure employment.

Asked if the bill is seeking to institutionalize the programs and funding, Senator Villanueva answered in the affirmative. He said that the proposed measure also seeks to establish a competitiveness program as stated in Section 5 thereof on the establishment of the Philippine Labor Force Competencies Competitiveness Program. He explained that the system aims to address two major concerns of the Philippine work force: first, the institutionalization of the access to the national system of technical vocational education and training; and second, the provision of a system that would eventually diminish the possibility of job market mismatch in the country.

On the first concern, Senator Villanueva pointed out that according to the PIDS, vocational education

and training should be accessible to three types of stakeholders—the unemployed, the currently employed who want to increase income, and the employed who want to retool. He said that it is not just about the availability of training per se, but the availability of financing for those who want training. Regarding the second concern, he said that the DOLE had previously stated that job vacancies exist in the job market; however, it is the lack of skills to be employed that hounds the Filipino workforce.

Senator Villanueva reiterated the importance of establishing the Philippine Labor Force Competencies Competitiveness Program which, he said, is a holistic approach to democratize access to job skills training in order to gain employment while enhancing opportunities for gainful employment. To illustrate, he said that out of a thousand applicants or potential employees, one hundred will qualify for the positions sought, only 36% of them will pass the basic employability competency test, only 20 to 22 people will go to the interview process and, finally, a mere eight to 10 people would be successfully hired.

Senator Drilon pointed out that the matter of institutionalizing funding would be through the General Appropriations Act. He asked if it would be compulsory for the President to include funding for the program in his budget submission to Congress.

In reply, Senator Villanueva said that it would be compulsory for the President to include the funding in the budget to ensure sustainability for the program, not only to maintain the Philippine Labor Competency Competitiveness Program but also to ensure compatibility between the program and the industry.

Asked what would happen should the President decide not to fund the program. Senator Villanueva replied that the main reason for pushing the measure is to ensure funding for the establishment of the Philippine Labor Competency Competitiveness Program.

But Senator Drilon pointed out that Congress cannot compel the President to include funds in the budget submitted to Congress. Noting that the bill specifies the General Appropriations Act as the source of the funds necessary for the implementation of the Act, he stated that Congress could also choose not to fund the program.

Senator Vilanueva stated that the bill is needed to pursue the policy framework.

Asked by Senator Drilon whether the criteria and processes found in Sections 9, 12 and 13 of the bill could be found in existing TESDA regulations and policies, Senator Villanueva admitted that only in some cases. He said that under the Private Education Student Financial Assistance (PESFA) fund, anyone who is at least 15 years old may enroll in TESDA, while under the TESDA's Training for Work Scholarship Program, one must be 18 years of age. He explained that the special training for employment program is a scholarship program with a competency assessment and that one who passes the competency assessment would not only get a certification from TESDA but will also receive a tool kit.

Senator Drilon expressed concern that once the criteria and processes have been set by law, these may no longer be changed without the approval of Congress. He said that the criteria and processes may be relevant at the moment but may not be necessary to be maintained in the future.

Senator Villanueva said that if one would take a look at the same programs that are being implemented in TESDA — the TWSP, PEFA and STEF — one could conclude that the grant to qualified recipients in the bill has become more general and accessible. However, he believed that 15 years old is the labor age for labor workforce which is more inclusive and is becoming the general concern and international standard.

Senator Drilon posited that it would be best to allow the administrative agencies to set the criteria and processes because the processes evolve and legislators should not be dipping their fingers into the matter since they are not experts on technical matters. He reiterated his concern that putting it in the law would be limiting, and he believed that it would be more prudent to put in some flexibility to the standards by providing that the TESDA Board may revise the criteria as long as they are consistent with the program. Senator Villanueva said that he would be open to accept an amendment at the proper time.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR VILLAR

Asked by Senator Villar if the bill seeks to institutionalize a budget for TESDA only with respect to a particular program, Senator Villanueva said that the bill only seeks to institutionalize the budget for the Philippine Labor Force Competencies Competitive-

ness Program which is more of a scholarship program that would be accessed primarily by those who are still unemployed based on industry demand.

To Senator Villar's concern that the bill would affect agriculture, Senator Villanueva replied that the budget for the program would be in addition to the existing budget for the scholarship program allotted to the agricultural sector.

Asked how much was the total budget allocated to TESDA for agriculture, Senator Villanueva said that the budget for the Training for Work Scholarship Program is P2.2 billion for 2017. He clarified that TESDA could use its existing budget to finance the establishment of the Philippine Labor Force Competency Program.

Asked by Senator Villar how much would be spent for the program, Senator Villanueva said that during the committee hearings, half a billion pesos was the amount identified for the program. He said that the funding would be used in emerging industries and key employment generation sectors, where it could be ensured that the graduates would be employed after the training program.

Asked by Senator Villar whether the P500 million is in addition to the P2.2 billion, Senator Villanueva replied in the affirmative, saying that it is important to have an additional funding for the bill.

Senator Villar expressed concern on the fate of farm schools that are being built in every town in the country to be financed by TESDA. She pointed out that 30% of Filipino workers belong to the agriculture sector, and she feared that the P500 million or P1 billion would be deducted from the budget allocated for the farm schools and the money may not be enough to cover everything. She said that she intends to legislate the budget for the farm schools in the future.

Senator Villanueva said that he understands the concern of Senator Villar as he assured her that the budget for the program would not be coming from the amount already allocated for the funding of the scholarships for the agricultural sector and the farm schools. He said that the program may be used to train and create jobs for farmers and agricultural workers.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1431

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no



objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY BILLS

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of the following House bills, one after the other:

1. Committee Report No. 63 on House Bill No. 4848, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES HATCHERY IN THE CITY OF BISLIG, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR;

2. Committee Report No. 64 on House Bill No. 4850, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LOPEZ, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR;

3. Committee Report No. 65 on House Bill No. 4851, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ATIMONAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR;

4. Committee Report No. 66 on House Bill No. 4852, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF GUMACA, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR;

5. Committee Report No. 67 on House Bill No. 4853, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BAROBO, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR;

6. Committee Report No. 68 on House Bill No. 4854, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TAGKAWAYAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR;

7. Committee Report No. 69 on House Bill No. 4855, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF QUEZON, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR);

8. Committee Report No. 70 on House Bill No. 4856, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF HINATUAN, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR);

9. Committee Report No. 71 on House Bill No. 4857, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PEREZ, PROVINCE OF QUEZON, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR);

10. Committee Report No. 72 on House Bill No. 4858, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CALAUAG, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR);

11. Committee Report No. 73 on House Bill No. 4859, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PLARIDEL, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR);

12. Committee Report No. 74 on House Bill No. 4860, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF GUINAYANGAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR);

13. Committee Report No. 75 on House Bill No. 4861, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ALABAT, PROVINCE OF QUEZON AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR); and

14. Committee Report No. 76 on House Bill No. 4862, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LIGAO, PROVINCE OF ALBAY AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR).

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

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Villar, sponsor of the measure, and Senator Drilon for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR DRILON

Asked by Senator Drilon whether the 14 bills would need appropriations of public funds through the General Appropriations Act, Senator Villar replied in the affirmative. She said that the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) that is allotted a P7 billion budget every year, had agreed to fund the bills from their budget for the establishment of the marine hatcheries.

Senator Drilon asked whether the multi-species hatcheries may be established even in the absence of a law as long as there is an appropriation provided for by the BFAR for its implementation.

Senator Villar said that while the BFAR could opt to do so, the concerned congressmen would want to ensure that the marine hatcheries would be established and implemented in their districts.

Senator Drilon said that he was not objecting to the bills but that he was just establishing certain principles so that substantive laws are passed. He said that unless a budget is provided, the measures would become merely unfunded mandates. He pointed out that Congress has been criticized several times for passing various laws without an assurance of funding.

Senator Villar believed that there was no harm in approving local legislations to ensure that the Department of Agriculture and the BFAR would implement these measures. She said that, in a way, she was forcing said government agencies to build the facilities in order to help the local fisherfolk.

She then disclosed the findings of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization that if

illegal fishing in the country is not prevented, given the fact that the government also has a hard time preventing such activities, the source of food in the future would be from aquaculture. She reiterated that the establishment of multipurpose marine hatcheries would help in developing aquaculture, the country's source of fish in the future in case illegal fishing is not prevented.

Senator Drilon hoped that the non-inclusion of other coastal municipalities, provinces and cities would not mean that they would never have such hatcheries because they are a very important source of livelihood for the marginal fishermen. He believed that a marine hatchery should be established in every coastal city and municipality of the country. He nevertheless reiterated his concern on the non-implementation of these measures simply because of underspending or absence of budget allocation.

Senator Villar said that she was glad that the local officials of the concerned cities and municipalities have initiated legislation to make sure that the BFAR would give them the resources to establish aquaculture in their areas. Relative thereto, she asked the Body to help the local officials in legislating the law to make sure that the BFAR is forced to implement the programs.

She informed the Body that the BFAR would build the marine hatcheries, teach the local government on how to operate them for two years, and turn over the hatcheries to the local government units concerned.

Senator Drilon clarified that he was fully supportive of the program, as he recalled that when he was Senate President of the 16th Congress, the Senate passed six laws establishing municipal hatcheries.

Senator Villar assured the Body that she would work hard to pass all the bills establishing aquaculture in the Philippines so that there is fish in the aquaculture projects even when there is no fish in the ocean.

Senator Drilon said that, in fact, the Body should not wait for the House of Representatives to pass such measures because it is a very meritorious economic activity. He believed that there is an opportunity for the Body to establish as many hatcheries as possible through the budget by allocating the necessary budgetary support without necessarily passing a law. He suggested to Senator Villar that when the budget time comes, she should place in the budget the



establishment of as many municipal hatcheries as she can and to monitor and exercise oversight functions over the use of such budget.

At this juncture, the Chair asked on the budget for one municipal hatchery. Senator Villar replied that the budget is P10 million each, so that 14 marine hatcheries would cost about P140 million.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INTERPELLATIONS

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

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF AMENDMENTS

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4848 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4848 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4848

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4850 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4850 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4850

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4851 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection,

House Bill No. 4851 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4851

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4852 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4852 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4852

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4853 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4853 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4853

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4854 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4854 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4854

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4855 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection,



House Bill No. 4855 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4855

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4856 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4856 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4856

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4857 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4857 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4857

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4858 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4858 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4858

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4859 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection,

House Bill No. 4859 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4859

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4860 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4860 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4860

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4861 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4861 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4861

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

APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4862 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 4862 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4862

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

MOTION OF SENATOR SOTTO

Senator Sotto moved that the Body consider the following franchise bills on Second Reading: House

Rjet

Bill Nos. 5176, 4636, 5063, 5211, 5175, 5212, 5064 and 5177.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DRILON

Senator Drilon stated that the records would show that the franchise bills that were enumerated have been sponsored only the other day, thus, he did not have the opportunity to examine them carefully and that he was not yet ready to interpellate on the bills.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 4:53 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:01 p.m., the session was resumed with Senator Zubiri presiding.

WITHDRAWAL OF MOTION

Upon resumption, Senator Sotto withdrew his motion.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 5 ON SENATE BILL NO. 812

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 812 (Committee Report No. 5), entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE GRANT OF A TEACHING SUPPLIES ALLOWANCE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

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

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

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INTERPELLATIONS

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 Body approved the following committee amendments, one after the other:

1. On page 1, line 5, replace the monetary figure "3,000" with 3,500;

The session was suspended and was resumed shortly thereafter.

2. On line 9, between the words "thousand" and "pesos," insert the words FIVE HUNDRED;
3. Still on line 9, replace the monetary figure "3,000" with 3,500;
4. On line 11, between the words "thousand" and "pesos," insert the words FIVE HUNDRED;
5. Still on line 11, replace the monetary figure "1,000" with 1,500;
6. On line 14, between the words "thousand" and "pesos," insert the words FIVE HUNDRED; and
7. Still on the same line, replace the monetary figure "1,000" with 1,500.

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.

SOTTO AMENDMENTS

Senator Sotto stated that Senate President Pimentel has submitted his proposed individual amendments which he was adopting.

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

1. On page 1, line 9, after the monetary figure "P3,500," insert the phrase PER TEACHER PER SCHOOL YEAR;
2. On line 11, after the monetary figure "P1,500," insert the phrase PER TEACHER PER SCHOOL YEAR;

P3,500

3. On line 13, after the monetary figure “P2,500,” insert the phrase PER TEACHER PER SCHOOL YEAR;
4. On line 14, after the monetary figure “P1,500,” insert the phrase PER TEACHER PER SCHOOL YEAR; and
5. On line 15, after the monetary figure “P2,500,” insert the phrase PER TEACHER PER SCHOOL YEAR;

RECTO AMENDMENTS

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

1. On page 1, line 1, replace the year “2016” with 2017;
2. On line 5, replace the amount “P3,500” with P5,000;
3. Reword lines 9 to 17 to read as follows:

SEC. 5. *FUNDING.* – IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT, THE AMOUNT OF TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P2,500) PER TEACHER PER SCHOOL YEAR SHALL BE CHARGED AGAINST THE CURRENT APPROPRIATIONS OF THE DEPED FOR THE TEACHING SUPPLIES ALLOWANCE, WHILE THE ADDITIONAL AMOUNT OF TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P2,500) PER TEACHER PER SCHOOL YEAR SHALL BE CHARGED AGAINST ANY AVAILABLE FUNDS AND/OR SAVINGS OF THE DEPED. THEREAFTER, THE AMOUNT OF FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P5,000) PER TEACHER PER SCHOOL YEAR SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE DEPED BUDGET FOR THE TEACHING SUPPLIES ALLOWANCE UNDER THE GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT.

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. 812 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, Senate Bill No. 812 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 812

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 5:12 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:13 p.m., the session was resumed.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 56 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1395 (Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1395 (Committee Report No. 56), entitled

AN ACT RIGHTSIZING THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SERVICES DELIVERY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Legarda, sponsor of the measure, and Senator Hontiveros for her interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR HONTIVEROS

At the outset, Senator Hontiveros stated that the country has experienced three reorganizations under the Corazon Aquino government, re-engineering under the Ramos Administration, and the rationalization plan under the Estrada and Macapagal-Arroyo administrations.

Noting that the proposed strategies in the bill closely resemble the past rationalization plans, Senator Hontiveros asked if any assessment was conducted on such initiative and how and where the “excess

P 1577

fat” which the bill seeks to rationalize was found. Senator Legarda stated that the most recent rationalization was in 2004 pursuant to Executive Order No. 366 which was more than ten years ago. Similarly, she cited the Governance Act of 2011 sponsored by Senator Drilon which was also a rationalization plan for GOCCs. She believed that with the passage of the rightsizing bill, there would be a leaner, younger and meaner bureaucracy which was the common objective of the previous rationalization programs.

Asked what “excess fat” was not trimmed by the initiatives of the previous administration and how they were identified, Senator Legarda averred that certain dysfunctions in the government had to be addressed inasmuch as some agencies have redundant/duplicating functions or overlapping mandate and functions. Furthermore, she noted that there were agencies which actually outlived their purpose since the services they render could be better provided by the private sector.

Senator Hontiveros stated that according to data from private sector unions, namely, the Confederation of Independent Unions in the Private Sector, the Philippine Government Employee Association, the Philippine Independent Public Sector Employees Association, the Public Services Labor Independent Confederation, and all members of the NAGKAISA Labor Coalition, there were 268,000 unfilled plantilla positions in the LGUs, national government agencies, SUCs and GOCCs but that despite the number of unfilled positions, the whole bureaucracy has 595,000 job orders, contract of service workers, and MOA workers, and 100,000 authorized casuals/contractuals, for a total of 695,000 precarious positions which gives the impression that contractualization and non-standard employment have become the norm in the public sector.

Senator Hontiveros asked how Senate Bill No. 1395 would affect the 268,000 unfilled plantilla slots as she echoed the concern of the public sector unions that plantilla positions targeted for abolition would be replaced by flexible, nonstandard and cheap labor of contractuals while desirable and necessary jobs to keep the government operational would be outsourced.

Senator Legarda replied that the unfilled positions actually justify the need for rationalization as they are symptoms that the agencies are not responding to the needs of the organization or are bloated. She explained

that the job orders and others can also be absorbed in the rationalization program with the job orders as part of the issues that can be addressed by the committee that will be created upon the passage of the bill. She said that the proposed committee/commission will study all the ills of the bureaucracy so that the job order issue could be further addressed while the unfilled positions which have not served the purpose for which they were created, could be excised as part of the rationalization.

Senator Hontiveros questioned why these unfilled plantilla positions were not filled by the workers. She suggested that the bill be amended to the effect that these positions would first be filled from the existing complement of job orders, contract of service, MOA workers, casuals and contractuals as long as they meet the qualifications of the Civil Service Commission. Senator Legarda expressed willingness to receive these amendments so that JOs — as long as they are qualified and the position is still deemed necessary after the rationalization study has been done — should be the priority in hiring.

Asked whether the previous rationalization plan has been completed and whether the proposals under Senate Bill No. 1397, which resemble the earlier plan, which had been unable to cut the fat, be successful, Senator Legarda clarified that there is a difference between the rationalization plan borne out of EO 366 and the rightsizing being proposed by the bill. Under the mechanics of the old program, she said that the strategic review of the operations and the organization of the department and the agency was only limited to the units and did not cut across government departments and agencies, while Senate Bill No. 1397 would allow the government to implement transformational initiatives in agencies such as mergers, consolidations, splitting, transfer or abolition of offices.

Since the measure aims not only to professionalize but to transform the bureaucracy, Senator Hontiveros sought clarification on the kind and level of consultation that took place with the rank-and-file employees during the crafting of the bill. Senator Legarda replied that there would be massive consultations with agencies, units, bureaus of the executive department as well as with accredited public sector unions prior to the implementation of the rightsizing program.

Believing that it would be better to have held consultations with these parties prior to the drafting of the measure, Senator Hontiveros read a portion of



a letter sent by concerned public sector unions to the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Management dated April 6, where they expressed their concern, to wit:

"Learning from past experiences, government workers ended up being victimized and adversely impacted by reorganization because of lack of representation. The proposed rightsizing bills are devoid of any genuine consultation and involvement of workers and their public sector union or organization before, during and after processes."

She pointed out that these unions had hoped to have been involved even in the legislative process and not just after the bill has been passed and the law is being implemented. She expressed her intention to propose an amendment – not to achieve what should have been done in consultation beforehand – but to do some catching up on what else could be made afterwards. Senator Legarda clarified that the Philippine Government Employees Association (PGEA) was part of the technical working group (TWG) that drafted the bill, along with the Civil Service Commission, Government Service Insurance System, DBM and the Philippine Institute of Development Studies.

Senator Hontiveros noted that the group NAGKAISA Labor Coalition, which was one of the four public sector unions, had informed her that there was not enough consultation with and involvement of the unions during and after the process of drafting the bill. In fact, she said that PGEA national president Esperanza Ocampo was one of the signatories to the letter she had read earlier.

On another matter, Senator Hontiveros asked whether public sector unions would be included in the rightsizing committee, Senator Legarda replied that the committee, which would be composed of members of the Executive branch, would be in consultation with the public sector unions in carrying out its work.

Asked whether she would consider an amendment to make the public sector unions members and not only consultees of the committee, Senator Legarda said that the proposal would be worth considering. She said that under *Section 7 (Powers and Functions of the Committee on Rightsizing in the Executive Branch)*, the committee will not only submit proposed organizational structure, proposed executive issuances to the President along with a detailed organizational structure and staffing requirements but would also

hold consultations with all the sectors she had mentioned earlier. She said that she was not certain whether the head of the public sector unions can be part of the five-man committee, but she clarified that the suggestion could be studied and formally proposed and considered at the proper time. She also expressed concern that it might be difficult to have a committee with so many representatives, but that she could ask the DBM to study that possibility. However, Senator Hontiveros believed that it is not too much to add a few more people who would be willing and able to work in partnership with the executive members of the rightsizing committee in long and heavy work of rightsizing, modernizing and professionalizing the bureaucracy.

For her part, Senator Legarda suggested that the public sector unions could also be included in the subcommittee or technical working group, similar to what is being done in the Senate. Nevertheless, Senator Hontiveros expressed her intention to propose an amendment to include public sector unions not only in the subcommittees or technical working group but in the rightsizing committee itself.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1395

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 5:35 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:35 p.m., the session was resumed.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 55 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1393 (Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1393 (Committee Report No.55), entitled

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING ON-SITE, IN-CITY,
OR NEAR-CITY STRATEGY FOR**

INFORMAL SETTLERS FAMILIES IN CONSIDERATION WITH A PEOPLE'S PLAN AND MANDATING LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS TO PROVIDE OTHER BASIC SERVICES AND LIVELIHOOD COMPONENTS IN RESETTLEMENT SITES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7279, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING ACT OF 1992.

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

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Ejercito, sponsor of the measure, and Senator Hontiveros for her interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR HONTIVEROS

Preliminarily, Senator Hontiveros pointed out that the committee report defined "People's Plan" as a plan formulated and initiated by the beneficiary organization with the assistance of concerned government agencies. However, she believed that it is necessary for the definition to also underscore non-physical development components such as livelihood and capability building as history and experience have shown that these are also essential elements of a housing program. She asked whether Senator Ejercito would be amenable to an amendment that incorporates the phrase "which shall contain a site development plan including non-physical development components such as self-help housing cooperative, livelihood, self-help development and capability building" in the said definition. Senator Ejercito welcomed the proposal as he noted that non-physical development components can contribute greatly to the success of the housing program.

Adverting to page 12, lines 6 to 9 of the bill, Senator Hontiveros expressed concern that the provision leaves greater room for government agencies to decide that off-city resettlement should be resorted to even though the entire point of the bill is to promote in-city or at least near-city resettlement. As such, she suggested that the "last resort" phrase be replaced with "only be resorted to when directly requested by the affected ISFs themselves." Senator Ejercito disagreed, saying that the Committee foresaw

instances such as during natural calamities wherein government has to provide immediate housing to the victims or when there is need to relocate informal settler families from danger zones like waterways to off-city relocation sites. He stressed that the safety of the residents was the Committee's immediate concern and it did not want the ISFs exposed to danger. He clarified that off-city relocation could be considered if a people's plan could not be completed within a reasonable timetable.

Senator Hontiveros said that she was looking forward to working with the Sponsor on provisions relating to off-city relocation of ISFs who have been victims of natural disasters or in danger zones, but who may constitute an exception due to emergencies, and as such, their safety should be upheld as paramount but, at the same time, the "last resort" phrase would not put at a disadvantage other kinds of ISFs.

Senator Ejercito explained that the bill seeks to redevelop informal settler communities within the city, by addressing problems they experience in the existing housing programs such as dislocation and insufficient services and utilities. He assured Senator Hontiveros that he would be willing to work with her to promote in-city housing for ISFs to give them a chance to have their own homes and improve their living conditions. He also disproved some apprehensions that the measure was crafted for the purpose of decongesting Metro Manila. He said that informal settlers communities were targeted so that the properties where they have settled could be properly divided to have room for development as well as housing.

Senator Hontiveros pointed out that the bill aims to provide ISFs with adequate and genuine consultation mechanisms which include effective dissemination of relevant information and documents like land records, housing budgets, proposed plan and others. She recalled that during the public hearing for the bill, it was mentioned that 3,419 hectares of public lands are available for socialized housing in Metro Manila, the details of which were not been provided by the concerned government agency at that time.

Asked if the details were made available to the Committee, Senator Ejercito answered in the affirmative. He explained that the National Housing Summit was a joint effort by the Senate and the House of Representatives, together with the World Bank, in the previous year. At present, he said that the

P 99

Committee has the records of the inventory of land in the NCR and that he would instruct the committee secretary to furnish all the senators with the copy of the same.

He explained that the technical study done by the LRA identified 3,419 hectares as possible lands for development for in-city socialized housing, 1,200 hectares of which have informal settlers, which would be considered as priority areas. He said that redeveloping these lands would address housing backlog and give the ISFs the chance to uplift their living conditions and have dignity since no one should be called a "squatter" in his own country.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1393

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

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUEST

At this juncture, the Chair acknowledged the presence in the gallery of DBM Secretary Benjamin Diokno.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 79 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1454

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1454 (Committee Report No. 79), entitled

AN ACT REMOVING THE RESTRICTIONS IN THE REGISTRATION OF LAND TITLES UNDER SECTIONS 118, 119, AND OTHER RESTRICTION AGAINST ENCUMBRANCE OR ALIENATION ON FREE PATENTS ISSUED UNDER SECTION 44 OF COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 141 OR THE PUBLIC LAND ACT, AS AMENDED.

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

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

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DRILON

Senator Drilon manifested that as earlier agreed upon, he has already the list of bills calendared for debates for the week in anticipation of the numerous measures awaiting passage before the adjournment of sessions next week. However, he noted that Senate Bill No. 1454 was not included in the list of bills that would be taken up that day or the next. He clarified that he did not want to delay the interpellations on the measure but he requested that he be given time to have his interpellation the following week.

Senator Gordon requested that interpellations on the measure be allowed to continue as he recalled that the bill, which had been presented before the Body last week, was supposed to have been taken up the next session day. He said that the staff and government agencies worked hard on the bill which is a matter of grave importance to the poor to receive the land titles that they have long been waiting for. He added that Senate Bill No. 1454 is also a companion bill to the Irrigation bill since it would allow farmers who have agricultural land under free patent to own their land. Even though the restriction on selling it will not be lifted, he noted that the farmers will have access to credit as well as development and entrepreneurship.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 5:51 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:10 p.m., the session was resumed with Senate President Pro Tempore Recto presiding.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1454

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

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 31 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1306

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second

Rmt

Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1306 (Committee Report No. 31), entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE PHILIPPINE BOXING COMMISSION TO STRENGTHEN THE BOXING INDUSTRY AND PROMOTE THE SAFETY AND WELFARE OF FILIPINO BOXERS, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR.

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

The Chair recognized Senator Pacquiao, sponsor of the measure, and Senator Drilon for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR DRILON

Senator Drilon recalled that during the last interpellation on the bill, he was branded as having no common sense because, allegedly, given the fact that there were 22 or so sports being supervised by the GAB, it could not possibly supervise the boxing industry which was considered by Senator Pacquiao as a big business.

Senator Drilon then asked Senator Pacquiao to spread into the record the history of the creation of the GAB.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pacquiao, the session was suspended.

It was 6:13 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:14 p.m., the session was resumed.

Responding to Senator Drilon's query as to when the GAB was created and for what purpose, Senator Pacquiao said that the GAB was created in 1948 pursuant to Executive Order No. 120 series of 1948 to regulate boxing, wrestling and karate.

Senator Drilon said that to his knowledge, karate did not exist in 1948. He asked whether there was a professional group of karate players supervised by GAB in 1948. He said that his reading of Executive Order No. 120 series of 1948 shows that the

professional sports under GAB then were boxing, wrestling and jai alai.

Senator Pacquiao said that pursuant to Executive Order No. 392, series of 1950, the GAB is vested with supervisory authority over jai-alai, boxing, wrestling and racing.

As regards Senator Drilon's query on horse racing, Senator Pacquiao said that Presidential Decree No. 420 created the Philippine Racing Commission in 1974 to which the regulatory authority of the GAB over horse racing was transferred pursuant to the same law.

Senator Drilon asked whether all aspects of horse racing were transferred to the PRC or whether some functions were retained by the GAB.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pacquiao, the session was suspended.

It was 6:21 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:22 p.m., the session was resumed.

Senator Pacquiao said that horse racing was separated from the GAB on March 20, 1974, by virtue of Presidential Decree No. 420 and that only the licensing of the jockeys was retained.

Senator Drilon stated that a number of sports have a professional division, such as basketball which has the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA). He then asked if the GAB has a supervisory authority over the PBA. Senator Pacquiao replied in the affirmative, adding that it was given in 1976 by virtue of Presidential Decree No. 871.

Asked how many sports are under the GAB since 1976, Senator Pacquiao replied that under the supervisory functions of the GAB are boxing, wrestling, jai-alai, mixed martial arts, Muay Thai, basketball, billiards, cycling, golf, cockfighting, betting on horse racing, lawn tennis, dance sports and motocross.

On whether the sports cited would refer only to those who are in the professional aspect of the sports or to athletes who play for pay as distinguished from amateur sports, Senator Pacquiao replied in the affirmative.

Pmt

Asked if the GAB interferes in the performance of basketball professionals or simply issues licenses, Senator Pacquiao replied that the GAB is empowered to issue licenses as well as to regulate professional basketball professional players in cases like game-fixing, point shaving and play-for-pay in local basketball circles. He said that the GAB has no authority over basketball players in town fiestas who are usually amateurs.

On whether there are professional wrestlers in the country who may be under the regulation of the GAB, Senator Pacquiao said that he does not have the data on professional wrestlers but only that they are included in the list of mixed martial arts fighters.

Senator Drilon pointed out that wrestling is a sport distinct from mixed martial arts because the former has been in existence for several decades while the latter is a recent sport. He said that he was trying to test whether all the professional sports are being supervised by GAB and to know the extent of the GAB's supervisory functions since Senator Pacquiao has been asserting that GAB supervises so many sports activities and that common sense dictates that boxing should be supervised separately, when, according to the information he received, practically one-third of the personnel in the GAB just supervise and take care of the affairs of boxing while the other professional sports activities are simply allowed to take care of their own without any interference from GAB.

Senator Drilon again asked on the number of professional wrestlers in the country which GAB is not supposed to supervise. Senator Pacquiao said that he does not have the data, but he maintained that professional wrestlers are also involved in mixed martial arts.

Senator Drilon asked on the number of cycling tournaments in the country per year, as he recalled that there is only one or two big cycling events every summer. Senator Pacquiao replied that the data on cycling is not available at the moment.

To Senator Drilon's observation that the involvement of GAB in cycling is only to issue license to professional cyclists in the country and that the time consumed for the sport is not substantial, Senator Pacquiao agreed.

On whether golf is also included in the ambit of the authority of the GAB, Senator Pacquiao replied

that professional golfers and the profession of golf are regulated by the GAB in terms of issuing licenses to professional golfers. He said that the GAB does not interfere in golf tournaments.

As regards billiards, Senator Drilon noted that the regulatory authority of GAB on the sport is only to issue licenses to professional billiard players. Senator Pacquiao agreed.

On lawn tennis, Senator Drilon asked on the extent of the supervisory functions of the GAB over the sport and if there are professional lawn tennis players in the country. Senator Pacquiao replied that he does not have the exact names of the professional tennis players but he has met some of them.

Senator Drilon asked how many professional lawn tennis players the country has. He explained that the reason for his question was to prove that the GAB was doing nothing as far the other sports activities are concerned. He said that the failure of Senator Pacquiao to give him the number of lawn tennis players supervised and monitored by the GAB is an indication that while GAB would be in charge of supervising the players, they do not perform any function for the sport.

Senator Pacquiao said that the GAB does not have a record on the number of professional lawn tennis players in the country. Senator Drilon opined that the lack of record is an indication that the number of professional lawn tennis players are insignificant or even nonexistent so that the duties of GAB to license is illusory and does not exist. He then asked Senator Pacquiao to inquire from the GAB about the country's professional lawn tennis players, its supervisory functions, about the other aspects that he raised earlier, and the GAB's supervisory functions over professional bowlers.

Senator Sotto said that the Philippines never had professional bowlers but there is a classification of open-class bowlers who are technically in the professional level but are never called professionals, the reason why they are not required to secure a license from the GAB.

Senator Drilon opined that the inclusion of bowling in the list of sporting events supervised by GAB is therefore a fiction because, as admitted by Senator Sotto, there are no professional bowlers in the country. He explained that what he was trying to show by his



questions was that the present GAB practically does nothing except to supervise boxing as an industry and that if ever the GAB supervises or regulates sports, it is only to the extent of issuing licenses.

On whether football is also enumerated as one of the professional sports being regulated or licensed by GAB, Senator Pacquiao replied in the negative. He said that there are only 13 sports under the GAB.

Asked how many sports are supervised by GAB, Senator Pacquiao cited the following: jai-alai; basketball; boxing; wrestling; mixed martial arts; Muay Thai; billiards; cycling; golf; cockfighting; betting on horse racing; lawn tennis; dance sports; and motocross.

Senator Drilon noted that except in boxing, the activity of GAB is very limited, for instance, in basketball since the sport is currently regulated by the Philippine Basketball Association. Likewise, he observed that the GAB's role in golf, billiards and motocross was only limited to licensing and that the regulatory function on cockfighting has been transferred to LGUs. As regards lawn tennis, he said that there is no known professional tennis player in the country to supervise, and that the licensing of jai-alai has been transferred to the Cagayan Economic Zone Authority. He surmised that if there are 150 GAB employees, 30% or more of its manpower could have been devoted to professional boxing.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 6:46 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:48 p.m., the session was resumed.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1306

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

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 62 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1449

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no

objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1449 (Committee Report No. 62), entitled

AN ACT EXTENDING THE VALIDITY PERIOD OF DRIVER'S LICENSES, AMENDING FOR THAT PURPOSE SECTION 23 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4136, AS AMENDED BY BATAS BLG. 398 AND EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 1011, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LAND TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC CODE.

Senator Sotto stated that the parliamentary status was the period of individual amendments. He said that the sponsor of the measure, Senator Poe, has introduced her individual amendments incorporating the inputs made by Senator Lacson as well as the individual amendments of Senator Drilon, and that clean copies of the measure were already distributed to the Members of the Chamber.

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

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. 1449 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, Senate Bill No. 1449 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1449

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 6:50 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:52 p.m., the session was resumed.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary of the Senate read the following bill and resolution which the Chair referred to the committees hereunder indicated:

BILL ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1468, entitled

AN ACT DESIGNATING CASINOS AS COVERED PERSONS UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ANTI-MONEY LAUNDER ACT OF 2001, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Recto

To the Committees on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; and Justice and Human Rights

RESOLUTION

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 386, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICES TO REVIEW THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS (IRR) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10913 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ANTI-DISTRACTED DRIVING ACT, ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (DOTC-LTO)
Introduced by Senator Victor Joseph Ejercito

To the Committee on Public Services

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 57 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1397 (Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1397 (Committee Report No. 57), entitled

AN ACT PENALIZING AND PREVENTING THE USE OF MOTORCYCLES OR SCOOTERS IN THE COMMISSION OF CRIMES THROUGH THE USE OF BIGGER PLATE NUMBERS AND IDENTIFICATION MARKS, REGULATION OF BACKRIDERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

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

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DRILON

Senator Drilon stated that Senator Gordon has provided the Members of the Chamber a copy of his amendments which, according to the Rules, have to be read one by one during the period of amendments.

For expediency and to have an orderly presentation of the amendments considering the lateness of the hour, Senator Drilon proposed that all the amendments of Senator Gordon be introduced on the next session day when the Members could read and approve the provisions one by one; subsequently, a clean copy of the bill would be prepared so that they could better understand the amendments being introduced.

Considering the shortness of time, Senator Gordon acceded to the suggestion, noting that he also wants to make sure that the bill would be approved.

Thereupon, Senator Sotto moved to submit the amendments of Senator Gordon and to consider them deemed read into the record. He requested the Secretariat to provide a clean copy of the bill.

At this point, Senator Drilon manifested that since the hour is already late and there are still a number of bills being calendared for the next session day, the Senators cannot study the measure yet.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 6:59 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:03 p.m., the session was resumed.

P. J. E.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR GORDON

Senator Gordon said that the proposed amendments had been submitted to the senators and to the Secretariat so that the introduction of the amendments to the bill could be facilitated. However, he expressed willingness to comply with the suggestion with the expectation that it could be finished by Monday. He underscored the importance of having the measure passed in view of the people that are being killed by motorcycle riding-in-tandem criminals daily.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS OF SENATOR GORDON

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the proposed amendments of Senator Gordon were deemed read and inserted into the record.

The Chair directed the Secretariat to provide a clean copy of the bill the following day. Senator Sotto informed the Body that the individual amendments would be taken up on Monday, at the latest.

The following is the proposed amendment by substitution of Senator Gordon:

1. On page 1, line 2, place the period (.) inside the close quotation mark immediately after “2017,” to read as follows: “Motorcycle crime prevention act of 2017.”;
2. On page 1, line 3, replace the word “State” after Sec. 2. with DECLARATION OF, to read as follows:

Sec. 2. DECLARATION OF Policy.

3. Still on page 1, lines 6 to 9, delete the sentence starting from the word “It” up to the word “scooters” and replace it with the following sentence:

IT IS HEREBY DECLARED THE POLICY OF THE STATE TO SECURE AND SAFEGUARD ITS CITIZENRY FROM CRIMES COMMITTED WITH THE USE OF MOTORCYCLES THROUGH READABLE PLATE NUMBERS AND IDENTIFICATION MARKS.;

4. On page 1, lines 10, add letter “S” on the word “definition” so that it will now read as DEFINITIONS;
 5. On page 2, from lines 1 to 8, delete all the enumerated definitions and replace them with the following enumeration:
- (A) “BACKRIDER OR PASSENGER” REFERS TO ANY PERSON SEATED AT THE

BACK OF A MOTORCYCLE, OR A PASSENGER OF A MOTORCYCLE.

- (B) “DRIVER” REFERS TO ANY PERSON DRIVING OR CONTROLLING A MOTORCYCLE.
- (C) “MOTORCYCLE” REFERS TO A POWERED TWO-WHEEL MOTOR VEHICLE, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO, SCOOTERS, MOPEDS, AND MOTORCYCLES WITH APPENDAGES SUCH AS SIDE CARS, TRICYCLES OR TRIKES.
- (D) “OWNER” REFERS TO ANY PERSON WHO OWNS A MOTORCYCLE.
- (E) “PLATE NUMBER” REFERS TO THE REGULAR MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSE PLATE FOR A MOTORCYCLE ISSUED BY THE LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) BEARING THE STANDARD ALPHANUMERIC CHARACTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4136, AS AMENDED.

6. Still on page 2, insert a new section as SEC. 4 to contain the following provision:

SEC. 4. REGISTRATION BY OWNER. – THE OWNER OF A MOTORCYCLE SHALL REGISTER HIS OR HER MOTORCYCLE WITH THE LTO WITHIN TWENTY (20) DAYS FROM SUCH ACQUISITION. THE OWNER OF A MOTORCYCLE SHALL ALSO REPORT ANY SALE OR DISPOSITION OF HIS OR HER MOTORCYCLE TO THE LTO WITHIN FIVE (5) DAYS FROM SUCH SALE OR DISPOSITION. FAILURE OF THE OWNER TO REGISTER HIS OR HER MOTORCYCLE, OR REPORT ITS SALE OR DISPOSITION SHALL SUBJECT THE OWNER TO IMPRISONMENT OF ARRESTO MAYOR TO PRISION CORRECCIONAL UNDER THE REVISED PENAL CODE, OR A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN TWENTY THOUSAND PESOS (P20,000.00) BUT NOT MORE THAN FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P50,000.00), OR BOTH.;

7. Starting on page 2, line 9 down to page 6 line 15, delete the old Sec. 4 and Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 and replace them with the following new Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 to read as follows:

SEC. 5. READABLE PLATE NUMBER. – THE LTO SHALL ISSUE A READABLE PLATE NUMBER FOR EVERY MOTORCYCLE WITH ALPHANUMERIC CHARACTERS IN LARGE AND READABLE FONT FROM A DISTANCE OF AT LEAST FIFTEEN

(15) METERS FROM THE MOTORCYCLE. THE LTO SHALL ALSO DEVISE A COLOR SCHEME OF THE READABLE PLATE NUMBERS FOR EVERY REGION IN THE PHILIPPINES WHERE A MOTORCYCLE IS REGISTERED FOR QUICK AND EASY IDENTIFICATION. THE READABLE PLATE NUMBERS MUST BE DISPLAYED IN FRONT AND AT THE BACK OF A MOTORCYCLE AND SHALL BE MADE OF SUITABLE AND DURABLE MATERIAL AS DETERMINED BY THE LTO.

SEC. 6. REGISTRY OF MOTORCYCLES. —THE LTO SHALL MAINTAIN A REGISTRY OF MOTORCYCLES IN A DATABASE TO FACILITATE INFORMATION RETRIEVAL FOR OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT PURPOSES. THE REGISTRY OF MOTORCYCLES SHALL INCLUDE, BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: NAME OF MOTORCYCLE OWNER, MOTORCYCLE OWNER'S DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER, MOTORCYCLE OWNER'S ADDRESS AND CONTACT DETAILS, MOTORCYCLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER, MOTORCYCLE PLATE NUMBER, MOTORCYCLE BODY COLOR, MOTORCYCLE BRAND/MAKE. IN THE REGISTRY OF MOTORCYCLES, THE LTO SHALL OBSERVE AT ALL TIMES REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10173 OR THE DATA PRIVACY ACT OF 2012.

SEC. 7. DRIVING WITHOUT A PLATE NUMBER OR READABLE PLATE NUMBER. —DRIVING WITHOUT A PLATE NUMBER OR A READABLE PLATE NUMBER, AS PROVIDED IN THIS ACT, IS PROHIBITED. THE DRIVER OF A MOTORCYCLE WITHOUT A PLATE NUMBER OR READABLE PLATE NUMBER, AS PROVIDED IN THIS ACT, SHALL BE PUNISHED BY PRISION CORRECCIONAL AS PROVIDED IN THE REVISED PENAL CODE, OR A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P50,000.00) BUT NOT MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (P100,000.00), OR BOTH. A MOTORCYCLE DRIVEN WITHOUT A PLATE NUMBER OR A READABLE PLATE NUMBER SHALL BE STOPPED, AND SUCH MOTORCYCLE SHALL BE SEIZED BY LAW ENFORCERS AND IMMEDIATELY SURRENDERED TO THE LTO. THE OWNER OF SUCH MOTORCYCLE MAY REDEEM HIS OR HER SEIZED MOTORCYCLE FROM THE LTO UPON PROOF OF OWNERSHIP, PAYMENT OF THE COSTS OF SEIZURE, AND

COMPLIANCE WITH A READABLE PLATE NUMBER, AS PROVIDED IN THIS ACT.

SEC. 8. FAILURE TO SURRENDER SEIZED MOTORCYCLE. —ANY LAW ENFORCER WHO SHALL FAIL TO SURRENDER A SEIZED MOTORCYCLE UNDER THE PRECEDING SECTION OF THIS ACT, WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR (24) HOURS FROM SEIZURE SHALL BE PUNISHED BY PRISION CORRECCIONAL AS PROVIDED UNDER THE REVISED PENAL CODE.

SEC. 9. UNLAWFUL USE OF A MOTORCYCLE IN THE COMMISSION OF A CRIME. —IF A MOTORCYCLE IS INTENTIONALLY USED IN THE COMMISSION OF A CRIME CONSTITUTING A GRAVE FELONY UNDER THE REVISED PENAL CODE, OR IN THE ESCAPE FROM THE SCENE OF SUCH CRIME, REGARDLESS OF THE STAGE OF COMMISSION WHETHER ATTEMPTED, FRUSTRATED, OR CONSUMMATED, THE OWNER, DRIVER, BACKRIDER OR PASSENGER WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SAME SHALL BE PUNISHED BY RECLUSION TEMPORAL TO RECLUSION PERPETUA AS PROVIDED UNDER THE REVISED PENAL CODE.

IF A MOTORCYCLE IS INTENTIONALLY USED IN THE COMMISSION OF A CRIME CONSTITUTING A LESS GRAVE FELONY OR LIGHT FELONY UNDER THE REVISED PENAL CODE OR ANY OTHER CRIME, OR IN THE ESCAPE FROM THE SCENE OF SUCH CRIME, REGARDLESS OF THE STAGE OF COMMISSION WHETHER ATTEMPTED, FRUSTRATED, OR CONSUMMATED, THE OWNER, DRIVER, BACKRIDER OR PASSENGER WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SAME SHALL BE PUNISHED BY PRISION CORRECCIONAL TO PRISION MAYOR, AS PROVIDED IN THE REVISED PENAL CODE.

IF A SEIZED MOTORCYCLE IN THIS ACT IS UNLAWFULLY USED IN THE COMMISSION OF A CRIME, THE MAXIMUM PENALTY SHALL BE IMPOSED.

IF DEATH OR SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURIES, AS DEFINED UNDER THE REVISED PENAL CODE, RESULTS FROM THE UNLAWFUL USE OF A MOTORCYCLE IN THE COMMISSION OF A CRIME, THE PENALTY OF RECLUSION PERPETUA AS PROVIDED UNDER THE REVISED PENAL CODE SHALL BE IMPOSED.

SEC. 10. IMPOUNDMENT AND FORFEITURE OF A MOTORCYCLE. —A MOTOR-

CYCLE USED IN THE COMMISSION OF A CRIME SHALL BE IMPOUNDED BY THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) AS EVIDENCE IN CUSTODIA LEGIS UNTIL THE TERMINATION OF ITS CASE. SUCH MOTORCYCLE SHALL THEN BE FORFEITED IN FAVOR OF THE GOVERNMENT, UNLESS THE COURT FINDS THAT THE DEFENDANT IS INNOCENT OR SUCH MOTORCYCLE BELONGS TO AN INNOCENT THIRD PARTY.

SEC. 11. LOSS OF PLATE NUMBER OR READABLE PLATE NUMBER. – IF THE PLATE NUMBER OR READABLE PLATE NUMBER OF A MOTORCYCLE IS LOST, DAMAGED, OR STOLEN, THE OWNER OF SUCH MOTORCYCLE SHALL REPORT THE SAME TO THE LTO AND THE PNP WITHIN THREE (3) DAYS AND REQUEST A REPLACEMENT PLATE NUMBER. FAILURE OF THE OWNER TO REPORT THE SAME SHALL SUBJECT THE OWNER TO IMPRISONMENT OF ARRESTO MAYOR TO PRISION CORRECCIONAL UNDER THE REVISED PENAL CODE, OR A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN TWENTY THOUSAND PESOS (P20,000.00) BUT NOT MORE THAN FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P50,000.00), OR BOTH.

SEC. 12. TAMPERING A READABLE PLATE NUMBER. – TAMPERING, ALTERING, FORGING, IMITATING A READABLE PLATE NUMBER UNDER THIS ACT SHALL BE PUNISHED BY PRISION MAYOR AS PROVIDED UNDER THE REVISED PENAL CODE, OR A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P50,000.00) BUT NOR MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (P100,000.00), OR BOTH.

SEC. 13. LTO OPERATIONS CENTER. – THE LTO SHALL ESTABLISH AN OPERATIONS CENTER ACCESSIBLE TWENTY-FOUR (24) HOURS A DAY AND SEVEN (7) DAYS A WEEK TO FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT.;

8. On page 6, line 16, “Sec. 12,” the provision on “Appropriation” shall now be renumbered as SEC. 14;
9. Still on page 6, lines 17 and 18, after the word “appropriation,” delete the phrase “of the Department of Transportation” and Sec. 14 will now read as follows:

Sec. 14. Appropriation. – The amount needed for the initial implementation of this Act shall be taken from the current fiscal year’s appropriation. Thereafter, the amount

needed for the operation and maintenance shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.;

10. Still on page 6, after the section on “Appropriation,” insert a new section as SECTION 15, to read as follows:

SEC. 15. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS. – THE LTO, IN CONSULTATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AND OTHER RELEVANT AGENCIES, SHALL PROMULGATE THE RULES AND REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT WITHIN NINETY (90) DAYS FROM ITS EFFECTIVITY.;

11. Still on page 6, line 20, renumber “Sec. 13. Repealing Clause” to SEC. 16;
12. On page 7, line 1, renumber “Sec. 14. Separability Clause” to SEC. 17;
13. Still on page 7, line 4, renumber “Sec. 15. Effectivity” to SEC. 17;
14. Still on page 7, line 7, change the word “Adopted” to APPROVED; and
15. Finally, replace the title of the bill to read as:

AN ACT PREVENTING AND PENALIZING THE USE OF MOTORCYCLES IN THE COMMISSION OF CRIMES THROUGH READABLE PLATE NUMBERS AND IDENTIFICATION MARKS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1397

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

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 7:05 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.


ATTY. LUTGARDO B. BARBO

Secretary of the Senate

Approved on May 30, 2017 