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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Creative Industry and Performing Arts (Special Committee)	HR 1668	Rep. De Venecia	Inquiry into the status of implementation of RA 9266, otherwise known as the Architecture Act of 2004, RA 10350 or the Philippine Interior Design Act of 2012, and other laws in relation to design professionals	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Christopher de Venecia (4th District, Pangasinan), will continue its discussion relative to HR1668. Rep. De Venecia, the principal author of HR 1668, explained the need to revisit the national policies regulating the practice of architecture and fostering the professional growth of architects and allied professionals. He disclosed that the Philippines is home to numerous architects, interior designers, and design professionals, with architects as among the most overpopulated and underemployed professionals in the country. Likewise, Rep. Angelica Natasha Co (Party-List, BHW), co-author of HR 1668, said that the inquiry aims to review existing laws relating to design professionals in order to determine the needed legislation that will empower them better. She emphasized the important role of design professionals in planning for a healthier, resilient, inclusive, and sustainable environment. The chair of the Professional Regulatory Board of Architecture, Arch. Robert Sac, gave an overview of the practice of architecture in the country. He said that the country produces the highest number of graduates of Architecture among the South East Asian countries. He added that in the last five years, more females are into the architecture profession compared to males. Currently, he said there are over 40,000 employable architects in the country out of around 50,000 registered architects. Sac supports the intention of HR 1668, saying that RA 9266 or the Architecture Act of 2004 is being "loosely implemented." He explained that while the law requires that the services of Filipino architects be engaged in building all structures in the country, not all building owners or land developers comply with this requirement. Sac claimed that it has been a known practice by some land developers to engage the services of foreign architects to prepare the design of their buildings. Such practice, according to Sac, is not only disadvantageous to the nation and the Filipino architects, but also takes away the "Filipino soul" to the buildings, compromising the Philippine climactic conditions and culture and traditions. Project Officer Kenneth Biunas of the Design Center of the Philippines (DCP), Department of

Continuation… Creative Industry and Performing Arts (Special Committee)				Trade and Industry (DTI), gave an update on the design mapping project of the DCP. He said that the DCP is currently crafting the National Design Policy that will create support mechanisms to nurture the local design industry. He asked for the support of the stakeholders through their participation in preparatory activities such as the workshops and the mapping survey. Meanwhile, Philippine Institute of Interior Designers (PIID) Vice President Trisha Anne Padernal presented the current state of the interior design profession in the country. She said that to date, there are 3,511 registered interior designers in the country with 57% actively practicing their profession. Among the active practitioners, 61% are from the ages 23-35 years. Some of the challenges that the industry faces are the proliferation of illegal practitioners of the profession and the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to the health and economic well-being of the interior designers. Padernal sought for government's assistance to empower interior designers with programs that are geared towards strengthening the Filipino design and to include interior designers in government projects, among others. PIID is a duly accredited organization of interior designers in the country. Due to time constraints, the Committee only discussed RA 9266, with Rep. De Venecia propounding clarificatory questions on certain provisions of the law. He asked how to operationalize the regulation of the practice of architecture in terms of the principle of "beauty." The resource persons, composed of professionals in architecture, interior design, and landscape architecture, agreed that it is difficult to define "beauty" as it pertains to design. Arch. Sac further said that regulating architecture based on the aspect of beauty is a challenging task thus, the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC) has no specific policy on the matter. (The Professional Regulatory Board of Architecture is under the PRC.) Rep. De Venecia also inquired if the PRC ensures that architects who renew their license every three years adhere to the provision in the law which states that an architect is "responsible for advocating the fair and sustainable development, welfare and cultural expression of society's habitat in terms of space, forms and historical context." Sac replied that since the PRC does not review the plans made by the architects, it could not monitor the architects' compliance with this provision. The PRC gets involved only if there is a case filed against an architect, he added.

Continuation… Creative Industry and Performing Arts (Special Committee)				Rep. Co suggested that architects could be given incentives through a point system wherein the points they earn for complying with the provision will be taken into account when they renew their license. Also during the meeting, the resource persons were asked to comment on the Continuing Professional Development (CDP) of architects and allied professionals. RA 10912, or the CPD Act of 2016, provides that CPD shall be a mandatory requirement for the renewal of Professional Identification Card of all registered and licensed professionals under the regulation of the PRC. Eduardo Calma, of Lor Calma and Partners suggested that experienced architects should not be required to undergo more trainings. Trina Periquet, principal designer of the Periquet Galicia interior design firm, agreed that there is a need to upgrade and update the knowledge of professionals in their fields through CPD trainings. She, however, believes that it should not be made mandatory in the renewal of the professional ID. Joseph Javier of the Javier Design Studio Manila claimed that the professionals' trainings abroad get lower points than the trainings they attended locally. Sac explained that for the more experienced professionals, they can earn more CPD points by being a speaker or trainer in the webinars. He maintained that there is no difference in the point system between foreign and local trainings. However, foreign training needs to be documented properly for it to be recognized and approved by the CPD Council under the Professional Regulatory Board of every profession. Chona Ponce, Executive Council Member of the National Committee on Architecture and Allied Arts, National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCAA-NCCA), asserted that the guidelines for undertaking CPD are clear. During this pandemic, she said, CPD online trainings are now being held and the professionals can participate in these webinars in the comfort of their homes. Meanwhile, on the registration of the designs with the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL), Periquet said that the process is burdensome. Nevertheless, she admitted that in reality, the works of the designers are not protected and their designs are being replicated. Rep. De Venecia maintained that all outputs, including the designs of the architects and interior designers, are products of the mind, hence should be protected.

Continuation… Creative Industry and Performing Arts (Special Committee)				The Committee agreed to invite the following in its next meeting: NCCA, Professional Regulatory Board of Interior Design, Department of Public Works and Highways, and Commission on Higher Education.
Economic Affairs jt. /w Trade and Industry	Substitute Bills to HBs 263, 264, 655, 3239, 5440, 5538 & 5794	Reps. Ramirez-Sato, Abaya, Salimbangon, Gasataya, Aumentado, and Baronda	Establishing special economic zones in various parts of the country, and appropriating funds therefor	The Joint Committee, co-presided by Rep. Teodorico Haresco Jr. (2nd District, Aklan), Chair of the Committee on Economic Affairs, and Rep. Rosanna "Ria" Vergara (3rd District, Nueva Ecija), Vice Chair of the Committee on Trade and Industry, approved the Committee Reports on the seven Substitute Bills, subject to style. It shall likewise consider the amendments or inputs from the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Appropriations relating to the bills' taxation and appropriation provisions. At the outset, Rep. Haresco said that the proposed establishment of special economic zones (SEZs) is envisioned and conceptualized to help evenly spread the opportunities for socio-economic development. On her part, Rep. Vergara conveyed the solidarity of the Committee on Trade and Industry with the Committee on Economic Affairs in pushing for the passage of laws creating SEZs. She posited that SEZs stimulate the steady flow of both domestic and foreign investments, promote the export of goods and services, generate revenues and foreign exchange, create employment opportunities, and fast-track the development of infrastructure facilities. Rep. Vergara added that an SEZ, which propels the country's economic development, derives its value from a combination of three key drivers, which are: • Positive regulatory environment that provides the necessary framework the industry needs to take route in a new market; • Active environment that ensures physical infrastructure and policies are in place to support businesses and their employees; and • More rudimentary element of incentives, both financial and non-financial, which provide impetus for investment in a location that may otherwise be less appealing. The proposed SEZs to be established are the following: • Occidental Mindoro Special Economic Zone - HB 263 authored by Occidental Mindoro Rep. Josephine Ramirez-Sato; • Paluan Special Economic Zone - HB 264 authored by Rep. Ramirez-Sato; • Sangley Point Special Economic Zone - HB 655 authored by Rep. Francis Gerald Aguinaldo Abaya (1st District, Cavite);

Continuation… Economic Affairs jt. /w Trade and Industry				• Cebu 4th District Special Economic Zone - HB 3239 authored by Rep. Janice Salimbangon (4th District, Cebu); • Bacolod Special Economic Zone - HB 5440 authored by Bacolod City Rep. Greg Gasataya; • Northern Bohol Special Economic Zone – HB 5538 authored by Rep. Erico Aristotle Aumentado (2nd District, Bohol); and • Metro Iloilo Special Economic Zone and Free Port - HB 5794 authored by Iloilo City Rep. Julienne Baronda).

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	**MEASURES**		**SUBJECT MATTER**	**ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION**
	NO.	**PRINCIPAL AUTHOR**		
Energy jt. w/ Ecology and Transportation (Technical Working Group)	Substitute Bill to HBs 444, 738, 1432, 2020, 4075, 4179, 4356, 4366, 4391, 4962, 6604, 7298, 7299, 7317 & 7607	Reps. Revilla, Biazon, Campos, Vargas, Bernos, Cabochan, Deputy Speaker Santos-Recto, Reps. Go (E. C.), Garcia (J.E.), Deputy Speakers Legarda and Romero, Rep. Garin (S.), and Deputy Speaker Gatchalian	Providing the national energy policy and regulatory framework for the use and development of electric vehicle industry, appropriating funds therefor	The joint technical working group (TWG) decided to schedule another meeting to finalize the substitute bill. The meeting was presided over by Rep. Jose Enrique "Joet" Garcia III (2nd District, Bataan), Vice Chair of the Committee on Energy, Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento (1st District, Samar), Chair of the Committee on Transportation, and Rep. Ruffy Biazon (Muntinlupa City), for the Committee on Ecology. In today's meeting, the TWG discussed all the sections of the substitute bill and took note of the comments and recommendations of the resource persons from the Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Transportation (DOTr), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), Board of Investments (BOI), Bureau of Philippine Standards (BPS), League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP), Electric Vehicle Association of the Philippines (EVAP), and Association of Mindanao Rural Electric Cooperatives (AMRECO) Inc., among others. Most of the amendments made were on the appropriate language of some of the provisions of the bill. The resource persons will be submitting their position papers on the bill's contentious provisions such as the powers and functions of the implementing agencies and the establishment of charging stations for electric vehicles.