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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Basic Education and Culture	Substitute Bill to HB 6247	Rep. Salceda	Establishing the Learning Materials Development Center (LMDC), providing for its duties and functions, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Pasig City Rep. Roman Romulo, will deliberate further on the Substitute Bill to House Bill 6247.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Romulo informed the body that HB 6247 was amended to focus only on the creation of the LMDC, which is now reflected in the substitute bill.</p> <p>During the Committee's previous meeting on HB 6247, Rep. Romulo suggested that the provision creating the LMDC be extracted from HB 6247 and be developed into a separate bill to focus on addressing the recurring malady and blunders in the Department of Education's (DepEd) textbooks and learning materials. In the original version of HB 6247, the creation of the LMDC is one of the reforms on the K to 12 educational system that was proposed by Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay), author of HB 6247.</p> <p>Rep. Salceda said that the proposed LMDC shall be attached to the University of the Philippines (UP) College of Education. Its primary function is to ensure the accuracy and effectiveness of nationally procured and distributed learning materials such as textbooks and teacher guides in public elementary and secondary schools. Rep. Salceda added that his bill proposes that after one year from the start of the LMDC's operation, no textbook shall be procured by the DepEd unless certified accurate by the LMDC.</p> <p>UP President Danilo Concepcion said that UP is willing to extend its assistance to the proposed LMDC. However, UP opposes the proposal to attach the LMDC to the UP System as the UP College of Education is already heavily loaded with numerous tasks and responsibilities. He explained that adding the LMDC under the administration of the UP College of Education might cause problems in terms of management and resources. He proposed that the LMDC should be an independent inter-agency body attached to the DepEd, wherein the UP College of Education will just be one of the member agencies of the inter-agency body.</p> <p>UP College of Education Dean Jerome Buenviaje concurred with Concepcion that attaching the LMDC to the UP College of Education will overwhelm the latter.</p>

<p>Continuation... Basic Education and Culture</p>				<p>Rep. Salceda asked UP to be more open to his bill. He said the UP College of Education will only have administrative supervision over the LMDC and that funds will be appropriated to enable the latter to hire its own personnel. He explained that the reason why he chose UP to supervise the LMDC is because UP is the apex educational institution in the country which can be relied on to ensure that all the learning materials of students are accurate. Rep. Salceda opposed the creation of an independent inter-agency body because such body normally does not last or exists temporarily.</p> <p>Chair Romulo urged Buenviaje to consult again with the faculty members of the UP College of Education in order to devise other ways that will allow the latter to supervise the proposed LMDC.</p> <p>Baguio City Rep. Mark Go commended the noble intent of the proposed law, which will effectively ensure the accuracy of learning materials in the basic education as the LMDC will be tasked, among others, to recommend the updating of existing learning materials and the replacement of deficient learning materials. He said this will improve the overall quality of basic education in the country.</p> <p>For her part, DepEd Assistant Secretary Alma Ruby Torio assured the body that all DepEd textbooks and other learning materials undergo a quality assurance process prior to their mass production and delivery. However, she admitted that errors were found in the self-learning modules for this school year.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bill were resource persons from the Commission on Higher Education and National Book Development Board (NBDB).</p>
	<p>HB 7138</p>	<p>Rep. Vargas</p>	<p>Providing for the establishment of culture, arts, tourism and heritage councils in every province of the country</p>	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 7138 in another meeting.</p> <p>The Secretariat will confer with the author the recommendations of the resource persons during the meeting.</p> <p>The bill seeks to establish a Culture, Arts, Tourism and Heritage Council in every province in the country that shall undertake culture, arts, tourism, and heritage preservation, enhancement and development. The Department of the Interior and Local Government shall assist in the creation of these councils and provide initial funding for their operations.</p> <p>National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) Program Development Officer Edison Molanida expressed his support for the bill. He said that the proposed law will strengthen the legal presence of the NCCA in the localities.</p>

<p>Continuation... Basic Education and Culture</p>				<p>However, he recommended to rename the proposed council to Local Culture and Arts Council (LCAC) and to expand its establishment not just in every province, but in every city and municipality in the country as well. Edison further suggested that each LCAC must be manned by a cultural officer with a permanent employment status.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Department of Tourism Undersecretary Roberto Alabado III agreed with the suggestion of the NCCA particularly in not including the field of tourism in the LCAC. He said the tourism sector should be separated from the LCAC as there are already tourism development councils in the municipal level and tourism offices in every city and barangay.</p>
	<p>HB 6175</p>	<p>Deputy Speaker Yu</p>	<p>Separating the Dulop National High School - Bag-ong Valencia Extension in Barangay Bag-ong Valencia, Municipality of Dumingag, Province of Zamboanga Del Sur from the Dulop National High School, converting it into an independent national high school to be known as Bag-ong Valencia Agricultural National High School and appropriating funds therefor</p>	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 6175 pending compliance of DepEd Region 9 with the documentary requirements for the separation and conversion of schools.</p>
<p>Creative Industry and Performing Arts (Special Committee)</p>	<p>HR 1802</p>	<p>Rep. De Venecia</p>	<p>Inquiry into the state of Filipino gastronomy and culinary heritage</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Christopher de Venecia (4th District, Pangasinan), terminated its deliberations on House Resolution 1802.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. De Venecia said that today's hearing marks the Committee's final inquiry on issues relative to the Resolution. Moving forward, he underscored the need to conduct a gastronomy mapping to push the flourishing gastronomy industry even further.</p> <p>Rep. De Venecia asserted that food is not just a status symbol but a cultural symbol as well. He continued that the gastronomy industry, which has impact on the lives and livelihood of many Filipinos, has been included as one of the creative fields identified by the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN). In the Philippines, there are only two cities in the country that are included in the UCCN, and these are Baguio City, in the field of crafts and folk art; and Cebu City, in the field of design.</p> <p>The UCCN was created in 2004 to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development. <i>(Source: UNESCO website)</i></p> <p>Resource persons from the Department of Agriculture (DA), Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), and stakeholders from the gastronomy industry were present to provide their inputs and recommendations on topics related to gastronomy.</p>

<p>Continuation... Creative Industry and Performing Arts (Special Committee)</p>				<p>DA Undersecretary Evelyn Laviña explained the concept of food security, which involves a combination of food availability, affordability, quality, and safety, as well as resilience against risks.</p> <p>Laviña also said that under the stewardship of Agriculture Secretary William Dar, the DA developed the One DA Reform Agenda program to transform the Philippine agriculture and help the country achieve food security. The One DA Reform Agenda, she added, addresses the issues and concerns confronting the country's food security which include the following: aging farmers; insufficient supply of some agricultural products; small and fragmented farmlands; non-observance of good farm practices; poor quality of produce; presence of pest and diseases; lack of financial support; and fluctuating prices; among others.</p> <p>Reps. Francisco "Kiko" Benitez (3rd District, Negros Occidental) and Stella Luz Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City) highlighted the importance of putting in place mechanisms that will bridge the farmers and the consumers.</p> <p>Rep. Quimbo said that the DA should consider the development of the farm-to-table approach, which allows consumers to buy fresh produce directly from farmers, without going through a store, market, distributor or middleman. She also pointed out the lack of access to fresh ingredients that hampers the potential of gastronomy industry in the country.</p> <p>Rep. De Venecia, along with Reps. Quimbo, Benitez, and Jericho Jonas Nograles (Party-List, PBA), said that the DA must continuously work closely with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Tourism (DOT) in order to help develop and promote the gastronomy industry. The Chair also suggested that DA must conduct a forum with the private sector in order to be apprised of the actual situation on the ground and develop solutions on how to address the challenges confronting the industry.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA) inquired about the role of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the development of the gastronomy industry.</p> <p>The DENR will submit its comments on the matter once it has gathered information relative to the Resolution.</p> <p>Also during the meeting, the Committee discussed the establishment of standards for Filipino cuisine.</p> <p>DTI Bureau of Philippine Standards (DTI-BPS) Director Neil Catajay gave a brief explanation on the difference between "standards" and</p>
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<p>Continuation... Creative Industry and Performing Arts (Special Committee)</p>				<p>“technical regulation.” He said that standards are not for mandatory compliance but may be used as reference for entities producing the same product. On the other hand, he noted that certain products are subject to technical regulation and therefore should mandatorily comply with such regulations.</p> <p>Rep. De Venecia inquired about the benefits of establishing standards for Filipino cuisine.</p> <p>Executive Director Pauline Suaco-Juan of the DTI Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions explained that the objective of establishing standards is to promote exports through gastrodplomacy or the effort of building the nation’s image through food, by using Filipino food as a tool to foster cultural understanding among countries.</p> <p>Suaco-Juan explained that lack of standards does not present much problem if Filipino cuisine will be marketed domestically. However, if Filipino cuisine has to be marketed overseas, it helps to have an arsenal of recipes to help export local products. In this light, standards are important, Suaco-Juan further said.</p> <p>Chef Robby Goco, who is part of the DTI-BPS Technical Committee for Adobo, agreed with Suaco-Juan’s statement. He added that the Technical Committee is inclined to come up with the baseline or basic recipe for popular Filipino dishes.</p> <p>On July 9, the DTI-BPS created a technical committee on Filipino dishes to develop Philippine National Standards in cooking popular Filipino dishes such as adobo, sinigang, and lechon.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Kristine Singson-Meehan (2nd District, Ilocos Sur) asked about the mechanism in choosing the “standard” recipe for a particular dish.</p> <p>Catajay said that the DTI will coordinate with the DOT and the local chefs to come up with a recipe that will be used as reference in preparing a popular Filipino dish.</p> <p>On the other hand, restaurateur Elbert Cuenca informed the Committee about the challenges that the gastronomy industry faces, and these include the following: forced discount for senior citizens and persons with disabilities; lack of appropriate regulations on food delivery services, such as Grab Food and Food Panda; and unreasonable and exorbitant rental rates.</p> <p>Likewise, social entrepreneur and marketing and branding specialist Pacita Juan added that one of the challenges being faced by the food industry is the Food and Drug Administration’s</p>
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Continuation... Creative Industry and Performing Arts (Special Committee)				tedious process with regard to food product registration. Rep. De Venecia said that the Committee will put forward necessary recommendations that will push essential reforms in the gastronomy industry.
Energy	Substitute Bill to HBs 7608 & 8786	Deputy Speaker Gatchalian and Rep. De Jesus	Providing for the national policy and framework for energy advocacy, creating for the purpose the Energy Advocacy Counsel Office, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, presided by its Vice Chair, Rep. Presley de Jesus (Party-List, PHILRECA), approved the Substitute Bill to House Bills 7608 and 8786, subject to style. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to finalize the substitute bill and refer the same to the Committee on Appropriations for consideration and approval of its funding provision.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Wes Gatchalian (1st District, Valenzuela City), author of HB 7608 and head of the technical working group (TWG) that crafted the substitute bill, reported the results of the TWG discussion on the proposed law.</p> <p>The Deputy Speaker said that the TWG agreed, among others, on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed Energy Advocacy Counsel Office (EACO) should be attached to the Department of Justice instead of the Department of Trade and Industry. • The proposed provision granting the EACO the power to recognize and accredit non-government organizations should be deleted. • The qualifications for the Energy Advocate Counsel should be relaxed and the number of Deputy Advocate Counsels should be increased to three. <p>The proposed law provides that the EACO shall be a public legal office that shall represent all captive market end users in the energy sector and matters affecting the public interest before any department, commission, agency, or court requiring the services of a lawyer.</p>