



# Committee Daily Bulletin

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## COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
<b>Ad Hoc Committee on Military and Uniformed Personnel (MUP) Pension System</b>	Substitute Bill to HBs 701, 704, 1210, 1734, 3421, 3650, 3831, 4534, 4706, 5233, 6823, 7158, 7461, 8061, 8593 & 9271 and HR 430	Reps. Biazon, Cabochan, Villafuerte, Matugas, Minority Leader Paduano, Deputy Speakers Rodriguez and Santos-Recto, Rep. Tambunting, Deputy Speaker Pichay, Reps. Suarez (D.), Vargas, Suansing (H.), Bustos, and Salceda	Creating a sustainable fiscal framework for the separation, retirement and pension system of the military and uniformed services personnel, providing mechanisms for the disposition of government assets for the purpose, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Albay), approved the substitute bill and the corresponding Committee Report subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Rep. Salceda, who is also the author of HB 9271, explained the need to establish a sustainable fiscal framework for the MUP's separation, retirement, and pension system by way of disposing selected government assets to support its funding requirement in addition to instituting certain reforms in the system. HB 9271 was used as the base bill in consolidating the bills.</p> <p>MUPs referred to in HB 9271 are the uniformed personnel in the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, Philippine Coast Guard, Bureau of Fire Protection, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, Bureau of Corrections and the hydrography branch of the National Mapping and Resource Information Agency.</p> <p>Recognizing the role of the MUP in nation building and considering the fiscal position of the country, Rep. Salceda said that the proposed law will provide the benefits due to the MUP without compromising the stability of the national economy.</p> <p>Rep. Salceda reiterated that the current MUP pension scheme has an estimated accumulated unfunded liabilities amounting to P9.6 trillion or 53.4% of the 2020 gross domestic product (GDP). He said that if reforms would not be implemented, the MUP pension liabilities would continue to balloon which could result in a negative economic growth of 7.2% GDP by 2030, which is far worse than the impact of the financial crisis in 2008. Likewise, public debt will increase by as much as 25% by 2030.</p> <p>The Department of National Defense (DND), Philippine National Police (PNP), Philippine Navy (PN), and the Philippine Air Force (PAF) expressed support for the measure. However, they all suggested that the pensionable age should be 56 instead of 60, which was already agreed on during the previous meeting. The Committee acceded to their suggestion.</p> <p>Rep. Stella Luz Quimbo (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Marikina City) manifested that the P9.6 trillion unfunded</p>

<p>Continuation...</p> <p>Ad Hoc Committee on Military and Uniformed Personnel (MUP) Pension System</p>				<p>liabilities is an overstatement considering that the salary increase for MUP is granted every six years.</p> <p>National Treasurer Rosalia de Leon explained that the assumptions in coming up with such figures included the increase in the number of MUP and data coming from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).</p> <p>DND Secretary Delfin Lorenzana clarified that the salary increase for the MUP is not given annually, rather in three tranches for a period of six years.</p> <p>Rep. Quimbo said that with the Defense Secretary's explanation, the P9.6 trillion is all the more unrealistic because less frequent salary increases would equate to lower unfunded liabilities.</p> <p>In addition, Rep. Quimbo suggested to the Committee to look into the possibility of mandating the MUP to contribute to the pension system to lessen the fiscal burden on the government. At present, the MUP pension is non-contributory in nature, hence the funds needed for such are entirely sourced from the General Appropriations Act (GAA).</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Isidro Ungab (3<sup>rd</sup> District, Davao City) asked if the funds needed for the MUP pension shall be automatically appropriated in the GAA. Rep. Salceda answered in the affirmative.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Ungab requested the concerned agencies to submit the updated inventory of MUP assets in order to determine which assets can be disposed of and utilized to fund the current MUP pension scheme.</p> <p>Rep. Sharon Garin (Party-List, AAMBIS-OWA) suggested that the procedure to be undertaken in disposing such assets and the government agency that will be tasked to conduct the inventory of MUP assets be specifically stated in the proposed law.</p> <p>Other agreements reached during the meeting were the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To base the MUP pension on one-rank higher than the rank they hold at the time of retirement, as applicable;</li> <li>• To adopt the definition of "military and uniformed personnel" in HB 704;</li> <li>• To include the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, Bureau of Customs Enforcement Group, and other similar uniformed law enforcement agencies in the coverage of the proposed law;</li> <li>• To improve the provision on the accounting and inventory of assets</li> </ul>
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<p>Continuation... Ad Hoc Committee on Military and Uniformed Personnel (MUP) Pension System</p>				<p>of military and uniformed services, which shall be patterned after the coco levy law;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To include disability pension in the insurable items under Section 19 of the substitute bill;</li> <li>• To create a Provident Fund with voluntary membership and contribution; and</li> </ul> <p>The Committee also agreed that the Mile Long property in Makati City be added to the list of assets that can be disposed of or leased, the proceeds of which can be earmarked for the Military and Uniformed Service Modernization Fund. Under Administrative Order 21 series of 2020, the DBM is directed to study, propose and undertake such measures as may be appropriate so that the proceeds of the Mile Long property shall be used to fund the priority programs of the government, including the pension program for MUP.</p> <p>The Committee directed the resource persons to submit their position paper as well as the documents and reports requested by the Members.</p> <p>Another meeting will be scheduled on June 16 to discuss with the MUP agencies the proposed law, as revised.</p>
<p><b>Good Government and Public Accountability</b></p>	<p>HR 1711</p>	<p>Speaker Velasco</p>	<p>Inquiry into the policies and guidelines of the Department of Health (DOH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the registration, utilization, manufacture, distribution or sale of drug products for the Coronavirus disease, particularly policies and guidelines which appear to be detrimental to public interest</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Michael Edgar Aglipay (Party-List, DIWA), terminated its <i>motu proprio</i> inquiry relative to HR 1711. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the Committee Report.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Bernadette Herrera-Dy (Party-List, BH), co-author of HR 1711 and the Chair of the technical working group (TWG) that was tasked to find out the status of the clinical trials of Ivermectin, gave a report on what transpired during the TWG meeting.</p> <p>According to the Deputy Speaker, there was no consensus yet on the use of Ivermectin as an effective treatment for COVID-19. She explained that the position of the Philippine Society for Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (PSMID) was that Ivermectin has no significant overall benefit as treatment for COVID-19 and that there is low to very low assessment on the use of Ivermectin for COVID-19 prevention. Hence, PSMID needs further clinical trials to ascertain the effectiveness of the anti-parasitic drug.</p> <p>On the other hand, Deputy Speaker Herrera-Dy said the Concerned Doctors and Citizens of the Philippines (CDC) strongly advocated the use of Ivermectin for prophylaxis and early treatment for COVID-19. She said the CDC cited the overwhelming evidence on the efficacy of Ivermectin based on numerous clinical trials done in developed countries like</p>
	<p><i>Motu proprio</i> Inquiry</p>		<p>Into the alleged questionable guidelines and policies of the DOH and FDA that hamper public health service delivery to the Filipino people</p>	

<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability</p>				<p>Czech Republic and Slovakia, and in developing countries such as South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mexico, and India.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rodante Marcoleta (Party-List, SAGIP) concurred that there is already overwhelming evidence from international experts on the efficacy of Ivermectin as treatment for COVID-19.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Herrera-Dy asserted that the DOH must already have an official stand on whether or not physicians are free to prescribe Ivermectin to patients. She also recommended for the DOH to look into the possible conflict of interest between those conducting clinical trials and the pharmaceutical companies, since the latter are the ones that usually sponsor clinical trials/studies.</p> <p>DOH Secretary Francisco Duque III apprised the body that the FDA is now granting compassionate special permit (CSP) to doctors and hospitals for the use of Ivermectin in the treatment of COVID-19. A CSP may be issued by the FDA to allow limited use of investigational drugs or unregistered drugs. Secretary Duque also said that the DFA also issues a compounding authorization to a duly licensed pharmacy which dispenses Ivermectin to those with valid prescription.</p> <p>Drug compounding is often regarded as the process of combining, mixing, or altering ingredients to create a medication tailored to the needs of an individual patient. <i>(Source: FDA website)</i></p> <p>The Committee recommended the following courses of actions to be undertaken by the DOH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To coordinate with the Department of Foreign Affairs on possible government-to-government approach to acquire information from other countries on researches or studies pertaining to the use and clinical trials of Ivermectin for treatment of COVID-19;</li> <li>• To urge the PSMID to consider the findings of the CDC on the efficacy of Ivermectin as prophylaxis and treatment for COVID-19;</li> <li>• To revisit DOH Administrative Order No. 2013-0021 which provided stricter requirements for the registration of pharmaceutical products;</li> <li>• To address the persistent delays and possible “red-tape” in FDA processes with regard to product registration and renewal; and</li> <li>• To remove the requirement of certification of good standing from the Philippine Medical Association before medical practitioners are</li> </ul>
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<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability</p>				<p>accredited by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), which is not provided for under RA 11223 (Universal Health Care Act).</p> <p>On the letter sent by the DOH to the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) pertaining to the revocation of licenses of doctors who are prescribing Ivermectin inappropriately to patients, DOH Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire clarified that the intention of the letter was just to inform the PRC that there are doctors who are not following the proper procedures in prescribing Ivermectin. She said this kind of practice should be investigated by the PRC.</p> <p>Asked how such reports reached the DOH, Vergeire said that television news reports on the matter prompted the DOH to write the PRC.</p> <p>Rep. Michael Defensor (Party-List, ANAKALUSUGAN) chided the DOH for quickly passing judgment against those who support the use of Ivermectin. He said the DOH should come up with a policy that balances the risk and benefit of Ivermectin. He emphasized that the number of deaths from COVID-19 could have been curtailed if only the DOH permitted the use of Ivermectin to help treat the disease.</p>
	<p>HR 1396</p>	<p>Deputy Speaker Savellano</p>	<p>Inquiry into the questionable receipt of private funding by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other government agencies and institutions in exchange for the issuance of specific and pre-defined policies directed against a legitimate industry under Philippine laws and in complete disregard of the rights and welfare of consumers</p>	<p>The Committee terminated its inquiry relative to HR 1396. The Secretariat was directed to prepare the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Aglipay said that the objective of the inquiry is to determine the propriety and legality of FDA's acceptance of grants from private advocacy groups which could possibly influence FDA policies in the future.</p> <p>The FDA admitted in the previous meeting that it received a grant from anti-tobacco advocacy groups such as The Union (International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease) and Bloomberg Initiative in the amount of \$150,430.00, which was used by the FDA to hire additional research personnel, pay for operational costs, and purchase equipment for its research projects.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rufus Rodriguez (2<sup>nd</sup> District, Cagayan de Oro City) said that the FDA clearly violated the following laws in its acceptance of the grants: Republic Act 6713 (Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees); Batas Pambansa Blg. 39 (Foreign Agents Act of 1979); and RA 3019 (Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act).</p> <p>He explained that the FDA should not have accepted a grant from a contending</p>

<p>Continuation... Good Government and Public Accountability</p>				<p>stakeholder (anti-tobacco groups) when the FDA is supposed to formulate the rules, regulations, and standards governing the registration of electronic nicotine/non-nicotine delivery systems (ENDS/ENNDS) and heated tobacco products (HTPs) and the issuance of license to operate, pursuant to RA 11467 or the law that increased the excise tax on alcohol and e-cigarettes, and other laws and issuances.</p> <p>According to the Deputy Speaker a potential conflict of interest could arise from the receipt of the grant which might affect or influence FDA's decision on the regulation of ENDS/ENNDS/HTPs. He also informed the body that The Union and Bloomberg Initiative are not compliant with BP 39 because they have not registered with the Department of Justice for acting as foreign agents which have the ability to persuade or influence government agencies or the public with respect to domestic policies through their advocacy campaigns and activities.</p> <p>FDA Deputy Director General Ronald De Veyra said that the grant is not a violation of RA 6713 because it was not given to a public official but to the FDA for the purpose of initiating projects meant to develop and deliver high-impact evidence-based tobacco control interventions.</p> <p>FDA Center for Cosmetic Regulation and Research Director <i>Ana Trinidad Rivera</i> cited Section 18 of RA 9711 (FDA Act of 2009) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) which allow the FDA, through its special regulatory fund, to accept grants, donations, and all other endowments from local and external sources.</p> <p>Asked by the Deputy Speaker on the role of the donors in the disbursement of the grants/funds, Rivera maintained that The Union and Bloomberg Initiative are not in any way involved with the administration of the funds.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1<sup>st</sup> District, Nueva Ecija), co-author of HR 1396, if the FDA has already formulated the guidelines for the regulation of ENDS/ENNDS/HTPs, Rivera replied that the FDA is already finalizing the guidelines and assured the Committee that it is not being influenced by the donors.</p> <p>Principal author of the resolution, Deputy Speaker Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (1<sup>st</sup> District, Ilocos Sur), questioned the validity of the Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2010-01 (Protection of the Bureaucracy against Tobacco Industry Interference) between the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and Department of Health (DOH) at this time of the</p>
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<p><i>Continuation...</i> Good Government and Public Accountability</p>				<p>pandemic. He said because of this Circular, it prevented DOH Secretary Francisco Duque III from utilizing the ventilators donated by Lucio Tan (LT) Group, Inc., which also owns Fortune Tobacco Corporation, last December 2020.</p> <p>Under the Circular, “public officials and employees shall not solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan or anything of monetary value in the course of their official duties or in connection with any operation being regulated by, or any transaction which may be affected by the functions of their office from any person or business related to the tobacco industry.”</p> <p>CSC Commissioner Aileen Lourdes Lizada said the Circular is currently under review by the CSC and that it has sent its legal opinion on the matter to the DOH last March, which already allowed the DOH to use the ventilators donated by the Lucio Tan Group.</p> <p>DOH Bureau of International Health Cooperation Director <i>Maria Soledad Antonio</i> confirmed that the DOH is now preparing to deliver the ventilators to the different beneficiary hospitals in Metro Manila.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rodriguez criticized the slow action on the part of the DOH. He said the delay in the distribution of ventilators could have caused the loss of lives of people who were desperately in need of the ventilators. He stressed that this is a case of criminal negligence on the part of the DOH.</p>
<p><b>Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples</b></p>	<p>HR 15</p>	<p>Rep. Cullamat</p>	<p>Investigation into the alleged water crisis and the revival and effects of the construction of the Kaliwa Dam and Laiban Dam projects</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Kalinga Rep. Allen Jesse Mangaoang, will deliberate further on the issue raised relative to House Resolutions 15 and 309 in its next meeting.</p> <p>Rep. Mangaoang recounted that in the Committee’s previous meeting, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) disclosed that a Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) will be conducted in affected areas in Quezon Province where the New Centennial Water Source-Kaliwa Dam Project will be constructed.</p> <p>He said that some Members asked that the FPIC process be temporarily put on hold pending the conclusion of the Committee’s investigation so that the concerned parties may be able to sit down and come to a meeting of the minds. However, the NCIP pushed through with the FPIC process, with the concerned indigenous cultural communities and indigenous peoples (ICC/IPs) voting against the project. The FPIC is an essential requirement prior to the implementation of a project inside the territories of the ICCs/IPs.</p> <p>Rep. Mangaoang explained that the Committee Members support the government’s</p>

<p>Continuation... Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples</p>				<p>effort to utilize the country's water resources and harness their potential to benefit the Filipino people. But the Committee stands firm in its position that the exploration and utilization of the country's natural resources must be done responsibly.</p> <p>In the case of the Kaliwa Dam project, Rep. Mangaoang enjoined the proponents of the project to give the affected ICC/IPs their just share of the benefits to be derived from the project as they are the ones who will suffer from the absolute forfeiture of their ancestral domain.</p> <p>NCIP Region IV-A Regional Hearing Officer Josefina Agusti informed the Committee that the FPIC process is still ongoing. She said that although there had been meetings between the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and the affected ICCs/IPs, there was no agreement yet, particularly on the share in the profits by the IPs.</p> <p>MWSS Project Manager Jose Dorado Jr. promised to submit the agency's financial projection in relation to the profit sharing with the ICCs/IPs. He likewise elucidated that the Kaliwa Dam Project is only in its first phase of the project, which involves the crafting of a detailed midyear design. In order to commence with the second phase, or the construction itself, the MWSS still needs to secure required clearances from various agencies, he added.</p> <p>Rizal Province Vice Governor Reynaldo San Juan Jr. reiterated the request of the provincial government of Rizal with the MWSS to provide the former a copy of documents related to the Kaliwa Dam Project in order for the provincial government to give its comments and recommendations.</p> <p>Southern Tagalog for Environmental Development and Protection (STEP) Sierra Madre Chairman Mark Almazan and some ICC/IPs from the Municipality of General Nakar in Quezon Province manifested their objection to the Kaliwa Dam Project.</p> <p>Likewise, Philippine Movement for Climate Justice (PMCJ) Resident Scientist Ruben Guieb pointed out that the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) issued for the Kaliwa Dam Project should be revoked since it was found by scientists and some experts to be technically-deficient, inconclusive, and unscientific. He also pointed out that the social acceptability of the project was not achieved through the FPIC process.</p> <p>Reacting to the statement of Guieb regarding the ECC, Rep. France Castro (Party-List, ACT-TEACHERS) questioned the basis of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for issuing an ECC to the Kaliwa Dam project. Rep. Castro requested a</p>
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Continuation... Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples				<p>copy of the subject ECC and supporting documents from the DENR.</p> <p>Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) proposed the issuance of a resolution calling for the MWSS and other agencies involved in the Kaliwa Dam Project to cease and desist from initiating, performing or doing any activity inside the affected ancestral domain of the Dumagats or indigenous people absent a completed FPIC process.</p> <p>The Committee agreed with the suggestion of Rep. Zarate.</p> <p>For the Committee's next meeting, Rep. Zarate requested that the Committee be apprised of the status of the foreign funds allocated for the Kaliwa Dam Project. Rep. Mangaoang also directed the MWSS to provide a map design of the Kaliwa Dam.</p>
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TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Natural Resources (Technical Working Group)	HBs 107 & 4518	Reps. Fortun and Cabochan	Establishing marine protected areas (MPAs) in all coastal municipalities and cities	<p>The technical working group (TWG), presided by Committee Secretary Raul Terso, will prepare the substitute bill to the two bills and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Terso informed the body that in March 2020, the Committee created a TWG to craft a substitute bill for HBs 107, 4518, 1686, 4052, and 3460. However, he said the TWG found that the bills vary in objectives and coverage. Thus, the TWG thought it best to come up with separate substitute bills for each set of bills with similar objectives and coverage.</p> <p>For the bills establishing the MPAs, Terso said these already underwent extensive discussions in the Committee and a bill with similar subject matter was approved on Third Reading by the House of Representatives in the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress.</p> <p>The resource persons agreed that the version that was approved on Third Reading in the previous Congress be adopted as the substitute bill to HBs 107 and 4518.</p>
	HBs 1686 & 5442	Reps. Villafuerte and Nieto	Establishing the National Council for the Preservation of Mangrove Forests	The TWG will prepare the substitute bill to the three bills and the corresponding Committee Report.
	HB 4052	Rep. Fortun	Providing for the preservation, reforestation, afforestation, and sustainable development of mangrove forests in the Philippines, providing penalties for violation thereof	The Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) recommended the adoption of the penalty provision in HB 4052 which imposes a fine of not less than P200,000 for violating any of the prohibited acts stated in the bill, particularly those that will

Continuation... Natural Resources (Technical Working Group)				<p>destroy or damage the mangrove forest. The BMB also recommended that the proposed law be aligned with the Sustainable Forest Management Act, which was approved by the House on Feb 1.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the DENR's Forest Management Bureau suggested that the proposed National Council for the Preservation of Mangrove Forests should be an independent body and not attached to the DENR.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their recommendations for the TWG's reference in crafting the substitute bill.</p>
	HBs 3460 & 8925	Deputy Speaker Hataman and Rep. Villafuerte	Establishing a national wetland policy, providing mechanisms for its institutionalization, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The TWG will prepare the substitute bill to the two bills and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Rep. Amihilda Sangcopan (Party-List, AMIN) suggested that HB 8925 be used as the working draft as it is more comprehensive than the other bill.</p> <p>The BMB and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources recommended that local government units (LGUs) should be involved in taking care of the wetlands in the country. Thus, they proposed the inclusion in the bill of a provision stating the roles and responsibilities of the LGUs in the protection and conservation of the wetlands in their respective jurisdictions.</p> <p>Under HB 8925, all types of wetlands shall be covered by the proposed law including inland wetlands (waterbodies located within land boundaries such as rivers, creeks, and lakes); coastal wetlands (located within the coastal watershed such as bays, marine shores, and estuaries); and human-made wetlands (constructed or maintained by humans such as dams, reservoirs, and fish/shrimp ponds).</p>