



Committee Daily Bulletin

18th Congress
Third Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. III No. 19
June 30, 2021

COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Justice	HB 8557	Rep. Pineda	Granting Filipino citizenship to Gaoming Qiu	The Committee, chaired by Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso III (3 rd District, Leyte), approved the Committee Report on House Bill 8557.
	HB 9454	Majority Leader Romualdez	Granting Filipino citizenship to Kwok Yam Ian Chan	The Committee approved the Committee Report on HB 9454.
	HR 1666	Rep. Biazon	Inquiry into the closure of Insular Prison Road in the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) Reservation by the Bureau of Corrections (BuCor)	<p>The Committee will continue its inquiry relative to House Resolution 1666.</p> <p>Muntinlupa City Rep. Ruffy Biazon, author of HR 1666, said that his resolution seeks to thresh out the issues concerning the closure of the Insular Prison Road (IPR) inside the NBP. He emphasized that it is important to determine whether it was legal for the BuCor to erect a wall across the IPR, which serves as access road for residents living near and around the prison facility.</p> <p>Rep. Manuel Luis Lopez (1st District, Manila), Chair of the Committee on Metro Manila Development, informed the body that the House Speaker referred to his Committee for appropriate action the letter of Muntinlupa City Mayor Jaime Fresnedi also complaining about the closure of the IPR. The road closure has affected the people of Muntinlupa City, particularly the residents of Southville 3, a government social housing project near the NBP. Rep. Lopez said his Committee will forward to the Committee on Justice all documents, including position papers, it has received on the matter to serve as reference in the conduct of this inquiry.</p> <p>Southville 3 homeowners' association president Jap Landingin conveyed to the Committee the hardships experienced by the residents of Southville 3 with the closure of the IPR. He claimed that this resulted in job losses as some residents could not afford the additional transportation expenses for the longer route in going to work. It likewise allegedly caused the death of at least 10 residents who could not get immediate medical attention from medical facilities because of the blocked road. He added that more than 2,000 tricycle drivers have also lost their livelihood due to the road closure.</p> <p>Members of the Samahang Magkapitbahay ng Smart Tower and A-Angat K5 Samahang Magkapitbahay, the communities inside the NBP Reservation, also shared their difficult experiences since the closure of the IPR.</p>

<p>Continuation... Justice</p>				<p>BuCor Director General Gerald Bantag stated that BuCor has coordinated and communicated with the local government units (LGUs) the construction of the wall across the IPR and that he has documents to prove this. Bantag also explained that the IPR passes through the maximum security compound of the NBP so it had to be closed for security reasons. He mentioned that there is an alternative road that can be used by the residents which is the Magdaong Road in Poblacion, Muntinlupa City.</p> <p>BuCor Business Center Director Randy Serrano further explained that BuCor has absolute authority over the IPR based on Section 6 paragraph (b) of RA 10575 (The Bureau of Corrections Act of 2013), which states that “the BuCor shall have the absolute authority to design, formulate and implement land-use development plans and policies, as a way to maximize its assets’ value for the effective and extensive reformation programs for national inmates.”</p> <p>Serrano also reported that BuCor is already coordinating with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) for the improvement of the Magdaong Road to better serve the residents who are using this as alternative to the IPR.</p> <p>Mayor Fresnedi refuted the statement of Bantag that the BuCor coordinated with the LGUs. Fresnedi asserted that his office did not receive any notification from BuCor and that other stakeholders were also not consulted prior to the construction of the wall across the IPR. He said clearly, the BuCor did not comply with Section 2 paragraph (c) of RA 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991 which requires “all national agencies and offices to conduct periodic consultations with appropriate local government units, non-governmental and people’s organizations, and other concerned sectors of the community before any project or program is implemented in their respective jurisdictions.”</p> <p>Councilor Raul Corro of Muntinlupa City also countered the statement of BuCor which claimed that it has absolute authority over the IPR. He said the BuCor does not have such absolute authority as the land constituting the NBP Reservation, where the IPR is located, is registered under the National Government. He urged the dismantling of the wall and reopening of the IPR to address the plight of the residents who have been enduring the situation for more than a year already.</p> <p>On the other hand, Barangay Poblacion Chairman Allen Ampaya informed the body that his office received a notification from BuCor stating that the IPR will be closed temporarily.</p> <p>District Engineer Elpidio Trinidad of the DPWH Las Piñas-Muntinlupa District Engineering Office confirmed that the IPR is classified as a national road. He also said that by virtue of Commonwealth Act No. 67, series of 1936, funds were appropriated from the National Treasury for the construction of</p>
------------------------------------	--	--	--	---

Continuation... Justice				<p>facilities and structures inside the NBP Reservation, where the subject IPR is located.</p> <p>Chair Veloso opined that since the IPR is a national road, the BuCor does not have the absolute authority over it. He said the BuCor would be violating Section 3 paragraph (e) of RA 3019 (Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act) should it continue to close the IPR which is a national road. He recommended that the BuCor demolish the wall and reopen the IPR to the public.</p> <p>Department of Justice (DOJ) Undersecretary Deo Marco clarified that the DOJ only has administrative supervision over the BuCor and that it was the latter which carried out the road closure pursuant to RA 10575. He explained that since RA 10575 grants BuCor absolute authority over the administration or management of BuCor lands, the requirement of prior consultation with LGUs and other stakeholders is not needed. He said the BuCor merely adhered to the provisions of RA 10575, pointing out that it is a newer law as compared to the Local Government Code or Commonwealth Act 67.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the DOJ Undersecretary admitted that RA 10575 may have to be reviewed to harmonize its provisions with the abovementioned laws and other existing laws. He also said that the DOJ will be submitting today its official position paper on HR 1666.</p> <p>The Chair, together with Rep. Biazon and Committee Vice Chair Jonathan Keith Flores (2nd District, Bukidnon), concurred with the observation that there is a need to revisit RA 10575.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Biazon regarding the current modernization plan of the BuCor, the DOJ Undersecretary apprised the Committee of the possibility of transferring the NBP to a new location, potentially in Nueva Ecija. He said hopefully the transfer will commence before the end of the Duterte Administration.</p>
Women and Gender Equality	HBs 9059 & 9465	Reps. Acosta-Alba and Villafuerte	Ensuring gender responsive and inclusive protocols and programming to address the gender-differentiated needs of women during COVID-19 and other public health concerns, emergencies and disasters	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Maria Lourdes Acosta-Alba (1st District, Bukidnon), approved in principle House Bills 9059 and 9465.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to prepare the substitute bill for the two bills incorporating in it the recommendations of the stakeholders.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Acosta-Alba, who is also the author of HB 9059, underscored the importance of the proposed law citing the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and other disasters for that matter, on women and girls. She explained that as with the present pandemic, women and girls are experiencing more serious social and economic consequences than men. She added that the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the society's reliance on women as many of them work as frontline healthcare workers, apart from their important role of taking care of their family's well-being. However, despite this, the country's</p>

<p>Continuation... Women and Gender Equality</p>				<p>responses during the pandemic are deficient in examining and addressing the needs of women and girls and understanding the risks they face.</p> <p>Rep. Acosta-Alba stressed that responding to the pandemic and other public emergencies is about creating a resilient environment that benefits everyone. She added that “as policymakers, we have to ensure that gender responsive approaches, as strongly recommended by both bills, are necessary to accomplish our commitment to leave no one behind, to build back better towards a better normal, and heal as one.”</p> <p>Likewise, Rep. Yedda Marie Romualdez (Party-List, TINGOG SINIRANGAN), co-author of HB 9059, said that the bill aims to work towards the advancement and inclusion of Filipino women and girls, as well as the protection of their rights during public health emergencies. She agreed that women and girls are disproportionately affected during the pandemic, which is evident based on the following: increased cases of gender-based violence; unexpected pregnancies; sexual and reproductive health risks; lesser economic opportunities; unpaid care work; and difficulty of accessing healthcare services. This disproportional impact on women and girls in this time of pandemic further exacerbates the already existing gender inequalities, she added.</p> <p>Rep. Luis Raymund "LRay" Villafuerte Jr. (2nd District, Camarines Sur), author of HB 9465, was not able to join today’s meeting due to poor internet connectivity. However, he asked the Committee Secretary to manifest in the meeting that the explanatory note attached to his bill shall serve as his sponsorship speech.</p> <p>Among those who expressed their support for the two bills were representatives from the Departments of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Interior and Local Government (DILG), Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Labor and Employment (DOLE), Tourism (DOT), and Agriculture (DA); Philippine Commission on Women (PCW); National Council on Disability Affairs (NCDA); National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF), Commission on Population and Development (POPCOM); Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO); National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA); Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA); Office of Civil Defense (OCD); Philippine National Police (PNP); and Commission on Human Rights (CHR).</p>
--	--	--	--	---