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COMMITTEE MEETINGS ON HOUSE MEASURES

COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Foreign Affairs	Substitute Bill to HBs 2467, 3895 & 6109	Reps. Rodriguez (R.), Arenas, and Benitez	Declaring the maritime zones under the jurisdiction of the Republic of the Philippines	<p>The Committee, chaired by Rep. Maria Rachel Arenas (3rd District, Pangasinan), approved the Substitute Bill to House Bills 2467, 3895, and 6109 subject to style. Thereafter, the corresponding Committee Report was likewise approved.</p> <p>It was the Committee Vice Chair, Rep. Emigdio Tanjuatco III (2nd District, Rizal), who presided over the deliberations on the proposed law, upon the request of the Committee Chair, to allow the latter to sponsor her bill (HB 3895).</p> <p>Rep. Arenas highlighted the significance of her bill in preserving the country's territorial integrity and in providing flexibility in the passage of subsequent laws pertinent to the rights and obligations of the country over its maritime zones.</p> <p>In addition, Rep. Arenas said her bill aims to harmonize the country's domestic legislations with international laws, such as the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), to which the country is a signatory. "The Philippines, as a signatory to the UNCLOS, recognizes the establishment of various maritime zones and jurisdiction of coastal states, including its own, over which sovereignty can be exercised," she said.</p> <p>Thus, Rep. Arenas emphasized that "the Philippines exercises sovereignty over its internal waters, archipelagic waters, territorial sea, and airspace over it, as well as its sea bed and subsoil." She added that "the Philippines also exercises sovereign rights over its contiguous zone, exclusive economic zone, and continental shelf including the right to explore and exploit living and non-living, organic or non-organic resources."</p> <p>Reps. Wilter Palma (1st District, Zamboanga Sibugay) and Loreto Acharon (General Santos City) sponsored HBs 2467 and 6109, respectively, on behalf of the authors. Rep. Palma mentioned that a similar version of the bills was approved on third reading by the House of Representatives during the 18th Congress.</p> <p>Expressing support for the proposed law were the resource persons from the National Task Force for West Philippine Sea (NTF-WPS), Department of Justice, Armed Forces of the</p>

Continuation... Foreign Affairs				<p>Philippines, Philippine Coast Guard, and DFA – Office of Consular Affairs.</p> <p>National Security Council Deputy Director General and NTF-WPS Vice Chair Nestor Herico said that the enactment of the proposed law will reiterate the country’s maritime entitlements and rights over the lawful use of the seas and oceans under the 1982 UNCLOS. He added that its passage will serve as a basis for any negotiation on territorial limits among claimant states in the WPS.</p> <p>Rep. Arenas urged the swift approval of the proposed law, invoking Section 48, Rule X of the House Rules which states that “In case of bills or resolutions that are identified as priority measures of the House, which were previously filed in the immediately preceding Congress and have been approved on Third Reading, the same may be disposed of as matters already reported upon the approval of the majority of the Members of the Committee present, there being a quorum.”</p> <p>The Chair informed the body that the Committee will schedule a briefing with concerned government agencies to extensively discuss matters pertaining to the WPS.</p>
	HB 6494	Rep. Palma	Establishing a regular Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) consular office in the Municipality of Ipil, Province of Zamboanga Sibugay and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee adopted two House Resolutions (HRs) in substitution of HBs 6494 and 6554 and approved the corresponding Committee Reports, subject to style.
	HB 6554	Rep. Amatong	Establishing a consular office of the DFA in the Municipality of Liloy, Province of Zamboanga del Norte, and appropriating funds therefor	<p>Rep. Arenas explained to the body that the establishment of consular offices is already part of the mandate of the DFA, hence a law is no longer required for this purpose. She mentioned that additional consular offices may be created if the conditions prescribed in Section 3 of Executive Order No. 45, s. 2017 (Providing for the Reorganization of the Field Offices of the Office of Consular Affairs of the DFA) are met.</p> <p>Rep. Palma, author of HB 6494, and Rep. Adrian Michael Amatong (3rd District, Zamboanga del Norte), author of HB 6554, accepted the decision of the Committee to substitute their bills with resolutions.</p> <p>The DFA-Office of Consular Affairs supports the proposed measures.</p>
	HR 691	Rep. Maniquiz	Urging the DFA to establish a consular office in the Second Legislative District of the Province of Zambales	The Committee adopted HR 691 and approved the corresponding Committee Report, subject to style.
Higher and Technical Education	HB 5728	Rep. Romualdez (Y.M.)	Institutionalizing the Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program (ETEEAP) and providing funds therefor	<p>The Committee, chaired by Baguio City Rep. Mark Go, approved House Bill 5728 and the corresponding Committee Report subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>TINGOG Party-List Rep. Jude Acidre, co-author of HB 5728, said that the bill seeks to</p>

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education				<p>institutionalize the Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program (ETEEAP) to standardize its implementation and ensure its sustainability through government funding. The ETEEAP is an educational assessment program introduced at the tertiary level in 1996 that recognizes the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values gained by individuals from informal training and relevant work experiences. He added that through this program, deputized higher education institutions are able to award these individuals with the appropriate college degree through a competency-based evaluation which consequently enables them to seek higher-value jobs. Thus, he said the passage of the bill is an important step in ensuring inclusivity in the country's education system.</p> <p>Commission on Higher Education (CHED) – Office of Programs and Standards Development Director Cherrie Melanie Ancheta-Diego conveyed CHED's support for HB 5728. She informed the body that CHED has already issued Memorandum Order No. 29, series of 2021, which provides the enhanced policies, standards, and guidelines for the ETEEAP for undergraduate degree programs. Moreover, she said the Philippines Qualifications Framework – National Coordinating Council already approved the plan to include ETEEAP as one of the modes under the Philippine Credit Transfer System which allows students to move from a vocational course to a college degree program based on the principle of credit transfer.</p> <p>Director Ancheta-Diego reported on the following achievements of the ETEEAP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 104 CHED-deputized higher education institutions (HEIs) – 79 private HEIs and 25 state universities and colleges – implementing the program; • 371 programs/disciplines covered, which include agriculture education, architecture, fine arts, business management, criminal justice, engineering and technology, humanities, industrial education, science and mathematics, social sciences and communication, and teacher education, among others; • 7,436 enrollees for 2020 and 5,817 enrollees for 2021; and • 2,216 graduates for 2020 and 2,164 graduates for 2021. <p>Rep. Go requested CHED to submit to the Committee a written report on ETEEAP's accomplishments.</p>
	Substitute Bill to HBs 707 & 1366	Reps. Tan-Tambut and Nograles (M.I.)	Converting the Sulu State College in the Municipality of Jolo, Province of Sulu into a state university, to be known as Sulu State University, and appropriating funds therefor	The Committee approved the Substitute Bill to HBs 707 and 1366 and the corresponding Committee Report, subject to style and amendment.

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education				<p>The Committee, together with CHED, will conduct a joint evaluation of the Sulu State College's compliance with CHED's requirements for the conversion of state colleges into state universities.</p> <p>The proposed law seeks to convert the Sulu State College into a state university to give the youth of the Province of Sulu and its neighboring provinces, Tawi-Tawi and Basilan, the opportunity to pursue higher education without having to travel far to reach urban areas where most universities are located.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bills were the resource persons from the CHED, Sulu State College, and the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC).</p>
	HBs 323, 2047, 2196, 2330, 2333, 2505, 2506, 2525, 2948, 3066, 3262, 3319, 3320, 3356, 3524, 3583, 3626, 3679, 4328, 4817, 6239, 6409, 6459, 6460 & 6546	Reps. Ecleo, Tutor, Fuentebella, Amatong, Benitez, Espina, Hernandez, Lara, Cagas, Ongchuan, Roque, Sakaluran, Buhain, Calderon, Co-Pilar, Go (E.C.), Hataman, Violago, Fariñas, Marcos, Zubiri, and Paglas	Establishing TESDA training and assessment/accreditation centers in certain parts of the country and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved the 25 bills and their corresponding Committee Reports subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) lawyer Joyce Balong informed the body that under Republic Act 7796 (TESDA Act of 1994), TESDA does not exercise administrative supervision over municipal training centers. She said it is the local government unit (LGU) concerned which has the responsibility over a municipal training center. She also suggested that the bills just limit their scope to the establishment of TESDA training centers and exclude the assessment/accreditation function as the latter involves a separate and more complex process. She explained that it would be easier to create a training center first and apply as an assessment/accreditation center later on.</p>
	HBs 1264, 2226 & 2369	Reps. Yu (D.G.), Matibag, and Caoagdan	Converting/renaming technical-vocational schools in certain parts of the country into state colleges and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HBs 1264, 2226, and 2369 and their corresponding Committee Reports subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>Rep. Divina Grace Yu (1st District, Zamboanga del Sur), author of HB 1264, stated that her bill seeks to convert the Zamboanga del Sur School of Arts and Trades (ZSSAT) into Zamboanga del Sur Polytechnic State College (ZSPSC) to widen its curriculum and address the needs of the growing student population in the province.</p> <p>For his part, Rep. Rudy Caoagdan, DPA (2nd District, North Cotabato), author of HB 2369, said that his bill seeks to convert the Makilala Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) into a state college, to be known as the Mindanao Indigenous Peoples State College (MIPSC). He said the conversion of MIST into a state college will entitle it to receive funds from the national government for the students' free tertiary education and will promote the rights and welfare of indigenous peoples (IPs).</p> <p>Rep. Go commented that the proposed MIPSC may be misconstrued as an educational</p>

<p>Continuation... Higher and Technical Education</p>				<p>institution exclusive for IPs in Mindanao. He said this may discourage students who do not belong to this group from enrolling in this school. He noted that if the intent of converting MIST into a state college is to broaden its base, renaming it to "Mindanao Indigenous Peoples State College" will run counter to this goal.</p> <p>Reps. Maria Theresa Collantes (3rd District, Batangas) and Basilan Rep. Mujiv Hataman concurred with the observations of Rep. Go.</p> <p>Likewise, CHED Legal and Legislative Service Director IV Frederick Mikhail Farolan pointed out that if indeed the intention of MIST's conversion is to focus on IP education, he said it has to comply with additional requirements for the integration of IP studies into the curriculum of MIST.</p> <p>The CHED officials also suggested the conduct of a feasibility study on MIST's conversion since there are already at least two state universities and colleges in Cotabato and converting another school into a state college may already be redundant.</p> <p>On the suggestion of Rep. Go to consider another name for the state college, Rep. Caoagdan proposed the name "Mindanao Peoples State College."</p> <p>The Committee agreed to amend the pertinent provisions of HB 2369 to reflect the proposed change in the name of the state college.</p>
	<p>HB 2371</p>	<p>Rep. Caoagdan,</p>	<p>Converting the Cotabato Foundation College of Science and Technology (CFCST) in the Municipality of Arakan, Province of Cotabato, into a state university to be known as the Cotabato Foundation State University, and appropriating funds therefor</p>	<p>The Committee approved HB 2371 and the corresponding Committee Report subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>The Committee and the CHED agreed to conduct a joint evaluation of CFCST's compliance with CHED's requirements for the conversion of state colleges into state universities.</p> <p>Rep. Caoagdan, author of HB 2371, explained that the conversion of the CFCST into a state university will improve the access to free and high-quality education for students in the region, particularly those from remote communities with limited resources and low-income families.</p> <p>Expressing their support for the bill were the resource persons from the CFCST and PASUC.</p> <p>The CHED expressed its support for HB 2371 provided that a section will be included in the bill stating that the school shall comply with CHED's requirements as a pre-requisite for conversion.</p> <p>Rep. Go gave the assurance that the proposed provision will be reflected in all the bills</p>

Continuation... Higher and Technical Education				seeking to convert state colleges into state universities.
	HB 4080	Rep. Yu (J.V.)	Converting the JH Cerilles State College (JHCSC) in Mati, San Miguel, Province of Zamboanga del Sur, into a state university to be known as the Zamboanga del Sur State University (ZDSSU), and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 4080 and the corresponding Committee Report subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>The Committee, together with CHED, will conduct a joint evaluation JHCSC's compliance with the requirements for the conversion of state colleges into state universities set by CHED.</p> <p>In her sponsorship speech, Rep. Yu, co-author of HB 4080, explained that the conversion of the JHCSC into a state university will greatly benefit underprivileged students from Zamboanga del Sur who will no longer have to travel to Metro Manila and other nearby provinces to enjoy quality higher education. She added that the conversion will also serve as an economic stimulus for the province.</p> <p>JHCSC President Mary Jocelyn Battung expressed her support to the bill, citing the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create positive impacts on the lives of the poorest of the poor, and secure for them a brighter future; • Enable students to pursue new updated courses and professional paths; • Allow the academe and LGUs within the province of Zamboanga del Sur to jointly pursue initiatives for the improvement of public service through quality and accessible education; and • Elevate graduate education to levels of regional and national relevance through independent research, innovative instructions, and educational leadership. <p>Also expressing their support for the bill were the resource persons from PASUC and CHED.</p>
	HB 5892	Rep. Angara	Converting the Aurora State College of Technology (ASCOT) in the Province of Aurora and all its satellite campuses located in the Municipalities of Maria Aurora, Casiguran, and San Luis, all in the Province of Aurora, into a state university to be known as the Aurora State University of Science and Technology (ASUST), and appropriating funds therefor	<p>The Committee approved HB 5892 and the corresponding Committee Report subject to style and amendment.</p> <p>The Committee and the CHED will conduct a joint evaluation of ASCOT's compliance with CHED's requirements for the conversion of state colleges into state universities.</p> <p>ASCOT President Eutiquio Rotaquio Jr. apprised the body that ASCOT is already 95% compliant with the requirements of CHED.</p> <p>However, CHED Region III Director Leonida Calagui reported that there are still major deficiencies in ASCOT's compliance. She stressed that CHED will only be amenable to ASCOT's conversion upon its compliance with all the requirements.</p> <p>PASUC gave its support for the bill.</p>

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING ON HOUSE MEASURES				
COMMITTEE	MEASURES		SUBJECT MATTER	ACTION TAKEN/ DISCUSSION
	NO.	PRINCIPAL AUTHOR		
Public Order and Safety (Technical Working Group)	HJR 11	Speaker Romualdez	Adopting the current structure of the Philippine National Police (PNP) including the pay and allowances of PNP personnel and approving the promotion to the next higher ranks of all third level police commissioned officers designated to various positions under the current structure	<p>The technical working group (TWG), chaired by Rep. Romeo Acop (2nd District, Antipolo City), concluded its deliberations on House Joint Resolution 11. The TWG's report on HJR 11 will be presented to the mother Committee for consideration, attaching to the report the draft bill of the PNP in relation to HJR 11.</p> <p>Rep. Acop informed the body that the PNP and the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) have come up with a harmonized version of the draft bill which already addressed all the issues raised in the previous TWG meetings. Rep. Acop then thanked the Members and the resource persons for their active participation and inputs in further improving the draft bill.</p> <p>PNP Chief Rodolfo Azurin Jr. and NAPOLCOM Vice Chairperson and Executive Officer Alberto Bernardo also expressed their gratitude to the TWG for supporting the restructuring of the PNP.</p> <p>As agreed upon in today's meeting, the title of the draft bill was amended to read as: "An Act Adopting the Current Structure of the Philippine National Police Including the Pay and Allowances of PNP Personnel, Amending for the Purpose Sections 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 35, 36, and 67 of Republic Act No. 6975, Otherwise Known as the 'Department of the Interior and Local Government Act of 1990', as Amended, and Section 32 of Republic Act No. 8551, or the 'Philippine National Police Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998', and Appropriating Funds Therefor."</p>

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