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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Government Enterprises and Privatization jt. w/ Local Government	Substitute Bill to HBs 4175, 6214, 6285, 7249, 7256, 7280, 7294, 7313, 7360 & 7931	Reps. Haresco, Duterte, Bautista, Olivarez, Marquez, Villafuerte, Tambunting, Deputy Speaker Rodriguez, Reps. Garcia (J.E.), and Arroyo (M.L.)	Creating the Boracay Island Development Authority (BIDA)	<p>The Joint Committee, co-chaired by Rep. Eric Olivarez (1st District, Parañaque City), Chair of the Committee on Government Enterprises and Privatization, and Rep. Noel Villanueva (3rd District, Tarlac), Chair of the Committee on Local Government, approved the Substitute Bill to the 10 measures and the corresponding Committee Report.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Olivarez recounted that the Joint Committee held two meetings last year to deliberate on the proposed law in response to the call of President Rodrigo Duterte for the creation of the BIDA. He recalled that during the initial deliberation of the BIDA measures on September 16, 2020, it was agreed that an entity, in the form of BIDA, should co-exist with the local government units (LGUs) in the island. In that meeting, he said, there was no mention that the BIDA shall take over the powers of the concerned LGUs.</p> <p>Rep. Olivarez expressed confidence that the final version of the BIDA bill is a more responsive policy proposal that ensures that the economic growth in Boracay will not only be felt by the big investors in the island, but also by the local people. He added that the substitute bill underwent several revisions and its provisions were carefully reviewed and edited to ensure that there will be no diminution of the powers of the LGUs.</p> <p>Rep. Villanueva stated that notwithstanding the noble intent of the bill, he said that it is of prime importance to gather the sentiments and inputs of the stakeholders, including the mayors, governors, barangay officials, and the other representatives of the people in the Boracay Island. They are in a better position to know what is best and necessary for the development of the island, Rep. Villanueva added.</p> <p>Rep. Lisandro Gonzalez (Party-List, MARINO), co-author of HB 6214, said that the proposed law seeks to create a national authority that shall formulate policies, plans, programs, and projects for the rehabilitation, preservation, and enhancement of the Boracay Island. The proposed BIDA shall also ensure adequate provisions for environmental management and control; preservation of the equality of human life and the ecological systems; and prevention of</p>

<p>Continuation... Government Enterprises and Privatization jt. w/ Local Government</p>				<p>undue ecological disturbances, deterioration, and pollution.</p> <p>On the other hand, Reps. Carlito Marquez (1st District, Aklan) and Teodorico Haresco Jr. (2nd District, Aklan), respective authors of HBs 7256 and 4175, objected to the establishment of the BIDA as a government owned and controlled corporation (GOCC).</p> <p>Rep. Haresco pointed out that the current version of the BIDA bill is very different from the original version of HB 6214, which was used by the Joint Committee as its working draft. Rep. Haresco manifested that the present version of the substitute bill already provides that the surrounding islands, including Barangay Katiklan and other areas in the mainland, shall be under the jurisdiction of BIDA.</p> <p>Moreover, Rep. Haresco noted that the BIDA under the substitute bill is mandated to regulate facilities, infrastructures, constructions, and other services at reasonable rates and charges, which is contrary to the provisions of the Local Government Code, as it encroaches on the powers of the LGUs concerned. Rep. Haresco also questioned BIDA's other powers under the bill, such as authorizing it to secure domestic and foreign loans to fund projects; exercise the power of eminent domain within its jurisdiction; and establish a private security group.</p> <p>Others who also expressed their objection to the establishment of the BIDA as a GOCC were the following: Province of Aklan Governor Florencio Miraflores and Municipality of Malay Mayor Frolibar Bautista; and resource persons from the Boracay Inter-Agency Rehabilitation Management Group (BIARMG), Department of Trade and Industry Regional Operations Group (DTI-ROG), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Department of Budget and Management (DBM).</p> <p>Governor Miraflores believes that the proposed BIDA encroaches, diminishes, and even divests the constitutionally and legally mandated powers of the LGUs, specifically pertaining to local autonomy, as well as the power to generate income and manage their resources. He opined that the BIDA should be established as a regulatory body and not a GOCC.</p> <p>BIARMG General Manager Natividad Bernardino said that what the Boracay Island needs in terms of ecological rehabilitation and sustainability is a regulatory body working together with the LGUs of Malay and Aklan; and not a GOCC, which is perceived to be leaning towards prioritizing investment activities in the island.</p>
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<p>Continuation... Government Enterprises and Privatization jt. w/ Local Government</p>				<p>Mayor Bautista expressed concern over the impact of the BIDA bill, if passed, on the revenues of the Municipality of Malay. He said that 80 percent of the Municipality's income is generated from the establishments and activities in Boracay. However, he surmised that with the proposed law, the municipality will have nothing left to collect except property taxes.</p> <p>DTI-ROG Assistant Secretary Domingo Tolentino Jr. said that the proposed mandate and functions of BIDA may already be undertaken by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.</p> <p>DILG Undersecretary Epimaco Densing III maintained that the BIDA should be a regulatory body rather than a GOCC. Densing emphasized that the BIDA, as originally conceived, shall only be tasked to manage the environment in the area and ensure its protection and sustainability for foreign and local tourism. Further, he said that all taxes to be generated from the island, as allowed under the Local Government Code, should remain with the LGU.</p> <p>DBM Supervising Budget and Management Specialist John Castillo manifested that the DBM agrees with the position of the Department of Finance that the creation of a GOCC will result in a redundancy of government functions. He conveyed DBM's opposition to the establishment of the BIDA as it is inconsistent with the current policy of streamlining and rationalizing the government corporate sector, and the bureaucracy as a whole.</p> <p>Castillo also mentioned that the proposal to place BIDA under the direct control and supervision of the Office of the President may not be in line with the policy limiting the agencies under the President's immediate supervision. Thus, Castillo recommended that further study and deliberation be made on the proposed law.</p> <p>Considering the strong opposition of the local officials in the Province of Aklan, including colleagues in the House of Representatives, Rep. Villanueva withdrew his support to the current version of the BIDA bill. He proposed that it be compared with HB 6214 in order to come up with a version that is more acceptable to the people of Aklan.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Rep. Eric Go Yap (Party-List, ACT-CIS), co-author of HB 6214, assured the body that the proposed law will not result in the diminution of the powers and revenues of the LGUs concerned.</p>
<p>Justice</p>	<p>HB 8557</p>	<p>Rep. Pineda</p>	<p>Granting Filipino citizenship to Gaoming Qiu</p>	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Vicente "Ching" Veloso III (3rd District, Leyte), approved HB 8557.</p>

Continuation... Justice				<p>Rep. Enrico Pineda (Party-List, 1-PACMAN), author of HB 8557, said that Gaoming Qiu is personally known to him and has been a constant donor in the relief operations of the 1-PACMAN Party-List.</p> <p>Based on the explanatory note attached to HB 8557, the applicant is a Chinese national who has been residing in the Philippines since 2010, when he was employed as supervisor in a Filipino-owned company. Throughout the years, Qiu has established good relations with his Filipino partners as well as with their employees.</p> <p>Representatives from the Department of Justice (DOJ), Bureau of Immigration (BI), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Office of the Solicitor General (OSG), and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) interposed no objection to the bill.</p> <p>On the other hand, Deputy Speakers Rufus Rodriguez (2nd District, Cagayan de Oro City) and Evelina Escudero (1st District, Sorsogon) manifested their abstention, with reservations, to the motion for approval of the bill.</p>
	HB 9454	Majority Leader Romualdez	Granting Filipino citizenship to Kwok Yam Ian Chan	<p>The Committee approved HB 9454.</p> <p>Rep. Wilter "Sharky" Palma II (1st District, Zamboanga Sibugay), co-author of HB 9454, said that Chan is practically Filipino by culture having lived in the Philippines for 21 years. Rep. Palma added that the applicant studied elementary to college in the Philippines and is now an established businessman in the country. During the pandemic, Chan co-organized Love Plus Charity Foundation, an organization of Chinese nationals that provided food packs to frontliners and delivered food, water, and medical-related assistance to Filipinos in need.</p> <p>NBI special agent Joey Moran noted that a certain "Ian Chan" has a criminal record for estafa, but considering that the applicant has already submitted to the Committee an NBI clearance, then Chan has proven that he is not the same "Ian Chan" with derogatory record.</p> <p>Chan also stated under oath that it could not have been him since he was taking his Master's degree in the United States when the alleged crime was committed.</p> <p>Representatives from the DOJ, BI, DFA, OSG, and NBI interposed no objection to the bill.</p>
	HB 8460	Rep. Pineda	Granting Filipino citizenship to Zhengyu Zhu	<p>The Committee deferred its deliberation on HB 8460.</p> <p>Rep. Pineda, author of HB 8460, noted the valuable contributions of Zhu in the social welfare projects of the 1-PACMAN Party-List as well as the donations he has provided during this time of pandemic.</p>

Continuation... Justice				<p>Based on the explanatory note attached to HB 8460, Zhu is a Chinese national who has been residing in the Philippines since 2015. He was employed as a supervisor in Xingwang Limited Corporation, a Filipino-Chinese owned company.</p> <p>Deputy Speaker Rodriguez and Rep. Jonathan Keith Flores (2nd District, Bukidnon) observed that Zhu has difficulty speaking and understanding the English language.</p> <p>Further, Deputy Speaker Rodriguez noted that Zhu, along with the other applicant Qiu, does not speak the Filipino language. He requested a copy of documents pertaining to the income tax payments of the Philippine Offshore Gaming Operator (POGO) company of which Zhu and Qiu are the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Public Relations Officer, respectively.</p> <p>Deputy Speakers Rodriguez and Escudero manifested their abstention, with reservations, to the earlier motion for the approval of the bill.</p> <p>On Rep. Flores' motion, the Committee agreed to defer the approval of the bill.</p>
	HB 8618	Speaker Velasco	Amending RA 6732 or the law allowing administrative reconstitution of original copies of certificates of titles lost or destroyed due to fire, flood and other force majeure, RA 26 or the law providing a special procedure for the reconstitution of Torrens Certificates of Title lost or destroyed, and PD 1529 or the Property Registration Decree, in relation to the registration of property (by keeping the present land registration laws attuned with the changing times)	<p>The Committee agreed to create a technical working group (TWG) to further discuss the bills and come up with a substitute bill.</p> <p>Rep. Rodolfo Ordanes (Party-List, SENIOR CITIZENS), co-author of HB 8618, and Rep. Aurelio "Dong" Gonzales Jr. (3rd District, Pampanga), author of HB 8761, underscored the importance of the passage of the proposed law. They both cited the need to update the antiquated provisions of PD 1529 and to attune the existing land registration laws with the changing times.</p>
	HB 8761	Rep. Gonzales (A.)	Amending Sections 56, 108, 110, and 117 of PD 1529 (by revisiting and introducing amendments to the antiquated provisions and overlapping functions in the law to conform to the current state of affairs in land registration)	<p>Resource persons from the DOJ and the Land Registration Authority expressed their support for the proposed law.</p>

AGENCY BRIEFING		
COMMITTEE	SUBJECT MATTER	DISCUSSIONS
North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)	Update by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) on the status of payment of pending PhilHealth claims to hospitals in Regions I & II and the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR)	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Ramon "Mon-Mon" Guico III (5th District, Pangasinan), listened to the update of PhilHealth on the status of payment of pending PhilHealth claims to hospitals in Regions I, II and CAR.</p> <p>At the outset, Rep. Guico said the purpose of the meeting is to find out if PhilHealth has already settled the claims of various hospitals in North Luzon. He said it is important that the hospitals already receive the payment from PhilHealth to ease their financial burden and to ensure the continuous delivery of medical care in North Luzon amid the pandemic.</p>

Continuation...
North Luzon Growth
Quadrangle
(Special Committee)

PhilHealth President and Chief Executive Officer Dante Gierran said that PhilHealth is open to the recommendations of Congress that will resolve issues that are causing the delayed payments. He said it is also the objective of PhilHealth to expedite the release of payments in order to move forward.

In his presentation, PhilHealth Acting Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Eli Dino Santos enumerated the reasons for unpaid claims. First, he said some of the applications for claims were returned to the hospitals because the required documents were either not submitted, incomplete, or not properly accomplished. Second, some claims were denied because of the following reasons: claims were filed beyond the 60-day statutory period; double filing; late refiling; non-compliance with standard of care; and patients were not registered in PhilHealth database, among others. Third, some claims had to be referred to the PhilHealth's Legal Department due to multiple or spurious claims.

Santos presented PhilHealth's key recommendations to resolve the issue. He said there is a need to reiterate with the health care institutions (HCIs) the use of the Reconciliation Summary Module (RSM) in the PhilHealth Portal in submitting claims. He said all claims received by PhilHealth are reflected in the PhilHealth Portal. The RSM provides an easier and faster reconciliation of all claims, according to Santos. He said PhilHealth will release the RSM procedural guidelines to HCIs in Regions I, II and CAR by next week.

Likewise, Santos highlighted the need to conduct regular forums or dialogues with local government units (LGUs), legislative staff, and HCI staff on PhilHealth policies. Further, he said there is a need to encourage HCIs to meet and discuss their claims with the account reconciliation officers of PhilHealth for faster processing and payment of claims.

PhilHealth CAR Acting Vice President Dominga Gadgad said they are still in the process of collating all records pertaining to the payment of claims for HCIs in CAR. She then gave a brief update on the status of claim payments in Baguio City, which is targeted to be completed by the end of June. She thanked Baguio City Rep. Mark Go for his assistance in coordinating with the HCIs in order to expedite the processing of the payments.

PhilHealth Region I Vice President Dennis Adre gave a summary of claim payments to government and private hospitals in the provinces of Region I. He reported that for government hospitals, the status of payment of claims is as follows: Ilocos Norte, 88.38% accomplished; Ilocos Sur, 87.38%; La Union, 80.02%; and Pangasinan, 88.48%. For private hospitals, he said PhilHealth's payment of claims is 88% accomplished in Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, and Pangasinan, and 89% in La Union.

Similarly, PhilHealth Region II Vice President Danilo Reyes reported that the accomplishment rate in the payment of claims to government hospitals in Region II ranges from 75% to 92%. For private hospitals, he said the accomplishment rate ranges from 87% to 94%.

The Members proceeded to raise their issues and concerns on PhilHealth's processing and payment of claims to hospitals within their respective legislative districts.

In response, Gierran said that he will convene the Executive Committee of PhilHealth to form a special committee that will

<p>Continuation... North Luzon Growth Quadrangle (Special Committee)</p>		<p>have the primary task of resolving issues pertaining to the processing and payment of claims.</p> <p>Rep. Virgilo Lacson (Party-List, MANILA TEACHERS) asked the Philippine Hospital Association (PHA) for its recommendation to further improve PhilHealth's system in the processing of claims. He also inquired whether the Insurance Commission (IC) should regulate PhilHealth.</p> <p>PHA President Jaime Almora agreed that PhilHealth should be under a regulatory body. He explained that right now, PhilHealth functions both as a health insurance corporation and a health insurance regulator. He said the two roles should be separate where PhilHealth shall focus on providing health insurance, while another regulatory body, such as the IC, shall perform the regulatory function and implement a fair process of adjudicating disputed claims or complaints.</p> <p>Committee Vice Chair Rep. Joseph "Jojo" Lara (3rd District, Cagayan) recommended that the manpower of PhilHealth should also be augmented in order to increase efficiency in the processing of claims.</p> <p>Rep. Antonio "Tonypet" Albano (1st District, Isabela) asked PhilHealth to submit documents relative to claims that have been referred to the Legal Department of PhilHealth.</p> <p>The resource persons were requested to submit their respective reports and other relevant documents pertaining to the payment of claims.</p>
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