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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Higher and Technical Education	HB 9732	Deputy Speaker Legarda	Prescribing the use of neo-ethnic Philippine textiles in the academic regalia of all state universities and colleges	<p>The Committee, chaired by Baguio City Rep. Mark Go, approved House Bill 9732, subject to style and amendment. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>The proposed law seeks to establish the Philippine Academic Regalia Council (PARC) that shall formulate the national academic regalia policy. The said policy shall review, standardize, and adopt academic regalia for graduates, administrators, faculty, and awardees of state universities and colleges (SUCs).</p> <p>As defined in the bill, the term “academic regalia” refers to the “official garb worn by university officials, faculty, graduates, and awardees during graduation, commencement exercises, and other academic functions.”</p> <p>Expressing support for the proposed law were representatives from the University of the Philippines (UP), Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC), and the Philippine Textile Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology (PTRI-DOST).</p> <p>PTRI Director Celia Elumba further said that the proposed law will provide livelihood opportunities in local communities. Elumba also proposed that the design of the academic regalia for each state university or college be done by the PTRI, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the SUCs.</p> <p>On the query of Rep. Go, Elumba said that the estimated cost of the academic regalia using neo-ethnic Philippine textiles is around P500 per piece.</p>
	HB 9883	Deputy Speaker Garcia	Strengthening the knowledge economy human resources of the Philippines by increasing the appropriations for scholarships, scientific research, innovation and enterprise, education, and skills training	<p>The Committee approved HB 9883, subject to style and amendment. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Pablo John Garcia (3rd District, Cebu), author of HB 9883, said that his bill seeks to provide more funding for the expansion of scholarships and training, implementation of entrepreneurship-related courses, creation of skills development programs, and other endeavors focused on innovation and empowerment. It also aims to create more jobs, strengthen institutions, and reduce poverty.</p>

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education				Expressing their support for the bill were PASUC and the Philippine Business for Education.
	HB 9635	Rep. Violago	Designating the Central Luzon State University as research and development regional zone and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 9635, subject to style and amendment. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>Rep. Micaela Violago (2nd District, Nueva Ecija), author of HB 9635, sought the immediate passage of her bill. She likewise manifested that her explanatory note shall serve as her sponsorship speech.</p> <p>The proposed law seeks to declare the existing centers of Central Luzon State University (CLSU) as regional centers for the following: advancement of mushroom research and development; molecular biology and biotechnology; nanotechnology for agri-fishery; and climate change and environmental management.</p> <p>CLSU President Edgar Orden, CHED Region III OIC-Director Maria Teresita Semana, and Department of Budget and Management Region III Assistant Director Rosalie Abesamis expressed support for the bill.</p>
	HB 9653	Rep. Uy	Establishing a campus of the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines in Barangay Lumbia, City of Cagayan de Oro, Province of Misamis Oriental, to be known as the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines - Lumbia Campus and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 9653, subject to style and amendment. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>Expressing support for the bill were CHED Region X Raul Alvarez Jr. and University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines President Ambrosio Cultura.</p>
HB 9823	Deputy Speaker Savellano	Establishing the San Juan and Cabugao campuses of the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College in the Municipalities of San Juan and Cabugao, Province of Ilocos Sur, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 9823, subject to style and amendment. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Deogracias Victor "DV" Savellano (1st District, Ilocos Sur), author of HB 9823, manifested that his explanatory note shall serve as his sponsorship speech.</p> <p>The proposed law seeks to establish the San Juan Campus and Cabugao Campus of the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College (ISPSC) to strengthen the institutional capacity of ISPSC in providing quality and accessible tertiary education, along with other research centers.</p> <p>ISPSC President Gilbert Arce expressed support for the bill.</p> <p>CHED Executive Director Cinderella Filipina Jaro pointed out that the Municipalities of San Juan and Cabugao are adjacent municipalities. Hence, Jaro suggested that these two campuses, as well as the other public higher education institutions within the first legislative district of Ilocos Sur, should not offer the same courses.</p>	

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education	HR 1942	Speaker Velasco	Commending Farrell Eldrian Wu for graduating with a perfect 5.0 grade point average from the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States of America	<p>Jaro also suggested that a feasibility study should first be conducted to determine the needed funding support for the proposed law to ensure its successful implementation.</p> <p>The Committee adopted House Resolution 1942. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>Based on HR 1942, Farrell Eldrian Wu graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) on June 4, 2021 with two degrees: Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Engineering and Bachelor of Science in Business Analytics, minor in Economics. He attained a perfect grade point average of 5.0, which is the highest grade that could be conferred in MIT.</p>
Local Government	Substitute Bill to HBs 5687 & 7778	Reps. Bernos and Yap (E.)	Establishing the Cordillera Autonomous Region	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Noel Villanueva (3rd District, Tarlac), approved the Substitute Bill to House Bills 5687 and 7778, subject to style and amendment. The corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>Baguio City Rep. Mark Go, co-author of HB 5687 and head of the technical working group (TWG) that crafted the substitute bill, said that the TWG opted to use HB 5687 as the base bill in crafting the substitute bill because it is the same version of the bill that was approved by the Committee in the previous Congress. Rep. Go underscored the importance of the proposed law saying that the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) has been operating under a transitory system of governance for three decades now. Hence, the time is right to fulfill the goal of autonomy for CAR under the Constitution.</p> <p>The Constitution provides that there shall be created autonomous regions in Muslim Mindanao and in the Cordilleras. While the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) was already enacted, which established the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), an autonomous region in the Cordilleras has yet to be realized.</p> <p>Expressing support for the proposed law were representatives from the Departments of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Foreign Affairs (DFA), Agriculture (DA), and Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); and from the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Civil Service Commission, Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), and the local government of Baguio City led by Mayor Benjamin Magalong.</p> <p>Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) legislative liaison officer Gay Nadine Alvor asked the Committee to exclude the PCSO from being a source of funds for the proposed Cordillera Autonomous Region. The substitute bill provides that the PCSO shall allocate 3%</p>

<p>Continuation... Local Government</p>				<p>of its net income to the region as funding support.</p> <p>Alvor explained that at present, the PCSO is already supporting local government units (LGUs) out of its income from Lotto and Small Town Lottery operations. It is also saddled with many mandatory contributions and adding another such mandate to the agency will already affect its finances, especially now that the pandemic has adversely affected its sales.</p> <p>On the query of Kalinga Rep. Allen Jesse Mangaoang, Alvor said that the PCSO does not allocate funds to the BARMM, except for the regular funding support given by the PCSO to LGUs.</p> <p>Budget and Management (DBM) representative Stephanie Aguilar suggested that the compensation of officials and employees of the proposed autonomous region should be aligned with the total compensation framework established under Congress Joint Resolution No. 4 dated June 17, 2009.</p> <p>PEZA lawyer Christine Rosales said that there is no need to establish a separate economic zone authority for the promotion and creation of economic zones in the proposed Cordillera Autonomous Region.</p> <p>Rep. Go explained that the bill does not provide for the establishment of another PEZA in the autonomous region. Instead, it envisions that the regional government in cooperation with PEZA shall encourage, promote, and support the establishment and development of economic zones in the area.</p> <p>Meanwhile, CSC CAR Regional Director Marilyn Taldo suggested that the regional governor, in exercising his authority to fill-up positions in the regional government, should do this in accordance with existing standards, policies, and procedures promulgated by the CSC.</p> <p>Rep. Go was amenable to the suggestion of the CSC.</p> <p>Rep. Leonardo Babasa Jr. (2nd District, Zamboanga del Sur) asked if the stakeholders are supportive of the proposed law. He recalled that there were two attempts to establish an autonomous region in the Cordilleras, however, the people in the area did not ratify these proposals during the plebiscite.</p> <p>Rep. Go said that based on the surveys conducted by the NEDA, there is now a growing interest on the part of the Cordillerans to finally attain autonomy.</p>
	HBs 7362 & 9949	Reps. Yap (E.) and Pancho	Converting the Municipality of Baliuag in the Province of Bulacan into a component	The Committee approved HBs 7362 and 9949, with instructions to the Secretariat to

<p>Continuation... Local Government</p>			<p>city to be known as the City of Baliuag</p>	<p>consolidate the bills using HB 9949 as the base bill.</p> <p>Rep. Niña Taduran (Party-List, ACT-CIS) sponsored the bill in behalf of the author, Rep. Eric Go Yap (Party-List, ACT-CIS). She said that the conversion of Baliuag into a component city will provide the means to properly and directly address the issues and concerns of its constituents. She added that the proposed law has been endorsed by the majority of the residents in the municipality.</p> <p>Rep. Gavini "Apol" Pancho (2nd District, Bulacan), author of HB 9949, pushed for the passage of the proposed law. He manifested that the explanatory note attached to his bill shall serve as his sponsorship speech.</p> <p>Rep. Lorna Silverio (3rd District, Bulacan) suggested the review of Section 5 (Liability of Damages) of HB 7362 saying that it runs counter to Republic Act 7160 or the Local Government Code. Section 5 of the law states that "The City and its officials shall not be liable for death or injury to persons or damage to property done or caused as a consequences or result of discharge or performance of official functions within the scope of their duties."</p> <p>Rep. Silverio said that Title II, Chapter IV of RA 7160 pertains to the disciplinary actions to be meted against public officials. Likewise, Section 78 of the same law provides that all matters pertinent to human resources and development in LGUs shall be governed by the Civil Service Law and the CSC rules and regulations.</p> <p>Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) Local Fiscal Policy Service Director Ma. Pamela Quizon said that the Municipality of Baliuag meets the requirement under RA 7160 for the conversion into a component city, having an average annual income of P111.27 million for years 2018 and 2019.</p> <p>Likewise, Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) Supervising Statistical Specialist Raul Ludovice said that based on the 2020 census, the population of Baliuag is 168,470. This, Ludovice said, is way above the 150,000 minimum population requirement for the conversion into a component city.</p> <p>However, Land Management Bureau's chief of Evaluation and Statistics Section Genalyn Verbo said that the Municipality of Baliuag has a land area of 4,676 hectares, which is below the 10,000 hectares (100 square kilometer) minimum land area requirement for the conversion into a component city.</p> <p>Rep. Villanueva said that even if Baliuag did not meet the required land area, it is still qualified for such conversion considering that it</p>
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Continuation... Local Government				<p>meets the required population and average annual income.</p> <p>Under RA 7160, a municipality may be converted into a component city if it has a locally generated average annual income, as certified by the Department of Finance, of at least P100 million for the last two consecutive years based on 2000 constant prices, and if it has either of the following requisites: a contiguous territory of at least 100 square kilometers, as certified by the Land Management Bureau; or a population of not less than 150,000 inhabitants, as certified by the PSA.</p> <p>Expressing support for the proposed law were the DILG, League of Cities of the Philippines, and Baliuag Mayor Ferdinand Estrella.</p>
Natural Resources	HB 4100	Deputy Speaker Hataman	Declaring the month of May of every year as the Marine Turtle Awareness Month	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Elpidio Barzaga Jr. (4th District, Cavite), approved House Bill 4100 subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Rep. Amihilda Sangcopan (Party-List, AMIN), co-author of HB 4100, said that the bill seeks to promote the conservation and protection of marine turtles in the country by declaring the month of May of every year as the Marine Turtle Awareness Month. She added that five out of seven species of marine turtles around the world are found in the country. She emphasized the need for the future generation to be mindful, sensitive, and caring towards the environment including the oceans, in order for marine turtles to thrive.</p> <p>From the Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB), OIC-Chief of Wildlife Conservation Section Mirasol Ocampo recommended that the Marine Turtle Awareness Month be held in the month of June, instead of May. She explained that the World Sea Turtle Day is being celebrated every June 16, the birthday of Dr. Archie Carr who is the founder of Sea Turtle Conservancy and considered the "father of sea turtle biology."</p> <p>Sea Turtle Conservancy (STC) is a non-profit sea turtle organization raising awareness and protection for sea turtles across the globe with nearly 60 years of experience in national and international sea turtle conservation, research, and educational endeavors. <i>(Source: STC website)</i></p> <p>Rep. Sangcopan said she is amenable to the suggestion of the BMB.</p>
	HB 6082	Rep. Ramirez-Sato	Declaring the Island of Mindoro a mining-free zone and providing penalties for violation thereof	<p>The Committee approved HB 6082.</p> <p>Occidental Mindoro Rep. Josephine Ramirez-Sato, author of HB 6082, said that her bill</p>

Continuation... Natural Resources				<p>seeks to prohibit all forms of mining operations and activities including quarrying in the Island of Mindoro, which covers the Provinces of Occidental and Oriental Mindoro. She said the people of Mindoro provinces have been unwavering in defending their environment from mining activities, considering that the two provinces are vulnerable to floods and landslides. She added that this commitment to protect the environment and natural resources of Mindoro Island led to the 25-year mining moratorium ordinances issued by the two provinces. She explained that her bill seeks to institutionalize these local measures by declaring the Island of Mindoro a mining-free zone.</p> <p>Mayor Eric Constantino of Abra de Ilog, Occidental Mindoro expressed his support for the bill and reiterated the opposition of the Mindoro people against any mining activities within the Island of Mindoro.</p> <p>The DENR Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) maintained that allowing mining activities in the Island of Mindoro will contribute to the industrialization of the country.</p>
	HB 5884	Rep. Abueg-Zaldivar	Authorizing the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) of the DENR, having jurisdiction over the parcel of land subject of the application, to issue tree cutting permits to landowners for the cutting, gathering, and utilization of naturally grown trees in private and/or titled lands subject to the guidelines of the DENR	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 5884.</p> <p>Rep. Cyrille “Beng” Abueg-Zaldivar (2nd District, Palawan), author of HB 5884, said that her bill seeks to authorize the CENRO of DENR to issue tree cutting permits to landowners for the cutting, gathering and utilization of naturally grown trees in private and/or titled lands subject to the guidelines of the DENR. She explained that the bill aims to expedite the process of cutting dead and infected trees which pose danger to the lives and properties of landowners and to provide the latter with the freedom to make use of their trees for personal and private purposes. Further, she informed the body that her bill is actually a refiled measure from the 16th and 17th Congresses.</p> <p>DENR - Forest Management Bureau’s (FMB) Forest Policy Section head Kenneth Tabliga conveyed the Department’s support for the bill. She also agreed with the recommendation of Rep. Barzaga that the FMB should be the one tasked to formulate the DENR guidelines for the implementation of the proposed law.</p> <p>Rep. Leonardo Babasa Jr. (2nd District, Zamboanga del Sur) asked if the proposed law can also cover trees in barangay roads that need to be cleared for road widening purposes.</p> <p>Tabliga replied that the bill’s coverage may be expanded to allow the cutting of trees in case</p>

Continuation... Natural Resources				<p>these impede the implementation of government projects.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Jose "Bonito" Singson Jr. (Party-List, PROBINSYANO AKO) suggested that guidelines should be issued on the proper cutting of trees to ensure that this will not be a hazard to road users. Rep. Barzaga agreed that in some instances cutting trees may not suffice and will require actual uprooting of trees especially for road widening projects.</p> <p>Tabliga said the DENR will issue the guidelines on the proper cutting of trees. She explained that at present, the Department of Public Works and Highways undertakes the cutting of trees for road widening projects under the supervision of the DENR.</p> <p>Replying to the query of Rep. Eddiebong Plaza (2nd District, Agusan del Sur) as to who determines that certain trees are infected thus should be cut or felled, Tabliga said it is the DENR which evaluates and assesses this and gives the approval for the cutting of infected trees.</p> <p>Both Reps. Plaza and Barzaga recommended that the proposed law should include a penal provision to deter would-be violators.</p> <p>Rep. Abueg-Zaldivar agreed to submit a draft penal provision for her measure which shall be discussed in the next meeting.</p>
	HB 6321	Rep. Singson	Prohibiting the exportation of black sand and its derivatives in its raw form to other countries	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 6321.</p> <p>The proposed law seeks to prohibit the exportation of black sand in its raw form and to require all black sand mining companies in the country to institute, build, or lease advanced processing plants for magnetite in order to locally process magnetite and export processed magnetite instead. As defined in the bill, black sand is dark sand containing small fragments of magnetite which is a rock mineral and an oxide of iron that is attracted to magnet and can be magnetized to become a permanent magnet itself.</p> <p>Reacting to the statement of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) that the proposed law is inconsistent with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of the World Trade Organization, Rep. Singson, author of HB 6321, requested the DTI to submit the exact provisions of the proposed law which might conflict with the GATT. He said this will help in introducing amendments to the bill to make it compliant with the GATT and other international trade agreements to which the Philippines is a party.</p> <p>DTI Board of Investments (BOI) Investments Specialist Graciela Marie Juatco said that the</p>

Continuation... Natural Resources				<p>DTI will submit its recommendations to align the proposed law with the GATT and other international trade agreements.</p> <p>The DENR-MGB expressed support for the bill pointing out that the local processing and export of magnetite will decrease the country's importation of processed magnetite, increase government revenues, and generate jobs in the localities where the magnetite will be processed.</p> <p>Rep. Eufemia "Ka Femia" Cullamat (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA) also manifested her support for the bill.</p>
	HB 8299	Rep. Ramirez-Sato	Institutionalizing the Tamaraw Conservation Program, creating its administrative and implementation mechanism, providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee will deliberate further on HB 8299.</p> <p>Rep. Ramirez-Sato, author of HB 8299, said that her bill seeks to address the declining population of tamaraws in the country by strengthening the Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP) of the DENR and transforming it into an office which shall formulate and implement the Tamaraw Conservation Management and Action Plan (TCMAP). She added that the bill also proposes to create the Tamaraw Conservation Coordinating Council which shall provide oversight function over the implementation of the TCMAP and TCP.</p> <p>Recognizing the valuable inputs provided by the BMB to the bill, Rep. Ramirez-Sato said that she will coordinate directly with the Bureau in coming up with a revised version of her bill.</p>
Youth and Sports Development	HB 8388	Rep. Tutor	Further expanding the coverage of incentives granted to national athletes and coaches, amending for the purpose Section 8 of RA 10699 or the National Athletes and Coaches Benefits and Incentives Act	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Faustino Michael Carlos Dy III (5th District, Isabela), approved House Bill 8388 subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Rep. Kristine Alexie Tutor (3rd District, Bohol), author of HB 8388, said that her bill seeks to increase the cash incentives of national athletes and coaches to show gratitude to them for bringing pride and honor to the country. The bill increases the cash incentives for athletes who win in the following games:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asian beach games or Asian-level competitions held at least every two years with at least 25 countries participating, and qualifying competitions for world-level and Asian-level games – For gold medalists, P600,000; silver medalists, P350,000; bronze medalists, P150,000; • Southeast Asian (SEA) Games – For gold medalists, P400,000; silver medalists, P250,000; bronze medalists, P100,000; and • ASEAN Para Games – For gold medalists, P250,000; silver medalists, P125,000; bronze

<p>Continuation... Youth and Sports Development</p>				<p>medalists, P50,000.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bill were the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation.</p> <p>The PCSO stated that while it supports the noble intent of the bill, it might not be able to serve as one of the funding sources of the proposed law at this time because the PCSO charity fund is currently giving priority to health programs and initiatives in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Rep. Jericho Jonas Nograles (Party-List, PBA) conveyed that aside from providing cash incentives to athletes after winning sports competitions, it is also important to support athletes before the competitions or during their preparation/training period. He said funds should be provided for their training, including sessions with sports psychologists and nutritionists, as this will holistically condition the mind and body of athletes before their competitions.</p> <p>Rep. Anthony Peter "Onyx" Crisologo (1st District, Quezon City) suggested that the PSC should provide more funding to sports wherein Filipino athletes are competing well or have greater chances of winning in international games.</p> <p>Deputy Speakers Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino (8th District, Cavite) and Eric Martinez (2nd District, Valenzuela City) requested PSC to submit data on its funding allocations per sport.</p> <p>By a majority vote of the Members, it was agreed that the proposed law shall only cover the proposal to increase the incentives for the Asian-level competitions, SEA Games, and ASEAN Para Games, as mentioned earlier, and not include local sports competitions.</p> <p>The Committee also agreed that a funding provision will be included in the proposed law wherein the funding source will be the 50% national government share in the gaming revenue of PAGCOR.</p> <p>The PCSO and PAGCOR were requested to submit data on how their funds were utilized for the promotion of sports in the last five years.</p>
	HR 2003	Rep. Elago	Urging the Philippine government, through the Philippine Sports Commission, to ensure the safe and gradual resumption of training for Filipino athletes	<p>The Committee adopted House Resolution 2003 subject to style and amendment, and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>Rep. Sarah Jane Elago (Party-List, KABATAAN), author of HR 2003, underscored the importance of resuming the trainings of</p>

<p>Continuation... Youth and Sports Development</p>				<p>Filipino athletes in schools or in other sports facilities, adding that online individual training does not suffice to prepare athletes for their respective sports. Based on the resolution, the PSC issued an advisory asking all national sports associations to postpone their athletes' training and disallow group activities within Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Rizal.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the resolution were the PSC, Commission on Higher Education, and the National Task Force Against COVID-19.</p> <p>Games and Amusements Board (GAB) Professional Sports Division Chief June Bautista said that the GAB is strictly following the Joint Administrative Order (JAO) No. 2020-0001 between the PSC, GAB, and the Department of Health, which provides the guidelines on the conduct of health-enhancing physical activities and sports during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also said that supplemental guidelines under the JAO was issued relative to the conduct of "bubble-type training" for athletes competing in the upcoming 2021 SEA Games.</p> <p>As defined in the supplemental guidelines, athletic bubble-type training and competitions refer to conditions in which a specific league, sports organization or promotion with competing sports teams or athletes of team events are subjected to strict isolation from the general public for a limited period of time for the purpose of holding a sporting activity without spectators in attendance in a restricted-environment set up where there is constant vigilance towards adherence to public health guidelines, conscientious conduct of participants, and enforced standard controlled measures in place to mitigate the risk of possible hazards to public health and safety.</p> <p>Department of Education (DepEd) Director of Palarong Pambansa Secretariat Joel Erestrain said that DepEd is waiting for a directive from the President on the resumption of training for athletes ages 18 and below. He reported that the Palarong Pambansa for this year is already cancelled due to the increasing COVID-19 cases in the country.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) stated that they have already come up with guidelines and protocols on the gradual resumption of sports trainings in schools. However, they still need clearance from concerned government agencies on the matter.</p> <p>Rep. Dy requested the UAAP and NCAA to submit their proposed protocols and guidelines</p>
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Continuation... Youth and Sports Development				on the resumption of sports training programs in schools.
	HR 2005	Rep. Elago	Commending and supporting the 24 Filipino athletes who qualified in the Olympics and Paralympics 2020	The Committee adopted House Resolutions 2005 and 2110 subject to style and amendment. The corresponding Committee Reports were also approved.
	HR 2110	Rep. Albano	Congratulating and highly commending the Philippine Olympic Committee, Inc. under the leadership of President Abraham 'Bambol' Tolentino and all other officials thereof, for their outstanding efforts in supporting and preparing Filipino athletes for competition in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics that enabled Filipino Olympians to achieve excellent performances in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and to bring home the biggest haul of Olympic medals in the history of Philippine sports	Rep. Dy extended his congratulations to the athletes who participated in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics for their outstanding performance in the games and to the Philippine Olympic Committee for their huge support to the Filipino Olympians who brought home the highest number of medals ever since the country made its Olympic debut in 1924.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Transportation (Technical Working Group)	Draft Substitute Bill to HBs 13, 37, 565, 1409, 1894, 2219, 2618, 3446, 3569, 3996, 4141, 4571, 4615, 4652, 5352, 5965, 5967, 6089 & 6438	Reps. Del Mar (dec.), Biazon, Abellanosa, Vargas, Campos, Barba, Albano (A.), Deputy Speakers Santos-Recto and Hernandez, Reps. Agabas, Chatto, Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, Reps. Peña, Villafuerte, Castelo, Yap (E.), Tambunting, Bagatsing, and Cabatbat	Regulating the use of motorcycles as public utility vehicles	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Navotas City Rep. John Reynald Tiangco, terminated its deliberation on the draft substitute bill to the 19 bills. The substitute bill will be presented to the mother Committee for its consideration and approval.</p> <p>Rep. Tiangco informed the body that the draft substitute bill incorporates the comments and suggestions raised by the resource persons during the TWG's previous meeting.</p> <p>Continuing the discussion on the proposed law, the TWG extensively deliberated on the following provisions of the draft substitute bill: standards and specifications for motorcycle (MC) taxis, issuance of franchises, operation of MC taxis, fare schedule, and penalties.</p> <p>Muntinlupa City Rep. Ruffy Biazon, author of House Bill 37, suggested that the franchising of motorcycles for hire that pass through cross-borders shall be under the jurisdiction of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB). On the other hand, MC taxis that will operate within a specific locality, the concerned local government unit shall issue the franchise.</p> <p>Rep. Cristal Bagatsing (5th District, Manila), author of HB 6089, opined that the proposed penalty suspending or revoking the professional driver's license of an erring rider is too much because it will cost the rider his source of income. She suggested that the specific penalties be discussed further and determined during the crafting of the proposed law's implementing rules and regulations.</p> <p>Land Transportation Office (LTO) Assistant</p>

Continuation... Transportation (Technical Working Group)				<p>Secretary Edgar Galvante said that the penalties stated in the proposed law are the same penalties imposed on the erring drivers of other public utility vehicles. Imposition of stiffer penalty, he said, is to deter any violation of the law, thereby ensuring the safety of the driver and the riding public.</p> <p>Motorcycle Rights Organization Chairman Yob JB Bolanos said that there must be a schedule of fines and penalties for violations of laws governing land transportation services.</p> <p>Other recommendations made by the resource persons to further improve the proposed law are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To rename the title of the bill to "Regulating the Use of Motorcycles for Hire"; • To maintain the proposal that the Department of Trade and Industry's Bureau of Philippine Standards and the LTO shall recommend to the Department of Transportation the standards and specifications of motorcycles that may be allowed to operate as MC taxis; and • To include the Philippine National Police - Highway Patrol Group and the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority as part of the team that shall assist the LTO in enforcing the traffic rules and regulations and ensuring that the provisions of the proposed law are strictly complied with.
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AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
Health	<p>Briefing on the status of implementation of RA 11223 or the Universal Health Care Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Health (DOH) 	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Angelina "Helen" Tan, M.D. (4th District, Quezon), listened to the briefing by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) on the status of implementation of Republic Act 11223 or the Universal Health Care (UHC) Act.</p> <p>Rep. Tan said that in today's meeting, the Committee would like to know what has been done so far two years after RA 11223 was approved in 2019. She said that the promise of UHC is simply the universality of health coverage, which means no Filipino will be left behind. Thus, the UHC law provides for the automatic membership of every Filipino citizen to the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP). Likewise, under the law, Filipinos shall be granted immediate eligibility for health benefit package, regardless of whether or not they are registered with PhilHealth.</p> <p>Rep. Tan said the premium of indigent patients will be paid for by the government, which will address the gap in coverage between financially capable and incapable Filipinos.</p> <p>DOH Secretary Francisco Duque III said that for the past year and a half, the DOH and PhilHealth have formulated more than 60 policy directives relevant to the implementation of the UHC law,</p>

Continuation...
Health

- Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth)

ranging from the primary care benefit package to the service delivery design of the healthcare provider (HCP) networks. On top of that, Duque stated that the effort to respond to the pandemic has allowed the fast-tracking of certain components of the UHC implementation, such as strengthening the epidemiologic and surveillance system and health emergency responses; streamlining of procurement and supply chain management systems; intensifying the health promotion campaign; capitalizing health system capacity investments; capacitating health decision making at the local level; and integrating health information technology.

In addition, DOH Undersecretary Mario Villaverde reported that the DOH initially engaged 58 local government units (LGUs), which consented to become UHC integration sites (UHC-IS). The UHC-IS refer to provinces, highly urbanized cities, and independent component cities that have signified their commitment to the DOH to integrate their local health systems into province-wide and city-wide health systems.

Villaverde said that to date, the DOH is doing capacity building through e-learning modules, and continually proposing measures to create new health-related units and hire additional personnel to effectively implement the UHC law and other health-related laws. Villaverde also said that the DOH has focused its priorities on the implementation of the UHC law and the COVID-19 response initiatives of the government. He stressed that while the DOH's activities and accomplishments steered the country towards the progressive realization of UHC, there is still much work to be done.

PhilHealth Vice President Shirley Domingo discussed the three types of coverage under the UHC, namely: the population, the service, and the financial coverage.

Domingo said the Philhealth entered into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA) to enable data sharing of death information records between the two agencies to update PhilHealth membership database. Guidelines were also issued to facilitate the registration of all Filipinos using the revised PhilHealth Member Registration Form to maintain an accurate database of its members. As to service coverage, Domingo averred that the PhilHealth is currently improving its comprehensive outpatient benefit package through the nationwide implementation of its *Konsulta* Program. With regard to financial coverage, Domingo said the PhilHealth has issued policies on the design and implementation of the "no co-payment/no balance billing" mechanism as part of the PhilHealth benefit packages.

Reps. Tan and Stella Luz Quimbo (2nd District, Marikina City) inquired on the total number of Filipinos covered or subsidized by PhilHealth.

The Health Secretary said that PhilHealth currently covers around 87% of the population, which is equivalent to around 95 million Filipinos.

On the query of Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate (Party-List, BAYAN MUNA), the Health Secretary said that the DOH proposes a budget of P110.13 billion for 2022, which includes the amount of P80 billion for the subsidy for PhilHealth premiums.

Batanes Rep. Ciriaco Gato Jr. inquired about the effect of the Supreme Court ruling on the Mandanas vs. Ochoa case on the devolution of provincial hospitals under the supervision of DOH.

<p>Continuation... Health</p>		<p>Villaverde clarified that even under the Local Government Code of 1991, all provincial, district, municipal or city hospitals should have been devolved to the LGUs. What has been retained by the DOH are the regional medical centers and national hospitals. He clarified though that there have been some provincial hospitals that were renationalized, and therefore are excluded from the full devolution as a result of the Supreme Court decision.</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. As a result of the ruling, LGUs are expected to receive a huge increase in their NTA by 2022.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Deputy Speaker Bernadette Herrera-Dy (Party-List, Bagong Henerasyon) inquired about the status of implementation of Section 36 of the UHC law. Under Section 36 (Health Information System), “all health service providers and insurers shall each maintain a health information system consisting of enterprise resource planning, human resource information, electronic health records, and an electronic prescription log consistent with DOH standards, which shall be electronically uploaded on a regular basis through interoperable systems.”</p> <p>PhilHealth Senior Vice President Arturo Alcantara said that at present the PhilHealth is beefing up its internal system to integrate and connect all system processes for a faster and more reliable transfer of information. Nonetheless, he admitted that PhilHealth has yet to develop and design its own information system and currently relies on third-party health insurance systems (HIS) or those developed by the healthcare facilities.</p> <p>The DOH head of the Knowledge Management and Information Technology Service, Dr. Enrique Tayag, stated that the DOH currently uses two health information systems – one for primary care and the other for eye care – which are both electronic medical records. For hospitals using other applications, Tayag said the DOH validates the data to eliminate fraud. However, he conceded that under the UHC law, all electronic medical record systems should be established by the DOH and PhilHealth. He mentioned that there is an ongoing consultation with the Department of Information and Communications Technology on how to implement this particular provision of the UHC law.</p>
	<p>Discussion on PhilHealth Circular No. 2021-0013 on the Temporary Suspension of Payment of Claims (TSPC)</p>	<p>The Committee discussed with PhilHealth and concerned private health organizations the issues and concerns raised relative to PhilHealth Circular No. 2021-0013.</p> <p>Rep. Tan said that this meeting provides a venue for clarifying issues and complaints from private healthcare institutions (HCIs) and healthcare providers (HCPs) against the issuance of this PhilHealth circular. According to Rep. Tan, PhilHealth issued Circular 2021-0013 as a precautionary measure against HCIs and HCPs that are subject of investigation. On the other hand, she added that the Philippine Hospital Association (PHA), Private Hospitals Association of the Philippines (PHAP), and Philippine Medical Association (PMA) declared that they are disengaging from PhilHealth and warned that “the bridge between them and the PhilHealth is bound to collapse.”</p> <p>PhilHealth Circular No. 2021-0013 establishes the guidelines on the issuance of Temporary Suspension of Payment of Claims (TSPC) as a payment preventive measure against HCIs and HCPs that are subject of investigation based on credible and verifiable report by the PhilHealth or other duly authorized government agencies, owing to apparent and probable presence</p>

<p>Continuation... Health</p>	<p>of fraudulent acts, unethical practices and/ or abuse of authority. TSPC is the conditional stoppage of payment for claims undergoing investigation. It is not a penalty but a preventive measure to avoid the loss or wastage of funds due to fraudulent acts, unethical acts, and abuse of authority.</p> <p>PhilHealth President and Chief Executive Officer Dante Gierran clarified that the TSPC has already been in place since 2016 as embodied in PhilHealth Circulars 2016-0026 and 2018-0019. He noted that the subject circular does not intend to unduly burden HCIs and HCPs, especially during this COVID-19 pandemic. Gierran said that the circular was issued in the spirit of proper fund management and fraud control. He assured the Committee that the circular will cover only the health providers engaged in fraudulent acts.</p> <p>PHA President Jaime Almora read the public statement of HCPs on PhilHealth Circular 2021-0013. He averred that the HCIs and HCPs find the circular uncalled for during this time of pandemic. He also said that HCIs and HCPs mistrust the intent and purpose of the circular.</p> <p>Rep. Tan called the attention of PhilHealth with regard to the three-day period given to the HCPs to respond to the TSPC. She said the time given is so short, which may be tantamount to lack of due process.</p> <p>PhilHealth Fact Finding Investigation and Enforcement Department Acting Senior Manager Ernesto Barbado Jr. replied that the three-day period is set based on the urgency to resolve the issues concerning the HCIs and HCPs.</p> <p>Rep. Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija) inquired whether the Circular passed through the PhilHealth Board, to which Duque replied in the negative. Rep. Suansing and the other lawmakers also advised PhilHealth to consult and coordinate with the healthcare institutions and providers prior to the issuance of any policy or circular affecting the latter in order to maintain a harmonious relationship between the two parties.</p> <p>Rep. Suansing manifested that Circular 2021-0013 may lead to hospital closures at a time when the country's healthcare system is dealing with a fresh surge in COVID-19 infections driven by the Delta variant. Consequently, she requested the Committee to strongly urge PhilHealth to review and possibly suspend this circular without prejudice to any legislative measure that may be filed by the Committee on Health.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Herrera-Dy posited that the PhilHealth cannot paralyze the hospitals' delivery of health services by suspending the payment of their claims on mere suspicion of fraud through the issuance of TSPC purportedly as a precautionary measure. She articulated that instead, PhilHealth should continue paying the claims until such time that fraud has been confirmed, in which case it has the option to deduct the amount involved from its next payment to the guilty health provider or professional.</p>
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