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COMMITTEE MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Agriculture and Food jt. w/ Trade and Industry	HR 1522	Speaker Velasco	Inquiry into the rising food prices with the end in view of determining the necessary interventions to stabilize food prices and ensure the availability and affordability of food to Filipino consumers	<p>The Joint Committee, co-presided by Rep. Wilfrido Mark Enverga (1st District, Quezon), Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Food, and Navotas City Rep. John Reynald Tiangco, Chair of the Committee on Trade and Industry, will continue its inquiry relative to the 10 House Resolutions.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Enverga said that the purpose of the inquiry is to find a solution to the current increases in the prices of pork and basic food commodities in order to provide affordable and sufficient food for the Filipino people, especially at this time of the pandemic. He underscored the need to determine the real situation on the ground in order for the government to undertake proper interventions. He noted that there are disparities between the figures reported by the industry and those coming from the government, such as the Philippine Statistics Authority, with regard to current pork prices and the supply of pork.</p> <p>For his part, Rep. Tiangco said it is important to be updated on the status of the programs and interventions being implemented by the Department of Agriculture (DA) to bring down the prices of pork and other basic commodities. He also likes to know if other measures can be explored in order to extend support and assistance to local producers. He recommended the grant of fuel discounts to fisherfolk and reduction of tariff rates on the importation of yellow corn, which is used as hog feed.</p> <p>In the previous meetings of the Joint Committee, DA Secretary William Dar discussed the abrupt increase in prices which he attributed to last year's African swine fever (ASF) outbreak, natural disasters (three major typhoons and the Taal Volcano eruption), and global trade distortions and inefficient movement of food supplies caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the measures that stabilize pork prices were the increase in the volume of importation of pork for the year 2021 and imposition of price ceilings on selected pork and chicken products in the National Capital Region (NCR) by virtue of Executive Orders (EOs) 133 and 124, respectively. In order to augment local food supply through importation, Dar said the DA proposed the lowering of tariff for food imports for a period of one year.</p>
	HR 987	Rep. Cabatbat	Investigation into the production and importation status of poultry commodities in the country amidst the COVID-19 pandemic	
	HR 1495	Rep. Vargas	Urging the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) to deploy more Kadiwa rolling stores through its Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita Program, in light of the recent price increase of basic commodities in the country	
	HR 1504	Rep. Geron	Urging the DA to explain and submit a report of all programs and measures undertaken by its implementing agencies to address price instability	
	HR 1505	Rep. Geron	Investigation into the alleged shortage in the supply of meat products resulting in the escalation of prices and the status of food security in the country	
	HR 1512	Rep. Quimbo	Inquiry into the rising pork prices	
	HR 1515	Rep. Cayetano, (A.P.)	Urging the House of Representatives to take the lead and get the job done in making sure that prices of basic goods such as meat and vegetables are affordable by bringing all stakeholders together for the benefit of the Filipino people, uncovering the root causes of the price increase, and thereafter to coordinate with and assist the relevant government agencies in addressing the issues, with the end in view of ensuring that all citizens shall have access to sufficient, safe, and affordable food especially during this time of pandemic	
	HR 1526	Rep. Tambunting	Inquiry into the alarming rise in the price of basic commodities with the end in view of implementing necessary measures to ensure the accessibility of basic commodities and defend the right of every Filipino to adequate and affordable food	
	HR 1556	Rep. Zarate	Investigation into the rising of food prices, importation, and the neglect of the industry	

<p>Continuation... Agriculture and Food jt. w/ Trade and Industry</p>	<p>HR 1587</p>	<p>Rep. Brosas</p>	<p>of agriculture in the Philippines</p> <p>Investigation into the transportation restrictions on locally sourced pork and increased importation of pork amid the dire state of the local livestock industry</p>	<p>DA Undersecretary for Policy, Planning and Research Fermin Adriano informed the body that inflation in NCR has significantly decreased since October. He then reported the current initiatives of the DA to stabilize food prices which include the continuous implementation of its National Hog Repopulation Program and “Kadiwa ni Ani at Kita” Program. Adriano said that the repopulation program aims to jumpstart and revive the swine industry by restructuring and modernizing backyard swine farming, increasing breeder base population, enforcing strict biosecurity measures, and providing concessional and flexible loan terms for backyard and commercial hog raisers. He said that the Kadiwa program establishes a direct link between the farmers or fisherfolk and the consuming public, providing a market system which sells major agricultural goods at reasonably low prices.</p> <p>Adriano also highlighted that fertilizers are important farm inputs in ensuring high production of quality crops such as corn. As an immediate measure, he said the DA has already requested the Office of the President (OP) for increased funding intended for farmers’ fertilizer subsidy. For the medium and long-term plan, he said the DA aims to mainstream organic farming which uses biological or organic materials such as fertilizers and to revive the local fertilizer industry in order for the country to not be dependent on fertilizer imports. He said the increase in fertilizer prices also contributes to the price increases of pork and other basic commodities.</p> <p>Rep. Noel Villanueva (3rd District, Tarlac) expressed his frustration over the lack of concrete plans by the DA that will truly have an immediate impact on the ground. According to Rep. Villanueva, organic farming, as suggested by the DA, will not be a viable solution to the crisis at hand since it would take about three years to condition the soil for this purpose. He reiterated that as long as the prices of corn are high due to high fertilizer prices, the prices of pork will also increase. He underscored the need to stabilize fertilizer prices and increase the fertilizer subsidy for farmers.</p> <p>Author of HR 1587, Rep. Arlene Brosas (GABRIELA) agreed that the government should focus on interventions that would help bring down the price of fertilizers, if the DA will be unable to provide additional fertilizer subsidy to the farmers.</p> <p>Adriano replied that as much as the DA would want to provide more fertilizer subsidy to the farmers, it is constrained from doing so due to lack of funds. Which is why the DA has already requested the OP for an additional</p>
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<p>Continuation... Agriculture and Food jt. w/ Trade and Industry</p>				<p>budget for this purpose amounting to P8 billion.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Tiangco regarding the status of cold storage distribution to local government units (LGUs), as one of the initiatives of the DA to ensure adequate pork supply in NCR, Bureau of Animal Industry OIC-Director and now Executive Director of the National Meat Inspection Service Reildrin Morales, said that they are just awaiting the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement transferring the funds to the LGUs to procure chillers or cold storage facilities. So far, he reported that the LGUs of Valenzuela, Parañaque, Marikina, and Quezon Cities have already submitted their list of beneficiaries.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura Executive Director Jayson Cainglet lamented that despite the implementation of EOs 133 and 124, the price of pork did not significantly decrease and local producers are at the losing end due to the spike of pork imports. In addition, he said there has been huge revenue losses for the government because of the lowering of tariffs.</p> <p>Rep. Stella Luz Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City), author of HR 1512, also criticized the implementation of EOs 133 and 124, saying that it was a mistake because the government only incurred revenue losses due to the lowering of tariffs on imported pork. She said the amount that was lost could have been used by the DA to provide subsidies to the farmers and hog raisers. She also hinted at the possibility that price manipulation, stockpiling, and other anti-competitive behaviors are occurring which are causing pork prices to go up.</p> <p>Adriano countered that the price of fresh pork has now gone down to P280 per kilogram (/kg) and P340/kg for pork shoulder (<i>kasim</i>) and belly (<i>liempo</i>), respectively, from a peak of P360/kg for <i>kasim</i> and P400/kg for <i>liempo</i> in January.</p> <p>Belying the issue of stockpiling or cold storages reaching full capacity because of high volume of stored pork, Adriano said that it is a matter of the delay in the release of pork products due to issues on labeling and processing or completion of documentary requirements. For his part, Meat Importers and Traders Association spokesperson Paolo Pacis explained that the reason for this is the low demand for pork as more people became financially unstable because of the lockdowns.</p> <p>Rep. Rosanna "Ria" Vergara (3rd District, Nueva Ecija) inquired if the imported pork products are frozen and if there is a possibility to also bring down frozen pork prices to P250-P270/kg. Adriano confirmed that imported</p>
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Continuation... Agriculture and Food jt. w/ Trade and Industry				<p>pork products arriving in the country are frozen. Meanwhile, DA Undersecretary-designate for Livestock William Medrano stated that frozen pork now being sold in wet markets is about P60 cheaper compared to fresh pork, with frozen <i>kasim</i> at P220/kg and frozen <i>liempo</i> at P280/kg.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit the relevant documents requested by the Members during the meeting.</p>
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COMMITTEE DELIBERATION ON ETHICS COMPLAINTS

COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Ethics and Privileges	Committee Case No. SC-2021-09, sworn complaint of Ma. Milagros Dormido, against Rep. Rolando Valeriano (2 nd District, Manila)	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Rosanna “Ria” Vergara (3 rd District, Nueva Ecija), deferred its consideration of the seven complaints due to insufficient number of Members present in the meeting.
	Committee Case No. SC-2021-08, sworn complaint of the Manotok Realty, Inc., as represented by Ms. Dormido, against Rep. Valeriano	Committee Secretary Amado Rey Caballero Jr. informed the body that there are only seven members present in today’s meeting. He stated that under the Rules of the Committee, there should be at least 13 Members (Committee Members and ex-officio Members) in attendance in order to put to a vote the determination of sufficiency in form and substance of each complaint.
	Committee Case No. SC-2021-07, sworn complaint of the Citizens Movement for Good Governance of Ozamiz City Foundation Inc., as represented by Edgar Villanueva, against Deputy Speaker Henry Oaminal (2 nd District, Misamis Occidental)	Rep. Lawrence “Law” Fortun (1 st District, Agusan del Norte) moved for the deferment of the consideration of the seven complaints, which was approved by the Committee.
	Committee Case No. OR- 2021-06, on the referral of the House of Representatives of the recommendations pertaining to the alleged intervention of Deputy Speaker Oaminal in the implementation of the housing project in Purok 6, Lam-an, Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental as contained in Committee Report No. 1034 on HR 1197, submitted by the Committee on Good Government and Public Accountability	
	Committee Case No. SC-2021-05, sworn complaint of Mayor Jesse Viña, et al. against Rep. Diego “Nonoy” Ty (1 st District, Misamis Occidental)	
	Committee Case No. SC-2021-04, sworn complaint of Luzviminda Denore Coronel, et al. against Deputy Speaker Rodante Marcoleta (Party-List, SAGIP)	
	Committee Case No. SC-2021-03, sworn complaint of Catherine Janice Neri, et al. against Deputy Speaker Oaminal	

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