



Committee Daily Bulletin

18th Congress
Third Regular Session

A publication of the Committee Affairs Department

Vol. III No. 44
August 11, 2021

COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources	Substitute Bill to HB 7792	Rep. De Venecia	Institutionalizing an Aqua-Negosyo Program in every agro-industrial business corridor in the fisheries management areas, creating for this purpose the Aqua-Negosyo Centers, appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Leo Rafael Cueva (2nd District, Negros Occidental), approved the Substitute Bill to House Bill 7792 with amendments.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Cueva commended the author of the bill and the members of the technical working group (TWG) for crafting the substitute bill, which he described as a “meaningful and timely measure.” He added that the proposed law will help address food security concerns in the country as well as help the marginalized fisherfolk, and others who are similarly situated, venture into the business of fisheries and aquaculture, which will be beneficial to them especially during these trying times.</p> <p>Rep. Leonardo Babasa Jr. (2nd District, Zamboanga del Sur), head of the TWG that crafted the substitute bill, said that the proposed law institutionalizes the Aqua-Negosyo Program and provides a one-stop shop for aquaculture entrepreneurs. Likewise, the program will capacitate the municipal fisherfolk and other marginalized sectors who are interested to go into the aquaculture business.</p> <p>Rep. Babasa went on to say that the bill aims to transform the existing technology centers and other similar instrumentalities of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) into aqua-negosyo centers to be placed under the Fisheries Management Areas (FMAs) spread around the country. The BFAR-National Integrated Fisheries Technology Development Center (NIFTDC) located in Dagupan City in Pangasinan will serve as the model aqua-negosyo center.</p> <p>Rep. Christopher de Venecia (4th District, Pangasinan), author of HB 7792, said that the proposed Aqua-Negosyo Program shall promote sustainable fisheries development by improving food value chains; managing spatially defined production clusters along infrastructure corridors; establishing multi-sectoral public-private-people partnerships; and providing catalytic investments to transform the fisheries sector towards a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive and equitable “blue economy.” Rep. De Venecia further said that instead of creating a new body to implement the proposed law, the BFAR and</p>

Continuation... Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources				<p>the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (NFRDI) will instead be empowered to allow them to function towards the realization of the proposed law's objectives.</p> <p>The World Bank defines "blue economy" as "the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health."</p> <p>Rep. Eufemia "Ka Femia" Cullamat (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) sought assurance that the bill will truly benefit the small fisherfolk and will not be displaced or adversely affected due to the aquaculture business ventures.</p> <p>Rep. De Venecia explained that one of the primary objectives of the proposed law is to empower the small fisherfolk to become "aquapreneurs" themselves which will improve their earning power and thus alleviate their living condition.</p> <p>Expressing support for the proposed law were resource persons from the Department of Agriculture, BFAR, NFRDI, NIFTDC, and Professional Regulation Commission Board of Fisheries.</p>
Health	HB 9354	Rep. Tan (A.)	Amending RA 11525, otherwise known as the COVID-19 Vaccination Program Act of 2021	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4th District, Quezon), approved House Bill 9354 subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair, Rep. Kristine Alexie Tutor (3rd District, Bohol), presided over the meeting during the deliberation on two bills authored by the Chair to allow the latter to sponsor her bills.</p> <p>Rep. Tan, author of HB 9354, said that her bill seeks to amend Republic Act 11525 by adding registered dentists and licensed medical technologists and pharmacists as among those medical personnel who may serve as vaccinators. This is to augment the country's human resources for health as the government builds up its vaccination efforts to achieve herd immunity and curb the further spread of COVID-19, especially now with the emergence of the Delta variant.</p> <p>Rep. Tan posited that the Committee should deliberate on the bill with urgency and exigency to provide immediate delivery of health services and improvement of COVID-19 response before the 18th Congress closes its legislative calendar.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), Rep. Tan clarified that the effectivity of the proposed law shall cease upon the termination of the government's COVID-19 pandemic vaccination program.</p>

Continuation... Health				<p>Expressing support for the bill were resource persons from the Professional Regulatory Board of Dentistry, Philippine Medical Association Adhoc Committee on Vaccination, and Philippine Pharmacists Association.</p> <p>On the other hand, the Professional Regulatory Board of Medical Technology did not favor HB 9354 citing the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The competencies and skills of medical technologists are more needed in the clinical laboratory; • The administration of a drug is not among the major competencies in the practice of medical technology, thus they may not be equipped to administer the vaccine. • RA 5527, or the Philippine Medical Technology Act of 1969, defines the practice of medical technology; hence, allowing medical technologists to serve as vaccinators is outside of their expertise and may encroach on the practice of other health professionals. <p>Rep. Tan said that the bill provides that serving as vaccinator is purely on a voluntary basis and with that, medical technologists will have the option whether or not to serve as such.</p>
	HB 9633	Rep. Tan (A.)	Establishing a national patient navigation and referral system for the purpose of strengthening the provision of health care delivery system and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 9633 subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Rep. Tan, author of HB 9633, said that her bill seeks to institutionalize and expand the scope of the existing One Hospital Command Center (OHCC) by establishing a National Patient Navigation and Referral System (NPNRS). Rep. Tan said that the NPNRS will also receive calls from non-COVID patients and refer them to appropriate healthcare facilities. At present, the OHCC, which was launched by the Department of Health (DOH), receives calls through its dedicated phone lines from COVID-19 patients and healthcare providers.</p> <p>DOH Undersecretary of Health/Chief of Staff Leopoldo Vega said that with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for a mechanism to navigate patients across the spectrum of care became prominent and paved the way for the establishment of the OHCC. He added that the OHCC serves as an effective solution to bridge the current fragmented health system in terms of service delivery.</p> <p>Expressing support for the bill were resource persons from the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Philippine Medical Association, and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation. The Department of Budget and Management promised to submit its position paper on the bill.</p>

Continuation... Health	HB 6666	Rep. Haresco	Establishing a 50-bed capacity district hospital in the Second District of Aklan to be known as the Western Aklan District Hospital and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 6666, subject to style and amendment, as well as compliance with the requirements set by the DOH for the upgrading of hospitals.</p> <p>Rep. Teodorico Haresco Jr. (2nd District, Aklan), author of HB 6666, suggested that the bill's title be amended by inserting the phrase "in the Municipality of Ibahay" to pinpoint the actual location of the hospital.</p> <p>DOH's Development Management Officer Roderick Napulan recommended that further study on the bill be conducted first. He stressed that with the Supreme Court ruling on the Mandanas vs. Ochoa case, the DOH deems it appropriate that the hospital be placed under the direct supervision and control of the local government unit (LGU) of Aklan.</p> <p>Based on the SC ruling on the Mandanas case, the just share of LGUs in the internal revenue allotment (IRA), now called National Tax Allotment (NTA), must be computed based on all national taxes, and not just the National Internal Revenue Taxes (NIRT) being collected by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR). This will include other taxes being collected by the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and other agencies. As a result of the ruling, LGUs are expected to receive a huge increase in their NTA by 2022.</p> <p>Napulan averred that the DOH shall continue to support the LGU of Aklan by providing the latter with appropriate technical assistance and by monitoring the hospital's compliance with standards. As to the hospital's capital outlay requirement, Napulan said that the DOH can provide funding in accordance with the Philippine Health Facility Development Plan National Allocation Framework. He said that since the Province of Aklan is classified under category 1, which means it has a low bed capacity, the DOH can provide 100 percent of its capital outlay requirements.</p>
	HB 7546	Rep. Bolilia	Establishing the Southern Tagalog Medical Center in the Municipality of Ibaan, Fourth District of the Province of Batangas and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 7546, subject to style and amendment, as well as compliance with the requirements set by the DOH.</p> <p>Rep. Lianda Bolilia (4th District, Batangas), author of HB 7546, said that her bill aims to establish the Southern Tagalog Medical Center, to be located in the Municipality of Ibaan in the Fourth District of Batangas. The hospital will be equipped with modern technology and will be capable of treating various diseases and dysfunctions.</p> <p>Rep. Bolilia noted that the overflow of patients from nearby provinces indicates a need for more government hospitals that have affordable services, thus, the need to establish a bigger apex hospital. She said the proposed</p>

Continuation... Health				<p>new tertiary level hospital will serve the needs not only of the Province of Batangas, but also of the nearby provinces of Cavite, Quezon, Laguna, and Mindoro.</p> <p>Napulan said that the Province of Batangas is classified as category 4, which means that it has a high bed capacity. Hence, only 25 percent of its capital outlay requirements may be supported by the national government.</p>
	HB 7581	Rep. Quimbo	Creating a Health Economics Unit under the Department of Health (DOH) and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to fine-tune HB 7581.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Tan stated that the bill aims to establish a health economic unit under the DOH, which will have the capacity to conduct regular data analysis and produce rigorous policy-oriented health research to guide the regulators in their decision making. This unit will be responsible for contributing the economic analysis needed for the proper design and evaluation of DOH policies and programs, thus enabling the government to continuously build its capacity for evidence-based policy-making, particularly for the health sector.</p> <p>Rep. Stella Luz Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City), author of HB 7581, said that the government needs its own research capacity in the field of health economics as it only relies on private firms in the analysis of data emanating from studies with great health and economic implications. The problem with such approach, she said, is the absence of accountability when the recommendation of the private firm is erroneous. Thus, she advocated increasing the in-house capacity of the DOH to conduct data analytics that consider various social objectives.</p> <p>Rep. Mario Vittorio "Marvey" Mariño (5th District, Batangas), co-author of HB 7581, underscored the importance of the passage of the bill. He added that the government has appointed isolation czars and treatment czars, but not a "data czar" who can study the effects of a public health emergency on the economy.</p> <p>DOH Health Policy Development and Planning Bureau Medical Officer Ma. Socorro Santos said the Department supports the intent of the bill. She explained that the DOH is not able to hire economists because at present there are no corresponding positions in the Department. However, Santos said that some functions of the proposed health economics unit are already being performed by various bureaus of the DOH. Hence, she recommended that the functions of the proposed economics unit be redefined, taking into consideration the existing structure, functions, and capacity of the DOH.</p> <p>Likewise, National Economic and Development Authority Social Development Staff OIC-</p>

Continuation... Health				Director Girlie Grace Casimiro-Igtiben said that the creation of a new unit in the DOH might duplicate the functions of the existing offices in the Department. However, she supports the idea of creating plantilla positions for health economists in the DOH.
	HB 6121	Rep. Salimbangon	Establishing a general hospital in Barangay Luy-a, Municipality of Medellin, Province of Cebu to be known as Bogo-Medellin Hospital and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee deferred its consideration of HB 6121.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Housing and Urban Development (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 3891, 6131 & 7080	Reps. Benitez, Yap (V.), and Villafuerte	Providing for the development of sustainable cities and communities in the country	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Faustino "Inno" Dy V (6th District, Isabela), terminated its discussion on the draft Substitute Bill to House Bills 3891, 6131 and 7080.</p> <p>The Secretariat was directed to finalize the substitute bill and the corresponding Committee Report for consideration and approval by the mother Committee.</p> <p>The proposed law provides a roadmap in building and managing cities towards economic prosperity, social inclusion, cultural diversity, ecological balance, and climate resilience.</p> <p>In today's meeting the TWG agreed on the following amendments to the draft substitute bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A local government unit (LGU) covered under the proposed law shall implement plans, programs, and activities in conformity with the goals of the <i>Ambisyon 2040</i> and the Philippine Standards for Sustainable Cities and Communities in order to fulfill its economic, political, and social functions. • Digital connectivity shall be included as one of the principles of the framework of sustainable cities and communities; • National agencies and LGUs shall ensure the genuine and adequate public participation in urban, regional, spatial, and environmental planning. • A National Housing and Urban Development Sector Plan (NHUDSP) shall be formulated by the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD) in consultation with relevant government agencies, local

Continuation... Housing and Urban Development (Technical Working Group)				<p>government units, civil society organizations, private sector, and the academe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Budget and Management shall incorporate the annual targets set by the DILG, DHSUD, and National Economic and Development Authority in the awarding of the Seal of Local Good Governance under Republic Act 11292 or The Seal of Good Local Governance Act of 2019. <p>The TWG Chair requested the resource persons from the DILG, Department of Information and Communications Technology, and the League of Cities of the Philippines to submit their respective position papers on the substitute bill.</p>
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DISCUSSION WITH AGENCIES/ENTITIES		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Cooperatives Development	Report/update on issues pertaining to the creation/formation of regional clustered organizations (RCOs) vis-à-vis the implementation of Republic Act 11364, otherwise known as the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) Charter of 2019	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Presley de Jesus (Party-List, PHILRECA), discussed with the cooperative sector the issues pertaining to the creation or formation of RCOs.</p> <p>Rep. De Jesus explained that the CDA stands by the legality of creating the RCOs and is merely exercising its power pursuant to RA 11364. On the other hand, he acknowledged that some cooperatives question the legality of the RCOs saying that this is not specifically provided for in the law. Not wanting to take sides, Rep. De Jesus said that the role of the Committee in this instance is to serve as a bridge between the CDA and the cooperatives so that the two parties are able to resolve their issues and move forward. He added that the purpose of today's meeting is to be updated on the result of the virtual consultative meeting that was held between the CDA and the cooperatives regarding the creation of RCOs.</p> <p>Section 4 (z) of RA 11364 provides the power of the CDA to recognize sectoral apex organizations and a national alliance of cooperatives (NAC), while Rule IX of the law's Implementing Rules and Regulations provides that RCOs shall be recognized and organized according to the prescribed guidelines.</p> <p>CDA Chair Joseph Encabo informed the body of the results of the virtual consultative meeting the CDA arranged on August 3, with leaders and representatives of cooperatives in attendance. He reported that majority of the participants are in favor of the organization and recognition of the RCOs. However, he admitted that some of the participants have either adopted a neutral position or were still questioning the legality of the organization of the RCOs. He cited the Philippine Cooperative Center (PCC) as one of those which wanted to ensure that the organization of the RCOs is legal and there was no misinterpretation of the law. Further, Encabo shared that a series of nationwide consultative meetings will be held on the matter in September.</p> <p>PCC Vice Chairperson Garibaldi Leonardo confirmed that the PCC wants to be assured that the organization of RCOs is legal. He mentioned that even Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel "Migz"</p>

<p>Continuation... Cooperatives Development</p>		<p>Zubiri and Senator Risa Hontiveros are saying that it is not provided for in RA 11364. Thus, he said if the issue on the legality will not be resolved by the CDA, the PCC may just have to file a case in the proper courts.</p> <p>PCC Chief Executive Officer Edwin Bustillos said the CDA should keep an open mind on the different opinions of other cooperatives, emphasizing the importance of a continuing consultation in order to iron out the issues.</p> <p>The Chair agreed that there should be a continuing consultation so that this will no longer require intervention from the courts.</p> <p>Several cooperatives expressed their support for the holding of more consultative meetings between them and the CDA.</p>
	<p>Review of laws, rules and regulations affecting electric cooperatives registered with the CDA</p>	<p>The Committee listened to the concerns of electric cooperatives (ECs) relative to the implementation of the Philippine Cooperative Code of 2008 (RA 9520) and the National Electrification Administration (NEA) Reform Act of 2013 (RA 10531).</p> <p>Various electric cooperatives such as the Philippine Federation of Electric Cooperatives and the Sorsogon II Electric Cooperative brought to the attention of the Committee the difficulties being experienced by ECs, which are registered with the CDA, in complying with numerous requirements under the Philippine Cooperative Code and the NEA Reform Act. They proposed the issuance of a common policy guideline that will harmonize all the rules and regulations governing ECs.</p> <p>Rep. De Jesus assured the ECs that the CDA and NEA will consult with each other in order to address their concerns.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the Negros Occidental Electric Cooperative also suggested that a review of certain conflicting provisions, particularly with regard to tax exemptions, in the Philippine Cooperative Code and the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law be conducted. The Cooperative claimed that ECs are exempted from the value-added tax under the Philippine Cooperative Code but not under the TRAIN law.</p>
	<p>Budget Proposal of the CDA for fiscal year (FY) 2022</p>	<p>The Committee discussed the proposed budget of CDA for FY 2022.</p> <p>The CDA Chair presented that the Department of Budget and Management-approved budget for CDA for next year amounts to P1.7 billion. He said the amount will be utilized in pursuit of CDA's main advocacy which is the advancement and betterment of cooperatives.</p> <p>Rep. De Jesus expressed support for the 2022 proposed budget of the CDA even as he said that he will try to push for an increase in CDA's budget during the upcoming congressional deliberations on the national budget.</p> <p>Rep. Godofredo Guya (Party-List, RECOBODA) requested the CDA to furnish the Committee a copy of its budget proposal for FY 2022.</p>