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COMMITTEE MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Suffrage and Electoral Reforms jt. w/ Muslim Affairs, and Peace, Reconciliation and Unity	HBs 8116, 8117, 8161, 8222 & 8277	Deputy Speaker Legarda, Rep. Mangudadatu, Majority Leader Romualdez, Rep. Dimaporo (M.K.), and Deputy Speaker Ungab	Amending Section 13, Article XVI of RA 11054 [Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)], repealing for the purpose RA 6734 [Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)], as amended by RA 9054 (Strengthening and expanding the Organic Act for the ARMM) (by resetting the BARMM elections scheduled on the Second Monday of May 2022)	<p>The joint Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to come up with a substitute bill for the five House Bills. The meeting was co-chaired by Rep. Juliet Marie de Leon Ferrer (4th District, Negros Occidental), Chair of the Committee on Suffrage and Electoral Reforms; Rep. Ansaruddin Abdul Malik Adiong (1st District, Lanao del Sur), Chair of the Committee on Muslim Affairs; and Rep. Esmael Mangudadatu (2nd District, Maguindanao), Chair of the Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity.</p> <p>Rep. Mangudadatu will sit as the TWG Chair. The TWG shall also have two vice chairpersons who will come from the Committee on Muslim Affairs and the Committee on Suffrage and Electoral Reforms.</p> <p>Most of the bills seek to extend the transition period of the BARMM to three more years or up to year 2025, and set the first regular elections of the BARMM to May 2025 instead of May 2022.</p> <p>Rep. Mangudadatu, who is also the author of House Bill 8117, said that the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) needs ample time to finalize and enact the Bangsamoro Electoral Code (BEC) which will govern the conduct of elections in the BARMM. He also emphasized that extending the transition period will allow the National Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to lay better foundations towards a successful implementation of the peace agreement and the programs of the BTA as well.</p> <p>Rep. Mohamad Khalid Dimaporo (1st District, Lanao del Norte), author of HB 8222, said that his bill also seeks the fulfillment of the "Annex on Normalization," which is an integral part of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro. The normalization process aims to reintegrate the MILF combatants to the mainstream of society. He asked the Philippine National Police (PNP) as to how many of the MILF members who have been decommissioned are already being considered to become members of the PNP.</p> <p>PNP Command Center Acting Chief Franco Simborio answered that the papers of 1,500 out of about 12,000 decommissioned MILF members are already being processed for their integration into the police force. (There are about 40,000 MILF combatants who are expected to be decommissioned under the normalization process.)</p>

<p>Continuation... Suffrage and Electoral Reforms jt. w/ Muslim Affairs, and Peace, Reconciliation and Unity</p>				<p>Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) Undersecretary for Joint Normalization Division David Diciano confirmed the figures given by the PNP. He further explained that not all decommissioned MILF members will be qualified to become members of the PNP because they may not be able to meet certain requirements like age and educational attainment.</p> <p>In reply to the query of Rep. Dimaporo, the OPAPP Undersecretary said that an estimated budget of P49 billion covering the years up to 2026 will be required to achieve the goals of the multi-year program for BARMM. Rep. Dimaporo then suggested that this budget requirement should be included in the proposed law to ensure sufficient funding, particularly for the implementation of programs for normalization. He requested the Department of Budget and Management to submit its official position on the matter.</p> <p>Rep. Dimaporo also asked the PNP and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to submit their accomplishment report in relation to Article 11 (National Defense and Security, Public Order and Safety, and Coast Guard Services) of Republic Act 11054 or the Organic Law for the BARMM.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Amihilda Sangcopan (Party-List, AMIN) lamented that up to this day, she has not yet received the Transition Plan of the BTA which she has requested in the previous meetings. Under RA 11054, "within the first 60 days of the transition period, the interim Chief Minister of the Bangsamoro government shall submit to the BTA a transitory plan that shall contain the proposed organizational plan, as well as the schedule for implementation therefor."</p> <p>Rep. Sangcopan underscored that a roadmap is necessary to identify what still needs to be done which will justify the proposed extension of the transition period and resetting of the first regular election of the BARMM. She also asked about the status of the Bangsamoro Electoral Code and the Indigenous Peoples (IP) Code.</p> <p>BARMM's Ministry of the Interior and Local Government Minister Naguib Sinarimbo replied that the BTA intends to pass the BEC within the year, while the IP Code is already included in the first tier of priority legislations of the BTA. (The BTA serves as the interim government in the BARMM during the transition period).</p> <p>Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) asked if the proposal to extend the BARMM election to 2025 has been certified as urgent or priority legislation by the President. Sinarimbo said that a request to certify the proposed law as urgent has been sent to the Office of the President through the OPAPP. He also informed the body that the Council of Leaders, including governors and congressmen in the BARMM, as well as the secretaries of the</p>
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<p>Continuation... Suffrage and Electoral Reforms jt. w/ Muslim Affairs, and Peace, Reconciliation and Unity</p>				<p>OPAPP, DILG, and Department of National Defense, all agree that such an extension is necessary.</p> <p>Rep. Zarate also recommended that an executive session be conducted in order for the BTA to fully disclose the reasons why the transition period must be extended. Rep. Dimaporo concurred with the suggestion of Rep. Zarate.</p> <p>Rep. France Castro (Party-List, ACT-TEACHERS) said that a performance report covering the transition period should also be submitted by the BTA so that Congress will have a better assessment on whether there is really a need to extend the transition period and to reset the BARMM elections.</p> <p>Replying to the other queries of Rep. Castro, Sinarimbo said that the Education Code was already passed by the BTA and that the COVID-19 vaccination of teachers, who belong to the A4 category (frontline personnel in essential sectors), has already started in BARMM.</p> <p>On the other hand, Deputy Speaker Rufus Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City) does not favor the postponement of the scheduled election in BARMM in May 2022. He maintained that the first regular election in BARMM should push through and synchronized with the 2022 national elections, as provided for in RA 11054. He asked the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) if it can conduct the election in BARMM without the BEC.</p> <p>COMELEC lawyer Albert Leonard Rodriguez said that the Commission needs to be provided with a guideline on how to conduct the elections in BARMM, considering that it will be a parliamentary form of government. He also explained that the 63 barangays in North Cotabato, which voted to be included in the BARMM, need to be classified as to which political subdivision they will be part of. He likewise said that parliamentary districts have not yet been established to date. However, he also admitted that if Congress will be unable to pass a law that will reset the election to 2025, COMELEC is bound to proceed with the elections based on the original schedule set on May 9, 2022.</p> <p>Rep. Mangudadatu thanked the Members and the resource persons for their inputs in today's meeting. He asked for their continuous participation in the upcoming meetings of the TWG.</p>
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