



Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 18th CONGRESS, SECOND REGULAR SESSION
House of Representatives

Vol. 2

Friday, October 2, 2020

No. 9c

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:00 a.m., the session was resumed with Deputy Speaker Roberto V. Puno presiding.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we take up the Additional Reference of Business and that the Secretary General be directed to read the same.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved and the Secretary General is directed to read bills on First Reading for proper referral to the appropriate committees.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary General read the following House Bills and Resolutions on First Reading, Message from the Senate, Communications and Committee Reports, and the Deputy Speaker made the corresponding references:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 7788, entitled:

“AN ACT APPROPRIATING TWENTY FIVE BILLION (25,000,000,000) PESOS FOR THE NATIONAL TOBACCO ADMINISTRATION’S (NTA’S) SUSTAINABLE TOBACCO ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (STEP) OVER A PERIOD OF (5) FIVE YEARS”

By Representative Savellano
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD

House Bill No. 7789, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE RANK CLASSIFICATION IN THE BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION (BFP) AND BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY (BJMP), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 58 AND 64 OF REPUBLIC ACT NUMBER 6975, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1990’ ”

By Representative Villafuerte
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
ORDER AND SAFETY

House Bill No. 7790, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING PROTECTION TO FREELANCERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Villafuerte
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND
EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 7791, entitled:

“AN ACT MANDATING ELECTIVE AND APPOINTIVE CABINET-LEVEL OFFICIALS TO ANNUALLY SUBMIT A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE SHOWING FITNESS TO WORK AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Barba
TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL
SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL
REGULATION

House Bill No. 7792, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE CURRENT FUNCTION OF THE BFAR NATIONAL INTEGRATED FISHERIES TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTER AND RENAMING IT TO PHILIPPINE CENTER FOR AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative de Venecia
TO THE COMMITTEE ON
AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES
RESOURCES

House Bill No. 7793, entitled:

“AN ACT TRANSFERRING THE CONTROL AND SUPERVISION OF THE PROVINCIAL AND SUB-PROVINCIAL JAILS TO THE BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6975, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1990’ AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Garcia (Jose Enrique)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 7794, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING MULTI-SPECIES MARINE HATCHERIES IN THE CITY OF BALANGA AND THE MUNICIPALITIES OF BAGAC, LIMAY, MARIVELES, ORION, AND PILAR, PROVINCE OF BATAAN, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Garcia (Jose Enrique)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON
AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES
RESOURCES

House Bill No. 7795, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PROVINCIAL OFFICE OF THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION (CHED)

IN THE PROVINCE OF BATAAN AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Garcia (Jose Enrique)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND
TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 7796, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE BUCARI AREA IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF LEON AND ALIMODIAN, PROVINCE OF ILOILO AS ECOTOURISM ZONE, ESTABLISHING FOR THE PURPOSE THE BUCARI ECOTOURISM COUNCIL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Gorriceta
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

House Bill No. 7797, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING THE PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6764 ENTITLED ‘TARLAC STATE UNIVERSITY CHARTER’ AND AUTHORIZING THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS THEREOF”

By Representative Yap (Victor)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND
TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 7799, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING AN INTERNET ALLOWANCE FOR ALL PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Quimbo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC
EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 7800, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 910 TO ALLOW CONGRESS TO APPROPRIATE A PORTION OF THE MALAMPAYA FUNDS AND SIMILAR OTHER PROJECTS TO IMPROVE THE STATE OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH CARE BY ALLOWING ITS APPROPRIATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE”

By Representatives Lacson, Pineda and
Romero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 7801, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE
BACOLOR RECONSTRUCTION
PROGRAM FOR THE PROTECTION,
REBUILDING, AND RECOVERY OF
THE MUNICIPALITY OF BACOLOR,
PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Gonzales (Aurelio)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 1258, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING
CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF
DR. EBERHARD CURIO, A BELOVED
FRIEND OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE
PHILIPPINES AND THE PROVINCE
OF ANTIQUE”

By Representative Legarda
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1259, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH)
TO ORDER ALL PRIVATELY-
OWNED HOSPITALS AND/OR
HEMODIALYSIS CENTERS TO ALLOT
A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF THEIR
HEMODIALYSIS MACHINES FOR
COVID-19 PATIENTS”

By Representative Taduran
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

House Resolution No. 1260, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(DOH) AND THE CIVIL SERVICE
COMMISSION (CSC) TO PROBE THE
REPORTED FAILURE OF MANY
GOVERNMENT DOCTORS TO
RENDER THE WEEKLY MINIMUM
FORTY (40) HOURS OF DUTY”

By Representative Taduran
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1261, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION STRONGLY URGING
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TO INCREASE THE FISCAL
YEAR 2021 BUDGET OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
(DA) BY FORTY-TWO BILLION PESOS
(PHP 42,000,000,000.00) FOR THE
IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE PLANT, PLANT, PLANT
PROGRAM AS A COVID-19
RECOVERY RESPONSE”

By Representative Cabatbat
TO THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Resolution No. 1262, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION STRONGLY
URGING THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS TO RESTORE
THE FOUR BILLION TWO
HUNDRED MILLION PESOS (PHP
4,200,000,000.00) PROPOSED FUND
OF THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION
ADMINISTRATION (NIA) FOR THE
REPAIR AND REHABILITATION OF
COMMUNAL IRRIGATION SYSTEMS
(CIS) IN THE COUNTRY FOR FISCAL
YEAR 2021”

By Representative Cabatbat
TO THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Resolution No. 1264, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE
COMMITTEE ON METRO MANILA
DEVELOPMENT TO INVESTIGATE, IN
AID OF LEGISLATION AND OTHER
PURPOSES, THE UNDESIRABLE,
OBTRUSIVE AND DANGEROUS
EFFECTS OF CONSTRUCTIONS
ACTIVITIES, PARTICULARLY
DIGGINGS AND EXCAVATION
WORKS IN NATIONAL ROADS AND/
OR HIGHWAYS, IMPLEMENTED
BY THE METRO MANILA
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY,
WHICH REMAIN UNFINISHED,

INADEQUATELY REPAIRED, IMPROPERLY COVERED AND/OR LACK PROPER WARNING SIGNS; TO COMPEL THE METRO MANILA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO IMMEDIATELY ADDRESS THESE PROBLEMS, ADMINISTRATIVELY SANCTION RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS AND, IF NECESSARY, PROMULGATE ADDITIONAL RULES TO AVOID AND CURB THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PRACTICES, WHICH PREJUDICE AND ARE DETRIMENTAL TO THE PUBLIC”

By Representative Yap (Victor)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 1265, entitled:

“RESOLUTION HONORING THE WORK AND CONTRIBUTION OF HIS EXCELLENCY IGOR KHOVAEV AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE PHILIPPINES IN FOSTERING STRONGER PHILIPPINES-RUSSIA BILATERAL RELATIONS AND CONFERRING UPON HIM THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF ACHIEVEMENT”

By Representatives Cayetano (Alan Peter), Romualdez (Ferdinand), Cayetano (Maria Laarni), Villafuerte, Abu, Fernandez, Tolentino, Sy-Alvarado, Hofer, Yu, Vargas Alfonso and Abante
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

Message dated September 23, 2020, informing the House of Representatives that on September 22, 2020, the Senate designated Senators Juan Miguel “Migz” Zubiri, Manuel “Lito” M. Lapid and Risa Hontiveros as conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1807, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER OF EVERY YEAR AS

THE ‘NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH’ ”

and House Bill No. 5422, entitled:
“AN ACT DECLARING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER OF EVERY YEAR AS THE ‘NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH’ IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY”
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter dated August 17, 2020 of Jose Antonio T. Feliciano, Municipal Mayor, Municipality of Bamban, Province of Tarlac, submitting to the House of Representatives a copy of their Reports on Fund Utilization and Status of Program/ Project/ Activity Implementation for the months of May, June and July 2020 of the Bayanihan Grant to Cities and Municipalities.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated August 19, 2020 of Sixto B. Dela Victoria, Municipal Mayor, Municipality of Albuera, Province of Leyte, furnishing the House of Representatives a copy of their Reports on Fund Utilization and Status of Program/Project/ Activity Implementation for the months of April, May, June and July 2020 of the Bayanihan Grant to Cities and Municipalities.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated August 26, 2020 of Ma. Rosario Cumpio-Avestruz, Municipal Mayor, Municipality of Barugo, Province of Leyte, informing the House of Representatives that their Reports on Fund Utilization and Status of Program/Project/ Activity Implementation for the months of April, May, June and July 2020 of the Bayanihan Grant to Cities and Municipalities have been posted in three (3) conspicuous places in their locality.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Email dated August 26, 2020 of Dannie Lyn Villaflo, Municipality of Liloan, Province of Southern Leyte, submitting to the House of Representatives a copy of their Report on Fund Utilization and Status of Program/Project/Activity Implementation for the month of July 2020 of the Bayanihan Grant to Cities and Municipalities, attested by Shirlita Y. Chong, Municipal Mayor.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Email dated September 16, 2020 of Rey M. Palero, Municipal Budget Officer-Designate, Municipality of Padre Burgos, Province of Southern Leyte, submitting to the House of Representatives a copy of their Report on Fund Utilization and Status of Program/Project/Activity Implementation of the Bayanihan Grant to Cities and Municipalities, attested by Hermenegildo C. Culpa, Municipal Mayor.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Letter dated 24 September 2020 of Janice G. Ayson-Zales, Deputy Director, Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), transmitting to the House of Representatives duly certified electronic copies of the following BSP issuances:

1. Circular No. 1097 dated 21 September 2020; and
2. Memorandum No. M-2020-069 dated 22 September 2020.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Letter dated 28 September 2020 of Janice G. Ayson-Zales, Deputy Director, Office of the General Counsel and Legal Services, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), transmitting to the House of Representatives duly certified electronic copies of the following BSP issuances:

1. Circular No. 1098 dated 24 September 2020;
2. Memorandum No. M-2020-070 dated 21 September 2020;
3. Memorandum No. M-2020-071 dated 24 September 2020;

4. Memorandum No. M-2020-072 dated 24 September 2020; and

5. Memorandum No. M-2020-073 dated 25 September 2020.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Notice of Posting of the Financial Accountability Reports (FARs) and Budget Accountability Reports (BARs) of the Supreme Court of the Philippines and the Lower Courts (SCPLC) and the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET) for the first quarter of 2020 on the Supreme Court website.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Exceletter Issue No. 34 - The Official Publication of the Metrobank Foundation, Inc.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Reports on Fund Utilization and Status of Program/Project/Activity Implementation of the Bayanihan Grant to Cities and Municipalities for the months of May, June, July and August 2020 of the Municipality of Tunga, Province of Leyte, attested by Catalina F. Agda, Municipal Mayor.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Report on Fund Utilization and Status of Program/Project/Activity Implementation of the Bayanihan Grant to Cities and Municipalities as of September 14, 2020 of the Municipality of San Ricardo, Province of Southern Leyte, attested by Roy Y. Salinas, Municipal Mayor.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Report on Fund Utilization and Status of Program/Project/Activity Implementation of the Bayanihan Grant to Cities and Municipalities for the month of September 2020 of the Municipality of Limasawa, Province of Southern Leyte, attested by Melchor P. Petracorta, Municipal Mayor.

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of the Committee on Sustainable Development Goals (Committee Report No. 540), re H.R. No. 1263, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING ALL PRIVATE AND PUBLIC TELEVISION STATIONS TO ALLOT AT LEAST THREE (3) HOURS PER DAY TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS THAT FOSTER HOLISTIC LEARNING AND EDUCATION TO KEEP THE GOVERNMENT ON TRACK IN ITS COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVE THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS”

recommending its adoption in substitution of House Resolution No. 856

Sponsor: Representative Villaraza-Suarez
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Higher and Technical Education and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 541), re H.B. No. 7798, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE MINDANAO STATE UNIVERSITY-LANAODEL NORTE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE ARBORETUM IN BARANGAY RAMAIN, MUNICIPALITY OF SULTAN NAGADIMAPORO, PROVINCE OF LANAODEL NORTE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 3978

Sponsors: Representatives Go (Mark), Yap (Eric) and Dimaporo (Khalid)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs and the Committee on Ways and Means (Committee Report No. 542), re H.B. No. 7802, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFW) SOVEREIGN FUND”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 530

Sponsors: Representatives Mendoza, Salceda and Paduano
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Trade and Industry and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 543), re H.B. No. 7805, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING PROTECTION TO CONSUMERS AND MERCHANTS ENGAGED IN INTERNET TRANSACTIONS, CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE THE ELECTRONIC COMMERCE BUREAU, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bills Numbered 6122 and 6958

Sponsors: Representatives Gatchalian, Yap (Eric) and Garbin
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 544), re H.B. No. 5367, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE BASIAWAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL - MALAGSOM EXTENSION IN BARANGAY BUHANGIN, MUNICIPALITY OF MALITA, PROVINCE OF DAVAO OCCIDENTAL FROM THE BASIAWAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS BUHANGIN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Romulo, Bautista-Bandigan and Yap (Eric)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 545), re H.B. No. 5363, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE LAWA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL - NUEVA VILLA EXTENSION IN BARANGAY LAWA, MUNICIPALITY OF DON MARCELINO, PROVINCE

OF DAVAO OCCIDENTAL FROM THE LAWA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS CORONA A. CABANILLA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Romulo, Bautista-Bandigan and Yap (Eric)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 546), re H.B. No. 5364, entitled:

"AN ACT SEPARATING THE DON MARCELINO NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL - DALUPAN EXTENSION IN BARANGAY DALUPAN, MUNICIPALITY OF DON MARCELINO, PROVINCE OF DAVAO OCCIDENTAL FROM THE DON MARCELINO NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS ERNESTO BALINDAN SUMBONATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Romulo, Bautista-Bandigan and Yap (Eric)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Basic Education and Culture and the Committee on Appropriations (Committee Report No. 547), re H.B. No. 5328, entitled:

"AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY TALOGOY, MUNICIPALITY OF MALITA, PROVINCE OF DAVAO OCCIDENTAL, TO BE KNOWN AS TAMAING TRIBAL NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"

recommending its approval without amendment

Sponsors: Representatives Romulo, Bautista-Bandigan and Yap (Eric)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

Report of the Committee on Trade and Industry (Committee Report No. 548), re H.B. No. 7808, entitled:

"AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 35, 37, 38, 39 AND 40 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4566, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CONTRACTORS' LICENSE LAW, MODIFYING THE CONTRACTORS' LICENSE RENEWAL PROCESS, INCREASING FEES, AND IMPOSING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF"

recommending its approval in substitution of House Bill No. 1911

Sponsors: Representatives Gatchalian, Gonzales (Aurelio) and Collantes
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno).
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday, September 30, 2020, we approved several local bills on Third Reading. I move that we direct the Secretary General to immediately transmit to the Senate those local bills that we approved on Third Reading on September 30, 2020.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Secretary General is so directed.
Majority Leader.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 7727

Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 7727, as contained in Committee Report No. 528, and that the Secretary General be directed to read the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The Secretary General is directed to read the title of the Bill.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 7727, entitled: "AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-ONE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status is that we are now in the period of sponsorship and debate. I now move that we consider the proposed budget of the National Library of the Philippines and recognize Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda to sponsor the proposed budget of the said agency.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved, and the Honorable Salceda is recognized.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Ferdinand Gaité.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Hon. Ferdinand Gaité is recognized for his interpellation.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend for a minute to let the technical staff rearrange the microphones and other equipment.

I so move.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is suspended.

It was 10:10 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:11a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.

Honorable Gaité may please proceed.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF THE PHILIPPINES

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Chair, Mr. Speaker, at sa ating kapita-pitagang mga kasamahan sa Kongreso sa umagang ito, Friday, October 2 at sa ating Sponsor, ang kapita-pitagang Cong. Joey Salceda.

Sa kadahilanang wala nang ibang kasapi ng Minorya na nais mag-interpellate sa budget ng National Library of the Philippines, iminumungkahi ko po—I move for the termination of the budget deliberations on the National Library, Mr. Speaker, at sa ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the Majority joins the Minority in moving for the termination of the deliberations on the proposed budget of the National Library of the Philippines.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved and the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the National Library of the Philippines is hereby terminated. Congratulations. (*Applause*)

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we consider the proposed budget of the Governance Commission for GOCCs and to sponsor the proposed budget, I move that we recognize Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved and Honorable Salceda is recognized to sponsor the measure.

Majority Leader.

REP. SALCEDA. Mr. Speaker, they are still in the swabbing queue. So, may I ask that we first suspend the consideration of the budget of the GCG.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. ... we suspend the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is suspended.

It was 10:13 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:22 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of the proposed budget of the Governance Commission for GOCCs.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.
Majority Leader.

ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING COUNCIL

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we now consider the proposed budget of the Anti-Money Laundering Council.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the budget of the Anti-Money Laundering Council is opened.
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, we would like to acknowledge the presence of our guests, research persons from the agency, who are present in the plenary. We have Executive Director Mel Georgie Racela, Director Alvin Bernido and Ms. Ma. Esmeralda Norada.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Chair recognizes and would like to welcome to the House of Representatives our guests: Executive Director Mel Georgie Racela, Director Alvin Bernido and Ms. Ma. Esmeralda Norada, the Manager of Financial Services Division of AMLC. Welcome to the House of Representatives.
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, to sponsor the proposed budget of the Anti-Money Laundering Council, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from the Second District of Albay, Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Honorable Joey Salceda is recognized to sponsor the budget of the Anti-Money Laundering Council.
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the first of our colleagues to interpellate our Sponsor is Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate of the Party-List BAYAN MUNA. I move that he be recognized.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Honorable Zarate is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, Mr. Speaker, as well as to our colleagues in the hall and in Zoom.

May the good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, accommodate some questions, clarificatory questions related to the budget of the Anti-Money Laundering Council.

REP. SALCEDA. Certainly.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

As a preliminary question, Mr. Sponsor, (*technical problem*) from the good Sponsor, the mandate of the Anti-Money Laundering Council. What is the mandate of the Anti-Money Laundering Council, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Tatlo: Unang-una, pasiguraduhin na secure at may integridad ang ating financial system; pangalawa, na hindi ito puwedeng gamitin ng mga kriminal o ng mga hindi kanais-nais na gawain; at pangatlo, makipagtulungan sa ibang bansa para po hindi po magamit o maging parte ng tinatawag nating mga “transnational crime.” So, iyan po iyong tatlong gawain po ng AMLC bilang financial intelligence unit po ng ating bansa.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat, Ginoong Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Ang AMLC or Anti-Money Laundering Council is a creation previously of the Human Security Act. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Kung ang tanong e ito ay anak ng Human Security Act, hindi. May sarili ho siyang pinanggalingan, iba ang nanay at tatay niya. Subalit noong nagkaroon po tayo ng Human Security Act, naging wisdom po ng Kongreso na maging miyembro doon po ng bagong Anti-Terrorism Council ang Executive Director po ng AMLC.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po sa paglinaw. So ang Anti-Money Laundering Council ay kabahagi siya ng Anti-Terrorism Council. Tama po ba iyon, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Tama po.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you. And puwede po bang malaman din ng Kinatawag ito at ng Kapulungang ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, mayroon din po bang papel ang Anti-Money Laundering Council doon sa mandato na inilatag ng Executive Order No. 70, which also creates the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. I think, it is minor and it is more when asked to support.

REP. ZARATE. May we ...

REP. SALCEDA. It does not have a preeminent – in short, kung titingnan mo iyong budget doon para sa EO na iyon, wala hong budget para sa kanila.

REP. ZARATE. Well, in the 2021 Budget, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, there is a budget allocated for that task force, that is P19.1 billion. That is why I also inquired what is the participation or the role of the Council in the Task Force, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Walang nakalaan po doon ni piso para sa AMLA.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor. But by the way, for 2021, AMLC is requesting this Congress to appropriate how much, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Ang hinihingi po sa atin ay P85 million. Iyong naibigay natin last year, P130 million.

REP. ZARATE. So, there is a reduction in the budget of AMLC for 2021, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Tama po.

REP. ZARATE. Yes. Now, looking at the budget books, I saw in the Performance Information submitted by AMLC that in its 2019 GAA targets, for example, for the outcome indicator the percentage of cases filed which were favorably decided by the Courts, their target was 100 percent, and the actual was 100 percent; for Percentage of Money Laundering/ Terrorist Financing Cases acted upon based on international and domestic requests received, 100 percent target, actual is 54 percent; Percentage of AML/CFT Trainings conducted on schedule: target was 100 percent, actual is 85 percent. May we inquire from the good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, in actual numbers, ilan ho ba ito dahil percentages lang ang nakalagay?

REP. SALCEDA. Your Honor, we are searching for the absolute magnitudes.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. While they are looking ...

REP. SALCEDA. Ah, ...

REP. ZARATE. Yes.

REP. SALCEDA. We will come up with the actual numbers because the numbers we have, Your Honor, they will not comply with the empirical requirements.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. We will just ...

REP. SALCEDA. Yes, can we move to another question unless it is (*Inaudible*)?

REP. ZARATE. Yes, I will just go to my related question, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Sige.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, I did inquire that, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, especially the actual number, because in the report made by the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, which groups, at least, I think, 41 countries – it is an intergovernmental grouping that tracks the function of the Anti-Money Laundering Council in different countries. The number of investigations and prosecutions for money laundering in the Philippines, according to APG, is low and is inconsistent with the Philippines' risk profile. In fact, APG said that between 2013 and 2018, they conducted 277 financial investigations resulting in 20 petitions for money laundering, which resulted in 10 prosecutions and five convictions. So this is not, APG said, consistent with the money laundering risk profiles in the Philippines. Despite the Philippines' risk profile in the six-and-a-half years since the introduction of the stand-alone offense on terrorist financing, the Philippines has not conducted any prosecutions. So, my question related to that, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, has there been any change in the statistics, from the report made by the ...

REP. SALCEDA. Mas marami-rami na po kung – inaamin po na iyong APG, Asia/Pacific Risk Group on Money Laundering, iyong Asia/Pacific Group report between 2013 and 2018, mukhang, compared to the risks, mababa po iyong nagawa ng AMLC. Subali't po kapag tiningnan mo iyong 2019, mas malaki na po iyong kanilang nai-file, 38 cases, at nitong, as of September 15, nakapag-file na po sila ng 28 cases. Ang application nila for bank inquiry noong 2019 ay 20 applications and as of September, 12 applications. So, their petition for the issuance of freeze orders, 14 petitions for an estimated P600 million have been filed, and 11 petitions with an estimated frozen amount value of P138 million, foreign currency of \$8 million and insurance policies worth P13 million. Hindi pa ho siya expected – hindi ho siya masasabing impressive, pero definitely po improving.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Since 2016, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, one of the major campaign programs or even wars launched by the present administration is the war or the campaign against drugs. May I inquire from the good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, are the activities of those personalities involved or organizations involved in this drug menace also covered by the mandate of the Anti-Money Laundering Council, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Iyong mga pangalan po galing sa PDEA, pero iyong amount po, P15 billion.

REP. ZARATE. Fifteen?

REP. SALCEDA. Billion.

REP. ZARATE. Billion 'no?

REP. SALCEDA. Billion ang frozen.

REP. ZARATE. Fifteen billion ang amount na frozen up to now.

REP. SALCEDA. Frozen, yes.

REP. ZARATE. So, and this involves how many cases—how many personalities—against those involved in drugs have been filed by the Anti-Money Laundering Council, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. We will disaggregate, Your Honor, but it is part of those 66 cases that I mentioned that have been filed and those 32 applications that were filed, so parehas din naman e.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. We will just request the disaggregation of that so that makita po natin dahil nga ito’y isa sa ...

REP. SALCEDA. Ay opo, ipapa ...

REP. ZARATE. ... sinasabing malaking kampanya ...

REP. SALCEDA. So, iyan po iyong pangalawang request n’yo po, iyong disaggregation nga po at pangalawa iyong absolute amount noong mga percent. So, ibibigay po namin agad. Sisimulan na po na mahango po iyong mga aktuwal. Subalit po, iyong mga pangalan ay kailangan pong hanguin po sa PDEA, subalit po iyong hinihingi n’yo po na dalawang datos ay maibibigay po namin.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, and if I may also include the profile of persons involved, whether there are foreign nationals or locals involved in those activities, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Certainly, Your Honor, both foreign and local, the profiles.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you.

Now, earlier, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, that is why I asked the statistics dahil nga iyan ang isa sa pinakamalaking itinutalak na kampanya ng administrasyon since 2016 and up to now. So, kung iyan ang isa sa pinakamalaking problema at hanggang ngayon ay malaking problema pa rin, gusto nating makita kung paano rin ba tinututukan ng Anti-Money Laundering

Council iyan—because certainly, this problem will not thrive if the financing is not also that huge—and how this money is being washed or laundered in the formal or our informal economy afterwards.

Now, I will shift now to a different related question, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. The Anti-Money Laundering Council has powers laid down, principally, in the Anti-Terrorism Law. Is that a correct appreciation, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. May sarili hong batas sila, pero isinama po doon sa Anti-Terrorism Law.

REP. ZARATE. Yes. In fact, other than the Anti-Terrorism Law, the Anti-Money Laundering Council also derives its powers or jurisdiction from other related laws like the Terrorist Financing Law. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Now, I am just curious, although this was enacted by Congress, in Republic Act No. 10168, AN ACT DEFINING THE CRIME OF FINANCING OF TERRORISM, PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR AND OTHER PURPOSES. I gave a second look and a serious look at Section No. 11, the authority to freeze by the Anti-Money Laundering Council.

May I inquire, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, other than this anti-terrorism—this Act or R.A. No. 10168, mayroon po bang power din ang Anti-Terrorism Council, its own mandate, to freeze the accounts of those who are suspected of facilitating acts of terrorism, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. The answer is yes.

REP. ZARATE. So, these powers are lodged not only in Republic Act No. 10168 but also in other related laws like the Anti-Terror Law? Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Correct.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, thank you. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

In Section 11, it states here:

Authority to Freeze – The AMLC, either upon its own initiative or at the request of the ATC, is hereby authorized to issue an *ex parte* order to freeze without delay: (a) property or funds that are in any way related to financing of terrorism or acts of terrorism; or (b) property or funds of any person, group of persons, terrorist organization or association, in relation to whom there is probable cause to believe that they are committing or attempting or conspiring to commit, or participating in or facilitating the commission of financing of terrorism, et cetera.

Then, it says further:

The freeze order shall be effective for a period not exceeding twenty (20) days. Upon a petition filed by the AMLC before the expiration of the period, the effectivity of the freeze order may be extended up to a period not exceeding six (6) months upon order of the Court of Appeals: Provided, That the twenty-day period shall be tolled upon filing of a petition x x x.

So, Section 1, Article 3 of our Constitution, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, it is very, very explicit in that particular section that “no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.” Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. That is correct.

REP. ZARATE. Yes. Yet here we are in this particular law, we have Section 11 that allows a council to freeze the bank accounts of a suspected person, *ex parte*, for 20 days and before the expiration of the 20-day period, they can even petition again the Court of Appeals to extend that for another six months – because I did not see it in the provisions of the law –

without even a notice to the person whose accounts or property were frozen. Is that not a violation, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, of the clear mandate of our Constitution?

REP. SALCEDA. Iyong terorismo kasi, Your Honor, is a threat to life, liberty and property of another citizen. So, there is a competent body which establishes the probable cause if such a threat exists in the nature of terrorism. I am not a political philosopher, Your Honor, but I could say, for as long as we have institutions competently manned with integrity – I guess, Your Honor, terrorism, being a global phenomenon, I think any threat, you can see, for example, in the United States now, you know, the principal threat now is identified to be essentially white supremacists and, therefore, the homeland security now makes a determination of whether this domestic problem poses a threat to life, liberty and property of other people. The issue there, Your Honor, is that there is one, a competent authority, and second, there is a probable cause and that probable cause has to be empirically established, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Yes. Thank you, good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Well, I raised this because I think we should take a closer look at and review this issue. I can understand, probably, the initial stage of its application where a 20-day period is given by the law, ‘no, but to extend this to another six months, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, without notification, I think it already, to the involved persons, runs counter to the provisions of the Constitution, ‘no. Para ho kasi itong nag-apply tayo ng temporary restraining order sa ordinary cases, puwede kang bigyan ng 20-day TRO but within the 20-day period ay kailangang magkaroon ng hearing, magkaroon ng pagdinig sa kaso or sa panig noong mga tao kung saan nire-restrain iyong kanilang acts, ‘no. But here, there is no such thing, ‘no. By the mere filing by the Anti-Money Laundering Council of a petition, it can be extended by the Court of Appeals to another six months, ‘no. Why I raised this, Your Honor – ah yes, will the good Sponsor ...

REP. SALCEDA. Yes.

REP. ZARATE. Yes.

REP. SALCEDA. Your Honor, hindi madali at hindi po frivolous iyong proseso. Iyong pag-impose ng 20 days o iyong pag-extend to six months po ay nakabase, hindi ho sa majority kundi nakabase po sa unanimous decision po ng AMLC. Kung may saka-sakali man sigurong remedial legislation, para sa akin dito, ang importante na kung nagkamali ang AMLC, dapat mayroon pong restitution. Iyon siguro, Your Honor, ang mas kailangan kasi ang tao po ay hindi infallible. Pero sa pananaw ko naman, kung ang isang institution, tulad po ng Council, ay binubuo ng mga propesyonal and, therefore, iyong posibilidad po ng pagkakamali na basta-basta na lang ginamit na hindi naaayon po sa pagsuspetsa na ito'y ginagamit sa terorismo ay hindi po, I do not think, there is no, in my mind, there is no risk of frivolous or let us say malevolent o ibig sabihin dysfunctional use nito pong kakayahan na mag-freeze, na basta-basta po magagamit.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Well, certainly, I agree, 'no, na kailangang mayroon talaga tayong pamamaraan para matingnan kung ano ba itong acts of terrorism na being financed. I raised that point, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, because of the peculiarity and particularities of what is happening now in our country. You cited that in the US, 'no, and other jurisdictions, they have these also stringent laws for running after financiers of terrorism. But here in the country – kaya gusto ho nating linawin ito, kung ito ba ay naaayon sa ating Saligang Batas o kung kailangan, as you mentioned, ng remedial mandatory provision of the law dahil nga sa nabanggit ko kanina, dito ho kasi napakadali hong mag-akusa na iyong tao na iyan ay terorista.

Hindi ho lingid sa kaalaman ng kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na malawakan ang terrorist-tagging and red-tagging, especially in the past years, and that includes even this Representation and my colleagues

in the Makabayan bloc. We have been openly tagged as terrorists, for example, by officials of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict and other agencies. And hindi lang po kami, maraming mga organisasyon, legitimate organizations, civil society organizations and people's organizations have been tagged as terrorist organizations. And if we have this kind of provision, it can easily be weaponized to stifle dissent.

Imagine kung ang inyong bank accounts, ang iyong mga properties will be frozen for six months, hindi na ho makakakilos iyong mga nongovernment organizations na may programa para sa ating mahihirap. So, iyon po ang aking pinupunto ko rito.

REP. SALCEDA. Ang alam ko po, Your Honor, ang AMLC po ay ni minsan po hindi napagbintangan na pinanggalingan po ng balita na nagpalit na ng Speaker. Ang ibig kong sabihin, Your Honor, ay napakamaingat po ng AMLC simula't sapul. Kung pagdating po – dalawang bagay: doon sa 20 days, very high po ang confidentiality po ng pagpapatupad po kung sino at ano, saan. Pangalawa, doon sa extension na nasa Court of Appeals, ang court records ay nakasaad din po na ito ay confidential at hindi pupuwedeng ilabas o hindi po pupuwedeng i-press release o hindi pupuwedeng maging isang datos ng public domain.

So, ako naman, kilala ko po ang gawain po ng AMLC, ito ay naging maingat po pagdating po sa paghawak po ng mga datos, kaya I can assure the Gentleman that iyong red-tagging, definitely, hindi galing sa kanila. I guess, Your Honor, the appropriate or there are other government agencies you may wish to take into account whether they are part of it, but certainly not this institution I am defending today. They are not the source of red-tagging.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you for that statement, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

By the way, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, may I just inquire, the AMLC, the composition of the AMLC comes from different agencies. Is it not that the members of the Council

are representatives of the different agencies also?

REP. SALCEDA. So, these are from the BSP, SEC, and IC.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Now, since my time has expired, I will just wrap up.

Ang gusto ko lang pong i-point out kaya ni-raise ko iyan, especially for purposes of legislation, will the good Sponsor agree with me that considering that provision, well, you mentioned, you can vouch for the integrity of the members of the AMLC, but considering those provisions, specifically Section 11, to this Representation, they are vague because they did not mention there that in the extension by six months, at least those who are involved or those who are accused of engaging in terrorist financing – it should be clearly stated here that they can, within that six-month period, not only upon the initiative of AMLC, also contest it. Hindi ho kasi malinaw iyan dito sa batas na ito. Basta ang sinabi lang ay ang AMLC ay puwede silang, bago mag expire ang 20-day period, they can petition the Court of Appeals, ano. So...

REP. SALCEDA. Yes, I will join you, Your Honor. Number one, automatically lifted iyan, kapag hindi ho iyan in-extend iyong 20 ay automatically lifted po, kung hindi extended iyong 60 – ah iyong six months. So, Your Honor, I think, that is why I said, given the fallibility of human beings managing our institutions, the courses of remedy for individuals who may be caused harm, especially under Section 1, Article I of our Constitution, Your Honor, yes, I think it is properly the domain of Congress to offer such remedies.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you for that statement, Mr. Sponsor and your commitment to further review this provision of the law with the aim of safeguarding also the primordial rights of our people, that they shall be protected in their life, liberty and property dahil ang kalaban nila rito ay ang buong Estado. So it

is, I think, our duty as legislators that every gap na there is a potential for violation of the rights of our people be plugged.

So, thank you, Mr. Sponsor,...

REP. SALCEDA. Thank you very much.

REP. ZARATE. ... Mr. Speaker, for answering these questions...

REP. SALCEDA. I always enjoy – you always challenge me.

REP. ZARATE. Mr. Speaker, considering that no other Member of the Minority wishes to interpellate on the budget of the Anti-Money Laundering Council, I move to terminate the deliberations on the budget of the Anti-Money Laundering Council, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. On the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the consideration of the proposed budget of the Anti-Money Laundering Council.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Anti-Money Laundering Council is hereby terminated. Congratulations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 7727

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 7727.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the consideration of House Bill No. 7727 is hereby suspended.

Majority Leader.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Hon. Fred Castro who wishes to deliver a speech on a question of personal and collective privilege.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). What is the subject matter of the question of privilege of Hon. Fredenil Castro?

REP. CASTRO (F.H.) It is a personal and collective privilege, Mr. Speaker, on the matter of the leadership struggle in the House of Representatives.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Gentleman from the Second District of Capiz, Hon. Fredenil Castro, is recognized for his question of privilege.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. CASTRO (F.H.)*

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the question of privilege of Representative Castro be referred to the Committee on Rules.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The question of privilege of Hon. Fredenil Castro of the Second District of Capiz is referred to the Committee on Rules.

Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is suspended.

It was 11:12 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:16 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.

Majority Leader.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 7727

Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 7727, as contained in Committee Report No. 528, and that the Secretary General be directed to read the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The consideration of House Bill No. 7727 is hereby resumed and the Secretary General is directed to read the title of the measure.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 7727, entitled: "AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-ONE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume consideration of the proposed budget of the Governance Commission for GOCCs.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The period of sponsorship and debate on the budget of the Governance Commission for GOCCs is hereby resumed.

Majority Leader.

* Deleted pursuant to a motion to strike off the records which the Body approved in plenary on October 15, 2020 (See Journal of the Second Special Session dated October 13 to 16, 2020).

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, we would like to acknowledge the presence in the Hall of our resource persons, the guests from the agency concerned. We have Chairman Samuel Dagpin, Jr., Director Irving Occeña, Director Gene Carl Tupas, Director Johann Carlos Barcena and Director Michael Pabalinas.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The House of Representatives welcomes our guests from the Governance Commission for GOCCs. Welcome to the House of Representatives.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, to resume the sponsorship of the proposed budget, I move that we recognize the Gentleman from the Second District of Albay, Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda. And to interpellate our Sponsor, I move that we also recognize Rep. Ferdinand Gaité of the Party-List BAYAN MUNA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Hon. Joey Salceda is recognized to sponsor the measure and Hon. Ferdinand R. Gaité of the Party-List BAYAN MUNA is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker, at salamat sa ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor, at sa lahat ng mga kasamahan natin ngayon dito sa Plenary at gayon din sa Zoom at ang ating mga panauhin sa umagang ito.

Mr. Speaker, may mga ilang katanungan lang po kung pahihintulutan ng ating kagalang-galang na Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Certainly.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po. Puwede ho, ang unang inquiry, ano ho ba ang mandato ng Governance Commission for GOCCs under Republic Act No. 10149, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Dalawa—siguraduhin na ito ay financially viable at pangalawa, na mayroon pong fiscal discipline. So, iyong financial viability, ang pinakabuod nito ay maging responsive sila sa pangangailangan po ng publiko, na hindi po magawa kung ito ay isang parte ng burokrasya. Halimbawa,

ang GSIS ay hindi po isang bureau ng national government, kundi ito ay government owned and controlled. Ito ay isang masasabi nating parang SSS. So ibig sabihin, may nature sila na kailangan nila ng kaunting kalayaan, na sila po ay makapag-decide, na ang kanilang budget ay hindi dumadaan po sa Kongreso. Kalimitan po ang mga budget nito ay hindi dumadaan sa Kongreso.

So, itinalaga po ng gobyerno para naman magkaroon po ng isang institusyon na nagbabantay sa operasyon po ng mga institusyon na ito, lalong-lalo na ito—ito ay under ng oversight functions ng Congress, subalit po sa mga pang-araw-araw na kanila pong operasyon ay mayroon na pong tagabantay tayo at ito po ang GCG.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, salamat po. Mr. Sponsor, gaano karami ba ang ahensiyang ino-oversight ng GCG sa kasalukuyan?

REP. SALCEDA. One hundred eighteen.

REP. GAITE. One hundred?

REP. SALCEDA. Eighteen.

REP. GAITE. One-one-eight.

REP. SALCEDA. One-one-eight.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

Noong 2011 po itinatag ang GCG at siyam na taon na po siyang nag-e-exist. Pero binabasa ko po iyong ating mga listahan ng na-file na bills noong Seventeenth Congress, there were three bills calling for the abolition of the GCG. For this Eighteenth Congress, there was another bill that was filed for the abolition of the GCG, House Bill No. 1898 by Hon. Lorna Silverio, and the grounds stated therein was that it did not fulfill its mandate of, iyong nasabi po ng ating kagalang-galang na Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, iyong usapin ng policies ng government para sa GOCCs. Dahil sa dami nga ng GOCCs, nagkakaroon ng kaniya-kaniya o hindi consistent ang direksyon ng mga GOCCs na nabanggit—SSS, GSIS and the 118 others. And there is also a problem regarding the corporate governance

policies, specifically iyong problem ng political interference in the operations of said GOCCs. There is also a problem in the lack of transparency in the selection process of the members of the board of the respective GOCCs. And there is also a lack of financial integrity, financial consistency. So, nine years palang po ang GCG and yet, marami na po nag-iisip na hindi nito nafu-fulfill iyong kaniyang mandato, Mr. Speaker. Ano ho po ba ang reaksyon ng ating Sponsor dito, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Hindi ako magpapalusot na ito ay nasa Supreme Court na, na ito ay under judicial review already. Pero sa pananaw ko po, bilang isang dati pong nasa private sector, palagi pong nagkakaroon sa mga korporasyon, lalong-lalo na po kapag isa kang holding company, lagi na po sa loob po mismo ng board of directors, bumubuo ka pa ho ng isang grupo upang mabantayan po, ma-monitor po iyong performance noong mga kumpanya na pag-aari po ng isang korporasyon. So, sa pananaw ko po naman po ay may mga ginagawa po ang GCG na hindi po, sa ngayon, ginagawa o naimamandato, halimbawa, sa DBM, kasi ang GCG po, ang kanilang—iyong isang halimbawa na lang po, bago iyong GCG, P7.1 billion lang iyong nai-remit na mga dividend. Ngayon po ay nasa P28 billion. So, sila pa iyon parang tagabantay natin, tagaudyok.

It is almost like a management audit unit of the government that essentially tries to look after, not just from this negative approach, but rather that from holding the hands of our government-owned and -controlled corporations so they can better respond to the needs of the public, of public interest.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Iyong binabanggit n'yo pong improvement in terms of the remittances of the GOCCs to the national coffers, sinasabi n'yo pong nag-improve, lumaki, Mr. Speaker, pero ang tanong, Mr. Speaker, ang PhilHealth ho ba ay saklaw ng GCG, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Ang alin po?

REP. GAITE. Ang Philippine Health Insurance Corporation.

REP. SALCEDA. Opo.

REP. GAITE. Case in point, Mr. Speaker.

Kung totoo ngang nakatulong ang GCG sa mas episyenteng pagpapatakbo ng mga korporasyon lalo na sa usapin ng pagbibigay ng serbisyo at, gayundin sa kabilang bahagi, ang nalulustay o baka maaari pang sinabi ng iba'y nananakaw na pondo ng mga GOCCs, a very glaring concern or issue is that the issue of corruption has not really been curtailed and as a matter of fact, the GCG even with its powers of oversight over such GOCCs has failed miserably in controlling or even minimizing corruption.

Ang sabi nga dito, gusto i-address iyong corporate governance policies, iyong problema ng transparency, the integrity of its financial operations. So, nandoon sana, nasa frontline, kung baga, frontliner iyong GCG dahil napakalaki ng kapangyarihan noong GCG. It overtook the original functions of the Office of the President, the Commission on Audit, the NEDA, the GPPB, the OGCC which accordingly, when this was created in 2011, ang sabi daw i-centralize na raw ang lahat ng mga GOCCs despite the fact that these GOCCs have their respective mother government agencies like, nabanggit ninyo po, the GSIS and SSS. Dati po ang mother agency nila, if I am not mistaken, ang Department of Finance. So, mayroong mga mother units din sila na nagbibigay ng guidance, nagbibigay ng direction, pati policy issues regarding the operations of such GOCCs. But now, we have created another layer, another dinosaur, if I may say, na napakalaki at napakalawak, pero tulad noong dinosaur, eventually, naging extinct kasi napakalaki, it was biting off more than it can chew dahil nakita nito na nagbigay ito ng isang masyadong napakalawak na kapangyarihan at iyong mga basic na operations ng mga GOCCs, kahit iyon ay hindi na niya ma-attend-an.

Mr. Speaker, ano ho bang tingin ng Sponsor doon sa nabanggit ko na nga po, mayroon na ngang ibang Kinatawan tayo dito sa Kongreso na nagmumungkahing i-abolish na iyong GCG dahil 'di nito natugunan iyong pangunahin niyang mandate based on those grounds that I have expounded, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. SALCEDA. Salamat. Pero alam ninyo po, dahil po sa –puwede ko i-share ko po sa inyo iyong analysis po ng GCG sa buong PhilHealth. Hindi ho sila nakakapagbigay ng bonus dahil laging bagsak po sila sa performance indicators. Sa pananaw ko naman ay isang napakalaking ambag ito sa operasyon ng gobyerno. Dahil po sa ginagawa po ng GCG, isa sa kanilang mandato na ibinigay po ng Kongreso, kaya po hindi po nakapagbibigay ng bonus ang PhilHealth gawa nga po noong 2017, 43 percent lang iyong kanilang grade, tapos noong 2018, iyong grade nila 78 percent lang. So ibig sabihin, maganda rin po iyong mayroon tayong isang management audit team na hiwalay po sa DBM dahil kung iisipin, ang DBM po talaga sa pagba-budget po talaga, kung бага iba ang focus po nila. E dito naman po, mayroon pong word mismo, “governance.” So, ibig sabihin nape-perform po ng GCG ang governance. The mere fact that PhilHealth never had bonuses because they failed the GCG Performance Audit, I think it is already a significant contribution to nation-building.

REP. GAITE. Salamat, Mr. Speaker, at buti na lang nabanggit ninyo po iyan kasi talagang magtataasan ang kilay ng mga mamamayan, lalo na iyong nagko-contribute sa PhilHealth, na bibigyan pa sila ng reward considering that they have already failed miserably, again, in the delivery of basic services. At hindi lang iyon, there are now allegations that our hard-earned contributions to the PhilHealth, which should have been monitored by the GCG, have been pocketed by certain officials or even those from the private sector.

So, Mr. Speaker, dapat lang talagang ginawa iyon and, of course, iyong issue ng non-delivery, iyong hindi pagbigay ng mga benefits, of course, that is a positive step, but other than that, it is controlling the hemorrhage of our much-needed funds. So iyon po iyong hinaharap rin po natin, na sana may proactive role and GCG pero as I said, we are not seeing that currently.

REP. SALCEDA. Ah, ...

REP. GAITE. I will go to... Sige,

Mr. Speaker, baka gusto mong sumagot.

REP. SALCEDA. Kung ipapa-print ko po itong kanilang –marami po doon kayong mababasa na mga masasabi nating proposal for the improvement of the operations of PhilHealth na sana po ay nakatulong, e nasa institusyon na po iyan. Kung hindi pa rin po nila gawin, sa tingin ko wala ho sa ambit ng GCG kundi ako personally po, Your Honor, it is a failure of the law because we made PhilHealth a health institution when in fact, it is just a financial institution. If it is a problem, it is a structural problem and therefore, that breeds a lot of other dysfunctions at the expense of the services to the people. I have conducted myself, Your Honor, a structural approach analysis of PhilHealth and I can tell you –pero sa ngayon po dahil ang napag-uusapan po ay ang budget po ng PhilHealth, sa pananaw ko, mula po dito sa GCG, e dapat po ang manghimasok na po ang COA and therefore, ang Ombudsman. So, iyon po ang step sa ngayon. Kundi sa ngayon, it is what you can call within the affirmative domain of managing certain institutions, especially those that do not regularly go to Congress when they ask for their budget.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pero tulad ng nabanggit ko, dahil nga napakaraming amo ngayon ng iba’t ibang ahensiya, lalo na iyong mga GOCCs –nandiyan na nga iyong COA, mayroon pang GCG, may DBM na, may GCG pa, may NEDA na, may GCG pa rin –napakaraming amo, too many masters, kung kaya’t kahit doon sa proseso ng pag-e-ensure ng integrity of financial conditions, nabanggit ninyo na po, may COA, pero iyong COA, of course, that is another concern, another issue, e for the past several decades probably, the agencies, not only PhilHealth for that matter, but so many other agencies have escaped the very much-needed audit performance evaluation of such agencies. Kaya’t sa dami ng dapat na nag-o-audit dito, e parang hindi ko trabaho iyan, trabaho iyan ng kabilang ahensiya. And I think that was the purpose originally of the GCG. But now, even in that aspect, they have been very much remiss.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will go on to my next topic and this was also our concern noong manggagawa pa ako at kawani ng OWWA, at Presidente ako ng COURAGE. Tinutulan namin ito, as a matter of fact, iyong creation ng GCG, and our argument then was, as I will state it now, we are creating another structure in the bureaucracy which will only add to the bureaucratic layer in the government. Gusto natin magkaroon ng lean bureaucracy and yet, we are creating so many government agencies whose functions are redundant, duplicating other existing agencies, those already established.

Ang isang trabaho sana daw ng GCG – ito, concern talaga ito ng mga manggagawa – iyong Compensation and Position Classification System. Can we have an update on the status of the CPCS of government financial institutions after the suspension by President Rodrigo Duterte under Executive Order No. 36 of 2017, suspending Executive Order No. 203, Series of 2016?

As a background, GOCCs, many of which are exempted from the Salary Standardization Law, since 2010, have not received any salary increase because upon the creation of the GCG, they were tasked with the responsibility of creating the CPCS. But since 2011, with the suspension of Executive Order No. 203 of 2016 by President Duterte, under Executive Order No. 36, magpahanggang ngayon, wala pang dagdag na suweldo ang ating mga kawani sa mga GOCCs na exempted sa Salary Standardization Law, na ang pinakahuli ay nitong taong ito, under the Salary Standardization Law 5. Mr. Speaker, ano na ho ba ang status nitong CPCS na matagal nang inaabangan din ng mga kawani ng mga GOCCs, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. SALCEDA. Doon sa 85 po ngayon na GOCCs na pinag-uusapan natin, 62 po pinili na po na mapaloob sa SSL. So, samakatuwid po, sila po ay – iyong kanila pong suweldo ay nakabase po sa Salary Standardization Law na ginagawa po ng Kongreso. Iyong natitira po ay – iyong kanila po, they chose to remain na ang kanilang compensation ay nakabase po doon sa CPCS framework para po sa mga GOCCs.

REP. GAITE. Okay. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

At gusto ko lang i-inform ang Kapulungang ito na may mga government agencies tayo, tulad ng nabanggit, mula noong 2010 or 10 years ago, wala pong salary adjustment. To name a few, I believe these are the GSIS, the SSS and others, dahil nga po iyong problema na dati exempted sila sa Salary Standardization Law but because of the GCG Law, which was responsible for establishing the CPCS, na sobra nang naantala magpahanggang ngayon, wala pa rin silang dagdag sa sahod. Hindi ho ba unjust iyon that while employees in other government agencies tulad ng national government agencies, mga state universities and colleges and local government units ay nagkaroon ng kakarampot na increase sa ilalim noong Salary Standardization Law 5, iyong ating mga kapatid na kawani sa GOCCs, ni isang kusing ay wala pa ring dagdag sa sahod?

Kaya po, iyan po iyong concern ng Kinatawang ito. Ano ho ang dahilan bakit hanggang ngayon iyong CPCS na sinasabi na responsibility ng GCG e hanggang ngayon ay hindi pa rin nailalabas? Mayroon ho bang maaasahan iyong mga manggagawa ng mga naturang agencies? Sinabi ninyo 62 out of the 85 have decided to comply or accept the provisions of the SSL 5, but there are many others whose salaries have not yet been adjusted, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Your Honor, I will be more forthright, no blame, it is about institutions making choices but I guess, Your Honor, the new CPCS that will come out, which the GSIS chose, I think they will get a higher pay under the new CPCS.

REP. GAITE. Pakiulit po, Mr. Speaker. Pasensya na po.

REP. SALCEDA. Aakyat po, 'pag lumabas po iyong bagong CPCS, aakyat po ang sweldo ng mga taga-GSIS. Kung gusto n'yo po ng draft, hihingin ko po dito.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po. So, ...

REP. SALCEDA. Ibibigay ko po sa inyo.

REP. GAITE. Actually, ang hinahanap po ng ating mga kasama na mga kawani sa mga GOCCs ay mismo iyong CPCS, not only for the GSIS, but for the other government-owned or -controlled corporations or government financial institutions. So, not only for the ...

REP. SALCEDA. I think ...

REP. GAITE. Not only for the employees and officials of the GSIS, but pati na rin iyong iba. So iyan po iyong concern kung kaya't I would also like to inform you that even many of the employees in the GOCCs are supportive of the demand for the abolition of the GCG which has not, they believe, lived up to the mandate not only of the agency, but of the employees. Kayo ho ba, may record ho ba ang GCG sa—anong tawag nila doon, may tawag sila, dashboard—iyon, may dashboard ba kayo ng specific GOCCs in terms of compliance with the performance targets of each agency? Mayroon tayong major final output, mayroong mga financial targets. Kasi ang tanong ng ating kagalang-galang na ...

REP. SALCEDA. Yes, mayroon po; it is called the "PCIS."

REP. GAITE. ... Congressman Marcoleta e, like the PhilHealth, ano ho ba ang scorecard at mayroon ba kayong mga rekomendasyon patungkol dito, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Para sa PhilHealth?

REP. GAITE. For all other government ...

REP. SALCEDA. Yes.

REP. GAITE. One hundred ...

REP. SALCEDA. Eighteen.

REP. GAITE. Eighteen.

REP. SALCEDA. Kaya iyong natitira pong 84, dahil ipina-abolish na natin iyong 30, so mayroon po, the ICRS, the link is there. With

respect to just PhilHealth as a specific issue, we have—I can share with you a 15-page summary of the recommendations of the GCG with respect to the operations of PhilHealth. And with respect to the status of the CPCS, may I approach the Gentleman and just share with you exactly where the CPCS is. And lastly, what is good for the goose is good for the gander. In short ...

REP. GAITE. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. ... this is not just for the GSIS, this is ...

REP. GAITE. Yes, siges po, pero siguro tapusin ko na lang po.

REP. SALCEDA. In short, this is for all GOCCs that are under the CPCS.

REP. GAITE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I just have six more minutes and siges po, puwedeng pagkatapos na lang, mayroon lang akong mga ilang inquiry lang, Mr. Speaker.

Nasabi ko kanina ang isang dahilan sa pagtatayo ng GCG o Governance Commission for GOCCs ay iyong problema ng lack of transparency in the appointment or selection of their board members. Kung kaya't based sa GCG Law, ni-limit na lamang sa one year ang term ng bawat appointee at they will apply the fitness and—ano po iyong term na ginamit, basta iyong merit and fitness, mayroon silang ginagamit na measurement of the performance. After which, kung sila ay pumasa, then mae-extend nang mae-extend ang kanilang termino bilang board members sa mga naturang korporasyon, pero ang isa ring binanggit ay iyong political interference. Nagulat ako kasi ang isa sa mga first resigned na official ng pamahalaang Duterte ay walang iba kundi si Jaime Maria Flores, siya ang first resigned official under the government of Duterte. He was formerly appointed as the head of the GCG and he resigned on October 24, 2016. And based on some articles I read, the reason why he resigned was because of political interference. Meaning, there were many—because ho iyong patronage politics, the influence of so many people wanting to

get appointed in major financial institutions was too much pressure. That was what I read in an article.

So, again, iyong head ng agency mismo, Jaime Maria Flores, in 2016, iyong mismong agency ng GCG was buffeted by political interference and accordingly, kaya na rin siya nag-resign, hindi niya na kaya iyong maelstrom na tumatama sa GCG. Kung sa GCG nangyayari iyan, how effective has the GCG been in ensuring that—sabi nga dito, iyong kawalan ng transparency sa pag-appoint ng members ng board. Hindi talaga necessarily iyong sinabing kumakatawan dapat, example sa GSIS—and we are moving for amendments of the GSIS Law—na dapat kapag sinabing kinatawan siya ng manggagawa, dapat manggagawa siya, dapat kawani rin siya, pero nakikita na nga natin kung paano ito nava-violate sa maraming pagkakataon. So, Mr. Speaker, papaano ba natin talaga magagamot ito? Puwede ho bang magbigay ng kaunting background, bakit ho ba talaga nag-resign si Mr. Jaime Maria Flores and how has the GCG been effective in addressing a major concern on how to prevent the interference of political patronage, especially in the selection of members of the board of the various GOCCs, GFIs, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Let us fix the term, Sir.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Let us fix the term, change the law.

REP. GAITE. (*Laughter*) Salamat, Mr. Speaker.

Marami talagang dapat ayusin dito sa GCG and nine years into its implementation, its enactment, we still see the same problems. It was created—iyong rationale niya for being created are still problems that we still face today. Hindi nito na-address iyong inconsistent policies in the objectives of the government GOCCs.

I believe that the GCG has a role in the issue of checking corruption. Hindi puwedeng maghugas-kamay ang GCG at sabihin na hindi nila trabaho iyong pag-check ng financial

conditions ng mga GOCCs dahil nandoon sa kanilang kapangyarihan ang pag-review at oversight sa mga ito. Dapat ma-check rin nila, ito na nga, iyong nabanggit ninyong CPCS. Noong inilabas ang unang Executive Order No. 203 na sinuspinde, ang isa sa mga rationale sa pagtatayo ng GCG ay iyong—ano iyong exact term, I forget the exact term but the—unconscionable, I think that was the term, the unconscionable salaries of officials in the GOCCs. Mantakin ninyo, when Executive Order No. 203 came out, panahon ni PNoy, ang suweldo ng pinaka-top positions ng mga government financial institutions would have been P1,855,699 a month, which is much, much bigger than the salary of the President of the Philippines which would have been only four hundred—where is that—P431,718 a month.

So, ito iyong sinasabing unconscionable salaries. Yet, instead of addressing that problem, lalo pang pinalaki iyong suweldo ng mga matataas na opisyal and the concept of checking the unconscionable salaries of officials in the GOCCs has not been corrected. And I believe President Duterte suspended its implementation on that basic ground. So, Mr. Speaker, sana po, sa nabanggit na po, we have to really change that law. I do not know kung to what extent, there are other proposals, but the budget of the GCG is put in question because iyong kaniyang mandato para ibigay ang kaniyang serbisyo has not been at par. So, Mr. Speaker, for now, I leave that at that, pero sa minimum, humihingi ako ng commitment paano ho ba ia-address iyong problema ng suweldo ng mga empleyado sa mga GOCCs dahil sa kagyat iyon po iyong malaking suliranin na hinaharap noong ating mga kawani sa mga GOCCs, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

So commitment lang po, Mr. Speaker, doon sa usapin ng suweldo ng ating mga kawani sa GOCCs, lahat na sila, hindi lang po ang GSIS kundi iyong 20-plus pa na hindi pa naa-adjust ang suweldo since 2010, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Yes, Your Honor, it should have been, actually, submitted last September except for COVID, but I would like to give you a copy ...

REP. GAITE. Salamat po.

REP. SALCEDA. ... of the draft ...

REP. GAITE. So, mayroon na po.

REP. SALCEDA. ... of the new CPCS that will essentially allow or perhaps lift the moratorium imposed by then President Aquino. I think that is my answer to you, Your Honor.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, bukas po tatanggapin ang proposal—ah, the CPCS for all GOCCs. Salamat po, Congressman Salceda. At dito po sa isinumite ngayong CPCS ay pag-aaralan natin para makita kung paano makakatulong sa ating mga kawani sa GOCCs na matagal na nilang gustong makita para magkaroon ng pagsusuri sa kalagayan nila bilang mga kawani ng ating pamahalaan sa mga GOCCs.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, dahil wala na pong ibang mga miyembro ng Minorya na nais magtanong at mag-interpellate sa GCG, I move that we terminate the interpellation on the budget of the GCG, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority to terminate the consideration of the budget of the Governance Commission for GOCCs.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The period of sponsorship and debate on the budget of the Governance Commission for GOCCs is hereby terminated. (*Applause*)

REP. SALCEDA. Clap your hands pa rin.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Congratulations!
Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session for a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is suspended.

It was 11:54 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:56 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.

COMMISSION ON THE FILIPINO LANGUAGE

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider the budget of the Commission on the Filipino Language.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Before we proceed with the first interpellator, Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the presence of our guests from the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino. We have with us today Mr. Norman Abubo, Budget Officer; Ma. Christina Pangan, Planning Officer; Mr. Salvador Sagadal, OIC, Chief Administrative Officer; and Mr. Arthur P. Casanova, Acting Chairman.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). We welcome our guests from the Commission on the Filipino Language to the House of Representatives. Thank you for your being here.

Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, again, to sponsor the budget, I move that we recognize Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda, and from the ACT TEACHERS Party-List, Rep. France L. Castro, for her interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Hon. Joey Salceda is recognized to sponsor the budget and Hon. France Castro is recognized for her interpellation.

Hon. France Castro may proceed.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend for a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Crisologo). The session is suspended.

It was 11:58 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:59 a.m. the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume consideration.

REP. SALCEDA. Certainly, Your Honor, to the Representative of our teachers. My father was a teacher all his life and my mother was a teacher too. Both of them were public school teachers.

Yes, Congresswoman Castro.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Binanggit ninyo po ang teachers, sa October 5 po ay World Teachers' Day, kaya po nagpupugay tayo sa ating mga guro.

Dito po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sa budget ng KWF or Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino, mapapansin po natin, Mr. Speaker, ang daming budget cuts. So, kung titingnan po natin, mayroon pong P9,000,908 na tinapyas sa budget ng KWF. Puwede po bang malaman, Mr. Speaker, ano po ba iyong original proposal na budget ng KWF?

REP. SALCEDA. Original, anong original ninyong proposal?

Ninety-one million, tinapyasan po ng katorse.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Thank you po, Mr. Speaker. So, in due time po, mag-aano po tayo ng proposal. So, puwede po bang maipaliwanag – doon sa proposal nilang P91 million, kinaltasan ng P14 million, marami po ditong mga proyektong KWF. Puwede po bang maipaliwanag, ano iyong magiging epekto ng kaltas doon sa mga programa at proyekto ng KWF, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Basically po, kapag tiningnan mo po iyong budget po nila, iyong composition, iyong tinapyasan lang talaga from P52 million at naging P33-million was the Promotion and Enrichment of Filipino and Philippine Languages. So, ang tinanggal mo doon ay iyong kanilang MOOE, imbes na P38 million ay naging P17 million. Ibig sabihin, mas konting training, mas konti pong pananaliksik, mas konti po sigurong mga action research na siya pong nagpapayaman po ng atin pong lenggwahe o ng atin pong wika. So, iyan po, basically, they will have less activities for the promotion and enrichment of Filipino and Philippine languages.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Nawala.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Parang nawala.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Nakikita na ba niya? Nakikita kung nandiyan? Iyong si Rep. France Castro, nakikita ba kung nandiyan?

Mr. Speaker, a few minutes of suspension, please.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is suspended.

It was 12:03 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 12:03 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.
Majority Leader.

REP. SALCEDA. Yes.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, kasi ina-unmute po yata ako...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Honorable Castro, you may proceed.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). ...kaya hindi po ako makapagsalita. Okay, so na-realize ko po iyong importance noong ginawang pagtapyas at magiging epekto nito doon sa paglinang, pag-develop, pagsasaliksik sa ating wika, sa wikang Pilipino. So, nalulungkot ako, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, sa isang desisyon nga ay halos ginawa na ngang optional ang Filipino language na pagtuturo sa tertiary. Ngayon, dito pa sa ahensiya na dapat na lumilinang, nananaliksik, at nagpapaunlad ng ating wika ay talagang binabaan ng budget at kinaltasan. So, in due time, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sana matulungan ako na maibalik natin itong budget na ito ng KWF.

REP. SALCEDA. Definitely, because noong ako po ay Governor ng Albay, marami pong naitulong sa akin ang KWF at bilang isa sa mga masasabi nating senior members ng Committee on Appropriations, isa po ako sa—I will definitely support once the proper proposal or proper request not augmentation but additional budget for KWF is made. Kasi alam ninyo po, para sa isang ahensiyang katulad nito, iyong P17 million o P22 million actually ay napakalaki pong dagok po sa kanilang operasyon, so ako po’y I am very supportive po. Ilang beses po silang ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Salamat po.

REP. SALCEDA. ... for just a ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Salamat po, Ginoong Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Isa din po sa aking concern, pangalawang concern ko po, Mr. Speaker, dahil nakakalungkot nga binawasan. Ang itatanong ko pa man din sa susunod, magkano ba iyong hiningi ng KWF sa DBCC sa paggawa ng promulgation ng IRR? Last year pa po ito e. Nalulungkot po ako kasi last year ko pa po itong hinihingi na sana

mabigyan ng pondo iyong paggawa ng IRR para po doon sa promulgation noong FSL, pero hanggang ngayon po ay wala. Puwede po bang malaman ang comment ng Sponsor hinggil dito?

REP. SALCEDA. Two million po. So, idagdag na po natin iyan. So, ang atin pong hihingi na dagdag po na budget para po sa KWF ay magiging P19 million para po magawa nila iyong kanilang napakahalagang gawain po lalong-lalo na po sa panahong ganito. Sa akin pong pananaliksik ng mga ekonomiya sa ibang bansa, nakita ko na kung saan po ang kultura ay nagiging basehan ng pagrekober po ng ekonomiya na tinatamaan ng ganito kalaki, kung saan po ang pagkakaisa o ang pagkakaroon po ng mga ganito pong aktibidad, actually, ay nakapagpapalakas ng loob ng mga ordinaryong mamamayan. Kaya ako po’y suportadong-suportado ko po nang todo-todo na madagdagan po ang budget ng KWF dahil pabalik-balik po sila sa akin sa Albay para po matulungan nga po iyong amin pong mga ginagawa po doon na mga pag-aaral patungkol po sa kultura at sa lenggwahe. At kaya po ako’y—so, iyong P2 million po ay iyan po ang hiningi nila para sa FSL at hindi rin po naibigay.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Salamat po, Mr. Sponsor. Pangunahing nagsulong po ng FSL Act simula noong Mayo 2012, katulong ang Philippine Federation of the Deaf at ng iba’t ibang national and regional organizations na ngayong taon ay nagbuo ng Filipino Sign Language Advocacy Cooperative upang bantayan ang implementasyon ng FSL at ginunita noong September 23 ang Pandaigdigang Araw ng mga Wikang Pang-Senyas o iyong sign languages at sa linggong iyon, ang Pandaigdigang Araw ng mga may Kapansanan sa Pandinig—nagpanukala po ang Philippine Federation of the Deaf at Filipino Sign Language Advocacy Cooperative ng para sa 0.01 percent earmarking para sa mga may kapansanan sa pandinig. Sa esensya, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, hinihiling nila sa Kongreso na gawing permanente ang paglalaan ng tiyak na pondo para sa kanila. Maliit na halaga lang, hindi bababa

sa 0.01 percent ng MOOE ng mga ahensiya na may mandato sa ilalim ng Filipino Sign Language Law o aabot halos sa P297 million para sa 16 na ahensiya, kabilang ang KWF. Ginoong Sponsor, ilan po sa mga ahensiya na minamandato ng FSL Law na magpatupad nitong batas na ito at tiyakin na maipatupad itong batas na ito sa mga sumusunod ay, una po, iyong KWF, Commission on Human Rights, Council for Welfare of Children, Philippine Commission on Women, DSWD, DILG-OSEC, DILG-Philippine National Police, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, State Universities and Colleges, Presidential Communication Operations Office o iyong PCOO, IBC and PTV 4, MTRCB, Local Government Academy, Department of Education, National Council for Children's Television and the Early Childhood Care and Development Council.

So, ito po, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, ang mga ahensiya na dapat na magpatupad at magsigurado na mapatupad ang FSL para po sa kapakanan ng ating deaf community. Nagkakahalaga po ito ng almost P297 million. Kung kukuhanin po natin iyong suggestion ng ating mga deaf community, 0.01 percent po noong bawat ahensiya sa MOOE. Puwede po bang marinig ang komento ng ating Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Susulatan ko po lahat kasi mukhang iyong mga ahensiya po ang bingi kaya kailangan po natin silang pukawin.

Alam ninyo po, sayang naman po iyong mga pag-tumbling natin dito sa Kongreso para gumawa ng mga magagandang batas at hindi mo rin naman ipapatupad. Alam ninyo po, pinag-aralan ko po lahat ng mga unfunded laws at kapag nakakarinig po ako ng ganyan ay ako po ay talaga gagawa kahit papaano po, in my own way, na lahat po itong mga mandated institutions kailangan pong mag-ambag para po ipatupad ang FSL, para po ito ay maisakatuparan na po, para po sa kabutihan, ng lahat po, lalong-lalo na po iyong mga naiwan sa atin pong lipunan.

So, I will, my office, as Vice Chair of Appro, will write all these institutions to remind them that they have been deaf to the needs, to the national imperative to help, especially those

who are marginalized not of their own fault. So I think, Your Honor, without being, hindi dahil po sa — but I share the advocacy that you are espousing.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Salamat po, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

So, aasahan po natin iyan. Ako po ay nagtitiwala sa ating Sponsor na magkatulong po tayo para gawin iyan. Isa pa pong mga ano, dagdag pa, dati po kahit Magna Carta for Persons with Disability in 1998 ay mayroon pong 1 percent earmarking para sa mga senior citizens at PWDs sa pamamagitan po ng general provisions sa GAA mula 2006 hanggang 2010. Noong 2010 po, halimbawa, iyong General Provision No. 34. Pero sa kasamaang palad po, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, nawala na po ito doon sa GAA simula noong 2011. Wala nang mandato o watered down provision na lang ngayon ang General Provision No. 32. So, ano po ba itong Section No. 34 sa GAA ng 2010? Iyong mga programs and projects related po sa ating mga senior citizens and differently abled in support of the Philippine plan of action for all deaf persons.

So, Mr. Speaker, siguro para po ma-concretize natin iyong ating sinasabi dito, baka puwedeng mailagay natin muli o maibalik natin sa Special Provisions or General Provisions iyong mga nabanggit ko po na dapat ay maglaan ng pondo sa mga agencies para po institutionalized na po at maipatupad na po nang kumpleto itong FSL. Ano po sa tingin ng ating Sponsor, Ginoong Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Noong governor po ako, iyong GAB po ay hindi isang tokenism, ngunit isa pong proyekto na binali-baliktad para lang po makapag-comply sa gusto ng batas. Kaya po ako ay naniniwala na kung magkaroon po tayo ng PPAs o programs, projects and activities o ng PMPs na siyang magde-define po ng 1 percent na iyan, bilang isang commitment ng atin pong bansa para po sa kabutihan at kagalingan po ng mga naiwan po — dahil sabi nga mismo ng ating Pangulo, na walang maiwan sa kaniyang administrasyon — so, aantayin ko po, Your

Honor, dahil hindi po ako isang eksperto, ang isang sulat mula po sa iyong opisina para po may basehan po ako bilang, kung saka-sakali man pong palarin na maging miyembro po ng small group na ito po ay maisulong ko po , at least magkaroon po ng tiyansa na ito po ay marinig at mabigyan po ng chance na makipag-compete sa iba pong mga masasabi nating competing priorities of our nation, especially in this period of pandemic, in the current crisis.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay.

So, with that very reassuring answer from our Sponsor ay nagtitiwala po ako doon sa sinasabi niya. So, susulat po ang aking opisina para po doon sa amendment, especially po sa General Provisions na ma-include po iyong implementation ng FSL in terms of budget na naaayon sa kaniyang mandato sa lahat ng mga government offices na involved.

Thank you po, Mr. Speaker. Thank you po, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize Representative Zarate.

REP. ZARATE. Mr. Speaker, inasmuch that no other Member from the Minority wishes to interpellate on the budget of the Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino, amin pong iminumungkahi na tapusin na ang deliberasyon at debate sa budget ng Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in terminating the deliberations on the budget of the Commission on Filipino Language.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The period

of sponsorship and debate on the budget of the Commission on the Filipino Language is hereby terminated.

Majority Leader.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF THE PHILIPPINES

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider the budget of the National Archives of the Philippines.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. SALCEDA. Wala na si Bonito.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda, the proponent of the budget.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Honorable Salceda is recognized to sponsor the measure.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Before we recognize the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of our guests from the National Archives of the Philippines. In Zoom: Jacklyn Joyce Delgado, Anna Theresa Magundayao, Gina Papa, Ma. Teresa Pagaragan, Leoncia Marquina, Elizabeth Eje and Remmel Talabis. For the support staff, we have: Maureen Janet Mercado, Marynissa Espiritu and Arjay Billones. Also with us today in the Plenary Hall: Chief Administrative Officer Jocelyn Reyes, Deputy Executive Director Marietta Chou and Executive Director Victorino Mapa Manalo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). We would like to welcome the guests from the National Archives of the Philippines.

Thank you for being here today.

Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. I move that we recognize from the BAYAN MUNA Party-List Representative Zarate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Honorable Zarate is recognized.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a few questions, Mr. Speaker.

May we know the main mandate of the National Archives, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Dalawa: iyong lahat ng public records po na may archival value pinangangalagaan po nila, at syempre kasama po diyan both governance and culture. So, iyon po talaga ang kanilang mandate.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

In the current situation that we are in now na mayroong pandemya ng COVID, tumindi iyong krisis, ano pong adjustments ang ginawa ng National Archives doon sa kanilang main mandate, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Iyong kanila pong – kasi alam ninyo po, marami po tayong mga ahensiya, mga LGUs, so iyong kanila pong mga training para po sa archival management are now being done online.

REP. ZARATE. And dahil online na ho ito, nare-reflect ba ito doon sa kanilang panukalang budget at budget na in-approve ng DBM, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Kasama po doon sa P171 million na budget nila.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po.

Kaya ko lang po naitanong iyan dahil mahalaga rin po ang papel ng National Archives, ano. Mahalaga iyong papel nila, hindi lang doon sa para magkaroon o sa hinaharap ay mayroon tayong reference kung ano ang nangyari sa ating kasaysayan. So, sana po ay ma-reflect din doon ano, mabigyan din ng pansin, lalo na ngayon itong sitwasyon natin na kailangang mag-adjust din sila. Gumagamit na tayo ng ibang teknolohiya, kailangang mag-adjust din ang National Archives at sana ay mabigyang pansin din ito ng pambansang pamahalaan. So, iyon lang ho

ang ilan kong mga paglilinaw sa budget ng National Archives at considering that no other Member of the Minority wishes to interpellate on the budget of National Archives, I move, Mr. Speaker, to terminate the deliberations on the budget of National Archives.

REP. SALCEDA. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority to terminate the period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the National Archives of the Philippines.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the National Archives of the Philippines is hereby terminated. Congratulations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, a few minutes of suspension.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is suspended.

It was 12:22 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 12:24 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.

Majority Leader.

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move to open the period of interpellation

on the proposed budget of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move to acknowledge the presence of our guests from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. They are Mr. Al Ryan Alejandro; Ms. Marichu Tellano; and in Zoom, Mr. Arsenio "Nick" Lizaso and Ms. Marichu Tellano.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). We welcome the guests from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. Thank you for being here, both physically and on Zoom.

REP. DELOS SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize the Hon. Stella Quimbo from the Second District of Marikina City.

Mr. Speaker, I move to recognize the Sponsor, the Hon. Joey Sarte Salceda, to sponsor the budget of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Hon. Joey Salceda is recognized to sponsor the measure and the Hon. Stella Luz A. Quimbo of the Second District of Marikina is recognized for her interpellation.

REP. QUIMBO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Yes, we can hear you, please proceed.

REP. QUIMBO. ... will the good Sponsor yield to a few questions?

REP. SALCEDA. Sure. Yes.

REP. QUIMBO. Mr. Sponsor, ano po ba ang mandato ng NCCA pagdating po sa conservation of architectural heritage tulad

ng mga lumang gusali na ginawa po ng mga tanyag na arkitekto?

REP. SALCEDA. Based sa kanilang submission sa atin, it is mandated as the overall policy-making and coordinating body, and grant-giving agency of the State for the preservation, safeguarding, development and promotion of Philippine arts and culture.

REP. QUIMBO. Sila po ba ay kasama din sa decision-making process as to whether certain architectural gems can be demolished?

REP. SALCEDA. May I ask for a repeat of the question.

REP. QUIMBO. Ang tanong ko po, Mr. Sponsor, is ano po ba iyong proseso po ng pag-preserve ng cultural properties? So, mayroon pong mga cultural agencies po na naka-attach sa NCCA. And ano po ang process po niyan, kung may isang halimbawang lumang gusali na mayroong gusto pong mag-demolish nito, ano po ba ang process para po humingi ng permit at ano po ang role ng NCCA dito po sa decision-making patungkol po dito?

REP. SALCEDA. Actually po, iyong tunay po na talagang nangangasiwa niyan ay ang National Historical Commission at ang National Museum. So, iyong role po ng National Commission for Culture and the Arts is really to provide grants that essentially allow the promotion or the preservation of these, what you can call "historical" or "heritage assets of the nation."

REP. QUIMBO. Pero po, Mr. Sponsor, can you confirm po na may supervision po ang NCCA over these cultural agencies, kasama po diyan ang National Historical Institute, pati na rin po iyong nabanggit ninyo na National Museum? So, may supervision po ang NCCA dito, 'di ba?

REP. SALCEDA. They are part of the Board of Commissioners of the Commission.

REP. QUIMBO. Okay. So, paki-confirm po, Mr. Sponsor, na ang proseso po dito is

that cultural properties or rather, important cultural properties will first have to be identified at kapag ang isang cultural property ay na-consider po na important ay iyan na po ay puwede pong ma-consider po for preservation. And pagdating naman sa identification process mismo, ang naka-assign po diyan would be the six cultural agencies na naka-attach nga sa NCCA.

Can the good Sponsor po confirm that this is the process?

REP. SALCEDA. Yes, I confirm.

REP. QUIMBO. So, Mr. Sponsor, ano po ba ang update po on the alleged demolition po of the Philam Life Building dito po sa Ermita, Manila? So, Mr. Sponsor, this building is a very beautiful one. It was built in 1961. So, because it is over 50 years old ay iyan po ay nasa jurisdiction po ng National Historical Institute. And sa loob po ng building na ito ay mayroong isang napakagandang teatro, the Philam Life Theater and in fact, ang mga dingding po ng teatro na ito ay may mga carvings po by Jose Alcantara. So, well, from my perspective po at sa pananaw po ng marami, ito po ay napakagandang gusali. In fact po, ang kaniyang sound system ay mako-consider din po na world-class dahil sabi po ng marami, kapareho po nito ang sound system po o acoustics ng Sydney Opera House. So, ang tanong ko po is, totoo po ba na dine-demolish po itong Philam Life Building? And secondly po, ano po ang plano doon mismo po sa teatro, kung ito rin ba ay made-demolish or will certain portions of the theater be conserved?

REP. SALCEDA. Iyong teatro sana, kaso nasira na po ito ng baha. Pero po iyong sa Manansala, nasa National Museum; iyong Alcantara carvings ay nasa National Museum, iyong façade po nito ay ipi-preserve.

REP. QUIMBO. So, Mr. Sponsor, can you confirm po that when the President of the Heritage Conservation Society, Atty. Mark Evidente, wrote the National Historical Institute and requested that this be conserved, ang sagot po nila is the following:

I regret to inform you that we cannot grant your request because both the NHCP and the National Museum of the Philippines are constrained from declaring the structure as an important cultural treasure as it has been assessed as failing to meet the necessary criteria for historical and/or cultural significance. Moreover, it is not a work of a national artist and more so, not located in a declared heritage zone.

So, kung titingnan po natin, kung iko-confirm po nila na isinulat nila ang kababasa ko lamang, e tila hindi dahil nasira ng bagyo kung bakit po dine-demolish, tama po ba?

REP. SALCEDA. So, tatlong bagay po: hindi po siya national landmark, hindi po siya trabaho ng isang national artist, at saka hindi ho siya declared as a national culture. So, ang desisyon po nila is partial preservation through the façade and all the artworks therein, especially the Alcantara carvings and the Manansala paintings.

REP. QUIMBO. So, mayroong partial na preservation. So, ang tanong ko po, was this a decision of the NCCA itself, Mr. Sponsor, or ang decision na ito ay ginawa po noong attached agency po ng NCCA?

REP. SALCEDA. There is an inter-agency committee that made the decision. It was chaired by the NCCA and the members were the NHCP, National Museum and surprisingly, the DPWH.

REP. QUIMBO. So, Mr. Sponsor, sa tingin ninyo po ba ang—may batas kasi po tayong iyong Heritage Law, R.A. No. 10066, pero, ang pinagtatakahan ko lang naman po, Mr. Sponsor, is despite that law, e parang mayroon pa rin pong nakakalusot na nagde-demolish po ng mga architectural gems, at sa aking palagay ay kasama po dito iyong Philam Life building. Although may kaunting matitira, may kaunting masasalba, e sa tingin ko ay talagang nakakapanghinayang na mayroong ganyang kagandang gusali ang mawawala. And mayroon pang mga ibang halimbawa po diyan, katulad noong Capitol Theater, katulad po ng Philippine Free Press Building, katulad

din po ng Carlos Palanca Mansion na ganoon din po ano, they suffered the same fate. So, ang tanong ko po, Mr. Sponsor, is, mayroon bang mga kahinaan po sa current system na baka naman puwede pong tulungan ng Kongreso ang NCCA para lalo pa po nilang mapatupad ang kanilang mandato to preserve our cultural and architectural heritage, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. SALCEDA. Mayroon pong—hindi prerogative, but the NCCA and its agencies have space with respect to what is demanded as full preservation, and there are three requirements: it is a work of a national artist; it is a national landmark; and it is a national cultural treasure. So obviously, this so-called Capitol Theater was not considered to have complied with these requirements and, therefore, partial preservation lang.

REP. QUIMBO. Hindi po ba, Mr. Sponsor, baka naman po napakataas ng standards para po makapag-preserve po ng mga magagandang gusali. And secondly po, ang sigurong related question po diyan is, kung binabasa po natin ang batas, may kaniya-kaniya pong, kumbaga, jurisdiction ang bawat isang attached agency. So, pagdating po sa mga istraktura na over 50 years old, iyan po ay mapupunta sa National Historical Institute. Kapag pagdating naman po sa archaeological and traditional ethnographic materials, mapupunta naman sa National Museum. Paano po kung mayroong mga ilang istraktura na, theoretically, puwedeng magfall under several agencies? In which case, sino po ang nagde-decide kung ang structure ba na iyan that would have multi-faceted features, sino ang magde-decide kung puwede bang i-demolish iyan o hindi?

REP. SALCEDA. Inter-agency committee, as I have said, and with a surprising member called “DPWH.”

REP. QUIMBO. DPWH? Sige po, pero siguro po wala naman tayong masyadong panahon pa to discuss this further. Mayroon lang pong suggestions sa NCCA kung ano pang puwede nating gawin para masigurado na talagang nako-conserve po natin itong mga

architectural gems, sana po e sila ay pumunta sa atin para baka puwede nating tulungan. Kung kailangan halimbawa ng amendments dito po sa Heritage Law, e bukas po tayo para pakinggan po sila. Ang last question ko po is, magkano po ang budget proposal for 2021 and how does it compare po to last year’s budget? Sa una kong tingin ay parang namalik-mata ata ako dahil napakalaki po ng pagbagsak. So, kaugnay po diyan sa pagbagsak ng budget is, ano po ang mga programa ng NCCA ang pinakamaaapektuhan po ng pagliit po ng budget na iyan?

REP. SALCEDA. Ano iyong last year? Iyong approved budget nila is P9-1-6 million. Actually, it is higher than their actual obligations incurred. Sa 2020, they had P9-1-6 million. In 2021, it is lower by, per NEP, it is lower by P384 million.

REP. QUIMBO. Opo. So, 9-1-6 million, it is now down to 5-3-1 million.

REP. SALCEDA. Yes.

REP. QUIMBO. So, halos 40 percent po. So, anong pinakamaaapektuhan po na mga programa dahil sa pagliit po nito?

REP. SALCEDA. Rehabilitation and preservation of MET Phase 2-B and Philippine Arts in Venice Biennale, P35 million. So, there is a—I guess, Your Honor, my suspicion is, of course, the easiest to cut is grants.

REP. QUIMBO. Tama po. Pero muli po, nakakalungkot dahil iyong unang item po na binanggit ninyo po, Mr. Speaker, e has to do with preservation naman po.

REP. SALCEDA.. Alam mo itong mga ito kailangan turuan—itong ating mga agency kailangan turuan ng presentation quality, ang gulo-gulo.

REP. QUIMBO. Sige po. Idagdag na rin po natin sa presentation e preservation na rin po. Idagdag na rin natin baka po ...

REP. SALCEDA. O ayan.

REP. QUIMBO. ...dagdag na appreciation...

REP. SALCEDA. So, Iyon pa rin, 300 nga...

REP. QUIMBO. ... for preservation of our architectural ...

REP. SALCEDA. ... ang nawala sa iyo.

REP. QUIMBO... heritage.

REP. SALCEDA. Ni hindi nila alam kung anong nawala sa kanila. Ang alam lang nila P183 e. Sa iyo iyon, so asan iyong 120 na nawawala? O, nagkakagulo na sila. Basta ang alam ko, sigurado ako nasa grants and aid iyon. Wala namang ibang tatapyasin diyan e. Pero iyong malaki-laki po, iyong MET at saka iyong partisipasyon natin na paligsahan kung hindi iyong pagbunyi ng kulturang Pilipino sa Venice na ang tawag ay "Venice Biennale."

REP. QUIMBO. Oo nga po. So, anyway po, that was my last question. I, of course, strongly support the budget of the NCCA at iyon lang po ang aking pakiusap, na sana naman po mayroon tayong increased efforts po dito po sa pag-conserve ng ating historical heritage po. Iyon lang po.

REP. SALCEDA. Kaya nga inilagay natin sa ARISE, kasama po sa Build, Build, Build Program ay creative ...

REP. QUIMBO. Tama po.

REP. SALCEDA. ... investments.

REP. QUIMBO. Tama po.

REP. SALCEDA. So, well, since ...

REP. QUIMBO. Buhayin na rin natin ang ARISE, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Kasi, nandoon po ang pag-asa na, sana iyong mga ganitong panahon ay actually panahon para buhayin ang espiritu ng tao ...

REP. QUIMBO. Tama po.

REP. SALCEDA. ... sa pamamagitan ng kultura.

REP. QUIMBO. Tama po.

REP. SALCEDA. So, maraming salamat po at sana ...

REP. QUIMBO. Salamat po.

REP. SALCEDA. ... huwag mo nang dagdagan ang iyong tanong.

REP. QUIMBO. (*Laughter*) Iyon na po, I will end there po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Thank you.

REP. QUIMBO. Maraming salamat po. Mabuhay po ang NCCA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Ferdinand Gaité.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Hon. Ferdinand R. Gaité is recognized.

REP. GAITE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mr. Sponsor, pahihintulutan bang magkaroon ng kaunting clarifications sa budget ng National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Yes, yes, certainly, Your Honor.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Doon lang sa isang ahensiya na nasa ilalim ng NCCA, iyong FDCCP, Film Development...

REP. SALCEDA. May I ...

REP. GAITE. Ay wala po yata.

REP. SALCEDA. She is not here but I guess

by command responsibility, the Chairman of the NCCA should speak for her.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

May concern lang ang Kinatawang ito dahil recently, the FDCP, together with the Department of Labor and Employment, the Department of Health and other government agencies, signed a memorandum of agreement pertaining to the conditions of work of employees in the arts sector.

REP. SALCEDA. May I seek the indulgence of the—although I am trying to, as far as possible, accommodate everyone, but the FDCP is not under the NCCA wing; it is under the Office of the President, so the Chairman cannot exercise command responsibility for any ...

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the clarification because in the last hearing of the NCCA, the FDCP was included in the budget deliberations so ...

REP. SALCEDA. I think it is the prerogative of the ...

REP. GAITE. Opo.

REP. SALCEDA. ... Committee on Appropriations, in terms of grouping, so that questions that are related to particular agencies that may have overlapping concerns may be answered, ...

REP. GAITE. Yes.

REP. SALCEDA. ... I think, more integrally.

REP. GAITE. So, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that.

REP. SALCEDA. Thank you very much.

REP. GAITE. Kung gayon rin man, dahil ang katanungan ko po ay patungkol sa FDCP at kung hindi ito saklaw ng NCCA, wala na po akong mga katanungan. At dahil wala nang ibang miyembro ng Minorya na nagnanais

magtanong ng clarification sa budget ng NCCA, iminumungkahi po ng Kinatawang ito na sarhan na o i-terminate ang deliberations sa budget ng NCCA.

Salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in moving for the termination of the deliberations on the proposed budget of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The period of interpellation and debate on the National Commission for Culture and the Arts' budget is hereby terminated. (*Applause*)

Congratulations!

Majority Leader.

PHILIPPINE RACING COMMISSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we consider the proposed budget of the Philippine Racing Commission.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, we would like to acknowledge the presence of our guests from the agency concerned. We have here the distinguished former Member of the House, Commissioner Dennis Laogan, Commissioner Lyndon Noel Guce, Executive Director Andrew Buencamino and Mr. Richard Beltran.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Our guests from the Philippine Racing Commission are welcome to the House of Representatives. Thank you for being here.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, to

sponsor the proposed budget of the Philippine Racing Commission, I move that we recognize Rep. Juan Miguel Macapagal Arroyo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Hon. Mikey Arroyo is recognized to sponsor the measure.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. It is my distinct honor and privilege to sponsor the budget of the Philippine Racing Commission.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Hon. Carlos Isagani T. Zarate of the Party-List BAYAN MUNA is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A few questions and interpellation, Mr. Speaker, if the good Sponsor will allow.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Of course, certainly.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Ang tanong ko lang po ay, sa sitwasyon ngayon ng pandemya ng COVID, isa hong apektadong sektor dito ay iyong, siyempre, iyong sektor noong nasasakupan ng Komisyong ito. Paano po nakapag-adjust iyong mga stakeholders sa pangangarera?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Napakasama po ng sitwasyon ng industriya ngayon. Apektado po ito sa TRAIN Law, napakababa po ng bentahan sa karera at sa

bentahan po, doon po kinukuha iyong premyo. Dahil sa TRAIN Law po, napakalaki ng buwis na pinapataw sa bawat piso na itinataya ng mga bayang karerista. Dahil po dito, lumiliit ang premyo pero ang gastos po to maintain a horse becomes higher and higher. Kaya po ang industriyang ito po ay sinasabi nilang nasa ano na, nasa ER na daw, emergency room po. Maraming nagbebenta ng mga kabayo sa murang presyo. Pababa po nang pababa pero mayroon pa rin pong mga horse owners, out of passion, even though they are not earning, they still maintain their horses just for the sake of passion, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

I understand, but more than that, siyempre, nakaka-survive naman iyong may-ari ng mga kabayo, pero ang concern ho ng Kinatawang ito ay paano, lalo na ngayong nasa pandemya ng COVID tayo, iyong mga kawani at empleyado, paano po sila naapektuhan at paano pong adjustment ang ginawa rito? Mayroon po bang mga ayuda na ibinigay din sa kanila, lalong-lalo na nitong mga nakaraang buwan na wala naman hong nangyaring karera, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Iyong ano naman po, hindi—wala naman pong nagsarang karerahan. The racing clubs still exist and they continue to pay their employees. The horse owners, they continue to pay their employees, although mababang-mababa ang suweldo po ng mga sota, ang nag-aalaga sa mga kabayo. Ang hinete naman po, ang hinete po at mga trainers ay sa porsyento po kinukuha. Mayroon naman pong mga mababait na horse owners na nagbibigay ng mga goods habang pandemya dahil wala pong karera dati. Six months po yatang nawalan ng karera—hindi, March, April, May, June, July, so I think five months pong walang karera. Five months pong walang karera, pero the horse owners continued to subsidize their employees. Be that as it may, it is a dying industry, but the horse owners love their industry so much that they are willing to make sacrifices. And the PHILRACOM, sila naman po ay sinusubukan ang lahat ng

kanilang makakaya upang tulungan naman ang mga horse owners because without the horse owners, without the horse owners' strength, financial strength, it will be hard for them to finance the losses of this industry.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. Salamat po. So, huling tanong ko na lang po, nag-resume na po ba iyong karera ngayon ng ...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Opo, mayroong once a week na karera po, Ginoong Speaker, Your Honor. Once a week po ang karera. There are three race tracks po : Malvar, Carmona, and Naic, Cavite. There are three race tracks. They have a race once a week, so palit-palit po ang mga karerahan, palit-palit po.

REP. ZARATE. Sige po, salamat po doon sa inyong mga kasagutan. Ni-raise ko lang po iyan dahil siyempre mayroon ding mga apektadong manggagawa, mga empleyado diyan, mga kawani na more than ever ay dapat sila iyong pagtuunan din natin ng pansin, lalong-lalo na sa panahon ngayon na may displacement in the past months dahil nga sa mga kuwarantina. So, yamang wala na pong miyembro ng Minorya na gustong magtanong at mag-clarify sa budget ng Philippine Racing Commission, I move to terminate the deliberations on the budget of PHILRACOM, Mr. Chair, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, we join the Minority in moving to terminate the deliberations on the proposed budget of the Philippine Racing Commission.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The period of interpellation and debate on the budget of the Philippine Racing Commission is hereby terminated. Congratulations! (*Applause*)

Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 7727

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 7727.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The deliberations on House Bill No. 7727 are hereby suspended.

Majority Leader.

CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. NO. 1265

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider for adoption House Resolution No. 1265 and that the Secretary General be directed to read the title of the resolution.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General is directed to read the title of House Resolution No. 1265.*

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 1265, entitled: "RESOLUTION HONORING THE WORK AND CONTRIBUTION OF HIS EXCELLENCY IGOR KHOVAEV AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE PHILIPPINES IN FOSTERING STRONGER PHILIPPINES-RUSSIA BILATERAL RELATIONS AND CONFERRING UPON HIM THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF ACHIEVEMENT."

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that I be made a coauthor of the said resolution.

* Copies of the resolution were distributed to the members earlier. Section 53, Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives provides that "[a] bill or joint resolution on Second Reading shall be read in full unless copies thereof have been distributed to the Members."

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno).
Please proceed.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. Authored by Speaker Alan Peter “Compañero” Cayetano and Reps. Romualdez, Martin and Cayetano, Maria Laarni.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno).
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Resolution No. 1265.

ADOPTION OF H. RES. NO. 1265

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; House Resolution No. 1265 is hereby adopted.

Majority Leader.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 7727 *Continuation*

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 7727, as contained in Committee Report No. 528, and that the Secretary General be directed to read the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. House Bill No. 7727 is open for consideration once again and the Secretary General is directed to read the title of the measure.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 7727, entitled: “AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-ONE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno).
Majority Leader.

SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status is that we are in the period of sponsorship and debate. I now move that we begin the consideration of the budgetary support – proposed budgetary support for the Southern Philippines Development Authority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, we would like to acknowledge the presence of our guest representatives from the agency concerned. We have Administrator and Chief Executive Officer Abdulghani Salappudin, Deputy Administrator Munap Pacio and Atty. Datu Reza Sinsuat, all from the Southern Philippines Development Authority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Our guests from the Southern Philippines Development Authority are most welcome to the House of Representatives. Thank you for being here.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, to sponsor the proposed budgetary support for the agency, I move that we recognize Rep. Manuel Jose M. Dalipe of the Second District of Zamboanga City.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Hon. Manuel Jose Dalipe is recognized to sponsor the measure.

Majority Leader.

REP. DALIPE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honor to sponsor the proposed 2021 budget of the Southern Philippines Development Authority or SPDA for Fiscal Year 2021. The proposed budget was P109 million, but the DBM has included only P76 million in the National Expenditure Program.

Mr. Speaker, this Representation, as Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, is now ready to answer questions, if there are any, from our colleagues relative to the budgetary support to Southern Philippines Development Authority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Rep. Carlos Isagani – is recognized.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, again, Mr. Speaker.

Will the good Sponsor yield to some clarificatory questions regarding the budget?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

May I inquire, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, for the record, what is the main mandate of the SPDA, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the mandate of SPDA is for the social development of Mindanao, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

How is it distinguished, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, from the mandate of the Mindanao Development Authority? Because we also have the Mindanao Development Authority. How are these two agencies, 'no, interact or converge or, in fact, how do they harmonize their duties and functions, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the Southern Philippines Development Authority is a government corporation while the Mindanao Development Authority is a government instrumentality, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. So, the SPDA is a government-owned and -controlled corporation, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Again?

REP. ZARATE. The SPDA is a government-owned – is it a GOCC?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. And as a GOCC, as a government-owned and -controlled corporation ay may sarili itong income? Nagdye-generate ito ng sarili niyang income? Tama po ba iyon?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Southern Philippines Development Authority generates its own income, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. And may the good Sponsor educate us, saan po nagmumula iyong income ng SPDA?

REP. DALIPE. Well, the Southern Philippines Development Authority or the SPDA generates its income from their various properties, particularly, they have revenues from aquaculture, livestock products, agricultural products, trading operation, rental services and income from housing and real estate, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor. Yet, every year, we are allocating or appropriating funds from the General Appropriations Act for the SPDA. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, we appropriate funds every year for the SPDA.

REP. ZARATE. And what is the – if it is an income-generating entity, may we be clarified what is the rationale why we still continue to appropriate funds for the SPDA, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, although the SPDA has some income, there are still a lot of properties of the SPDA which have to be developed and need support from the national government. And in the event that these properties of the SPDA will be fully developed, it is not far-fetched that the SPDA will not need anymore any government support from the national government, again, in the event that its properties will be fully developed, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Well, is there a similar entity like the SPDA in the Visayas or in Luzon for that matter, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker? Meron bang Central Visayas Development Authority or Northern Luzon Development Authority, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Well, to my recollection, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, this is the only one we have. This was the only one created. If I am not mistaken, this was created in 1975 as a response ...

REP. ZARATE. Yes.

REP. DALIPE. ... to what was happening in Mindanao. So, it is the only one, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, you are correct, Mr. Sponsor. Ang historical precedents or background as to why there is the SPDA was, this was the move made by the Marcos government as a response supposedly to the then growing rebellions in Mindanao, both the Moro rebellion as well as the communist rebellion in Mindanao. In fact, billions and billions have been poured into the SPDA since the past decades purposely to spur the development of Mindanao. So, my question now, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, from its creation in the '70s, in 1975, up to now, can the good Sponsor tell us, this Plenary, saan na ang inabot noong SPDA as far as its mandate to deliver services and development for Mindanao as a response to the problem

of rebellion in Mindanao? Both of us, Mr. Sponsor, we both come from Mindanao and we know that, even as we speak now, problema pa rin ng ating isla iyong usapin ng rebelyon.

So, as far as the mandate of the SPDA is concerned, ito na iyong aking huling katanungan, dahil taon-taon ay nagbibigay rin tayo ng pondo rito, nagagampanan ba ng SPDA iyong kaniyang mandato? Or critics would say na baka surplusage na ang SPDA dahil meron na tayong MINDA, merong SPDA and in fact, sa Autonomous Region in Mindanao ay mayroon na rin silang sariling ahensiya doon or entity to look into the development of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DALIPE. Well, through the years, the SPDA, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, has been trying its best to help our fellow Mindanaoans in giving them better opportunities. In fact, the SPDA has made a couple of programs which would try to help and address the concerns of our fellow Mindanaoans. But as reflected in the budget, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, even for 2021, medyo nakakalungkot lang nga po kasi ang pondo na ibinibigay po sa SPDA ay hindi naman ganoon kalaki. But nevertheless, even with the small amount given to the SPDA, I believe in the determination of the officials of the SPDA to really bring forward the help that is needed in the countryside in the southern Philippines. So, there is still more help needed in terms of support from the national government to the funding requirements of the SPDA to promote and develop its properties to be able to help more of our fellow Mindanaoans in the southern Philippines.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Wala na ho akong ibang katanungan. Just for the record na lang, magkano iyong budget for this year as compared – for next year as compared to last year?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the funding this year for the SPDA is P156 million. The funding for the SPDA

for next year to help develop Mindanao is only P76 million, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor. As the Vice Chair of the budget for the SPDA, then probably the good Sponsor will have to work on that and address that.

So, maraming salamat Ginoong Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Wala na ho akong ibang katanungan. Salamat po sa pagkakataon na makapaglinaw sa budget ng SPDA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Representative Barbers for his interpellation – Representative Barbers.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Hon. Ace Barbers is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. BARBERS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Majority Leader.

May I know if the distinguished Sponsor, a fellow Mindanaoan, is willing to give clarification to this Representation?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

Most of my inquiries, I should say, have already been asked by Congressman Zarate in his time to interpellate the distinguished Sponsor. I just want to get more information and clarification as to, one, may I know for the record what is the legal basis of the creation of the Southern Philippines Development Authority, the SPDA?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the Southern Philippines Development Authority was created through Presidential Decree No. 690 and also amended by Presidential Decree No. 1703, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. May I trouble the distinguished Sponsor to update my knowledge as to when this law was amended exactly? What year was this Presidential Decree implemented?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, Presidential Decree No. 690 was made on April 22, 1975, and it was amended by Presidential Decree No. 1703 on July 26, 1980, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, for the information. Siguro noong mga panahon na iyon, the creation of this authority was quite relevant doon sa usapin ng kaguluhan na nangyayari sa Mindanao. Am I correct, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, you are right on that.

REP. BARBERS. Pero when you say “Southern Philippines Development Authority,” are we referring, distinguished Sponsor, only to the southern part of Mindanao or the whole of Mindanao?

REP. DALIPE. Well, the entire – Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, when we refer to “southern Philippines,” it refers to the entirety, the entire Mindanao area, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. That is good to hear, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, because both this Representation and the good Sponsor are from Mindanao; and learning that the Authority covers the whole of the island of Mindanao, may I know exactly, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, kung ano ho iyong mga programs o unang-una, magkano po ang budget nitong SPDA for next year?

REP. DALIPE. For next year, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, ang pondo lang po ng SPDA ay P76 million.

REP. BARBERS. Mr. Speaker, P76 million with quite a large mandate, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, parang sa tingin ko may kakulangan sa budget in that P76 million. Correct, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, P76 million.

REP. BARBERS. So, in that P76 million budget being proposed for next year, magkano ho doon iyong PS?

REP. DALIPE. Well, for next year—for a while, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ah, distinguished colleague. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the P76 million is broken down as follows: for Personnel Services, P46 million; MOOE, P20 million; and for Operating Expenses of the satellite offices in Region IX and BARMM, P5 million; plus, we have P5 million for the proposed construction of the SPDA main office building in Davao City, which will give us a total of P76 million, and the bulk of which is only for Operating Expenses. Wala po for other projects.

REP. BARBERS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

In fact, more than 50 percent of the P76-million budget comprises or is devoted for PS and the MOOE, and the other operational expenses are quite miniscule compared to the mandate or in relation to the mandate of the SPDA. So, sa aking paniwala, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, while the intention of the creation of the Authority is very relevant, very timely, very, shall we say, makakatulong nang malaki sa programa ng Mindanao, it seems that their hands will be tied with a very measly budget of P76 million. The reason I asked that earlier, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, kasi how can the P76-million budget cover the whole island of Mindanao? Napakaliit, Mr. Speaker, if only to perform and be compliant with the mandate of the SPDA. It seems that there will be some sacrifices that have to be done.

One, maybe, we can increase the budget of the SPDA in order to cover the area of the good distinguished Sponsor in his district, as well

as this Representation's. Kasi since 1975, when the law was passed or the presidential decree was passed and amended in 1980, we have not really felt the presence of this Authority in the region where my district belongs. I do not know if this is same and true with the district of the distinguished Sponsor. May I get your comment on that?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the SPDA proposed a budget of P13 billion in order for it to reach the different regions or areas of Mindanao for its programs. Of the P13 billion, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, hindi po napagbigyan ng DBM, so that is why right now, we are working to sponsor only a budget of P76 million. But I agree with you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, in order for their presence to be felt, they have to have a budget. They proposed P13 billion for the development of the different areas, different regions, the total amount was P13 billion, but as reflected in the National Expenditure Program and in our General Appropriations Bill, the SPDA will be receiving P76 million, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

With the measly budget of P76 million, to my mind, Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the good Sponsor will agree with me, the Authority will become irrelevant because it seems that the budget that they were given for 2021, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, is only for the payment for personnel services. E ang next ko nga ho sanang itatanong, distinguished Sponsor, what are the programs, what are the activities that are stipulated in the mandate of this Authority? Kasi kung wala naman silang budget para maka-implement ng mga programs and activities nila, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, e parang napaka-irrelevant nitong Authority na ito and every single year, every time we pass our budget, kasama ho sila sa ating binibigyan ng appropriations. What is the opinion of the distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, although the Southern Philippines Development Authority will receive a P76-million subsidy from the national government, its total corporate operating budget is P109 million. But still, I agree with the Gentleman, also a Mindanaoan like me, that the SPDA really needs help. So, maybe through the leadership of the House and the Committee on Appropriations, we will be able to take a second look at the assistance to be given by the national government to the SPDA to augment its total corporate operating budget, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. Well, that is a good point raised by the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Considering that this is the first time that the country has produced a President who hails from Mindanao, perhaps it is about time that the Authority that speaks of development, speaks of programs and activities for the alleviation of the people of Mindanao—this is perhaps the best timing because, with the measly budget of P76 million, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, PS lang iyong binibigyan natin ng priority dito. E the biggest question is, what are we paying these officers for, e wala naman silang budget, wala naman silang activity, wala naman silang programa? So, are we saying that we just hired officials of the SPDA just to sit down there without doing anything? Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, mayroon po bang reports na isina-submit ang SPDA annually?

REP. DALIPE. The Southern Philippines Development Authority annually reports to the GCG and the Commission on Audit, and also the Department of Budget and Management. So, it provides the report annually, not only as far as the national government support is concerned, like for 2021 which is P76 million, but it will also report on its total corporate operating budget every year, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. Salamat po sa information na iyon, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Nakakalungkot lamang isipin kasi ho this is the time, as I stated earlier, as we have a President who comes from Mindanao and yet, the SPDA that speaks of programs, activities and development for Mindanao only got a very small or miniscule budget so to speak, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. E baka naman pupuwede nating taasan ito to cover the whole island of Mindanao. In fact, I will ask the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, kung mayroon bang programang in-implement ang SPDA sa Province of Surigao del Norte, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Well, if you look at the budget, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, I would like to inform the Gentleman, the distinguished Gentleman from Surigao, that there is none. Because by the figures alone, distinguished colleague, mahirap mabigyan lahat ng probinsiya, lahat po ng rehiyon sa Mindanao when you look at this corporate operating budget of the SPDA. Nevertheless, I agree with you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, that we really need to take a second look at their budget and hopefully, with the distinguished Representative from Surigao, we will be able to help this agency whose primary mandate is to help develop Mindanao, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Just for my education, distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ano ho ba iyong activities or programs that, if given a budget, the district that I represent will benefit from? And the same goes for the district of the distinguished Sponsor? I am just using the district as an example, Mr. Speaker. I am not trying to be parochial, but I just want to know what kind of activities, what kind of programs does the SPDA have, given that the budget they are asking for will be extended or granted to them? Ano po ba iyong magagawa nila?

REP. DALIPE. Okay.

Well, right now, in the existing budget of the SPDA, the existing corporate projects of SPDA, I have here seven: the SPDA Vitali Fishpond Project or aquaculture; SPDA Broiler

Production Project; SPDA Integrated Solar Salt and Fish Farm Project; SPDA Kapatagan Ice Plant; SPDA Koronadal Business Center; SPDA Bonbon Agricultural Development Project; and also, the development of the Wao-Bumbaran property of the SPDA, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

Iyon po bang mga nabanggit na mga activities at programs ng ating distinguished Sponsor are programs that could be implemented if the P13 billion proposed budget will be granted? Tama po ba iyon?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, you are asking me, if we give P13 billion to the SPDA, would there be other projects that would now ...

REP. BARBERS. No. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, I was informed earlier, that the proposed budget of the SPDA was reduced to P76 million, but originally it was P13 billion. Is that correct? Is that accurate?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker. They have a proposed budget of 1-5-6 and what was given by the national government is P76 million.

REP. BARBERS. Granting, for the sake of argument, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, that the P13 billion proposed budget is granted and approved by the DBM, the activities and programs that the distinguished Sponsor mentioned are the activities that would be implemented? Is that accurate too, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. There is still a longer list as proposed by the SPDA, which totals to P13 billion.

REP. BARBERS. Okay.

REP. DALIPE. And this Representation would furnish my distinguished colleague from Surigao the list of the P13 billion worth of proposed projects of the SPDA, which would

not only help a couple of provinces or regions but a bigger area of Mindanao in total, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. Well, I would assume, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, that in that P13-billion proposed budget, Surigao del Norte, the district that I represent, would already be included. But more than that, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, I do not want to sound parochial but I just want to know, because the programs and activities that the good Sponsor enumerated are programs that would really help the provinces in the island of Mindanao be alleviated from poverty.

I know for a fact that there are programs that need much bigger funding, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, pero ang pinakaimportante ho, nagagampanan ng SPDA iyong kaniyang mandato na tulungan lahat ho ng distrito, lahat po ng probinsiya na napapaloob sa isla ng Mindanao, lalong-lalo na iyong probinsiya at distrito ng ating kaibigan na si Congressman Oaminal ng Misamis Occidental, kasi one of the poorest provinces, aside from those provinces inside the CARAGA Region, are the provinces of Misamis Oriental and Misamis Occidental area. So having said that, Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate if the Gentleman, the distinguished Sponsor, would furnish this Representation with a copy of the proposed P13-billion list of activities and programs of the SPDA kasi nga po baka matulungan natin o hindi kaya, the House leadership could try to increase the budget if there is logic, there is reason, and more importantly, there is urgency in the implementation of those projects. To my mind, these are all poverty alleviation projects and would help in the livelihood of the people of Mindanao. Sabi ko nga ho kanina, let us take advantage of the fact that we have a Mindanaoan President because for the longest time, the island of Mindanao's allocation in terms of the national buget is quite small compared to the poverty incidence in the whole island. Do you agree, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. BARBERS. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, distinguished Gentleman from Zamboanga. Maraming salamat po sa inyong mga sagot sa aking katanungan and hoping that all these programs that the good Sponsor enumerated, e sana mabigyang-pansin ng ating national government. At sa atin namang palagay, kung tayo po ay magtutulak nito, especially those that really need sufficient funds, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, e sa aking tingin ay hindi ho siguro magdadalawang isip ang ating national government in appropriating funds for that. So, maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, for your patience.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Carlos Zarate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Honorable Zarate is recognized.

REP. ZARATE. Mr. Speaker, inasmuch as no other Member from the Minority wishes to interpellate on the budget of the Southern Philippines Development Authority, I move to terminate the deliberations on the budget of the SPDA.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the interpellation on the proposed budget of the Southern Philippines Development Authority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The period of sponsorship and debate on the budget of the Southern Philippines Development Authority is hereby terminated. Congratulations.

REP. DALIPE. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much to our

distinguished colleagues here in the House of Representatives.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

ZAMBOANGA CITY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the consideration of the proposed budget of the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Majority Leader.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the heads and officials of the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority: Attorney Gladys Kay Chua, Miss Katrina Beatriz Atienza and on Zoom, Chairman and Administrator Raul M. Regondola.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). We welcome our guests from the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority.

Thank you for being here.

Majority Leader.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Manuel Jose M. Dalipe, Second District Representative of Zamboanga City, to answer the questions on the proposed budget of the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Honorable Dalipe is recognized to sponsor the measure.

Majority Leader.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. DALIPE

REP. DALIPE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is my honor and privilege to sponsor the proposed 2021 Budget of the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority.

For Fiscal Year 2021, the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority proposed a budget of P298.45 million. The Zamboanga Ecozone's budget is geared towards President Duterte's goal of investing for resiliency and sustainability, especially in this time of pandemic where we should all reset, recover and rebound.

Mr. Speaker, this Representation, as Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations and Congressman of Zamboanga City, is now ready to answer questions from our colleagues relative to the budgetary support for the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno).
Majority Leader.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Carlos Zarate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Honorable Zarate is recognized.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the good Sponsor yield to a few questions and interpellation?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Just for the record, may we inquire from the good Sponsor, when was the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority established and by virtue of what edict, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority was created through Republic Act No. 7903. It was signed on February 23, 1995, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. So, 1995, it has been more than two decades already. Ah, no.

REP. DALIPE. Fifteen years.

REP. ZARATE. Fifteen years, 'no, 15 years.

So, will the good Sponsor enlighten us, in the last 15 years, ano ang naging achievement nitong Special Economic Zone na ito, also Zamboanga City being a freeport, 'no?

REP. DALIPE. Well, in the last 15 years, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority was able to attract a couple of investors and implement a couple of projects to help the economic development of Western Mindanao.

As such, it has attracted investments for cold storage facilities for sardines and marine products, a poultry dressing plant and slaughterhouse, processing of halal foods and meat products processing. It also has a 100-hectare halal processing and manufacturing area. Also, it has been able to attract investments for biotech farms. And it has attracted, particularly, investments in different manufacturing industries, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Just for the record, for Fiscal Year 2019 and 2020 or at least 2019, may we inquire from the good Sponsor how much revenue was generated by the Special Economic Zone and how much did it contribute to the national coffers?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority remitted P22 million to the National Government—for a while, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Well, Mr. Sponsor, considering the time constraints ...

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, in 2019, the operating revenue of the Zamboanga City Economic Zone Authority was P5,203,000, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Last question ko na lang to the good Sponsor. What is the impact of this COVID-19 pandemic on the freeport and the special economic zone as far as locators and revenues are concerned, and what are the prospects in the coming years, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Well, the COVID-19 pandemic, its impact on the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority is the shutting down of certain businesses, factories and industries for the period as specified by the National Inter-Agency Task Force. But as far as the letters of intent are concerned, they still remain and the locators have not yet withdrawn their letters of intent to invest. So, the impact is the stoppage of work from the period when the GCQ or the EGCQ was implemented in the City of Zamboanga, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. And these closed companies or – itong mga nagsara na mga kompanya, nagbukas na ba sila ulit as of now?

REP. DALIPE. Yes. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, they are operating right now.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you.

So, iyon lang iyong ilang mga questions ko, clarificatory questions. Siyempre, mahalaga na sa pagbubukas rin ng ekonomiya, pagbabalik ng mga activities sa special economic zone ay ang pangunahing tinitingnan nating interes din dito, hindi lang iyong interes ng mga locators kung hindi iyong interes ng mga manggagawa. Dapat kumuha tayo ng aral mula dito sa mga economic enclaves dito sa Luzon. Noong magbukas sila, bumalik iyong mga manggagawa na wala namang kasiguruhan na they will be properly tested et cetera at handang-handa sila sa pagbubukas ng ekonomiya.

So, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, considering that no other Member from the Minority wishes to interpellate on the budget of the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority, we move to terminate the deliberations on its budget.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the interpellations on the proposed budget of the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The period of sponsorship and debate on the budget of the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority is hereby terminated. Congratulations.

REP. DALIPE. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much to my distinguished colleagues. Maraming salamat po. *Muchas gracias*.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session for one minute.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is suspended.

It was 1:41 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 1:43 p.m., the session was resumed

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.
Majority Leader.

NATIONAL HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE PHILIPPINES

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed with the consideration of the proposed budget of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we acknowledge the presence of the heads and officials of the National Historical Commission, namely: Chief Administrative Officer Rosario Sapitan, Deputy Director Alvin Alcid, Deputy Director Garminda Arevalo and Chairperson Dr. Rene Escalante.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). We welcome our guests from the National Historical Commission of the Philippines. Thank you for being here today.

Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda of the Second District of Albay, Vice Chairperson of the Committee on Appropriations, to answer questions on the proposed budget of the Department.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Hon. Joey Salceda is recognized to sponsor the measure.

Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Arlene D. Brosas from the GABRIELA Party-List to interpellate the Sponsor on the proposed budget.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Hon. Arlene D. Brosas of the Party-List GABRIELA is recognized for her interpellation.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, ilang mga katanungan lang tungkol sa budget ng NHCP, Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Willingly.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Please proceed.

REP. BROSAS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, after the government reallocated the National Historical Commission of the Philippines' P100-million fund for COVID-19 related projects, the agency's P300 million for Capital Outlays for 2021 was also removed from the budget. Where will the agency get its budget for the restoration of heritage structures, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, the P100-million fund for COVID-19-related projects po ay na-reallocate ng NHCP. Ang P300 million na Capital Outlays for 2021, na-remove din sa budget. Ngayon, saan po kukunin ng ahensiya ang budget para sa restoration of heritage structures, Mr. Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Next year, di wala. Wala nga.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. There would be no restoration project next year.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, importante pong magpreserba ang ating historical structures para sa susunod na henerasyon, lalo na ngayon po, matindi ang historical revisionism o mga erasures pa nga ng kasaysayan sa atin, sa ating lipunan. Kaya, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ano po ang pagtingin ng NHCP dito?

REP. SALCEDA. Kung nanaisin po ng Kongreso, bilang—it is the principal policy-making body of this country under the Constitution and therefore, should set the appropriate priorities. Certainly, it is well within our powers to restore because next year, definitely, due to their contribution or compelled contribution to the COVID efforts, they will not have a single restoration project. So it is up to us, Your Honor, if at the appropriate time, the Committee, the body, this Congress would at least provide the NHCP with the funds in order to conduct at least very important restoration projects.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Tama po, dapat magpatuloy iyong pag-restore ng ilang mga heritage structures na kailangang-kailangan pong maunawaan ng ating mga kababayan. Hindi naman po tumitigil iyong edukasyon ngayon so sa tingin po natin, may importansya na dapat bigyan dito sa usapin ng mga historical structures natin.

Next, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, kaugnay po sa statue ng comfort woman sa Roxas Boulevard sa Manila, it was removed on April 28, 2018, citing pressure from the government of Japan. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ano po ang plano at budget allocation ng NHCP para sa mga historical markers? Mayroon po ba silang plano para ma-reinstate ang comfort woman statue?

REP. SALCEDA. Ang pananaw ko, Your Honor, kailangan tayo diyang makialam kasi nandito naman po si Chairman at kasama po siya sa inter-agency committee na nag-set kung ano po ang mga masasabi nating mga national historical treasures o national historical symbols of this country. So I am not saying na—well, nandito siya, sinasabihan ko siya na pag-aralan niya dahil ang sagot niya sa akin, wala daw siyang pakialam dahil DPWH ang nag-decide. Pero sa tingin ko, may pakialam siya. Kaya sa tamang oras, Your Honor, hihingin ko sa kaniya na mag-report kung ano ang pananaw ng inter-agency committee kung saan nakapaloob ang National Museum, siya at kasama po ang DPWH at ang NCCA, kung ano ang disposisyon nila. Hindi ho puwedeng basta bara-bara na lang po ang sagot ng NHCP, dahil iyon po ang sinabi sa akin, na wala daw silang magagawa. Pero sabi ko may magagawa po sila kaya kailangan they should make that determination whether this statue really is a very important national historical—mahalaga po sa kasaysayan ng Pilipinas.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Hindi po tayo nasasapatan doon sa walang kongkreto na plano, walang concrete plan iyong NHCP para sa pag-reinstate ng comfort woman statue. Alam po natin ang kasaysayan natin sa sexual slavery by the Japanese

Imperial Army during World War II. Ito po iyong ginawang mga comfort women ang ating mga lola. So, hanggang ngayon po, even sa usapin ng reparations, kung pag-uusapan natin ito, hindi naman nagbayad ang gobyerno ng Japan sa mga biktima ng sexual slavery and militarism ng Japanese army. Pangalawa po, ni hindi kinalala, ni-recognize, lalong-lalo na sa kasaysayan natin iyong usapin ng comfort women. Kasi kung hindi, makikita po natin ito sa mga educational materials na mayroon tayo.

So hanggang ngayon po, nanawagan at nagde-demand ng hustisya at accountability ang ating mga lola. Nakakahiya naman po sa ating mga lola na lumaban, nakipaglaban para sabihin iyong naging sitwasyon nila noong panahon ng digmaan, sila po na mga biktima ng military sexual violence. Ngayon, kung hindi po tayo nahihiya sa mga lola, mahiya naman tayo sa kasaysayan na mayroon tayo. Mawala man sila dito, matitira pa rin tayo at ang mga susunod na mga anak natin na magtatanggol para sa hustisya at karapatan ng mga biktima ng mga aggressions na ito, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Sang-ayon po ako.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, balikan ko lang po, mayroon po bang budget allocation para sa historical markers ang NHCP?

REP. SALCEDA. Mayroon, 30 markers at P800,000 each, so that is about P24 million.

REP. BROSAS. Mayroon po ba Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, mayroon po bang plano for exhibits and public education on history ang NHCP?

REP. SALCEDA. Mayroon pero—alam mo kinalbo kasi itong mga ito, dati P450 million, ngayon P200 million na lang ang budget nito. Kaya hindi ko puwedeng ipagmalaki na marami silang gagawin this year, kahit na quincentennial ng Pilipinas, pero aminin na po natin na talagang base po sa prayoridad po ng ating bansa—gawa po ng krisis sa pandemya, sa kalusugan—kaya mayroon pero kaunti.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, napaka-unsatisfactory po ng ganitong kalagayan. Mas lalo po ngayon, mas dapat tayong mag-educate ng ating mga o lalo na ng ating mga kabataan kaugnay sa mga nangyayari, sa mga pangyayari sa kasaysayan. Kaya po tinatanong namin itong mga plano for exhibits, public education at historical markers dahil mahalagang-mahalaga pong maunawaan, lalong-lalo na ng henerasyon na ito, ang kasaysayan ng Pilipinas para po hindi na nauulit iyong mga pagkakamali ng nakaraan.

Kaya hindi ko po alam kung paano ito e, ano. Mahalagang-mahalagang component din po na dapat ibigay sa kanila iyong pagtatayo ng historical markers, iyong public education. Kahit ngayon po e, sa online na pamamaraan, mayroon din dapat bahagi iyong NHCP para tulungan iyong mga kababayan nating maunawaan ang kasaysayan, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Nakakaiyak pero P13 million lang ang mayroon sila para sa production of three travelling exhibits: the one on the Sto. Niño; Philippine Part of the Circumnavigation, P4.5 million; Countdown to 500 years online lectures and webinars, P100,000; and production of two documentaries, P4 million. May P13 million din po. Nakakahiya po pero iyon po ang nasa budget.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, siguro at the proper time po, bigyan din natin ng pagkakataon na mabigyan ng sapat na tulong, mahalagang-mahalagang tulong, iyong NHCP kaugnay dito, lalong-lalo na iyong mga historical markers natin and hindi tayo natutuwa sa ganitong pagkilala sa kasaysayan saka sa edukasyon ng ating mga kababayan.

Mr. Speaker, onto my last question – mukhang hindi naman magbabago iyong priorities sa ngayon na ang sinasabi ninyo, kung ang administrasyon na ito ay adamant na magrebisa or hindi sumunod or hindi magpakita ng pagpapahalaga sa tunay, genuine na kasaysayan ng ating mga kababayan, mahihirapan po talaga tayo. But anyway, on to

my last question po. Mainit na mainit po itong usapin na ito. Distinguished Sponsor, may I know the position of the NHCP on the plan to sell the country's war reparation assets in Japan, located in the Roppongi and Nanpeidai districts in Tokyo and two others in Kobe, supposedly to raise funds for the pension of war veterans, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Hindi mo puwedeng gawin iyan because they are declared as National Cultural Treasures.

REP. BROSAS. So, ...

REP. SALCEDA. In short, they cannot be sold. In short, the position of the NHCP and the entire national cultural and historical – the entire community, they are opposed to the sale. Kontra po, hindi po puwedeng ibenta kasi kontra po sila, kasi they are declared as – kasi nga kapag dineclare ninyo na po as a National Cultural Treasure, hindi mo puwedeng ibenta.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, nagkakapareho po tayo sa posisyon kaugnay diyan. This Representation is opposed to the sale of Philippine assets with very important symbolic value not only to Filipino veterans but to our nation's history. We even want the establishment of more historical markers to recognize the courage and patriotism of Filipinos who fought during the war, of Filipino women who were abused. Sa gitna po ng banta ng mga rebisyonismo sa ating kasaysayan, mas lalong kailangan nating protektahan ang mga historical markers na ating pag-aari, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Katulad po ng – actually, in the Civil Code naman, maliwanag naman po na it belongs to the State and is intended for public use, and kailangan po ng Executive and Legislative concurrence bago po ito mapag-usapan kung paano gagawin.

Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. SALCEDA. Maraming salamat din.

REP. BROSAS. ... Mr. Sponsor. Iyon lang ang mga katanungan ko.

REP. SALCEDA. Salamat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, may I move that we recognize Rep. Sarah Jane Elago from the KABATAAN Party-List for her interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Hon. Sarah Jane Elago of the Party-List KABATAAN is recognized for her interpellation.

REP. ELAGO. Isang makabayan na pagbati. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker. Magandang araw sa ating Ginoong Sponsor at sa National Historical Commission of the Philippines. Mayroon pong ilang katanungan ang Representasyon na ito ng kabataan hinggil sa pondo na panukala ng NHCP para sa 2021.

Unang-una, Ginoong Speaker, nais malaman ng mga kabataan kung ano po ang mga programa ng NHCP upang palakasin ang pag-aaral ng kasaysayan sa lahat po ng lebel ng edukasyon sa Pilipinas, at mga pakikipagtulungan sa Kagawaran ng Edukasyon gayundin sa Commission on Higher Education?

REP. SALCEDA. Karamihan po ay nakapalikot po sa quincentennial or iyong 500th year. Pero aminin na po natin na kung ang budget mo ay dating P404 million biglang dinapa sa P221 million, masasabi natin na there will be vastly reduced activities with respect to educating our people and the youth with respect to our history.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, maari pong malaman kung ano ang mga programa, mga items na matatamaan, na hindi mapupunan ng pondo ...

REP. SALCEDA. Oo.

REP. ELAGO. ... para sa 2021 sa ilalim ng quincentennial celebration?

REP. SALCEDA. Unang-una, iyong kanina, sinabi ko na nga, ang nipis-nipis na lang po ng kanilang puwedeng gawin. Mr. Speaker, 4.5 million na lang po iyong kanilang documentary at P100,000 iyong kanilang online webinar, P100,000 (*Laughter*) for webinars. Ayan, so kahiya-hiya man: three travelling exhibits, P4.5 million; two documentaries, P4 million; marketing collateral, face mask, Lapu-Lapu figurine, Sto. Niño, P1.2 million; Quincentennial Art Competition online, P3.45 million; online engagement, P200 million; and production of online activities P100million. So, iyon. Ano iyong mga ...

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker ...

REP. SALCEDA. Ano iyong mga tatamaan? Ito iyong mga tinamaan, mas malalaki. Iyon po lang ang natira. Iyong site development ng Lapu-Lapu, dati 26, naging 407; restoration ng Cebu Monument, 535, dati 11; Paoay conservation of heritage structure and objects; Barcelona Church in Sorsogon; Iloilo Customs Building; Nicholas Loney Monument, Iloilo; Santa Maria, Ilocos Sur; Implementation of the National Quincentennial na dati P86 million, ngayon P34 million na lang. So, nakakalungkot man po pero epekto po iyan ng krisis na pinagdadaanan na natin, pero, well – hindi ho para i-surrender kaagad ng Kongresong ito, na wala ho tayong magagawa upang mabigyan po ng kahalagahan ang edukasyon ng kabataan patungkol po sa kanilang pagiging pagka-Pilipino.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker.

Ang isa pa po na usapin ay tungkol sa naging review ng curriculum ng K to 12 para sa taong ito, kung saan marami pong nabawas doon sa mga competencies na dapat matapos, maabot ng ating mga senior high school graduates, habang sa Kongreso, na tuloy-tuloy ang ating review ng K to 12, lalong-lalo na sa unang mga taon ng implementation na ito. Kinakailangan din nating malaman kung ano po ba ang tindig ng National Historical Commission of the Philippines ukol sa pagtatanggal po ng pag-aaral ng Philippine History sa kolehiyo bilang isa sa mga general

education subject. At kung sa basic education naman po, ito ay nasa mga unang taon lamang ng ...

REP. SALCEDA. They are officially against the removal of Philippine History as a course in college. They officially oppose it.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, what are the efforts being undertaken by the NHCP to actively push for the revival of the offering of Philippine History in college and strengthening the offering of such subject in all levels?

REP. SALCEDA. Well, there is a position paper already submitted to the CHED, but I am not aware kasi it is more on that part of the collective effort of the NCCA, NHCP, as well as the National Museum. So with respect to the details that you would like, I can certainly provide you with a copy of the paper that was submitted to the CHED with respect to the inclusion of the study of Philippine History in college.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Hindi ko lang po hawak.

REP. ELAGO. Opo.

Ang Representasyon po na ito ay manghihingi ng kabuuang ulat hinggil dito. Hindi lamang sa kolehiyo kung hindi ho sa lahat ng antas ng sistema natin sa edukasyon na kinakailangan ang tuloy-tuloy na pag-aaral ng kasaysayan dahil napakahalaga nito upang hindi na natin ulitin muli kung anuman ang naging pagkakamali at ito po ay magamit bilang inspirasyon at aral ng mga kabataan bilang mga tagapaghubog din ng ating kinabukasan.

Ngayon, Ginoong Speaker, nais ko pong malaman kung ano ang role ng NHCP pagdating sa Human Rights Violations Victims' Memorial Commission at kung ano na po ang update sa mga aktibidad nito para sa taong 2020 dahil sigurado po ako naapektuhan iyan nang malaki dahil sa hinaharap nating pandemya.

REP. SALCEDA. Naka-bid-out na po iyong building for P435 million.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, kailan po ito inaasahan na matapos? Ang building po ba na tinutukoy ay ang Freedom Memorial Museum?

REP. SALCEDA. Correct.

REP. ELAGO. Kailan po ito maaasahang matapos, Ginoong Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Eighteen months, pero alam mo naman ang Pilipino, kaya sabihin mo ng three years.

REP. ELAGO. Inaasahan ko po, Ginoong Speaker, na nawa ay mabilis po natin na matapos ito sang-ayon sa orihinal na plano na hindi po natin maaaring mapayagan na iyong mga dati ng praktika na todo ang delay sa mga proyekto ay mangyari pa po muli, lalong-lalo na sa napakahalagang proyekto na ito na nilaanang na ng pondo ng taumbayan para labanan ang historical revisionism at ngayon nga po, ang tinatawag na "negationism" dahil sa lubos na pagbabaluktot o kaya naman lubos na pagbabago mismo kung ano na po ang napatunayan sa kasaysayan o sa korte, sa Kongreso, gayundin po sa kasaysayan ng pagkilos ng mamamayang Pilipino para sa kanilang karapatan at kalayaan.

Kaya po sa tamang panahon, Ginoong Speaker, ang Representasyon na ito ng Kabataan ay magtutulak at patuloy po na magsusulong para sa suportang budget ng NHCP, na hindi lamang para sa selebrasyong quincennial at sa pagsuporta sa mga aktibidad ng Komisyon, ng Committee na ginawa para dito, kundi sa pangkabuuan, ang pagsusulong po ng pag-aaral ng kasaysayan, ang kasaysayan ng paglaban ng mga Pilipino para sa karapatan at demokrasya sa ating bansa. Mulí, maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker. Maraming salamat po sa ating Ginoong Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno).
Majority Leader.

REP. SALCEDA. Thank you very much.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. France Castro from the Party-List ACT TEACHERS for her interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Hon. France L. Castro of the Party-List ACT TEACHERS is recognized for her interpellation.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker.

So, hindi na po ako magpapalawig doon sa budget, nakita natin talaga iyong 50-percent cut doon sa buong budget ng NHCP. So, nakakalungkot din iyong Historical Asset Preservation and Management Program ay talagang 52.77 percent ang ibinagsak. So parang inaasahan na natin next year kung ano na iyong mangyayari doon sa ating mga historical markers and pagpe-preserve nitong ating mga makasaysayang mga lugar sa ating bansa.

Noon pong ano—mayroon po tayong batas, ito po iyong R.A. No. 11304, ito ay implementation ng Philippine-American War Memorial Day. Isinabatas po ito last year, at siguro, gusto ko lang ma-appreciate iyong ginawa po ng NHCP na effort para i-commemorate itong Philippine-American War. Pero mayroon po kaming ipinaabot, Ginoong Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, na pagpuna doon sa marker, kung saan nagkaroon po tayo ng ano, 'no—pinuna po natin dito iyong nakalagay sa marker kasi sa halip na bigyan natin ng pagpupugay ang mga mamamayan, ang mga Pilipino na nakipaglaban dito sa Philippine-American War Day ay in-emphasize natin dito sa marker na ito iyong Amerikanong naghudyat ng unang putok o iyong giyera sa mga Pilipino. Kung babasahin ko po iyong marker, Ginoong Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, nakalagay po dito:

Unang Putok sa Digmaang Filipino-Amerikano: Dito noong ganap na 9:00 ng gabi ng 4 Pebrero 1899 nagpapatok si Private William Grayson ng First Nebraska Volunteers, putok na nagpasiklab sa Digmaang Filipino-Amerikano.

So, alam naman natin, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na iyong marker ay mahalagang impormasyon at dito nakikita iyong nangyari sa ating kasaysayan. So bilang guro at bilang Sponsor din nitong batas na ito, kasama po ni dating Rep. Antonio Tinio, iyong R.A. No. 11304, sumulat po kami noong February 6, 2020, dalawang araw pagkatapos noong commemoration para po ma-call iyong atensyon ng ating National Historical Commission at mabago itong marker na ito. Kasi ayaw natin na ginugunita natin iyong Amerikano na siyang naghudyat ng kamatayan ng libo-libo nating mga kababayan noong panahon ng Amerikano. So as a Sponsor, Mr. Sponsor, as one of the authors of the law, puwede po ba malaman sa NHCP, bakit hindi ninyo po sinagot ang sulat ng Representasyong ito sa inyong opisina noong February 6, 2020?

REP. SALCEDA. Ano po iyong tanong?

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Ang tanong ko po, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, ay bakit po ako hindi sinagot...

REP. SALCEDA. Ah.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). ... in any form...

REP. SALCEDA. Ako ang sasagot sa'yo.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). ...noong February 6, 2020?

REP. SALCEDA. Kapag ang isang marker po ay naging history na rin iyong pagkakamali ay nagiging—ang correction po ng mga historian ay gumawa ka na lang ng isang bago na mas malaki at mas may ilaw, na iyon ang magsasabi ng kung ano ang totoong nangyari at hindi po iyong sinasabi ni Patrick Grace. So, iyon po ang balak ng NHCP. Tatabihan po iyon ng mas malaki, mas malinaw, mas madaling basahin at sasabihin nang maigi na mali iyong lumang marker kasi iyong lumang marker, dahil sa kalumaan, iyong historical error is similarly now also a fact of history. So, hindi ho puwedeng bastang-bastang itapon iyong marker ni Patrick Grace.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Mr. Sponsor, maaari ba akong makahingi ng written answer mula sa National Historical Commission of the Philippines, doon sa sagot nila?

REP. SALCEDA. Yes, Ma'am.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). At kailan po ito? Naririnig ko sa background gagawa sila ng task force.

REP. SALCEDA. Ah, may ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). February ano ba iyon? Ano ba iyon? February pa ito, so naintindihan naman namin na pandemic, pero before the pandemic pa ito. Hindi ba mayroon tayong batas na dapat anumang komunikasyon sa opisina ay dapat sinasagot ito within 15 days? Kaya medyo naano po ako dito, na-offend po ako dito, ano, sa NHCP, doon sa hindi nila pagsagot doon sa letter natin. Napakahalaga ito na pinupunto natin, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor.

REP. SALCEDA. Wala ho akong ano ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Hindi ho natin puwedeng balewalain ito at ngayon sasagutin ako ng parang ano, 'no, parang gagawa pa lang sila ng task force at sinasabi natin iyong pagbabago. Ito nga ang pinupunto namin sa Makabayan, iyong historical revisionism.

REP. SALCEDA. Naku, hindi ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Bagama't sinasabi nating historical events itong sinasabing unang putok dito sa lugar na sinasabi nating sa corner Sociego and Silencio Street sa Sta. Mesa, Manila, totoo iyon, kaya lang po, kaya nga po kami sa ACT TEACHERS Party-List, gusto nating—kahit na iyong estudyante na mga inimbata po natin para mabasa iyong marker at makita ito, nagpupuna rin sila kung bakit ganoon iyong nilagay instead na iyong pagpupugay natin doon sa ating mga bayaning Pilipino. May suggestion kami, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor. So, we suggest that in compliance with R.A. No. 11304, the names of the first casualties and

units of the army of the Malolos Republic, which defended the country in the first battle, namely, Corporal Anastacio Felix and two other Filipino sentries of the 4th Company of the Morong Battalion be written in the rectified historical marker. This way, we follow Jose Rizal's admonition in *Noli Me Tangere*, "Huwag niyong lilimutin ang mga nabuwal sa dilim ng gabi."

So, ano po ba ang masasabi dito ng National Historical Commission, Ginoong Sponsor, Ginoong Speaker?

REP. SALCEDA. Yes, and the only issue is there are some unnamed soldiers. So, there is a task force that was already created and at a certain deadline, kung hindi na talaga puwedeng pangalanan, para maging fair sa pamilya nila na makilala nila na bayani ang kanilang mga ninuno, e iyong mga kilala now, napangalanan na, ay ilalagay po.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Maaari po bang malaman, Ginoong Sponsor, Ginoong Speaker, iyong time frame noong pagpa-finalize noong sinasabi nating pagko-correct noong marker o pagdaragdag ng marker?

REP. SALCEDA. Naku, lalong bababa ang budget nito kapag hindi nila ginawa before the end of the year. Pero sinasabi ko na po sa inyo na ongoing naman po, at ikaw na mismo ang nagsabi na iyong mga atin pong kahilingan ay ginawa before COVID at alam naman natin during that period, between March and let us say before COVID started to run down which is about August, maraming bagay po ang mahirap pong isagawa. Pero nangangako po at committed po ang NHCP na gagawin po iyong dalawang bagay na nabanggit ko, unang-una, patungkol po doon sa tulay, at pangalawa, patungkol po doon kay Patrick Grace. Iyon po ay parehas mayroong task force para ma-establish kung ano po talaga ang tunay na ilalagay po sa marker.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. So, thank you po, Ginoong Speaker. So, dahil sa 2021 po, February 4, ay magkakaroon na naman po tayo ng program, matanong ko lang po, ang National Historical Commission kung mayroon

na po silang plano, nakapag-coordinate na rin po ba sa DepEd, sa SUC at CHED kasi iyon po ang nakalagay doon sa batas?

REP. SALCEDA. May planning workshop po sila sa November, saka po nila ilalagay at...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay.

REP. SALCEDA. ... para sa rollout po ng mga activities sa quincentennial.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. So Ginoong Sponsor, Ginoong Speaker, inaasahan ko po na makaka-receive ng plano po ang opisina ng ito, ang akin pong opisina, at willing po akong ma-involve doon sa commemoration sa February 4, 2021 po, Ginoong Sponsor, Ginoong Speaker.

REP. SALCEDA. Yes po.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay.

So, iyon lang po, Ginoong Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, at aasahan ko po ang commitment ng NHCP.

REP. SALCEDA. Dalawa po iyong – tatlo po iyong commitment namin: dalawang task force patungkol sa tulay, isang task force patungkol po kay Patrick Grace at iyong rollout po noong quincentennial activity sa Nobyembre.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay, marami pong salamat, Ginoong Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Zarate to interpellate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Hon. Carlos Isagani Zarate is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Considering that no other Member from the Minority wishes to interpellate on the

budget of the National Historical Commission, we move to terminate the deliberations on the NHCP's budget, Mr. Speaker.

I so move.

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in the motion to terminate the interpellations on the proposed budget of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) Chair hears none; the motion is approved. The period of sponsorship and debate on the budget of the National Historical Commission of the Philippines is hereby terminated.

Congratulations.

Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the session for one minute.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is suspended.

It was 2:23 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 2:49 p.m., the session was resumed

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.

Majority Leader.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

REP. BAUTISTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed with the consideration of the proposed budget of the Department of Energy, including its attached corporations.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, we would like to acknowledge the presence of our resource persons, our guests from the Department of Energy and its attached agencies who are present this afternoon. We have Secretary Alfonso Cusi of the DOE, Undersecretary Felix William Fuentebella, Undersecretary Emmanuel Juaneza, Undersecretary Donato Marcos, Assistant Secretary Gerardo Erguiza Jr. and Assistant Secretary Leonido Pulido III.

We have, from the PNOC, President and Chief Executive Officer Reuben Lista and Senior Vice President Lila Czarina Aquitania. We have President and CEO Rozzano Briguez of the PNOC-EC, President and CEO John J. Arenas of the PNOC-RC, President and CEO Pio Benavidez of the PNPC, President and CEO Irene Joy Besido-Garcia of PSALM and President and CEO Melvin Matibag of TransCo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). We welcome our guests from the Department of Energy and its attached corporations. Thank you for being here today.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, to sponsor the proposed budget of the Department of Energy and its attached corporations, I move that we recognize Rep. Manuel Jose M. Dalipe of the Second District of Zamboanga City.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The Hon. Mannix Dalipe is recognized to sponsor the measure.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF REP. DALIPE

REP. DALIPE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is my privilege to sponsor the proposed 2021 budget of the Department of Energy, including its attached agencies: the National Electrification Administration, National Power Corporation and Philippine National Oil Company. Also part of the DOE family who are here with us in Congress are the PNOC-Exploration Corporation, PNOC-Renewables Corporation, Power Sector Assets

and Liabilities Management Corporation and National Transmission Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the budget of the DOE, the corporate operating budget of the NEA, National Power Corporation and PNOC are part of President Duterte's budget submitted to Congress for approval, which aims to sustain government efforts in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by focusing government spending on helping communities cope and prevail in these uncertain times, thus the theme, "Reset, Rebound and Recover: Investing for Resiliency and Sustainability."

For 2021, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Energy's proposed budget is P2.49 billion, with P1.384 billion classified under New Appropriations and P764 million as Automatic Appropriations. For the corporate operating budget of the attached agencies, the National Electrification Administration's 2021 Budget is P3.93 billion. The budget consists of a P1.83-billion subsidy from the national government and P2.11 billion from NEA's corporate or internally generated fund. The National Power Corporation's proposed corporate operating budget is at P29.8 billion, with P1.186 billion as subsidy from the national government. The PNOC's proposed corporate operating budget is P613 million.

Mr. Speaker, this Representation, as Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, is now ready to answer questions from our esteemed colleagues relative to the budget of the Department of Energy and its attached agencies, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 7727

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 7727.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the consideration of House Bill No. 7727 is hereby suspended.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is suspended.

It was 2:55 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:02 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is resumed.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, the House earlier adopted Resolution No. 1265, RESOLUTION HONORING THE WORK AND CONTRIBUTION OF HIS EXCELLENCY IGOR KHOVAEV AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE PHILIPPINES IN FOSTERING STRONGER PHILIPPINES-RUSSIA BILATERAL RELATIONS AND CONFERRING UPON HIM THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF ACHIEVEMENT.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The manifestation of the Majority Leader is noted. Please proceed.

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, we are privileged to have with us today His Excellency Igor Khovaev, the Ambassador Extraordinary, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Philippines.

May I request that Ambassador Igor Khovaev be invited to the rostrum to receive the Congressional Medal of Achievement conferred upon him by the House of Representatives, together with a copy of House Resolution No. 1265.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the Secretary General be directed to read the title and the text of the House Resolution.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). We welcome and invite to proceed to the rostrum His Excellency Igor Khovaev, Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Philippines.

The Secretary General is directed to read the title and text of House Resolution No. 1265.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Resolution No. 1265, entitled: RESOLUTION HONORING THE WORK AND CONTRIBUTION OF HIS EXCELLENCY IGOR KHOVAEV AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE PHILIPPINES IN FOSTERING STRONGER PHILIPPINES-RUSSIA BILATERAL RELATIONS AND CONFERRING UPON HIM THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF ACHIEVEMENT.

WHEREAS, the House of Representatives has recognized on several occasions, the achievements of esteemed foreign delegates for their critical contribution to our country;

WHEREAS, Ambassador Igor Khovaev was designated as the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the Philippines on March 2, 2015;

WHEREAS, as an expert in International Relations and Diplomacy, Ambassador Khovaev joined the diplomatic service and worked in the Consulate General of Russia in Vietnam and in the Russian Embassy in Turkey. He was also sent to International Missions to Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, and Herzegovina;

WHEREAS, it is but proper to honor the invaluable work and contribution of Ambassador Khovaev, whose tour of duty in the country enhanced and deepened the bilateral relations between the Philippines and Russia, especially through political consultations and support in the areas of trade and investment, tourism, education, labor, cultural cooperation, anti-drug trafficking, defense cooperation, and health;

WHEREAS, Ambassador Khovaev's work is invaluable to the bond fostered between our countries through the successful conduct

of consultations, and meetings, including official working visits of several Secretaries of Foreign Affairs and two courtesy visits of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte to the Russian Federation regarding cooperation on many policy aspects, including national defense and economic exchange;

WHEREAS, during the assignment of Ambassador Khovaev, trade and investments between the two countries continually increased through exchanges of information and collaboration on activities as shown by the total of \$1.36 billion trade in 2018 alone;

WHEREAS, it is under the tenure of Ambassador Khovaev that the Joint Action Program of Tourism Cooperation was signed by the former Philippine Tourism Secretary Wanda Teo and officials of the Federal Agency of Tourism of Russia to expand the tourism flow between the two countries—there was an 11.6 percent increase in Russian tourists for 2016 which has continued since then because of the continuous promotion of the Philippines that picked Russian interest;

WHEREAS, Ambassador Khovaev incessantly supported Philippine education through the facilitation of a memorandum of understanding with the Commission on Higher Education and a call for scholarship in Russian Universities;

WHEREAS, it is through the significant diplomatic efforts of Ambassador Khovaev that the Russian Federation agreed to craft a labor agreement to address the needs and concerns of Filipino migrant workers especially the protection of the rights of those currently sojourning thereat;

WHEREAS, with the territorial threat that the country is facing, the Russian Federation has continuously offered its military capabilities and technology to enhance the Philippines' national defenses and potentially develop nuclear energy resources in the South China Sea through the enablement of the first ever port call to Russia of the Philippine Navy and the implementation of arrangements between the Philippine Department of National Defense and the Russian Ministry of Defense;

WHEREAS, the bilateral relations of our countries in the area of health has been deepened through the memorandum of

understanding between the Philippine Department of Health and the Russian Ministry of Health that was borne out of the effective efforts of Ambassador Khovaev. Recently, the unfaltering support of the Russian Federation to the well-being of the Filipino people during these trying times brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic was felt through the offering of clinical trials, supply, and manufacturing of a reliable vaccine against the virus alongside an Anti-COVID Drug and Electromyography (EMG) diagnostic system, all of which are helpful for our Recovery as One Country;

WHEREAS, in the performance of his duties as a Russian Ambassador, His Excellency Khovaev has played a material role for the turnaround of the previously cold relations between the two countries to the presently significant Philippines-Russia bond:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the House of Representatives, to honor the work and contribution of His Excellency Igor Khovaev, Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Philippines in fostering stronger Philippines-Russia bilateral relations and confer upon him the Congressional Medal of Achievement.

Adopted,

ALAN PETER "COMPAÑERO" S. CAYETANO
Speaker

This Resolution was adopted by the House of Representatives on October 2, 2020.

Signed.

JOSE LUIS G. MONTALES
Secretary General

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno).
Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDEZ (F.). Mr. Speaker, in order to allow our Speaker and our Members to meet and extend our greetings

to our distinguished guests and for the Speaker to confer the Congressional Medal of Achievement and the Resolution, I move that we suspend our session for a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Puno). The session is suspended.

It was 3:09 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:19 p.m., the session was resumed with Deputy Speaker Raneo "Ranie" E. Abu presiding.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.
Majority Leader.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 7727 *Continuation*

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 7727, as contained in Committee Report No. 528, and that the Secretary General be directed to read the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Secretary General is hereby directed to read the title of House Bill No. 7727 for consideration on Second Reading.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 7727, entitled: "AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-ONE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status is that we are in the period

of sponsorship and debate. I now move that we resume the consideration of the proposed budget of the Department of Energy, including its attached corporations, and recognize to continue his sponsorship of the proposed budget Rep. Manuel Jose M. Dalipe of the Second District of Zamboanga City.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The distinguished Representative and Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Hon. Mannix Dalipe, is recognized to continue his sponsorship of the budget of the Department of Energy, including its attached corporations, and to be ready for interpellations.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Chairman, this Representation, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations is now ready to answer questions from our esteemed colleagues relative to the budget of the Department of Energy and its attached agencies, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the first of our colleagues who wishes to interpellate our distinguished Sponsor is the Representative from the Party-List BAYAN MUNA, the Hon. Carlos Isagani Zarate.

I move that he be recognized.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the BAYAN MUNA Party-List, Hon. Carlos Isagani Zarate, is recognized to interpellate the good Sponsor.

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker. Magandang hapon ho sa ating lahat. Will the good Sponsor accommodate some clarificatory questions related to the budget of the Department of Energy as well as attached agencies?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. As a preliminary question, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, may the good

Sponsor inform this Body, what is the current energy mix of the country and its status?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the current energy mix based on data we gathered last year, 2019, is, for geothermal energy, we have 15.4 percent; oil, 32.2 percent; coal, 29.2 percent; natural gas, 6.1 percent; hydro, 3.3 percent; and other renewable energy is about 13.8 percent, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, good Sponsor.

Bale po itong datos na ito ay sa nakaraang taon pa at hindi pa ho nakonsidera dito ang nangyayari ngayon na nasa isang matinding krisis tayo na pinalala nitong pandemya ng COVID. Tama po ba, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Puwede po bang dahil sa nangyari ngayon ay nagbago itong mga tantos na ito or percentage noong ating mix or pareho lang kumpara last year? Wala namang masyadong pagbabago?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, pareho po.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Base po doon sa naturan ninyo, malinaw na, katulad pa rin ng mga nakaraang panahon, nakaraang dekada, ang atin pong enerhiya ay talagang nakasandig doon sa, una, sa fossilized oil, which is at 32.4 percent; pangalawa, sa uling o coal, which is at 29.2 percent; at malayo na sumunod ay ang geothermal, which is at 15.4; tapos renewable energies at 13.8, mixed; and last, ang hydro which is only at 3.3 percent. Now, sa ganitong kalagayan, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, alam n'yo po, panlimang budget ko na ito na pagtatalakay at siguro noong unang taon na nakibahagi ako sa deliberasyon ng budget, tinanong ko na rin iyong unang tanong ko sa inyo kanina at tuwi-tuwina, ang laging tugon ng Kagawaran ng Enerhiya ay

pagsisikapan nitong baguhin ang ating energy mix dahil malinaw naman na sa kinakaharap nating problema ngayon, lalong-lalo na sa mundo, iyong pag-init ng mundo, iyong climate change, maraming mga siyentista na at mga eksperto ang nagsabi na malaking bahagi rito ay iyong ating dependence talaga sa fossilized oil and coal, at iminumungkahi nila na bawasan natin iyong ating emission. And, again, panlimang taon ko na itong pagtatalakay sa budget na ito.

Ang kasunod kong katanungan, ano ba ang plano talaga ng Department of Energy, clearly and concretely, so that we can thoroughly or genuinely move away from fossilized oil or iyong tinatawag nilang "dirty energy," Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, I agree that the other technologies, other types of generation facilities which use crude oil have high generation costs. But through the years, the Department of Energy has been pushing for hybrid sources, like solar or renewable energy. So, even without subsidy, maski wala pong subsidy ang bagong technology, like the hybrid ones which will lower the cost, the Department of Energy helps propagate the use of these new technologies to eliminate the subsidy or to be able also to introduce other technologies, particularly for renewable energy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Well, salamat po sa inyong naging katugunan na mayroong pagtingin doon sa pag-shift, lalong-lalo na sa renewable energies.

Of course, at this point, you may argue and some may say that very expensive itong mag-i-invest tayo on renewable energies. But, experts also say—several economists also say that ultimately, it will be cheaper for us if we start investing now in this kind of energy rather than becoming too dependent on fossilized oil or even coal as a source of energy.

Now, gusto ko lang puntahan ng partikular ang sa kasalukuyan na reyalidad na ganoon pa rin iyong ating energy mix. Puwede bang maitanong ko sa ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor, paano po ba, sa pagkakaalam ninyo,

ina-award iyong mga kontrata on power, taking into consideration iyong programa ng Department of Energy na dapat iyong ating energy mix ay aalis na doon sa dependence niya sa mga nonrenewable energies, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, iyong pag-a-award po ng mga kontrata sa mga bagong gustong pumasok sa industriya, it is done through what we call the “Competitive Selection Process” or CSP po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, tama po iyon.

Ngayon, sa kasalukuyang regime of awarding contracts ay dapat dumaan na ito sa Competitive Selection Process. Previous to that ay puwedeng mga bilateral ang kasunduan.

Ang kadugtong ko na tanong diyen, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, sa pag-a-award ba natin ng kontrata, ng mga energy o power contracts, isinasaalang-alang ba nito, ang pagbibigay natin ng kontrata, iyong binanggit ninyo kanina na dapat ang ating energy mix ay magshi-shift na siya, from the so-called dirty sources of energy to renewable and clean sources of energy.

Naitanong ko iyan, Ginoong Speaker, dahil, Mr. Sponsor, kung titingnan natin, sabi ko nga panlimang taon ko na ito, hindi naman talaga bumaba iyong porsyento. Kung mayroon mang pagbaba ay hindi masyadong substantial. Iyong porsyento, halimbawa, nung coal, up to now we are almost 30-percent dependent on coal at halos ang mga itinatayong mga bagong planta ng enerhiya ay coal pa rin. So, is that not contrary to the supposed policy of the Department of Energy and the State, the government to move away from these sources of energy, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, totoo po, the Department of Energy is really trying its best. In fact, by 2030, the target of the Department of Energy is for renewable energy to have a 35-percent share in the pie. So, iyan po ang goal ng Department of Energy that by 2030, at least 35 percent ang magiging porsyento ng renewable energy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Well, salamat po at we welcome that pronouncement and statement from the Department of Energy. But again, the question is, kung tataas ang renewable energy to 35 percent, ano ho ang maaapektuhan nito? By 2030, sabi ninyo, nasa 35 percent na iyan. What about coal? Considering that iyong mga pinapayagan po natin ngayon na mga bagong power plants ay puro coal iyan, maraming coal ang kasama diyen. And syempre, iyong mga kontrata niyan ay pangmahabaan. So by 2030, if the trajectory now is still biased towards these plants that operate on coal, then even if we say that by 2030 ay magiging 35 percent iyong renewable energy, it will not make any dent, if at all – if there is one, siguro not substantial – doon sa gusto nating kontribusyon doon sa pagbaba noong ating CO² emissions, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, kung tataas po iyong porsyento ng renewable energy, e kakain po siya ng malaking piece doon sa ating energy mix and definitely, the share of the other sources of energy, which are termed as “dirty” or “hindi malinis,” will definitely be lowered. Kasi tataas iyong renewable energy by 35 percent, so, bababa rin po iyong porsyento ng other sources like coal and oil, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po, although hindi ko pa masyadong nakuha iyong gusto kong kasagutan dahil ang implication po nito, para lang malinaw, ngayon po, approve tayo nang approve ng mga planta na nakasandig sa coal. At syempre, iyong mga kuryente, enerhiya na gagawin nito at ipro-produce nito ay nakakontrata iyan nang mahaba, long term, long-term contracts iyan at in fact, nakatali na ang presyo niyan sa mga power supply agreements. Even if it passes through the Competitive Selection Process, e syempre nakatali iyan doon sa presyuhan pa rin ng coal at this time and probably in the coming years. Now, considering, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na ang global trend ngayon when it comes to the energy mix ay mas mababa iyong cost ng pag-set up ng renewable energy and the trend is actually really still going down, ano,

compared to setting up of a coal-fired power plant, now, ang magiging problema niyan dahil iyong mga kontratang pinasok ngayon ng mga power supply companies, ng mga generation companies ay mahal, paano pa kaya ito babawiin? Saan nila ito ipapasa ano? Pagdating ng panahon, even if we have that plan, sinabi ninyo by 2030 35 percent na iyong ating renewable energy, pero nakatali na iyong kontrata at hindi naman iyong kontrata taunan, ang mga power supply agreements can go to as long as 10, 20, 25 years, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. So, iyon po ang ating pinangangambahan, dahil sa napakahabang panahon ay hindi naman talaga ito binibigyan ng seryosong tugon ng ating kagawaran kaya ang nakikita natin, tuloy-tuloy lang din iyong construction ng mga coal-fired plants.

So, I am looking at a scenario, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, correct me if I am wrong, na pagdating ng panahon, dahil sa napakamahal ng cost ng mga enerhiyang ito samantalang bumababa iyong renewable energies, ay ipapasa ito sa mamamayan, iyong napakamahal na cost na kaakibat nitong dependence natin sa coal, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, iyong increasing share of more flexible generating capacities, puwede naman po siya e. It can work hand in hand with renewable energy supply. And, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, through the years, base sa policy, those supplying power are asked to source their power from renewable energy. So, mayroon pong policy na kailangan po nila i-source talaga through renewable energy hanggang makakarating tayo sa taong 2030 na 35 percent ng share ay magiging renewable energy.

REP. ZARATE. Ah, salamat po sa inyong tugon. But then again, ang specific na tanong ko doon, pagdating ng panahon na iyan in 2030, dahil naka-lock in na iyong mga kontrata noong pinapayagan nating mga power plants ngayon, wala po bang posibilidad na iyong mahal na cost of energy ay ipapasa sa ating mga consumers, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, if we look at how the whole picture is, it is actually the users who pay at iyong mga distribution utilities, sila lang ang taga-facilitate sa pag-distribute, sa pagpasa ng energy at cost niya. So definitely, kung titingnan natin in a bigger picture, it is really the users who are really buying and shouldering the cost of electricity.

REP. ZARATE. That is precisely my point, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Earlier, the good Sponsor agreed that, actually, iyong trajectory ng presyohan ng renewable energy is going down. Yet, sa ngayon, ang ating bias pa rin—kasi kaya ho ko hiningi iyong energy mix ng ating bansa, ang bias natin nasa oil and nasa coal pa rin, 'no. Kaya, halimbawa, ngayong taon nagtayo ka ng coal-fired power plant. Hindi naman ang projection mo sa susunod na taon lang iyong production of electricity kaya papasok ka sa kontrata na 10, 20, even 25 years at nakatali na iyong presyo ng kuryente doon.

Kaya pagdating, halimbawa, ng sinasabi po ninyong 2030, habang ang presyo ng renewable energy ay bumagsak na, tayo nakatali na doon sa presyong pinirmahan ko by 2020. So, iyon iyong problema dahil even as we speak now, nandoon pa rin talaga, 'no. Sila pa rin iyong second na pinakamalaking pinagmumulan natin ng energy. So, ang posibilidad nga ay ang presyo na iyan ng mga generation plants ay talagang ipapasa. Tama naman po kayo, iyong mga distribution utilities ipapasa lang nila iyan as pass-on charges. So, ang magiging kawawa talaga nito ay ating mga consumers. So, that is really the challenge to the national government, to the Department and even by extension, to our regulators, na seriously tingnan ito. Dahil kung titingnan mo talaga iyong mga bagong plantang itinatayo, karamihan pa rin doon, lalong-lalo na iyong mga baseload na mga planta, ay coal. And again, ang mga kontrata nito ay naka-lock-in na iyan sa napakahabang panahon. So, pagdating noong sinasabi ninyong 2030, sino ang magbabayad noong mahal na presyuhan?

Now, I am driving that point, Mr. Speaker, because earlier, just a few days or a few weeks

ago, narinig ko sa isang pronouncement from Malacañang na that they are even planning to declare or they considered declaring a climate emergency, pero that is very ironic. Magdedeklara ka ng climate emergency, but ironically, our energy outlook, our energy mix is contrary to our plans of, you know, pababain iyong ating contribution doon sa, for example, dito sa CO² emission because if you look at our biases in terms of energy production ay nandoon pa rin tayo sa tinatawag nilang “dirty sources of energy.” So, I hope next year, we will not be asking the same questions kasi pabalik-balik na lang ito at kada taon, sasabihin ng Department of Energy, “Actually, we are moving forward, we are moving away from coal, oil and gusto nating pagyamanin iyong renewable energy.” Because a lot of other jurisdictions, iyong ibang bansa ay talagang nag-i-invest na sila, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, doon sa renewable energy dahil nga in the long term ay mas maganda ang maidudulot nito not only sa environment but even to our national coffers. Especially now that we are in a crisis aggravated by this COVID-19 pandemic, the deficit in our budget is so large. So, dapat ho tinitingnan natin iyong mga kapamaraan kung saan makakapagtipid, hindi lang ang pamahalaan kung hindi rin ang ating mga mamamayan.

So, moving now to another point in my interpellation, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, one of the attached agencies of the Department of Energy is the Philippine National Oil Corporation. May I inquire, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, the mandate of the PNOC?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the PNOC’s mandate under P.D. No. 334, as amended, is to “ensure a stable supply of petroleum products in order to sustain the growth of the economy and social well-being of the nation,” especially in times of national emergencies, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor. The PNOC has other subsidiaries. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, mayroon pong mga ibang naka-attach sa Philippine National Oil Company, Mr. Speaker, distinguish colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Ilan po ang subsidiaries ng PNOC?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, there are two attached subsidiaries of the PNOC, one is the Philippine National Oil Corporation Exploration Corporation at iyong isa po ay Philippine National Oil Corporation Renewables Corporation. Dalawa, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. So, two subsidiaries, one for exploration and one for renewable energies. Tama po ba iyon?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, tama po iyon, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. And for our 2021 Budget, the PNOC is requesting how much appropriation from Congress, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, para po sa taong 2021, ang budget po ng Philippine National Oil Company is P613,183,000, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, for that. But just like the other government-owned and -controlled corporations, the PNOC is also generating its own income. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Sponsor, distinguished colleague, ang PNOC po ay nagdye-generate rin ng kaniyang income.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you for that answer.

Now, I have one related question. The PNOC has—maraming mga properties din ang PNOC. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor? And in fact, you have one particular property, a 220-hectare property in Limay, Bataan. May

we know what is the use of this property located in Limay, Bataan, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, iyong property po ng PNOC sa Limay, Bataan is a petrochemical industrial park, a petrochemical industrial park, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, correct. And may I inquire from the good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ilan po ang mga locators natin diyan because it is an industrial park, just like the other industrial parks?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, mayroon pong limang locators diyan po sa Limay, Bataan at ito po ay ang Philippine Resins Industries Incorporated, Petron Polypropylene Incorporated, NPC Alliance Corporation, Orica Philippines Incorporated at iyong DENR's non-combustion destruction facility, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. Lima po.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. But correct me if I am wrong, these five locators have been there for quite some time. Matagal na itong mga locators na ito. Ibig po bang sabihin ng ating Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, hindi nadagdagan itong mga locators na ito up to now, considering that we have a—napakalaki po ng lupain na iyan, 220 hectares?

REP. DALIPE. Hindi pa po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. Ito pa rin ever since.

REP. ZARATE. So, malaking bahagi ng kalupaan na iyan ay nakatiwangwang lang, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker? Is that correct?

REP. DALIPE. Well, the property in Limay, Bataan, if you go and check, may mga informal settlers rin po kasi siya, so iyon iyong situation niya.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, because it was not actually developed. But at any rate, I leave it at that. I hope the PNOC will look into that,

the development of that place and make use of it dahil makakatulong iyon sa pagbigay din ng additional revenues sa ating ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). That is the last question.

REP. ZARATE. I am winding up, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Okay. Thank you.

REP. ZARATE. Now, last point na lang. I read just a few days ago that the PNOC is also interested or, in tandem with other investors, will increase its stake or will place a stake in the development of the Malampaya plant. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker? Mag-i-invest and PNOC doon sa Malampaya?

REP. DALIPE. Well, so far, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, si Shell po kasi ay magda-divest noong kaniyang part doon sa Malampaya but the Philippine National Oil Company is still studying the options available, so hindi pa naman po final. Pinag-aaralan pa po. But as of now, ...

REP. ZARATE. And these options are? What are these options being studied by the PNOC?

REP. DALIPE. As of now, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, hindi pa po handa iyong mga options kasi bago lang po siya. It is fairly new and a complete staff work is still being done. So probably, in due time, the Philippine National Oil Company will be able to finish and provide the different options, and this Representation, the Committee on Appropriations would be willing to give you a copy of the options made or prepared by the Philippine National Oil Company for Malampaya, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor. Sana nga po pag-aralan nang mabuti iyan dahil ang sinasabi nila, iyong Malampaya fields ang available na mga reserve diyan ay hanggang 2027 na lamang. So kung

mag-i-invest pa ng dagdag or mag-i-invest ang PNOC diyan ay talagang pag-aralang mabuti iyan if it is really viable.

Thank you, Mr. Sponsor. My time is already up. Thank you for the opportunity to interpellate on the budget ng Department of Energy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu).
Thank you.
Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION
OF H.B. NO. 7727

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 7727.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.
Majority Leader.

DESIGNATION OF MEMBERS TO THE
BICAMERAL CONF. CTTE. ON
H.B. NO. 5422 AND S.B. NO. 1807

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we designate the following as members of the Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 5422 and Senate Bill No. 1807, DECLARING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER OF EVERY YEAR AS THE "NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH" IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY:

1. Rep. Sabiniano Canama;
2. Rep. Jose Ong Jr.; and
3. Rep. Godofredo Guya

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.
Majority Leader.

CHANGE OF REFERRAL OF H. RES. NO. 1176

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move for the change of referral of House Resolution No. 1176, entitled: RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE

TO NOMINATE RAMON REVILLA, SR. FOR THE NATIONAL ARTIST AWARD FOR FILM IN RECOGNITION OF HIS IMMENSE CONTRIBUTIONS TO PHILIPPINE CULTURE AND THE ARTS, SPECIFICALLY TO PHILIPPINE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY, from the Committee on Rules to the Committee on Basic Education and Culture.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we elect Rep. Fredenil "Fred" H. Castro as Deputy Speaker, vice Rep. Michael L. Romero, PhD.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; Rep. Fred Castro is hereby designated as one of the Deputy Speakers.
Majority Leader.

CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 7727
Continuation

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP AND DEBATE

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I now move that we resume the consideration of House Bill No. 7727, as contained in Committee Report No. 528, and that the Secretary General be directed to read the title of the measure.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the Secretary General is hereby directed to read the title of House Bill No. 7727 for consideration on Second Reading.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Bill No. 7727, entitled: "AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-ONE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary status is that we are in the period of sponsorship and debate.

I move that we resume the consideration of the proposed budget of the Department of Energy, including its attached corporations, and recognize, to continue his sponsorship, Rep. Manuel Jose “Mannix” M. Dalipe.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from Zamboanga City, Hon. Mannix Dalipe, is recognized to sponsor the budget of the Department of Energy, including its attached corporations, and we are now in the period of sponsorship and debate.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the next Member who wishes to interpellate our Sponsor is our distinguished Deputy Speaker Rodante Marcoleta of Party-List SAGIP.

I move that he be recognized.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The distinguished Deputy Speaker, Rep. Dante Marcoleta, is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. MARCOLETA. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

I have been a Member of Congress since 2004, Mr. Speaker. From my neophyte years until today, I have witnessed several episodes of budget deliberations, especially in the Plenary and in particular, that of the budget of the Department of Energy.

For so long a time, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, and considering that the chosen constituency of the SAGIP Party-List, the urban poor sector, the recurring issue, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, is how the poor people grapple with the price of electricity that eats up a significant portion of their income. I said I have been here since 2004, Mr. Speaker, and I think I have gained my right to at least analyze whether or not we are succeeding in our promise to our people, particularly in relation

to Republic Act No. 9136, which I believe was enacted in the year 2001.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, sa buhay po ng isang taong karaniwan, iyon pong pagbabayad sa kuryente ay isang sakripisyo. Kung tutuusin po, kung pasisimulan nating buksan uli iyong Republic Act No. 9136, sa Section 2 pa lamang, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, binabanggit na roon ang isang napakalaking kaugnayan kung bakit naitatag ang Department of Energy at saka iyong batas na kung tawagin natin ay “Electric Power Industry Reform Act” or “EPIRA.”

Mr. Speaker, sa Section 2, Chapter I, Declaration of Policy, letter (b), nakasaad po ang ganito, “To ensure the quality, reliability, security and affordability of the supply of electric power.” Mr. Speaker, kung magiging tapat po tayo sa ating sarili, ito bang Declaration of Policy na ito ay naipagkaloob ba natin ayon sa hinihingi ng probisyon na ito ng Republic Act No. 9136? Iyong quality, sa quality po, marami pa ring episodes ng brownout, minsan po hindi lang oras, kung minsan araw, lalong-lalo na po sa parte ng Mindanao. Idikit na rin po diyan iyong reliability, sapagkat kung hindi reliable po ang pinagkukunan ng kuryente o supply ng kuryente, ganoon din po ang nangyayari, ang security at iyon nga pong tinatawag nating “affordability” of the supply of electric power. In all honesty, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, can we openly admit that we have complied with this particular provision in the Declaration of Policy with respect to the current situation of our consumers, especially those that belong to the poorest of the poor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the process of being able to provide what you have stated is a continuing work in progress. For every time our population increases, there is an increase in the demand by our consumers. So, ang Department of Energy naman po ay – the Department of Energy is really doing its best, through its attached agencies like the National Electrification Administration and the National Power Corporation, to address this continuing increase in demand. Although hindi po siya perpekto, na hindi naman ibig sabihin na pagdating sa taong 2020, for example, na iyong

pinaplano na 100 percent ay mapeperpekto niya to address iyong mga na-state ninyo po sa Section 2, Chapter 1 ng EPIRA, nevertheless, it is continuing – it is a continuing job, especially of the Department of Energy and its attached agencies, to see to it that iyong mga kinakailangan ng ating mga mamamayan na murang kuryente, stable and reliable power ay mabigay po sa ating mga consumers.

Although, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, inaamin naman po natin na hindi madali o it is not an easy job or an easy task to do because of the increasing supply needed by our constituents and marami pa pong ibang factors na kailangan natin i-consider. Siyempre, isa na po, of course, iyong presyo ng electricity ay pabago-bago. So, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, rest assured that the Department of Energy will continue in its mandate, together with its attached agencies, of providing what is required of them under the law, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. MARCOLETA. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, with all due respect, ako po ay nalulungkot sa inyong katugunan sapagkat nasabi ko nga po kanina sa umpisa, mula Thirteenth Congress, nandito na po ako, iyan pong sinasabi ninyong sagot doon sa napakasimpleng tanong ay paulit-ulit ko na pong naririnig. Kasi po, iyong ating mga mamamayan, lalo na po iyong pangkaraniwan, sinasabi ko nga, hindi nila maintindihan, hindi nila mai-relate ang kanilang buhay. “Ano ba iyong budget na pinag-uusapan ninyo diyan? Palagi na lang, year in and year out, you are talking about the budget, deliberating on the budget of every agency and department of government, pero kahit kailan, you are unable to relate to us. Ano ba ang nahihita namin?”

Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ang gustong maramdaman ng pangkaraniwang tao, habang dinedebate natin ang inyong budget, ay ano naman po iyong para sa kanila? Hindi naman po kalabisan, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, na maghintay sila. Sa panig nila, sa sarili nila, maramdaman man lang nila na itong ginagawa nating ito ay nagkakaroon ng mabisang resulta sa kanilang buhay. Araw-araw, monthly, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, iyong monthly bill

po nila ng kuryente, parang nagiging isang palaisipan. It is like a conundrum. It is a puzzle. Bakit po? ‘Ika nga, ang pangako po ng R.A. No. 9136 ay affordability of supply of electric power. Napakasimple po ng kataga na iyon, affordability speaks of a level of price that is reachable for the ordinary consumers. Hindi po nila ito naramdaman, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Kaya po ang tanong natin – huwag nating gagawing katuwiran na ito po ang ginagawa natin, ganito po na ang nagawa natin, ito pa po ang gagawin natin, pero kapag hindi po natin nagagawa iyong pangako dito under the Declaration of Policy, lahat po ng ginagawa natin ay hindi kumukonekta sa puso ng mamamayan.

Basahin ko pa po iyong letter (c), Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, “To ensure transparent and reasonable prices of electricity x x x.” Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, iyon po ay madaling intindihin kahit na ng ordinaryong tao. “To ensure transparent and reasonable prices of electricity in a regime of free and fair competition x x x.” Hinto po muna ako doon, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Nagawa na po ba natin iyong “reasonable prices of electricity?” Ano po ba iyong risonable? Ang risonable po na presyo ay iyong lebel ng presyo na kayang-kayang abutin ng isang ordinaryong mamamayan. Iyon po iyong risonable.

Ito po ay Declaration of Policy, isa pong batas na ating ginawa ilang taon na po ang nakakaraan, 2001 pa po iyon. Bakit hanggang ngayon hindi po nagkakaroon ng katuparan? Kung pag-uusapan natin ay maramdaman lamang po ang ginagawa natin ngayon kasi sa panig po nila, “O, ayan na naman, budget hearing na naman sila, hindi naman natin maramdaman kung anong ginagawa nila.” Mayroon po silang katuwiran na magtanong. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, this is a recurring issue. When this Representation talks to them in town hall meetings, this is a recurring question. Sabi nila, “Kailan po kaya kami makakatikim, kahit minsan lang, iyong mababang kuryente?” Hindi po nila maramdaman, so there is something wrong in the system, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. We are not fulfilling this; we are failing our people.

Basahin ko pa po iyong kasunod, letter (f), Mr. Speaker, Your Honor: “To protect the

public interest as it is affected by the rates and services of electric utilities x x x." Mr. Speaker, totoo po ito. Ang public interest is always affected by the rates of electric utilities and other providers of electric power. Bakit po? Kapag mahal po ang kuryente, mahal ang production, mahal po iyong produkto, kawawa na naman po iyong consumer na bibili. Maliban pa po doon sa sinasabi natin, pangkaraniwan na kapag nakita na po nila iyong bill ng kuryente, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, iyong kaba na ng dibdib na naman po nila palaging nandoon. Ang tanong ko nga po ganito, kung ang atin pong mga budget na ginagawa,, at ito po'y tumutukoy sa efficiency and effectiveness of the programs that are being installed by the Department, bakit hindi po iyon tumutuloy sa benepisyong na maaari nating maiabot sa mga ordinaryong consumers? Ito po iyong tanong nila. Ito po iyong tanong nila. Papaano po natin sila sasagutin? Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, naghahanap po ako ng tulong sa inyo. Pagbalik ko ulit sa kanila, gusto ko po dala-dala ko ang isang kasagutan na tatanggapin nila. Sa ngayon po kasi wala akong masasabi sa kanila. Sasabihin ko na naman kagaya ng sinabi ko sa inyo, paikot-ikot na lamang po kami.

Mr. Speaker, sasamantalain ko na po kung medyo hirap pa ho kayong sumagot muna. Bibigyan po natin ng halimbawa para siguro kahit papaano, from generalities to situational, or example, pag-usapan po natin iyong Republic Act No. 9209, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Itong Republic Act No. 9209, ito po iyong prangkisa ng Meralco. Tama po ba, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the line of questioning of the honorable Deputy Speaker Marcoleta can properly be addressed by another agency which is being handled by Rep. Mikey Arroyo, the Energy Regulatory Commission.

REP. MARCOLETA. Alam ko po iyon.

REP. DALIPE. But I will ...

REP. MARCOLETA. Sa kagustuhan ko lang makagawa po ng example kasi para lalo nating

masagot sana, gusto kong pagtulongan natin, hanapin natin ang isang pinakamabuting sagot na sa maraming panahon po ay hinahanap-hanap po ng ating mga ordinaryong consumers. Hindi ko po patatagalin ang tungkol dito kasi may babasahin lang po ako na isang section dito na kaugnay po noong Declaration of Policy na binanggit ko kanina sa Republic Act No. 9136. Magkakambal po kasi sila. Sa Section 4 po kasi nitong R.A. No. 9209, iyong grantee po, ito iyong Meralco, ano po, sabi: "The grantee shall supply electricity to its captive market in the least cost manner." Pagkatapos sinundan pa po ng, "The grantee shall charge reasonable, just and competitive power rates." So, may kakambal po siya.

Mula po doon sa Declaration of Policy ng Republic Act No. 9136, ganoon din po iyong nakalagay doon sa prangkisa ng Meralco. Ibig kong sabihin po, bilang pagtutulad, paghahalimbawa, talaga pong konektado doon. So, komo ang pinakamalaking distribution utility dito sa ating bansa ay ang Meralco, nagagawa ko po siyang, halimbawa kung ang pag-uusapan ay iyong tanong po kanina, papaano kaya mararamdaman at kailan mararamdaman ito ng pangkaraniwang consumer? Sapagkat matagal na po, 2001 na po, baka dumating po ang panahon, wala nang maniwala sa atin, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Baka ang sasabihin nila, e, "Parang bolahan na yata ito, parang paikot-ikot po tayo."

Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I think we owe it to our people to give them an honest and reliable answer. Meron po ba kayong gustong isagot, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, meron po tayong tinatawag na "Competitive Selection Process," CSP that will address the generation cost which covers around 50 percent of the entire cost. The Energy Regulatory Commission, ERC, although iba po iyong magha-handle sa pag-sponsor sa kaniya, regulates the transmission and distribution sectors, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. MARCOLETA. Baka hindi rin po maintindihan iyong sagot na iyon, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

Ang ERC po talaga ang regulator. Mag-apply siyempre po iyong distribution utilities ng rates niya at aaprubahan ng ERC. Ang problema, Mr. Speaker, ang sabi nga dito sa prangkisang sinabi ko o doon sa Declaration of Policy, kailangang transparent tayo.

Alam po ba ninyo, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, doon sa rate fixing na ina-approve ng ERC, wala po akong makitang transparency. Bibigyan ko po kayo ng halimbawa. Iyon lamang pong formula ng pagko-compute ng rate ng Meralco magmula doon sa tinatawag nilang RORB na ngayon ay pumunta sa rehimen ng tinatawag nilang PBR o Performance-Based Rate, sinubukan ko po kasi na intindihin kung papaano po nila kinukuwenta. Pinadalhan po ako ng limang malalaking compendium po, ito po iyong formula. Mas mataas pa po sa akin iyong ibinigay na compendium. Kaya ko po bang unawain iyong formula na iyon, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, na mataas pa sa akin?

Tinanong ko pa nga iyong isa sa kanila e, baka kako maging si Dr. Albert Einstein hindi maiintindihan ito e. Papaano magiging transparent ito kung ako hindi ko masyado, hindi ko rin maintindihan ito? Sino man po sa atin dito, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, walang makakaintindi doon sa equation formula na ginagamit ng ERC kung ang pag-uusapan ay iyong rate fixing, kung magkano ang isisingil sa mga consumers.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

It was 4:20 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:22 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

Distinguished Sponsor, please respond.

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, ang Department of Energy provided that there would be a Competitive Selection Process. The CSP, iyon

po iyong isang ginagawa ng Department of Energy to see to it that the cost, ang presyo, ang cost na babayaran ng ating mga consumers ay siguradong, ang tinatawag nila, the "least cost possible," but not necessarily the cheapest, the least cost possible based on the formula. So, the ERC, Energy Regulatory Commission, which is the next agency to be sponsored here on the floor, can probably answer the other questions being asked by the honorable or my distinguished colleague, Hon. Rodante Marcoleta. But to add, it can be gleaned that about 15 percent of the charges are assessments pursuant to the EPIRA and ERC Resolutions with respect to transmission, distribution, systems losses and charges. These are pursuant to pre-established formulas that are subject for evaluation and approval of the ERC. Sila po ang next na magpe-present sa floor dito. So, the pricing methodologies for generation charges are applied by the ERC for generation charges.

So, iyong katanungan ninyo po, probably Hon. Mikey Arroyo, who is the one sponsoring the Energy Regulatory Commission can best answer that. But as far as the Department of Energy is concerned, na-provide na po ng Department of Energy and they did their best by giving us what we call the CSP, Competitive Selection Process, so at least magiging least cost for our consumers based on the CSP, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. MARCOLETA. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, the Department of Energy is the primary agency that is supposed to operationalize Republic Act No. 9136. Is that correct?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. MARCOLETA. Thank you. And in relation to that, at the very least, we expect programs that will be undertaken by the Department of Energy in order to realize eventually the lowering of prices or the tariff of electricity. For example, this Representation is assuming that there are programs that will entail competition because only competition, in the final analysis, will eventually lower the price of electricity.

Sa ngayon po kasi, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, sinasabi nga rito sa Declaration of Policy na kinakailangang mayroong economic efficiency and enhanced competitiveness of Philippine products in the global market. Kailan po natin magagawa iyon? Ang sabi rito po sa binasa ko na saknong dito, there should be a regime of free and fair competition and full public accountability. So, kung wala pong competition, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, hindi po natin kailanman maa-achieve ang isang lebel ng presyo na kayang abutin natin kahit sa mga darating na panahon.

So, kinakailangang maipaliwanag natin, ano ba iyong nakalatag na programa para mapaniwala natin ang ating mamamayan, mga kaibigan na, “Magtiis-tiis lang po muna tayo, ito po ang programa po na nakikita namin sa Department of Energy. Kapag ito pong lahat na ito ay natapos, ako po’y naniniwala na ang presyo ng elektrisidad ay talagang abot-kaya na natin.” O, e ano po ang sasabihin ko sa kanila? Ano pong programa ang puwede kong sabihin sa kanila? Iyon po iyong hinihingi natin. Ilan po ba iyong mga power generation companies ngayon? Palagay ninyo mabibilang lang sa daliri—siguro mga anim, pito, walo. Tayo po ba’y magdadagdag ng mga power generation companies para sa ganoon ay marami iyong magko-compete? Kung wala pong competition, e ano iyong sinasabi po sa Declaration of Policy that there should be a regime of fair and free competition? Iyon po sana iyong gusto naming malaman mula sa inyo, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, if you look at the entire picture, we already have that Competitive Selection Process, which the Department of Energy put in place, keeping in mind the consumers.

REP. MARCOLETA. Kailan po iyon?

REP. DALIPE. Well, 2018, nailagay na po iyong Competitive Selection Process, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MARCOLETA. Kung nailagay na po iyong Competitive Selection Process,...

REP. DALIPE. And if I may, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MARCOLETA. ... bakit hindi po nararamdaman iyong pagbaba ng presyo?

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, through the years, the long years that we have—e 2018 nailagay po iyan. So, the start is 2018 and iyan na po ang pinakamagandang policy na naibigay ng Department of Energy para mas maging transparent siya.

REP. MARCOLETA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. DALIPE. The Competitive Selection Process is open. It is open po. The Department of Energy requires the posting of the Terms of Reference, the details of the need of the consumers. So, ni-require rin po ng Department of Energy to also provide no hidden pass-on charges. So, doon pa lang po sa paglagay noong CSP ng DOE, at least nakikita po natin na nandoon po iyong concern ng Department of Energy for our consumers.

REP. MARCOLETA. Sana po, Mr. Speaker,...

REP. DALIPE. So, that is the ...

REP. MARCOLETA. ... ay magagamit po at ...

REP. DALIPE. ... best policy of giving it or making it open and transparent, the CSP, Competitive Selection process, na hindi na po sila puwedeng basta dumiretso sa isa, but there will be a selection process that will be transparent to all, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With due respect to the Deputy Speaker, your time is up.

REP. MARCOLETA. Isa na lamang po, magwa-wind up ako, Mr. Speaker.

Ito pong batas na ito ay naipasa natin 2001. Ang sinasabi po ninyo, iyong mga

competitive processes na binabanggit ninyo, 2018. Papaano po natin mapapaniwala – e bakit naman po mayroon tayong Declaration of Policy ng 2001? Ang sinasabi po ninyo, ginawa natin itong mga bagay-bagay na ito 2018 na. Papaano po tayo paniniwalaan ng ating mga consumers, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor? Kaya pala hanggang ngayon hindi natin nararamdaman. Ganoon po ba iyon?

REP. DALIPE. Well, actually, kung titingnan ninyo po, dapat nga 2013 pa siya, e kaso there was a delayed implementation due to a TRO or temporary restraining order. But the Supreme Court decided in May 2019, so ngayon pa, bago lang po siya. So, probably, in the years to come, with this new policy of Competitive Selection Process which is more transparent, which is more open, it will be for the benefit of our consumers, the different consumers in the different areas in the Philippines, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. MARCOLETA. Sige po, kung hanggang doon lamang po ang kaya nating ipaliwanag muna sa ating mga mamamayan ay wala po talaga, hindi ba, Mr. Speaker? Alangan naman sisihin ko iyong Korte Suprema na naman dito, baka hindi na ako paniwalaan.

Salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker Marcoleta.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the next Member who wishes to interpellate our Sponsor is Rep. Edcel Lagman of the First District of Albay.

I move for his recognition.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The honorable Representative from the First District of Albay, Hon. Edcel Lagman, is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

Please proceed, Honorable Lagman.

REP. LAGMAN. Can I be heard, Mr. Speaker?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Yes, we hear you.

REP. LAGMAN. Can I now proceed?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Yes, you may proceed, Honorable Lagman.

REP. LAGMAN. Distinguished Sponsor, honorable Speaker, today, October 2 of 2020, there is a news report captioned, and I quote, “Duterte mulls BNPP opening.” BNPP refers to the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant.

Is the distinguished Sponsor aware of this news account?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Honorable Sponsor.

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, Hon. Edcel Lagman, we confirm, it is true but such policy – we are still awaiting for further information from the Executive Department, from Malacañang, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, the lead paragraph of this news report reads, and I quote, “President Rodrigo Duterte wants the Department of Energy to study the reopening of the nuclear power plant in Bataan.” What can the Department of Energy say about this statement?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the Department of Energy welcomes – it welcomes the study. So, the pronouncement made and read by the distinguished colleague, Rep. Edcel Lagman, is not really on the actual operation already. But if the policy or the statement made was for the study, the Department of Energy welcomes the study because we really need to know, because we have to add other things to our energy mix. We cannot be reliant on certain sources, but if we can add more to our energy mix, it will be good for our country. So, ang nangyari po ay pinag-aaralan pa po iyan. So the Department of Energy welcomes that study. That is all, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, distinguished Sponsor, that is not my statement. That is what was written in the news account.

Now, let me proceed.

On October 24, 2020, President Duterte issued Executive Order No. 116—on July 24, 2020, entitled: DIRECTING A STUDY FOR THE ADOPTION OF A NATIONAL POSITION ON A NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAM CONSTITUTING A NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAM INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES. Is the distinguished Sponsor aware of Executive Order No. 116?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, can I request Hon. Edcel Lagman to repeat his question because iyong last two statements niya medyo garbled? So, can you please repeat your question, Hon. Edcel Lagman?

REP. LAGMAN. Yes, distinguished Sponsor.

On July 24, 2020, President Duterte issued Executive Order No. 116, entitled: DIRECTING A STUDY FOR THE ADOPTION OF A NATIONAL POSITION ON A NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAM CONSTITUTING A NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAM INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Is the distinguished Sponsor aware of Executive Order No. 116?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, yes, the Department of Energy is aware of that.

REP. LAGMAN. Among the powers and functions of the Nuclear Energy Program Inter-Agency Committee is, and I quote, "To review the existing legal framework, study the viability of nuclear energy, and recommend the necessary steps in the utilization of nuclear energy, as well as existing facilities such as but not limited to the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant." Does the distinguished Sponsor confirm this power?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, yes, we confirm.

REP. LAGMAN. This is a virtual order that the Nuclear Energy Program Inter-Agency Committee recommend the utilization of the BNPP after that study. Is this correct?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, yes, but after the study, pag-aaralan pa po iyan, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Does the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, know why the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant was mothballed and never became operational?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, through the years, particularly in the '70s and the '80s, there were allegations made by certain groups or sectors against the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. But through time, these allegations which were raised by certain groups were probably addressed because the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant is still there. So, iyon po iyong dahilan bakit na-mothball siya, because of the allegations raised at that time, in the '70s and '80s, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Were these allegations validated, so much so that the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant was mothballed and never became operational, as early as the late 1970s?

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, these allegations are still being validated. In fact, there were other nuclear power plants similar to the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant which were also checked and these other nuclear power plants are still in existence. So, iyong mga kasabay na nuclear power plants at that time which operated and are still operating are probably the answer to the allegations made at that time. So, it is not only the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant which was constructed, mayroon pa pong mga iba. The existence of the other nuclear power plants which are still operating right now—the nuclear power plants in Slovenia, the nuclear power plant in Brazil, and the nuclear power plant in Korea, which were built together with the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, at that

time, in the '70s and '80s, these other nuclear power plants, which are just the same in the design, constructed in the same year and which operated after construction are still operating at present. So, iyong mga alegasyon po ay kinonsider and probably, we can say as an answer na iyong continued operation ng mga nuclear power plants sa Slovenia, Brazil and South Korea, na hanggang ngayon po ay umaandar, they are the answer to the allegations raised by certain sectors or groups, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Distinguished Sponsor, may we know whether these other nuclear power plants of the same vintage as that of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant facility were constructed with corruption and greed, both official and private greed? May we know, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, when we construct a nuclear power plant, may costing po iyan. So, the cost of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant and the cost of the other nuclear power plants in other countries ay hindi naman po ganoon kalaki iyong diperensya. Halos magkakapareho lang sila. So probably, iyong allegations of corruption will be answered by the cost itself. So, magkano po ba iyong cost ng nuclear power plant doon sa Slovenia? Magkano po ba iyong cost noong nuclear power plant sa South Korea? Magkano po ba iyong cost noong nuclear power plant sa Brazil? And that, probably, by looking at the cost of the other nuclear power plants in other parts of the world which are still operating right now, and comparing them with the cost of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, diyan po makikita natin iyong allegations kung mayroon ba talagang corruption o wala po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Now, distinguished Sponsor, with respect to this other nuclear power plants of the same vintage, how much was the cost of the erection or construction of the same?

REP. DALIPE. The construction cost of

the BNPP at that time, total cost po niya after completion was about \$2.2 billion, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. My question is not about the cost of the BNPP, the cost of the other comparable nuclear facilities in other countries because you were saying, distinguished Sponsor, that that should show us the solution to the allegations of corruption. Now, what is the cost, respectively, of the construction of these other nuclear facilities of the same vintage as the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant? Would you have any data on this to support your justification?

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, we are trying to get the figures, but we will furnish you right away with the cost of the other nuclear power plants, particularly in Brazil, South Korea and Slovenia. Ibibigay po namin, kinukuha lang iyong datos, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Distinguished Sponsor, would you know whether these other nuclear facilities were constructed on top of an extinct volcano like Mount Natib, which was similar to Mount Pinatubo before its eruption in 1991?

REP. DALIPE. We will try to give you that information, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, if the other power plants were constructed on such hazards as you stated. The data are not available to this Representation right now, who is the Sponsor of the Department of Energy budget, but as soon as we get the data, we will furnish Hon. Edcel Lagman with such, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. But would the distinguished Sponsor agree that the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant is perched on Mt. Natib, a dormant volcano?

REP. DALIPE. Okay, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, before the construction of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, there was a US Geological Team which

inspected it. So, sila po iyong nag-inspect ng area ng Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. But just to answer the apprehension of my distinguished colleague, iyong pronouncement naman po ng Malacañang, ng Executive Department, ay pag-aralan muna po iyong Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. It does not mean that when such pronouncements are made, that the study will be made, e hindi pa naman po natin alam iyong resulta noong pag-aaral. So, let us wait until such time na lumabas po iyong pag-aaral, what the result will be, then that is the only time we can say whether we will operate or we will not operate the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant.

So, so far, as of now, we are still in the process of studying whether we will operate a nuclear power plant or not and the study will also include whether it will be the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant or it will not be the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. So, pag-aaralan pa po iyan lahat. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, my question was very simple. I was just asking for a confirmation from the distinguished Sponsor whether the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant is perched on Mount Natib, a dormant volcano. That is all I was asking for, a confirmation of that fact.

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, although malayo pa tayo diyan, but I will try to give some of the information or details requested by the honorable colleague. Mount Natib is around 13 kilometers away. So, hindi po siya or iyong Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, although hindi pa, sinabi ko I will try to reiterate that it is the—we are not yet sure whether it will be Bataan Nuclear Power Plant or not, or whether it will be another nuclear power plant which will be considered, so depende pa po sa study. But just to answer, the data that we got here is that Mount Natib is 13 kilometers away from Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, 13 kilometers is a very short distance.

When Mount Pinatubo erupted, it affected areas much, much farther than 13 kilometers; it affected the rest of the world. So, that short distance is not a justification that it will be safe to construct a nuclear facility proximate to a dormant volcano.

My next question is, would the distinguished Sponsor affirm that the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant was constructed along a fault line?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, can I request our distinguished colleague, dahil medyo garbled po iyong dating dito because of the Internet connection, na pakiulit po.

REP. LAGMAN. The question is that, would the distinguished Sponsor admit that the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant was constructed along a fault line?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant was not constructed on a fault line, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. Hindi po siya naka-construct on top of a fault line.

REP. LAGMAN. Is the distinguished Sponsor aware of prior studies which recommended that the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant should not be made operational?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, there were studies. In fact, may study pero hindi lang po isa. Paiba-iba po iyong findings ng mga study. There is one study which says na delikado, tapos may ibang study na lumabas na sinasabi na hindi. So, hindi siya pare-pareho ang conclusion. The studies yielded different conclusions, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Distinguished Sponsor, with your documents, which studies said that the Nuclear Power Plant should be mothballed and should never be operationalized because of 4,000 defects?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, just to allay any fears, let me state that in the Nuclear Energy Program, there is what we call the “four cornerstones for the

Nuclear Energy Program.” One of these, isa po iyong national policy which is Executive Order No. 116; second is the legislative framework; third is the alignment with International Standards; and fourth are public awareness and acceptability. And with all that, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, it will still go back to us here in Congress. It will still be upon Congress to check and review, see to it kung puwede ba o hindi. So definitely, after all of these studies which have been made and which I mentioned, even the things needed which we call the “four cornerstones for the Nuclear Energy Program,” Congress still has a say on that because of the legal framework or the law that will be needed, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. My question really, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, is that the distinguished Sponsor alleged that there are studies which documented that the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant should be mothballed for thousands of defects and should never be operationalized, and there are also contrary studies. My question really is, what are these studies which said that the nuclear power plant should be mothballed because of fatal defects?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, we will try to furnish you with a copy of such because we do not have the studies which you are requesting from us, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. We will furnish you as soon as we are able to get hold of them. But to add again, and I reiterate that that is beside the point because we will still continue to have a new study, pag-aaralan po ulit. So, the studies which were made in the past will be disregarded. We will have a new study on this, whether the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant is feasible or not, whether there is a need to set up a new one. So we will go back again to zero and study it, then after the conduct of such studies, then that is the time we will find out kung puwede ba siya o hindi siya puwede, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Last question, last question, Honorable Lagman.

REP. LAGMAN. Well, I have not consumed 30 minutes compared to the time consumed by Deputy Speaker Marcoleta. I have barely touched the surface of my questions.

Now, is the distinguished Gentleman aware of the study of the Puno Commission?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, although there was the Puno Commission, as I have said earlier, whatever the results of the previous studies were, they will just be noted because we will go back again e. We will study again at the present time whether the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant can be operated or not. So probably, we can use it as a reference but it will not be—the studies conducted in the past will not give or will not yield to us a conclusion. So, hindi po siya conclusive e.

So, that is why if you look right now, ang statement na ni-release ng Executive Department, that is for study. Because if the studies in the past were only conclusive, bakit pa natin pag-aaralan ulit ngayon? So, if the review on the news article, as stated by the Hon. Edcel Lagman, ay pag-aaralan po natin ulit e, so we will. I suggest that we await the study and when the results come out, then that is the time that we will discuss the results of the study as stated by the Executive Department, as stated by Malacañang, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. For the record, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Excuse me, Honorable Lagman. Dep. Minority Leader Kit Belmonte wants to give you his 30 minutes, so you can continue.

REP. LAGMAN. Thank you very much, Hon. Kit Belmonte, for giving me your time.

Now, just for the record, considering that, most probably, the distinguished Sponsor is not aware of the findings of the Puno Commission, the Puno Commission was created by no less than President Marcos in 1979. Ricardo Puno was the Minister of Justice

and one of the findings of the Commission was that the BNPP was not safe. Its design was plagued with unresolved safety issues and it was full of potential hazards to the health and safety of the public. And I just wonder why, 41 years from the construction and mothballing of the nuclear power plant, it is only now that we are going to conduct a restudy of whether or not the Bataan Nuclear Plant should be revived, rehabilitated and operationalized.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished...

REP. LAGMAN. That was my last question, I was just making an annotation. May we know from the distinguished Sponsor why the BNPP is monickered as the "monster of Morong"?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, I did not – monster of?

REP. LAGMAN. "Monster of Morong," Morong is in Bataan.

REP. DALIPE. Ah, monster of ...

REP. LAGMAN. Morong.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, hindi ko na po alam e. Kasi iyong issue po ngayon – opo, I cannot really give you the answer why it is called the "monster of Morong," but definitely, as how I understand the issue, hindi po natin puwede sabihin na eksakto na iyong Bataan Nuclear Power Plant na ang io-operate kasi it can be in Luzon, it can be in Visayas, it can be in Mindanao. That is the actual situation right now.

So, I do not – probably, I would just want to make the clarification as to the news report which was initially cited by the distinguished Gentleman, Rep. Edcel Lagman, na kung ang ating Nuclear Power Program ay doon ba sa Bataan o hindi. But definitely, what I can tell you right now, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, ay hindi pa rin po natin alam. Even if we go back to previous studies, even if we go back to those allegations against the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, but what I can say – and

I would like to reiterate that we are not yet sure if it will be the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant that will be operated. So, we will still wait for the policy, we will still wait for the study and by that time, doon po natin malalaman kung Bataan Nuclear Power Plant po ba ang io-operate natin o hindi, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Just for the record, Mr. Speaker, considering the ignominious past of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, the scandal and bribery which surrounded its procurement and construction, the onerous and odious loan of US \$2.2 billion which financed the erection of the facility and the dubious safety of its location – these are the reasons why it has been monickered as the "monster of Morong." And as the "monster of Morong," it should remain mothballed and should never be rehabilitated and operationalized despite any and all studies.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, the passage of time, of more than four decades, has made the second-hand BNPP facility more obsolescent. Unlike the other facilities which were operationalized and are continuously operational, the Bataan Nuclear Plant was mothballed and because of that, definitely, it has no comparison with respect to other operational facilities of the same vintage. So, I would suggest very strongly that a study should confirm that the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant should not be operationalized. As a matter of fact, it should be preserved, not to be rehabilitated but as a perpetual reminder of the corruption and greed during the martial law regime. What is the take of the distinguished Sponsor on this statement?

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, I am no expert in nuclear power plants, that is why just like other Filipinos, we would like to await the study. And the study will consider things, the new nuclear technology developments in relation to operations, safety, security and safeguards. The study is meant to look into the readiness of the Philippines to embark on a nuclear energy development program. So, this Representation also, like other Filipinos,

would like to find out kung puwede ba o hindi. So we would like to wait for the results of the study. I cannot comment because I, myself, I really want to find out, especially at this present time that we really need a new study to assess whether we will be needing it and placing it here or there or whatever. So, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, that is my response to your query.

REP. LAGMAN. Distinguished Speaker – Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, until now, the government is allocating funds for the preservation of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant under the budget of the National Power Corporation. Is it not?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, yes, it is. There is a budget for that and that is about P2 million per year, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. In the 2019 General Appropriations Act, how much was the BNPP-preservation budget?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, let me read to you the BNPP preservation budget under the National Power Corporation 2019 Budget: For Personnel Services, it was P23,666,000 and for the MOOE it was P62,982,000. So the total BNPP preservation budget is P86,648,000. For 2020, so far, for the Personnel Services, it is P18,471,000; for the MOOE, it is P29,618,000; and for Capital Outlays, it is P4,464,000.. The total is P52,553,000. For 2021, and I would like to give you the data, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. For 2021, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the Personnel Services is P27,252,000, the MOOE is P30,507,000 plus Capital Outlays of P34,773,000. So, the total budget that we are proposing for 2021 is P92,534,000, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor, for those very accurate restatement of the outlays. But again, these are not peanut allocations because they amount to several millions of pesos. As a matter of fact, the 2021

Budget, in its totality, is even higher than the 2019 and 2020 budgets because the total for 2021 is P92,534,000. Now, there is a capital outlay of P34,733,000. What is this capital outlay for?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the Capital Outlay for 2021 amounting to P34,000,000 is for the replacement of the roofing for the main building to protect the turbines and other equipment, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, if we have allocated millions of pesos annually for the preservation of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, how much has the government appropriated for the preservation of the BNPP in the past 41 years?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, we would like to submit to you in detail the total appropriations for the maintenance and preservation of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant for the last 24 years. So, we will furnish you the details of such, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Thank you so much.

We appreciate that commitment to submit the details of these annual appropriations for the past 41 years. But I would reckon that at an average of even only 50 million a year for the past 41 years, that would total to more than P2 billion for a mothballed and inoperational unsafe facility.

Now, why are we spending millions of pesos, now amounting to billions, for the preservation of the “monster of Morong” when it should be preserved as a memorial to the corruption and greed during the martial law regime, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, as I said earlier, first, the capital outlay is for the replacement of the roofing for the main building to protect the turbines and other equipment. Now, it also includes the rehabilitation of the perimeter fencing which is important to prevent informal dwellers from occupying the areas in the BNPP, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please wind up.

REP. LAGMAN. Mr. Speaker, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please wind up, honorable Congressman.

REP. LAGMAN. ... distinguished Sponsor,...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Last question.

REP. LAGMAN. ... do you not think that instead of rehabilitating the mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, it would be better to construct a new facility elsewhere and/or maximize alternative sources of energy for our energy mix?

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, I have reiterated time and again that we are conducting a new study. So, the proposal made by the distinguished Gentleman from Albay can also be one of those which will be considered. So, right now, hindi po natin masasabi kung doon na ba sa Bataan Nuclear Power Plant or, as what was suggested, in another area. So, we will still have to await the results of the new study which will be commissioned at present, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. LAGMAN. Well, for my last question or even just a statement, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, if ever this projected study would justify the rehabilitation and operation of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, then again, we are revising history because we are deodorizing the corruption and greed, both official and private, which happened during the martial law and the "monster of Morong" will again haunt the Filipino nation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, distinguished Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you. Before I recognize the Majority Leader, I would like to ask for the indulgence of the Members of the House and also to

manifest that the Presiding Officer gave additional minutes to Honorable Lagman. But according to our Rules, there are no rules here, there is no provision here that a Member can give their allotted time to another Member, so it is not allowed in our Rules. So from now on, we will be very strict. Section 94 of our House Rules, Rule XIII, says, "During budget deliberations, a Member shall not be allowed to speak for more than thirty (30) minutes in debate, *provided*, that a second round of interpellations may be allowed upon motion of the Majority Leader." There is no transferring of minutes allotted from a Member to another Member. Thank you.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the next of our colleagues to interpellate is the Representative of the Party-List BAYAN MUNA, the Hon. Eufemia "Ka Femia" Cullamat.

I move for her recognition.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the BAYAN MUNA Party-List, Hon. Eufemia "Ka Femia" Cullamat, is recognized to interpellate the good Sponsor.

REP. CULLAMAT. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). You may proceed, Honorable Cullamat.

REP. CULLAMAT. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Pahihintulutan ba ang Kinatawang ito na magpahayag ng mga ilang katanungan, Ginoong Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. CULLAMAT. Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, isa nga po sa mandato ng DOE ang paghihikayat ng kompetisyon para mapababa ang singil ng kuryente pero kahit mula noon hanggang naisabatas ang EPIRA, hanggang ngayon, patuloy lang ang pagtaas ng presyo ng kuryente, Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, I stated a while ago that the Department of Energy introduced a policy and it is a means to address iyong mga concern on how to make the price of electricity for people—to give the consumers the least cost and this is what we call the “Competitive Selection Process.” So, under po sa Competitive Selection Process, open po sa lahat, even the posting, sinabi ko kanina, iyong posting ng terms of reference, iyong details ng needs ng consumers, nandoon po sa ating Competitive Selection Process.

So, iyong DOE po, iyong Department of Energy, also provided no pass-on hidden charges. So, as far as the Department is concerned, it is really exerting its effort to see to it that the consumers will be able to experience or the least cost will be shouldered by the consumers by introducing these reforms, one of which, as I mentioned, is the CSP or the Competitive Selection Process because it makes it more transparent and more open for the public to see. So, iyon po iyong mga nilagay ng Department of Energy. But nevertheless, iyong presyo naman po, the price, doon naman po iyon sa Energy Regulatory Commission. But as far as the Department of Energy is concerned, isa na pong malaking tulong iyong Competitive Selection Process. Kasi kung wala po iyong Competitive Selection Process ay mahirap naman po baka kung ano-ano na lang or somebody will try to come up and favor a particular one. But with this in place, the Competitive Selection Process, rest assured that it will be more transparent to all, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. CULLAMAT. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor.

Kaya nga po ibig sabihin, hindi EPIRA ang naging tugon para pababain ang presyo ng kuryente. Isa rin po, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, isa rin po sa mandato ng DOE ay ang pagtiyak na ma-develop ang industriya ng natural na gas at iba pang renewable energy tulad ng wind at solar. Mapapababa po ba nito ang presyo ng kuryente, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, hindi rin po natin masasabi that renewable energy will drive the prices down. But ang makakasiguro lang po tayo is that we will be assured that through the Competitive Selection Process, it will be at the least cost to our consumers. So, at least, makikita po natin na iyong pinakamababa, let us say least cost, and since it is transparent, and that is what will be given to our consumers. So, not necessarily po na renewable energy, right there and then na masasabi natin will really drive the prices of electricity down. But we are assured, with the CSP, Competitive Selection Process, we have that assurance that the least costly for our electrical consumers will be chosen, will be given to the consumers, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. CULLAMAT. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, ilang taon na po bang umiiral ang Competitive Selection Process?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, puwede po ba ninyong pakiulit iyong inyong katanungan? Medyo garbled po dito sa plenary hall iyong audio and video ninyo. Can you please repeat your question?

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abu relinquished the Chair to Rep. Xavier Jesus D. Romualdo.

REP. CULLAMAT. Ilang taon na pong umiiral ang Competitive Selection Process?

REP. DALIPE. If we count it, 2018 siya, magdadalawang taon pa lang po. Fairly, it is a new scheme, bago lang po, less than two years if we count from 2018 or 2019, about two years, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, going back to the question kung ilang taon na iyong CSP, two years po, two years if we count—iyong first CSP policy po kasi is 2015 and it was revised in 2018. So, if we will count, 2018 is the date. So, we are now in 2020, so fairly, about two years. Two years old ang Competitive Selection Process, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). The session is suspended.

It was 5:40 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:40 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Romualdo). The session is resumed.

Yes, please proceed, Your Honor.

At this juncture, Representative Romualdo relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Raneo "Ranie" E. Abu.

REP. CULLAMAT. Hindi ko po naririnig iyong tanong – ah, iyong sagot.

REP. DALIPE. Okay.

Uulitin ko po iyong sagot. Iyong Competitive Selection Process po, iyong first Competitive Selection Process, the first CSP policy was in 2015 and it was revised in 2018. The 2015 CSP policy was subjected to a Supreme Court case. Tapos it was revised in 2018 to be more responsive to the consumers' needs. So, 2020 na po tayo ngayon, so more or less, two years po iyong Competitive Selection Process. Iyong CSP, two years, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Honorable Cullamat.

The session is suspended.

It was 5:42 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:43 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

REP. CULLAMAT. Hello, Mr. Speaker,

kagalang-galang na Sponsor. Naririnig na ba ako?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Okay, naririnig na po namin kayo. Puwede na po tayong magpatuloy.

REP. CULLAMAT. Okay.

Naririnig mo ba iyong tanong ko, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, or uulitin ko po?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Sasagutin na lang ho kayo ng kagalang-galang na Sponsor.

REP. CULLAMAT. Okay.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, uulitin ko po iyong sagot, siguro po na-cut iyong Internet connection.

So, tungkol po sa tanong ninyo tungkol sa kung ilang taon na po ba iyong Competitive Selection Process, iyong una pong Competitive Selection Process, iyong first CSP policy was in 2015 and it was subjected to a Supreme Court case. So, the CSP policy was revised in 2018 to be more responsive to the consumers' needs. So, we are now in 2020, more or less, dalawang taon na po iyong ating Competitive Selection Process policy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. CULLAMAT. Opo, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, dalawang taon na, pero di pa din bumababa ang presyo ng kuryente, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor. Dalawang taon na siya, pero hindi pa din bumaba ang presyo ng kuryente.

REP. DALIPE. Well, iyon na nga iyong isang layunin kasi ng CSP, para at least makasiguro po tayo na iyong binabayaran ng mga consumers is the least cost. So, the benefit of the CSP shall only be enjoyed by the consumers in the new PSAs between the GenCos and the distribution utilities. So doon, 'pag mayroong mga bagong Power Sharing Agreement, with the CSP, makakasiguro po tayo kasi mas transparent na po siya, hindi katulad dati noong wala pa po tayong Competitive Selection Process. So

basically, kung mayroon nang mga bagong agreements within the generating companies and distribution utilities and it is subjected to a Competitive Selection Process, makakasiguro po tayo na iyong presyo or the cost of electricity would be the least costly for our consumers because of this policy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. CULLAMAT. Okay. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, ang pagbibigay ng prayoridad sa pagpapaunlad ng renewable energy ay dapat pangunahing ikonsidera at sana ay gobyerno mismo ang magsasagawa nito. Ito ang tamang direksyon, lalo na pagkatapos nitong COVID-19, para sa hinaharap ng mga polisiya sa energy, lalo na tulad nating nakaasa sa imported na produkto. Mangangailangan tayo ng mas sustinableng pagkukunan ng enerhiya, iyong dapat ay matatag mula sa mga pagkagambala sa global supply chain. Gayundin, ang pribadong kumpanya ay tubo ang palaging nasa unahan, ang serbisyo ay nagiging sekondaryo kung kaya't nang ipasa ang EPIRA noong 2001, hindi natin maranasan ang tunay na pagbaba ng presyo ng kuryente, Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor.

Dagdag pa rito, Ginoong Speaker, nakakaalarma rin po iyong sinabi natin, iyong nuclear energy, nakakaalarma ang pagpasok ng nuclear energy power generation mix sa bansa. Nagpapalala lamang ito sa ating dependence sa imported na panggatong at posibleng magbabalik sa isinantabi ng \$2.3 bilyon sa Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. Ang nuclear power plant ay gagamit ng uranium na wala tayo. Magiging pareho lamang ito sa kaso ng langis at coal na nakadepende tayo sa imported na panggatong. Ang aasahang laki na megawatts na malilikha nito ay balewala kumpara sa kapasidad ng iba pang pagkukunan ng enerhiya sa bansa kung paglalaanan lamang ito ng sapat na pondo. Dagdag pa, may direktang gastos dito na ipapasa sa mga consumers tulad ng nuclear tax, gastos sa decommissioning at waste disposal na maaaring magresulta sa mas mataas na bayarin sa kuryente ng mga mamamayan. Maraming, maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor at ...

REP. DALIPE. Yes. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, tama po ano. Mayroon rin po tayong Green Energy Auction Policy. Doon po sa Green Energy Auction Policy, mayroon pong nakalagay doon na 2,000 megawatts. So iyong ating CSP, Competitive Selection Process, na tinatanong ninyo kung mayroon ba tayong other options doon, yes, mayroon po. So, 2,000 megawatts ang na-allocate sa kaniya for the Green Energy Auction Policy. So, iyong Department of Energy recently issued the Green Energy Auction Policy last July 14, 2020 at ito po ay naging effective last August 13, 2020. So, the Green Energy Auction Policy will facilitate the Competitive Selection Process, the CSP, that ensures renewable energy's entry at the least cost for our consumers, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. CULLAMAT. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, ang palagi pong inaasahan ng ating mamamayan ay ang murang kuryente.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, pakiulit po, naputol na naman.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Kagalang-galang na Cullamat.

REP. CULLAMAT. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, ang sabi ko po, ang palagi pong inaasahan ng ating mamamayan ay ang murang kuryente.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Iyon, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, ang inaasahan daw ng ating mga mamamayan ay murang kuryente.

REP. DALIPE. Yes po. In fact, what the Department of Energy did is to introduce a new policy, iyon na iyong Competitive Selection Process para iyong generating companies at mga distribution utilities, when they come with that power-sharing agreement, mas transparent, kasi para maiwasan na natin iyong mga duda na hindi iyong pinakamurang kuryente ang — it is not the least-cost price of electricity that will be given to our consumers.

So, the policy made by the Department of Energy, which is the Competitive Selection Process, will assure our consumers that their concern about lower electricity rate is always in the mind of the Department of Energy. So, the Competitive Selection Process, that was placed by the DOE, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. CULLAMAT. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, hindi po ito mangyayaring – wala pong nangyayaring pagbabang presyo, bagkus pataas ito nang pataas. Ito lamang po, Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor. Maraming salamat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Marami pong salamat.
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the next Member who wishes to interpellate our distinguished Sponsor is the Gentleman from the Lone District of Baguio City, Rep. Mark Go.

I move that he be recognized.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the Lone District of Baguio City, Hon. Mark Go, is recognized to interpellate the distinguished Sponsor.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, it would seem that we have some technical difficulties.

I move that we suspend the session. I move that we suspend the session – ah, he is there na.

Mr. Speaker, Representative Go is online already.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Mark Go from the Lone District of Baguio City is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. GO (M.). Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Will the honorable Sponsor be willing to answer some of my questions, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). Yes. Thank you very much.

Earlier, you have mentioned the energy mix, as far as the supply side is concerned, of the country and you have indicated that the biggest chunk in terms of the mix is oil. I would like to find out, what about the demand side? Would you tell us as far as the energy mix is concerned on the demand side of the energy situation of the country.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, iyong sa demand side naman po, however you look at it, pareho lang naman po iyon. Kasi as I have stated earlier, iyong geothermal is still 15.4 percent; hydro is 3.3 percent; natural gas is 6.1 percent; coal is 29.2 percent; oil is 32.2 percent; and the other renewable energy is 13.8 percent. So, basically, as far as the demand side is concerned, this is still what is reflected. So, pareho lang po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). So, you are saying that the supply is equal to the demand and therefore, you do not have any problem as far as the supply is concerned because that is what is demanded by our consumers or by the country in general.

REP. DALIPE. Well, as far as the demand side is concerned, there is a forecast made by the Department of Energy. So, iyong supply as reflected, which I mentioned earlier, is still the same. So, wala naman po tayong problema as of now, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). The other question I have here is, where do we want to be in the next one to three years in the short term, and in the long term, between four to 10 years in terms of the supply of the energy mix, in terms of the supply in the country? Will there be a change in the mix in consideration of the global situation, the plan to have a green environment in the country and as far as the requirements of our consumers, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, for the year, if we are talking about the future, the Department of Energy has this projection that for the Year 2040, oil will be 30.3 percent and the renewables will be 30.4 percent; coal will be 27.3 percent; gas will be 10.9 percent; and the others will be 1.1 percent, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. Iyon po iyong for 2040.

REP. GO (M.). What about in the short term? Year 2040 is 20 years from now. What about in the next five years, do we see a significant reduction in the mix of the oil, an increase in the renewable energy and probably a reduction in the share of the coal of our energy mix?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, wait, I am trying to get the projection, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, for five years from now because there is a table for that and – sandali lang po, we will give you the data but definitely, there is a sort of, may table po siya, so iyong graph, so iyong sinabi ko po kanina is 2040. So, ...

REP. GO (M.). Probably, I will have a follow-up question, distinguished Sponsor, while you are waiting for the data. How would you drive this in the next three to five years if the schedule is not quite (*Inaudible*).

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, can you please repeat? Parang naputol iyong sa huling question. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague from Baguio City. Can you please repeat your question because iyong towards the last part of your question ay medyo naputol po? Pakiulit na lang po, the distinguished Gentleman from City of Baguio.

REP. GO (M.). Yes, I was asking, where do you want our country to be in terms of the energy mix in the short term, one to three years, and in the long term, probably four years to 20 years or so in terms of the mix of our energy? The current one, as you stated, is about 32.2 percent for oil; for coal, it is about 29.2 percent; for renewable energy, it is about 13.8 percent; and for geothermal, it is 15.4

percent? In the next three years from today, could there be a change in this mix by probably coming out with programs or probably the programs are in place already, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Well, for the next three to five years, the direction that our country will be going into is for clean and indigenous sources of energy. So, kung makikita po, that is the direction. So, the Department of Energy is gearing towards that direction. So, we should have clean sources and indigenous sources of energy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). And these were, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, already articulated in, probably the arrangements that we have made with different institutions. And probably, contracts have been established already with other private enterprises in achieving this particular objective of increasing the percentage of green and renewable energy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. DALIPE. Well, through the years, mayroon naman tayong ipinapasok sa mix, iyong renewable energy because as what we have mentioned, doon pa rin sa Competitive Selection Process, mayroon na tayong Green Energy Auction. So with that Green Energy Auction policy, it assures that in that Competitive Selection Process, unti-unti, slowly we are already introducing green energy as one of those sources, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Now, with the current partnership that we have with the different institutions, are there, you know, partners we have right now that are already moving also from the current energy they supply to us to another type of energy they supply to the country? Can you just cite probably one or two of these companies that are doing this right now, which are moving towards a green environment so that they will be able to supply us with a different mix of energy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Well, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, if I understand it right—mayroon ba? Lahat po, all of these distribution utilities, almost all of them are already going to that Green Energy Auction—Meralco, Aboitiz, First Gen, Ayala, lahat po sila. Maski po iyong mga maliliit na distribution utilities, they are already participating in that Green Energy Auction program. So lahat po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, will this drive down the cost of energy as far as the consumers are concerned?

REP. DALIPE. Well, iyong use of renewable energy will not really guarantee that the cost will go down. What will guarantee that the consumers will pay the least cost is the Competitive Selection Process policy. So doon pa rin po tayo babalik on what policy or what will assure us that the prices will go down. Will it be renewable energy? Will renewable energy drive the prices down? We cannot say that but one thing for sure is that the Competitive Selection Process, whether it is renewable energy or the Green Energy Auction, will assure the consumers that they will be paying for the least cost, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, would this require an additional budget on the part of the Department of Energy to execute a shift or a change in the mix of our energy in the country, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Well, as far as the budgetary requirements are concerned, hindi na po kailangan. What the Department of Energy will do is to set the policies. So, insofar as the setting of policies is concerned, wala na pong problema in the requirement of additional budget for the DOE, so hindi na. The answer to that is that they do not need any more additional budgetary requirement just to set this policy for green energy. All the Department of Energy has to do is to set the policy and it has been setting the policy already with the, as I mentioned earlier, Green

Energy Auction, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, will it not be good if the Department of Energy will also engage in research along these areas so that they will be more competent to, you know, perform their function in relation to these energy providers? They can cite specific cases that they have experienced if and when they do engage in research as they perform their function in relation to these companies that are involved in providing energy to the country, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, before the Department of Energy issues a certain policy, they also do research. All the policies of the Department of Energy are based on scientific data. They do not issue policies which they just dreamed of, or when they sleep at night, they wake up in the morning, then they issue a policy. So, base po iyan lahat sa scientific data and research. So, before they issue the policy, the Department of Energy does its homework. They do research before issuing a specific policy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, this will also include the study, a comparative study on the prices of energy in other countries if you compare to our prices here in the Philippines? Will that be one of their considerations when they come out with their specific policies? Because as you know, one of the most expensive power rates is that of the Philippines, and if you look at the other countries, their prices of power are lower than our prices here in the country. So, will that be a consideration in the determination of policies and probably, guidelines when they do competitive bidding, you know, among these interested companies, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, yes, it is part of the studies by the Department of Energy to also check the prices of energy in other countries and according to

the data we gathered, we have a higher cost compared to others. That is why when the Department of Energy came up with the study and the results showed that ours is high, the Department of Energy came up and issued these policies to be able to also catch up with other countries with lower electricity costs.

So, *iyon, totoo po*, the Department of Energy is doing its study and comparing our energy price with that of other countries, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. I have another question and this is in relation to the budget.

The budget for 2021 of the Department of Energy, as approved by the Department of Budget and Management and included in the NEP, is P2,149,334,000. Out of this budget, only P1,444,361,000, you know, will be used for regular programs while P706,973,000 are for special accounts, which are considered to be automatic appropriations. I would like to find out, what are these automatic appropriations which are included in the budget of the Department of Energy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Okay. *Iyong* automatic appropriations, we have two for the DOE: one is Retirement and Life Insurance Premiums and the other one is the Special Account of the General Fund. We only have two, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. So, *iyong sa* Retirement and Life Insurance Premiums, the total amount is P57,797,000, and for the Special Account of the General Fund, the total amount is P705,158,000, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). So, the remaining budget or money of the Department of Energy is only P1.3 billion. Do you not think that is small? You know, you have an automatic appropriation of P764 million, which is about 30 percent of your budget and your money spent for Personnel Services, Capital Outlays and for MOOE is only 70 percent of your proposed budget of P2.1 billion. I know Secretary Cusi might be so frugal in his

expenditures, but being a concerned citizen, I think we are interested in seeing that there will be a significant improvement in terms of the mix of our energy, not only – I mean, in terms of the supply but at the same time, we are also interested in seeing a reduction in the price of fuel and other energy in the country. Probably, it would be incumbent upon us to support the Department of Energy to raise its budget considering that only 70 percent of its budget can be utilized in their operation, that is P1.3 billion, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. DALIPE. Well, the manifestation of my colleague from the City of Baguio is very much welcome. But so far, *ito po* – ah, *kaya naman ng* Department of Energy, but if there are any augmentations or any additions to the budget of the Department, they will be very much welcome to this Representation and the Department of Energy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). Distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, I would like to know how much is the original recommendation of the Department of Energy to the Department of Budget and Management, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the amount proposed by the Department of Energy, the amount requested by the Department of Energy from the Department of Budget and Management is P2.6 billion, but what was given by the DBM was only P2.1 billion.

REP. GO (M.). So, there – ah, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, there was a reduction of almost P500 million. What were affected by this reduction, Mr. Chair – ah, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Well, the items not considered, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, were the Vehicle Re-fleeting Program, the upgrade of technical and scientific equipment for the testing of upstream and downstream petroleum as well as coal

and renewable sources, plus a multilevel steel parking area. So, those are the items not considered by the DBM, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GO (M.). Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, the number two item that was removed from the NEP Budget, I am sure would have really helped improve the performance of the Department of Energy. Of course, the vehicle and the other item, the parking space, probably, might not greatly affect the performance of the Department of Energy, but as far as the second item is concerned, I am sure they need, you know, these kinds of instruments to help them find, probably, oil or other energy sources in the country. I would suggest that we consider reinstating back the budget for this item number two, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, we welcome that. If that can be made, why not? Because the upgrade of technical and scientific equipment for the testing of upstream and downstream petroleum, as well as for coal and renewable sources is very much needed and the amount for the equipment needed for the National Petroleum Testing Laboratory which was considered, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, is P50 million. So, if there will be any addition to enable the Department to have this equipment which is very useful for the Department of Energy, this Sponsor is happy to welcome that, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Honorable Go, please wind up.

REP. GO (M.). Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. I would like to propose that the budget for the equipment that was slashed by the Department of Budget be included in our approval of the budget of the Department of Energy, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

I will end my interpellation at this point.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

And we would like to thank also the Members and, of course, Secretary Cusi of the Department of Energy.

Marami pong salamat at magandang gabi po sa inyong lahat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you.

Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize the Hon. Sergio Dagooc of the APEC Party-List for his interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the APEC Party-List, Hon. Sergio Dagooc, is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. DAGOOC. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Magandang gabi po sa ating lahat, iyong mga nasa plenaryo at sa Zoom, sa ating kagalang-galang na Secretary sa Department of Energy, sampu ng kaniyang mga kasama, magandang gabi po sa ating lahat.

Mr. Speaker, ang kagalang-galang ba na Sponsor, ang kaibigan ko sa Second District ng Zamboanga ay tumatanggap ng ilang katanungan at sumusuporta ng ilang pakikiusap, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, opo.

REP. DAGOOC. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, would you agree that we are now transitioning to a society adapting to the effects of the pandemic and that access to electricity seems to be like a minimum requirement as even education, banking, commerce and everything at present are all done through technologies and the Internet, which clearly require electricity? Sumasang-ayon po ba ang kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, I agree, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DAGOOC. Based on the data, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, as of June 30, 2020, there are still 17,379 unenergized sitios at ang mga ito po ay 2,870 ang nasa Luzon; 3,165 ang nasa Visayas; at ang pinakamarami ay 6,637 na nasa Mindanao. At ang Zamboanga City alone, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, ay mayroon, to be exact, 95 unenergized sitios.

However, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, the proposed budget of the NEA for sitio electrification for this year, which is around P7.5 billion, is to energize the target sitios, 5,000, this year because of the directive of the President to energize the “last-mile” sitios before his term ends in 2022. So, sa 2021 po, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor ay dapat nasa 5,000 sitios, ay 3,600-plus and then sa 2022, 3,858. However, with this meager budget being provided by the NEP in 2021 – P1.8 billion – this can only energize 1,085 sitios. So, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, if we are not going to do anything about this, would you agree again with me that with the budget of P1.8 billion for only 1,085 sitios, there is a danger that the remaining sitios will not be energized in time for the end of the term of the present administration and president, who is Mindanaoan?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, yes. If you are talking about the budget for 5,000 sitios, the P7.5 billion will be able to energize 5,000 sitios, you are right on that. We still need about 17,379 sitios to be energized. So, if you would like, if the manifestation is that we have to have more budget, then we will try to consider that and I am happy to hear if there is any proposal to increase it. Because as far as the 2021 Budget is concerned, the current proposed allocation is P1.8 billion. So, malayo siya doon sa requested na P7.5 billion, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DAGOOC. Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, halos ako po ay tumindig at lumundag sa saya noong narinig ko po during the budget briefing ang suporta, noong may budget briefing sa Committee, ang suporta ng mga taga-Mindanao, lalong-lalo na po ang kagalang-galang na Sponsor, na suportahan

ang pag-restore ng budget para sa Sitio Electrification dahil ito po ay para sa lahat ng mga nasasakupan ng mga kagalang-galang na Miyembro ng Mababang Kapulungan. Hindi lang po ito para sa amin na nagsusulong nito kung hindi ang lahat po ng mga Miyembro ng Mababang Kapulungan na mayroon pong mga sitios sa kani-kanilang mga nasasakupan na hindi pa po naiilawan. Kaya po nagtataka po ako, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, year in, year out, this seems to be a perennial problem. Halos naubos na po ang laway namin dito parang, with all due respect, hindi pa rin kami pinapakinggan na kailangan na nating ibigay taon-taon ang tamang budget ng National Electrification Administration sa kadahilanan po na ang total electrification program na inumpisahan noong 1969 is a government program. It is not a program of the electric cooperatives; it is a program of the government in order to give access to electricity, to comply with the equal protection clause of the Constitution. Kaya po nagagalak po ako na sa tingin ko po ay susuportahan naman kami ng kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

So, would the distinguished Sponsor help us lobby, being the Vice Chairman of the Committee of Appropriations? Sa palagay ko nga, halos wala akong silbi bilang isang member ng Komite ng Appropriations kasi wala akong nagawa last year. Sa palagay ninyo ba, tama po ba ako, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, na tutulungan po natin – pagtutulungan po natin ang pag-restore ng budget ng NEA sa Fiscal Year ng 2021, Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, I admire the desire of the distinguished Gentleman from the APEC Party-List and I share the same sentiments with him. Kailangan po, at least, if our intent is really to energize all the 17,379 sitios, kailangan pong madagdagan, and I am one with him. I join him with such intent that, hopefully with the proposal, the Committee on Appropriations should be able to study it and will be able to see whatever we can add. Because I certainly agree with the distinguished Gentleman from

the APEC Party-List that kailangan talagang matulungan para maabot natin iyong target na 17,379 sitios, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DAGOOC. Thank you for that answer, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, because in a nutshell, total electrification is not just lighting homes; it is not just lighting bulbs. The ultimate objective, actually, of total electrification, from P.D. No. 269 until its last amendment, Republic Act No. 10531, is sustainable rural development. Hindi lang po pagpapailaw, ang talagang pakay po, purpose po, objective po ng total electrification is sustainable rural development kasi nakikita ng mga legislators natin noong 1969 na hindi tayo uunlad, there is no such thing as nation-building kung walang kuryente ang mga kanayunan. Nasa dulo na po tayo, kailangan po nating tapusin ito. So, I am very thankful and appreciative of the answer of the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Now, on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, there was a law passed by Congress, in the Seventeenth Congress, Republic Act No. 11039. Itong Republic Act No. 11039, ito iyong Electric Cooperatives Emergency and Resiliency Fund which, sinabi po ng batas na ito na, the initial fund, upon its effectivity, should be P750 million. However, only last year or only this year, in last year's budget that there was P200 million allocated. Mula noong naipasa ito, wala talagang allocation. Hindi natupad iyong P750 million. Only this year, through last year's budget, that there was P200 million that was recommended. So, this is effectively lower even as compared to the special amount.

Furthermore, the P250 million, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, for the year 2020, unfortunately, hindi nagagamit because it was diverted to fund the government's response to COVID-19 by virtue of our Bayanihan 1 which we passed last April. So, Mr. Speaker, ECERF is very important since we are expecting different kinds of calamities every year and we are depriving the victims of immediate access to electricity after it is devastated. So, this is again another area, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, that the Committee should also maybe look into.

Then finally, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, on another note, I think I do not want anymore to delve into other specific budget items that NEA is requesting because I am lobbying and I am asking the support of the House leadership, the honorable Sponsor and the Committee on Appropriations, for the restoration of the budget of NEA because those projects were even evaluated by NEDA and it has been affirmed that it is important based on NEDA's evaluation documents that we have. So with the affirmative answer of the Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, I will no longer delve into other specific budget items of NEA that we are lobbying to be restored.

Now, on another issue, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, naririnig ko kanina from my distinguished colleagues who were interpellating ahead of me, bugbog na bugbog po iyong term, iyong word na "least cost." I know, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, that we are live on Facebook, so that para maliwanagan po, ano ang ibig sabihin ng "least cost"? At nakita ko po diyan sa plenary ang aking kaibigan na si Undersecretary Wimpy, puwede po bang maipaliwanag, Mr. Speaker, ng Ginoong Sponsor kung ano ba talaga ang definition ng "least cost"? Kasi baka ang pagkaintindi ng ating mga kababayan na nakikinig, kapag sinabing "least cost" ay ang ibig sabihin murang kuryente. So, may I ask, Mr. Speaker, the Sponsor, what is the definition of "least cost" as far as the Department of Energy is concerned, based on EPIRA?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, basta qualified sila sa Terms of Reference, sino iyong pinakamababa sa paglaban nila, iyon ang mananalò. So, iyon ang—kasi siya iyong pinakamababa e, so iyon ang kukunin because iyon ang pinakamababang kuryente or "least cost," as what we call it, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DAGOOC. Samakatuwid, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, it does not follow na kapag sinabi mong "least cost," hindi ibig sabihin na mura siya. Am I correct, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Again, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, pakiulit, medyo garbled iyong last question.

REP. DAGOOC. Samakatuwid po, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, hindi po ibig sabihin na kapag sinabi mong “least cost” ay ang ibig sabihin, mura. Tama po ba ako, Ginoong Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, pareho tayo ng iniisip. Siyempre, maglalaban-laban sila assuming they pass the Terms of Reference. So, iyong mga naglaban-laban, sino iyong pinakamura, iyon ang mananalo. So, iyon ang tinatawag nating “least cost.” That is how we, the Department interprets it, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DAGOOC. So, ibahin ko, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, ibahin ko na lang iyong pagkakatanong ko. I will rephrase my question. Ang ibig bang sabihin ng kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, is that ang least cost ay hindi ibig sabihin na mura. Ang ibig sabihin niya, kung mag-bidding ka, mag-conduct ka ng Competitive Selection Process at that time, siya iyong pinakamura na bidder. Tama po ba ang pagkakaintindi ko, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker. Pero iyong pinakamababa naman should be the most responsive bidder also, the most responsive bidder with the lowest cost of power. So, hindi lang iyon basta least kaagad, pero the bidder should be responsive, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DAGOOC. Okay.

At least malinaw na, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, na ang “least cost” na tinutukoy sa EPIRA ay hindi ibig sabihin na magmumura ang ating kuryente kasi depende pa rin iyon doon sa mga parameters na sinasabi mo kanina.

Now, on the other issue na narinig ko kanina, this is just, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, to educate the public doon sa issue na nabanggit kanina ng mga kagalang-galang

kong kasamahan na nauna sa akin na nag-interpellate. Now, kanina, may nabanggit na mura ang kuryente sa ibang bansa kumpara sa atin. Again, ano po ba ang dahilan, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, bakit iyong mga tinutukoy na bansa ay mas mura ang kuryente kaysa sa atin?

REP. DALIPE. Well, if we compare iyong mga ibang bansa, one, iyong kuryente po nila ay subsidized. Second, iyong isa ring dahilan ay iyong taxes. Sa ibang bansa, hindi sila tina-tax. So, definitely, kung subsidized iyong kuryente, hindi ka pa tina-tax, definitely, iyong pagpasa ng distribution utilities ng presyo ng kuryente sa consumer ay magiging mas mababa. So, iyon iyong mga dahilan, so, one is government subsidy, second is hindi sila nagbabayad ng tax, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. Ito po iyong sa ibang bansa.

REP. DAGOOC. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, tama po iyong sagot mo. Kaya po ang mga Kinatawan po sa Power bloc ay mayroon pong panukalang batas na nakabinbin sa pagtanggap ng value-added tax sa ating kuryente dahil ang VAT natin sa kuryente ay ipinasa po—pinatawan po ng VAT sa whole supply chain, from generation to transmission, systems loss, distribution and other charges. At tama po kayo na kaya po mababa iyong singil ng kuryente sa ibang bansa, dahil wala po silang ganyan na ipinapataw sa kuryente nila, pero sa atin mayroon po. Ang mga tanong ko lang po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, as I have said a while ago, is just to educate the public regarding the issues on least cost at iyong higher cost of electricity in our country.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I just wanted to know the position, the stand of the Department of Energy on the proposed interconnection of Luzon to Mindoro via Batangas. Ano po ba ang posisyon o stand ng Department of Energy dito sa usaping ito na i-interconnect ang Luzon grid from Batangas to Mindoro para mawala na po iyong universal charge, iyong pinakamalaking share ng universal charge na missionary electrification, at mapunta po sa Palawan at Mindoro area dahil malalaking island po iyon. Ano po ba, uulitin ko, ang stand ng Department of Energy

sa intensyon na i-interconnect ang Luzon to Mindoro and Palawan, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. Iyong connection po, that is being worked out and ang target date po to connect Luzon to Mindoro is 2024 – so hopefully, by 2024, ma-connect na po iyong Luzon to Mindoro, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DAGOOC. Thank you for that, Department of Energy, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor. Kailangan na po natin iyan dahil ang hinahangad po natin ay mapababa iyong binabayaran na universal charge sa SPUG at malinaw naman po iyong Mindoro at saka Palawan, hindi po sila small, malaki po sila, so I am very delighted with that information. So, with all of those, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I would like to thank the Sponsor in advance for supporting the effort of the Power bloc in Congress to restore, in general, the budget requested by NEA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Ginoong Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you very much, Representative Dagooc.
Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, at this point, we would like to recognize the Hon. Abdullah Dimaporo of the Second District of Lanao del Norte for his interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the Second District of Lanao del Norte, Hon. Abdullah Khalid Dimaporo, is recognized to interpellate the good Sponsor.

REP. DIMAPORO (A.). Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, for your information, Mr. Speaker, there are two Dimaporos, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Ah, I am sorry...

REP. DIMAPORO (A.). ... one Khalid and the other...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). ... Abdullah “Bobby” Dimaporo.

REP. DIMAPORO (A.). Yes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The good-looking Dimaporo, Bobby Dimaporo.

REP. DIMAPORO (A.). The older one.

Mr. Speaker, I would like first to understand our problem and for us to understand our problem in the province of Lanao del Norte. As you know, there was a time that the Ilagas of the Christians and the Black Shirts of the Muslims fought each other in the province of Lanao del Norte. And until now, there are still bad feelings inside some of us. And the interior municipalities of Lanao del Norte, where the Muslims are living, they have supported the – some of them supported the MNLF because they fear that the majority rule neglects them. They gave more importance – we gave more importance to the Christian communities. And they said that the Christian communities in Lanao del Norte all have electrification but not those in the interior municipalities of Lanao del Norte. The Lanao del Norte Electric Cooperative understands this and they have scheduled the connection of the interior municipalities. And I think in 2019, Secretary Cusi, the good Secretary of the Department of Energy, promised or stated that the money for electrification should be given to NEA so that they can move faster.

But until now, for example, the three municipalities in the interior have not been given electricity because the budget was used for something else, and it could not be downloaded by Secretary Cusi. Secretary Cusi wants to give electricity if he can to all residents of the nation. I think that is one of his goals. And I think rather than keeping the budget for electrification under the Department of Energy, it should be given directly to the National Electrification Administration, the NEA. I am saying this, and I am also supporting the request that more budget be given to NEA.

My problem, Mr. Speaker, is that I am now in the province and our connection is not 100-percent reliable here in the province. And it is possible that I may not be able to attend during the time when I can ask that the budget for national electrification be taken out from the Department and, instead, be given to NEA. And this is my problem and I would like to ask the honorable Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, if he can find out from Secretary Cusi if it is true that he has stated that he wants the budget for electrification to be given directly to NEA so that they can move faster in implementing the planned electrification of NEA.

May I have the answer for that, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, there is a move by the Department Secretary to transfer all this electrification fund from the Department of Energy to the National Electrification Administration para – the intent of that is to facilitate the faster implementation of the program. So, indeed, the intent of the Department of Energy is to really help implement faster the programs needed, most specifically the electrification program, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DIMAPORO (A.). Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So, may I also ask that in case I will not be able to connect at the time that we will be amending the budget, since this is a request of the Department Secretary, can the Committee on Appropriations itself do it, to transfer the budget now lodged in the budget of the Department to the budget of the National Electrification Administration, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

In fact, there is P500 million which the Department of Energy returned to the DBM. Kasi iyong isang concern diyan when it comes to those funds is the liquidation to be made by the electric cooperatives. So, kailangan kasi i-liquidate iyong pondo. So, as far as that is concerned, there is really a need, really, to transfer it, to have it implemented faster so we can have faster electrification of the sitios, Mr.

Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DIMAPORO (A.). Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify. What I am asking is not giving directly the money to the cooperatives. What I am asking is that the money now that the good Secretary would really like NEA to have their budget for national electrification so that there can be a faster implementation of it. If it is transferred to NEA, it will be NEA that will be validating the proper release of the fund entrusted to it. So, I do not think that there would be a problem validating whether or not the money has been utilized properly. So, again, I would like to ask, Mr. Speaker, can I be assured by the good Sponsor that the Committee on Appropriations would do that, there being a statement from the Department Secretary, the good Secretary Cusi, that he would like the fund to be with the National Electrification Administration, that budget being a budget of NEA and not of the Department of Energy, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, there is that desire of the Department of Energy to really have it transferred fast, but in some instances because of, let us say, for example, na-delay, the delay in transfer is based on a COA audit observation on NEA regarding project implementation. But as far as the Department of Energy is concerned, wala pong problema, the DOE is willing to have it transferred kaya lang may naging isang sitwasyon wherein iyong Commission on Audit, nagkaroon siya ng audit observation sa NEA project implementation. Further, the source of the DOE fund is a special account under Automatic Appropriations which NEA has no access to. So tama po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, na as far as the DOE is concerned, wala pong problema. Iyon lang po, nagkaroon minsan, in that case, na may audit observation ang Commission on Audit sa implementasyon ng proyekto ng National Electrification Administration, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DIMAPORO (A.). Mr. Speaker, I would like to be clarified. Is it illegal or not proper for the House of Representatives to

put that money for electrification as a budget of the National Electrification Administration? Is it illegal or is it improper for the House of Representatives to do such, that such act, our Committee on Appropriations itself cannot transfer it if there is no one that will move for it, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, the Department of Energy is in a position to say that it would be better if the funds be directly given to the National Electrification Administration. In that manner, hindi na po dadaan sa Department of Energy. Because if the intent is to make it faster, then it would be better to have those funds directly placed with the National Electrification Administration, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DIMAPORO (A.). Mr. Speaker, this is the third time that I am going to say this. It is possible that I may not be able to have connection then because I am now in our province where the signal is not as good as the signal that I have in Manila. In case I will not be able to participate when that time comes, can the Committee on Appropriations itself transfer that money from the Department of Energy to the National Electrification Administration, now that the good Sponsor has confirmed that Secretary Cusi would like to do that, because he himself would like to have faster implementation of the projects of National Electrification?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. We will take a serious look into that and, hopefully, together with the Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, we will make the necessary recommendations with the House leadership in order to have a faster implementation of the electrification program of the government. So, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, we will bring this issue—bring this matter to the Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations and the House leadership, particularly, the funds which should be directly given to the National Electrification Administration, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. DIMAPORO (A.). Okay, Mr. Speaker, I understand that the Chairman of the Committee should be involved in this for the Committee to decide on it and I agree with that, Mr. Speaker.

Now, my last hope and my last request is, let us find a way. My last request to the Committee on Appropriations and to my colleagues is, let us find a way to increase the budget for national electrification because many of our municipalities, not only villages, need electrification. So, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you very much.
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the next Member who wishes to interpellate is the Lady from the First District of Iloilo, Rep. Janette Garin.

I move that she be recognized. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Yes, Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, we move to withdraw our motion for the recognition of Representative Garin and, instead, recognize another Member to interpellate while she is not yet here. We move for the recognition of Rep. Presley De Jesus of the Party-List PHILRECA.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the Party-List PHILRECA, Hon. Presley De Jesus, is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, we move instead that we recognize Rep. Ria Vergara from the Third District of Nueva Ecija.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). From the Third District of Nueva Ecija, Hon. Ria Vergara, is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. VERGARA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good evening to our fellow colleagues and our honorable Sponsor. I just have a question and a manifestation.

I was listening when Congresswoman Cullamat was interpellating and I am very disappointed that the energy sector believes that the Competitive Selection Process is the solution to lowering power rates. The Competitive Selection Process is good for distribution utilities that have large franchise areas like Meralco, but it will hurt small utility companies and small distribution coops that are unable to secure that need just, how would you say it, maybe 35 to 40 megawatts of power and not 1,500 megawatts. And this is my concern, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor: What happens when a small utility is only looking for, let us say, 15 or 20 megawatts and none of the generating companies want to provide service or if they do, they are willing to sell at P7 to P8 per kilowatt hour? At that rate, that is very expensive and, let us say, at that point, what if the WESM is only selling at P3? Will the DU now have to go with the WESM because the WESM rate at that time when they are looking for power is P3 versus the bidders or the single bidder who is offering at P7? So, P3 would be the least cost but WESM rates fluctuate, they change from hour to hour. It could be P3 at that time, at two o'clock in the afternoon, but it could hit P10 per kilowatt hour when it hits 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. What does the DU or coop do now if it is supposed to go with the least cost?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, can you please repeat the question? What is the least, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. VERGARA. I shall repeat it, honorable Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

Under the Competitive Selection Process, the distribution utility is supposed to go with the least-cost energy provider and based on Cong. Dagooc's interpellation, least cost is the one that provides the most affordable or the cheapest source of power. What if a distribution utility at that time needs to enter into a bilateral contract or into a power supply contract, and there is only one bidder that

is offering it at P7 per kilowatt hour but the WESM rate at that time is, let us say P2.50 per kilowatt hour? Will that DU or coop now have to go with the WESM to supply the energy needs of its franchise area since, at that time it was looking for power, the least-cost provider was WESM. That, Sir, is my question.

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, if there is only one bidder, then that would be considered a failure of bidding. But in this situation, before you go into that bidding, may window pa e, you still have about two years to prepare for that bidding. So bago pa darating tayo sa taon na kailangan niya ipa-bid iyon, two years before, puwede pa i-project noong distribution utility iyong kailangan niya. But in the event or when the bidding happens and there is only one bidder, then that would be considered a failure of bidding, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. VERGARA. Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, honorable Sponsor.

Okay, let us say there are three bidders and they are bidding at P7, P6.50, P6.75 and WESM is selling at P3.50. What happens then? The least cost will still be WESM's. There are three bidders and they are all in that same, you know, rates of P7, P6.50, P6.75. What will happen to the utility? Of course, the least cost would be WESM, but WESM's rates fluctuate. It is cheap at certain times, sometimes it is even negative but at other times, it can hit as much as P9 to P10. Will this DU now be required to go with the least cost, which is WESM, instead of the more expensive private generation companies that are charging significantly higher? How will the CSP help small utilities and small coops? You see, Mr. Speaker, if I may, having come from the power sector, I think the fundamental problem of the energy sector is when we deregulated generation. When we allowed the private sector to only be the ones to build power plants and to buy all of the government's power plants, I think that was something that put us on the road where we are now.

Our power rate, effective rate, 60 percent of it is from the generation charge, while

transmission and distribution charges only comprise 40 percent or less. The bulk of our power rate comes from generation charge and since generation is no longer regulated, the ERC has no say on what generation companies charge, what market forces dictate. What we were hoping to happen to the energy sector was what we saw in the telecommunications sector where we saw cell companies compete with each other so that cell phone rates went down. And we see that today, almost every single Filipino has a cell phone because it has become affordable. That is a success story. We are not seeing that in the power industry. Generation rates continue to go up. I think we are very fortunate that in Mindanao, there are still two hydro plants that will not be privatized, and I am so pleased that Secretary Cusi will not privatize it because Congressman Dimaporo was very active in ensuring that these hydro plants would stay with the government.

And so my question, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, is how can the DOE help small utilities and small electric coops keep generation rates down? There are instances when the bilateral contract is ending and nobody, none of the generating companies want to sell because it is more profitable for them to sell their power to WESM. What is a small utility company supposed to do? They are captive markets of these generating companies that say, "Our rate is P7, take it or leave it."

I hope that the Department of Energy can look into this because having been in the power sector once, that happened to the utility I was operating. We almost had to go with WESM because nobody wanted to sell because everybody was saying, "We would much rather go sell to WESM and make more money than go into a contract with you for 10 years and have reduced profits." So it is a call, honorable Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, to the DOE for them to also look at small power utilities, small distribution utilities, small electric cooperatives that do not have the—how would you say it—the clout or the economies of scale that large utilities like Meralco have. Yes, for Meralco, Competitive Selection Process would work but utilities

that are smaller, we are at the mercy of generating companies. And the ERC, it is helpless, it cannot dictate to the generating companies, "You are the closest and you should sell to the"—I hope that is something that the DOE can look into, or maybe Congress, if we pass a law that will mandate generating companies that their first priority should be utilities that are within their geographic area they should service. Let us say, 60 percent of their capacity should be sold to those utilities and not the entire 100 percent to the WESM if they so choose. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can this manifestation be brought to the attention of the Secretary of Energy, honorable Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, if I understand it right, kasi medyo madami iyong tanong, the Department of Energy will review that situation, but in any case, there is also one option wherein you can do aggregation. Lahat po ng maliliit, puwede ipagsama siya para maging isang malaki. All the small ones, you can group them together and make it a bigger one, so ...

REP. VERGARA. Sir, ...

REP. DALIPE. ... that can be done. But nevertheless, the Department of Energy will study that situation which our distinguished colleague has mentioned a while ago, Mr. Speaker.

REP. VERGARA. Thank you, Sir, yes, for that suggestion. The honorable Sponsor suggests that aggregate demand has its own problems and is detrimental naman to—it is good for those utilities that need base load, or it is good for the utilities that need peak load, but bad for those that use base load because they will be paying a premium for and subsidizing the peak load franchise areas.

Well, anyway, thank you very much, Mr. Sponsor, honorable Speaker. I just wanted to bring this to the attention—because I would like to agree with Congresswoman Cullamat on the Competitive Selection Processes, that while it will solve power rates in big utilities like Meralco, it is not the answer for smaller

utilities and electric cooperatives, especially those in rural areas.

Good evening, Sir, and thank you for this opportunity.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you very much. Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, the next House Member to interpellate is the Hon. Ferdinand Gaité of the BAYANMUNA Party-List.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the BAYANMUNA Party-List, Hon. Ferdinand Gaité, is recognized.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, at pahihintulutan ba ng ating Sponsor na magkaroon ng ilang kasagutan ang aking mga ilang pressing questions regarding the budget of the Department of Energy, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po. I share the disappointment of many of our colleagues regarding the problem of energy in the country. Marami ang paulit-ulit na sinasabi na ang kuryente sa Pilipinas ang isa na sa pinakamahal and despite what the Sponsor or the Department has done, it has not achieved the objective of lowering the prices of electricity in our country.

Nasabi ni Cong. Mark Go na talagang isang napakalaki at mabigat na problema ang halaga ng kuryente – at gayundin pala ng iba nating mga Kinatawan sa Kongreso – na isang malaking pasakit ang pagbabayad ng kuryente buwan-buwan. Nabanggit ang ilang mga solusyon tulad ng CSP, ngunit hindi pa rin makita ang impact nito, lalo na sa pricing, sa consumers at iba pa. Nabanggit kanina iyong isang suliranin ng ating energy mix at, paki-correct na lang po ako kung mali ang pagkuha ko ng datos, based doon sa sinabi na data, ang sinasabing “renewable energy,” I would presume this would be those classified

under geothermal, hydro, and other renewable energy. Tama po ba ako, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, opo, yes.

REP. GAITE. Kung gayon, lumalabas doon sa ating energy mix based doon sa figures na binanggit, tinotal ko kanina, lalabas na 33 percent of our energy mix comes from renewable energy while the rest, 67 percent, majority, comes from nonrenewable energy. Tama po ba ako, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Well, if we will combine geothermal, hydro, and ...

REP. GAITE. Other ...

REP. DALIPE. ... renewable energy, iyon lang po iyon, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po.

Habang ang ibang mga bansa ay palayo na o paalis na sa dating traditional sources ng energy – oil, coal, natural gas – na alam naman natin sa kasalukuyang suliranin ng ating lipunan, ng ating buong daigdig, ang climate change, ang dagdag na carbon emissions ay lalong nagdadagdag sa pagtaas ng temperatura ng buong daigdig at lumilikha ng napaka-volatile na klima sa buong daigdig ngayon, kung saan ang direksyon ay pababain ang carbon emissions ng lahat ng bansa at ito na iyong mga pinag-usapan sa COP21 at sa mga iba pang mga naganap na kasunduan para ibaba.

Kung gayon, Mr. Speaker, ito’y magkaugnay na dalawang usapin, iyong napakamahal na kuryente, at ikalawa iyong ating energy mix na kanina po nasabi ninyo na the direction of the Department of Energy is towards clean and indigenous energy. Sa kasalukuyang mix ng ating energy, masasabi ba natin itong clean considering that majority still is composed of coal, representing 29.2 percent, oil 32 percent, and natural gas at 6.1 percent or a total of 67 percent? Masasabi na ba natin, Mr. Speaker, na clean and indigenous when, by the way, except for the Malampaya natural gas, itong

karamihan ng sources na ito ay imported, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, we are transitioning, but when you look at the graph, makikita naman po iyong total, and if we add them, halos pareho na po sila e, nasa 31 percent at iyong isa ay – for a while ha. Kasi pareho na iyon, 30 – ito ba iyon? Iyan. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, kung titingnan natin iyong percentages, medyo pareho na siya e. Oil is at 33.5 percent, iyong renewables is at 33 percent. At paano po natin nakuha iyong 33 percent? In-add po natin iyong geothermal, hydro at other RE sources, so iyong total po natin is 33 percent. So kung titingnan po natin iyong percentages, oil is at 33.5 percent, while renewable is already at 33 percent. So, pantay na po sila, halos pareho na, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, parang nakakaligtaan ninyo po iyong coal, which is at 29.2 percent. Nakakalimutan ninyo iyong natural gas, which is at 6.5 percent, and these are considered nonrenewable sources. So, I find a disconnect when you say gusto natin ng clean and indigenous while the emphasis or priority of the Department of Energy ay nandoon pa rin sa direksyon na ito.

Kanina, si Cong. Mark Go was asking, ano ba iyong na-slash na budget sa Department of Energy? Based sa nabanggit ninyo, the original proposal was P2.6 billion but about P500 million was slashed, and you claimed that the amounts that were slashed were for testing equipment, downstream oil and coal equipment. Then, in the NEP, you have vehicle procurement and – ano iyong isa? May nabanggit pa – ah, iyong sa parking facility. Anyway, hindi ko pa rin nakita, may disconnect pa rin. The emphasis is still on nonrenewable energy, even in the amounts that were apparently slashed from the budget of the Department of Energy. Kaya nga po iyon ang point ko, sinasabi ninyo po na iyon ang direksyon ninyo pero right now, hindi ko makita sa inyong proposed budget for 2021 how you plan to achieve this, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Gusto kong idagdag...

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, iyon na po, iyong Department of Energy is coming up with policies para ma-achieve natin iyong clean energy scenario. So, with the clean energy scenario, in fact, we have projected that by 2014, mababago po talaga – sorry, 2040, mababago po iyong energy mix natin. So iyon ‘yon. The Department of Energy came up with that policy, iyong clean energy scenario, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po sa input. Of course, 2040 is 20 years from now. Ang gusto sana nating makita ay iyong sa budget mismo for 2021 or even up to the end of the term of President Duterte. Kaya paulit-ulit ko pong sinasabi iyong disconnect.

According to your reports, Energy Secretary Cusi was quoted to have said that the PNOC Exploration Corporation, one of the attached agencies under the PNOC, bought a higher stake in the Malampaya gas project, about 10 percent of Chevron’s total ownership interest under Service Contract No. 38. Bumili ng mas malaking shares para doon sa Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power project, which is set to end in 2024, so natural gas ito. But Malampaya’s reserves are projected to be depleted by 2027 at the latest. And natural gas ito; this also still emits carbon. May carbon emissions pa rin ito. So kayang magpuhunan sa isang – hindi natin masasabing low carbon ito, kung hindi necessarily clean form of energy. Iyong isang agency ng PNOC which is tasked to implement, promote, and develop a renewable energy program, the PNOC RC, binigyan po ba ito ng budget for 2021 sa ilalim ng ating proposed NEP and ngayon sa GAB, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Well, iyong GOCC, GOCC iyon e, so they have ...

REP. GAITE. Tama po, Mr. Speaker.

REP. DALIPE. ... their own budget, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po. Totoo po. Pero alam po naman natin, Mr. Speaker, na

marami ngang GOCCs na nangangailangan ng subsidies para ma-implement nila iyong kanilang mandato sa pag-create ng renewable energy. Kung kaya't tulad noong kaninang GOCC that we were – the budget of the GOCC, iyong Southern Philippines Development Corporation, kailangang bigyan ng budget para maisagawa nila iyong kanilang programa. National Housing Authority is also given a budget. It is a corporation but to fulfill its mandate, kailangan niya ng subsidyo. Yung National Food Authority, unfortunately, kinatay under sa Rice Liberalization Law, but it still needs a budget and I think I heard we allocated about P10 billion for that program.

But itong napakahalagang serbisyo, kuryente para sa mamamayan – at hindi simpleng kuryente but mura, malinis, indigenous energy – the Department of Energy seems to be again in a disconnect, as a corporation directly attached to it is not even given the support to operate renewable energy. So again, paano natin masasabi that our direction is towards clean and indigenous energy, Mr. Speaker? Magkano ho ba ang proposed budget originally ng PNOC RC for 2021 as proposed by their agency? Mayroon ho ba tayong datos para doon?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, wala pong budget ang PNOC RC sa GAA. Wala po siya sa National Expenditure Program.

REP. GAITE. Wala, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, wala po, kasi hindi po siya subject sa General Appropriations Act. So, kung titingnan po natin iyong National Expenditure Program ay wala pong nakalagay because PNOC RC is not subject to the GAA. So, hindi po siya automatically binibigyan ng budget ng PNOC mother corporation. PNOC RC is a separate entity with its own budget sources, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and as you have mentioned, it is a corporation. Tama po ba, it is a government-owned and -controlled corporation, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. Ang mother agency niya ay PNOC. Tama po, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague. Ang mother company po niya ay PNOC at ang PNOC RC ay isang GOCC.

REP. GAITE. So, hindi po pribadong kompanya itong PNOC RC, Mr. Speaker. Kung hindi ito pribado at ito ay GOCC, similar to other government corporations, whether attached to other government-owned and -controlled corporation, hindi po unusual na para ma-implement nila ang isang programa at ito ay binibigyan ng karampatang budget. And as far as I understand, the PNOC RC previously had a seed fund but it is fast being depleted in the objective of fulfilling their mandate. Mr. Speaker, the performance of the PNOC RC is nothing to scoff at. They have been able to implement between 2009 to 2010 the Barangay Electrification Program; in 2012, they were able to implement the Boni Tunnel Solar-Powered LED Lighting Project. They were able to provide rooftop solar power projects in government buildings. So, gobyerno pa lang iyan and I would like to know kung dito ba sa House of Representatives at sa Senate, mayroon na rin bang ganoong programa? Sa Philippine Heart Center, sa Department of Science and Technology and other government agencies? But sana gusto ko ring makita kasi napag-usapan, sabi ni Congresswoman Vergara, iyong maliliit na SPUG na binabanggit kasi kadalasan ang mas problema natin ay kuryente doon sa mga far-flung areas.

Especially now under the pandemic, many have to resort to electronic systems of communication, iyong sinasabing online education and others. Pero as basic as that – walang kuryente, how do we expect to achieve such a program if an agency under the Department of Energy is not even provided a budget for 2021? And as I understand, based sa nakuha naming information, nag-propose sila ng P658-million budget, roughly the amount that was reduced by the Department

of Budget and Management, which could have been placed in the Department of Energy's PNOC RC para matulungan iyong ating mga mamamayan na magkaroon ng mura, malinis, at indigenous na kuryente, Mr. Speaker. So, bakit hindi ito binigyan ng pagpapahalaga ng Department of Energy? Bakit hindi ito priority, as envisioned? Bakit hindi natin nakikita o nagre-reflect ito sa budget priority, doon sa mga programs na mayroon naman ang Department of Energy, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, kung pondo po ang ating pinag-uusapan, hindi nga po siya puwedeng ilagay sa General Appropriations Act. The most we can do are policies. So going back, hindi po kasi under sa – hindi subject to GAA ang PNOC RC. So, iyon po talaga iyong sitwasyon. But what the Department of Energy can do is to come up with policies that will move or gear us towards renewable energy, which is what the Department of Energy has been doing already. So, iyon po ang puwedeng itulong ng Department of Energy. But in terms of funding, hindi po, hindi po siya puwedeng ilagay sa General Appropriations Act, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, parang hindi ko maintindihan iyong concept na hindi puwedeng bigyan ng pondo because it is a government-owned and -controlled corporation. It is under the Department of Energy, under the PNOC; therefore, all government-owned and -controlled corporations, especially those requiring additional funding can be provided budgets. Nothing bars the government from providing budgets for the fulfillment of its mandate. Hindi po puwedeng mag-produce ng something from nothing. Kailangang mayroon silang resources para maisakatuparan iyong kanilang mandato batay sa pagkalikha ng mga ahensiya tulad ng PNOC RC. Pero nabanggit ninyo po na dapat suportahan ito ng Department of Energy. Pero mayroon kaming nakuhang information that the Barangay Electrification Program that I mentioned earlier, which the Renewable Corporation has completed, nabill na nila ang PNOC, ayon sa Commission

on Audit, pero hindi pa rin sila binabayaran. So again, there is a disconnect, Mr. Speaker. Paano masasabi natin na sinusupportahan noong mother company, ang PNOC, iyong Renewable Corporation in the fulfillment of its objectives, Mr. Speaker?

REP. DALIPE. Well, there is a way. If funding is needed, puwede naman siya through the PNOC, the Philippine National Oil Company. Pero iyong PNOC, siya iyong puwedeng magbigay sa PNOC RC. But before the PNOC can give funding to the PNOC RC, there should be studies or supported by feasibility studies. So, ang hihingi ngayon is the PNOC RC through the PNOC. So the budget, for example, for 2021, puwede through the PNOC, then si PNOC RC na lang ang hihingi from PNOC, but they should present iyong justification nila to the PNOC and through proper studies, supported by proper studies, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Gentleman.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So, as the mother agency of the PNOC RC, sabi nga "mother," so dapat ninonurture niya iyong kaniyang anak, meaning, iyong mga pangangailangan nito para maisakatuparan nga iyong kaniyang layunin, which is very laudable, which I believe should be the direction of this government, especially on the issue of renewable energy at hindi iyong, as proposed ngayon, iyong bumababa na ngang demand for – narinig ko the other day – iyong nuclear energy na isang imported na naman at mahal na technology na hindi rin safe. Hindi pa nabanggit iyong nangyari sa Japan, iyong sa Fukushima nuclear power reactor, which was devastated by the 2011 tsunami.

Iyong problem ay mismo itong Bataan Nuclear Power Plant ay nandoon nga sa paanan ng Mt. Natib, nasa tabing dagat, na kung saan mayroong Manila Trench, which according to geohazards is also prone to tsunamis. Hindi well thought out kung paano natin isusulong iyong pag-improve ng ating energy mix. Kaya, Mr. Speaker, bilang panghuling katanungan, hindi ba ako makakakuha ng commitment, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, kung paano mabibigyan natin

ng diin iyong sinabing vision of clean and indigenous energy for our country?

And, again—at kanina paulit-ulit iyon, and I think this is the common denominator—hindi lamang clean, hindi lang indigenous but affordable electricity. At kailan natin makikita ito sa ilalim ng programa ng Department of Energy? Dahil hindi makita iyong direksyon nito ngayon sa ilalim ng ahensiya, even with the budget of more than P2 billion. Kaya, ano ang commitment na puwedeng makita natin na talagang bibigyan ng diin ang renewable energy na makakatulong sa mga ordinaryong mga consumers, makakatulong sa ating mga electric cooperatives, at makakatulong sa ating mga mamamayan na dahil sa shift ng pandemic ay umaasa sa napakaraming bagong teknolohiya that need juice, that need power, that need energy? So, ano ho ang commitment na puwedeng ibigay ng Department of Energy dahil hindi ko po makita sa current na program and policies of the Department, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. DALIPE. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, the Department of Energy is already promoting a low-carbon economy through clean energy solutions.

First, mayroon pong tinatawag tayo na “RPS Rules.” It requires load-serving entities and electricity generators to source an agreed portion of their energy supply from eligible, renewable energy sources. Second, iyong Renewable Energy Market Rules establishes a market for trading of renewable energy certificates between, among trading participants. Third, we have the Green Energy Auction Policy in the Philippines. This provides option to RPS Rules-mandated participants, the distribution utilities in particular, in developing or fulfilling their respective minimum RPS requirement. Another is the Green Energy Option. It provides an option for end-users to choose renewable energy for their energy requirement, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you.

Honorable Gaite.

REP. GAITE. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The answer of the distinguished Sponsor still fails the ...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Time is up.

REP. GAITE. ... (*Inaudible*) of this, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker.

REP. GAITE. ... and hindi natugunan iyong mga ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Majority Leader.

REP. GAITE. ... pangunahing hinahanap na kasagutan ng Kinatawang ito.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the consideration of the proposed budget of the Department of Energy and its attached corporations.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, to allow the next Sponsor and agency to prepare, I move that we suspend the session.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

It was 7:52 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:58 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.
Majority Leader.

ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we now consider the proposed budget of the Energy Regulatory Commission.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, before we proceed, we would like to acknowledge the presence of our guests and resource persons in the gallery. We have Commissioner Floresinda Baldo-Digal, and we have on Zoom Chairperson Agnes Devanadera, Commissioner Alexis Lumbatan, Commissioner Catherine Maceda, and Commissioner Marko Fuentes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The members of the Energy Regulatory Commission family, welcome to the House of Representatives.
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, to sponsor the proposed budget of the Energy Regulatory Commission, I move that we recognize the distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Pampanga, Rep. Juan Miguel Macapagal Arroyo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The distinguished Gentleman from the Second District of Pampanga, Hon. Mikey Arroyo, is recognized.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My dear colleagues, it is my distinct honor and privilege to sponsor the budget of the ERC.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, the first of our colleagues to interpellate our Sponsor is the Representative from the Party-List BAYAN MUNA, the Hon. Carlos Isagani Zarate.

I move that he be recognized.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The honorable Representative from the BAYAN MUNA Party-List, Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate, is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Okay po ba ang aking audio, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Loud and clear.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). You may proceed, Honorable Zarate.

REP. ZARATE. Yes. Will the good Sponsor of the budget ng Energy Regulatory Commission entertain some questions by interpellation, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Certainly, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Well, thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

I will go directly to my questions related to the budget.

My first series of questions is related to the rising electricity bills of consumers, especially during this time of pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, kami po sa BAYAN MUNA, na kasama iyong isang NGO, iyong Matuwid na Singil sa Kuryente, pointed out in several instances and even during the budget briefing that the industrial electricity, as we found out, that Meralco sells to industrial and large commercial users at P0.98 per kilowatt in distribution charge was not consumed by the sector dahil nga nagka-lockdown at nagkaroon ng pagsasara iyong maraming mga kompanya, hindi nag-operate and instead, ito iyong kuryente na kinonsumo ng

mga residential consumers sa panahon ng pandemic. But, unfortunately, the ordinary consumers were charged P2.98 per kilowatt. So, ano po ang ginawa ng — may ginawa bang imbestigasyon dito ang Energy Regulatory Commission, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, tamang-tama po ang concern ng ating kaibigan, si Carlos Zarate.

As a matter of fact, I had a long conversation with the Chairwoman of the ERC and asked her about this because it is a genuine concern, not only of everybody but also of the people in my district.

The ERC, Mr. Speaker, has been studying ways and means now to correct this. They have met with the distribution utilities now to correct this shortcoming which is costly, financially, to our citizens. So, sa kanilang pag-uusap po, marami na po silang pinababawas na mga charge sa mga distribution utility. Pakonti-konti po pinapabawas and ang importante po, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, ay magkakaroon po ng tinatawag na “rebate” or they will charge — the excess charge, ikakarga po sa susunod na bills natin, so para pong may in-advance na bayad na po ang ating mga consumers after they have met with the distribution utilities. And they have specifically ironed out the questions and the differences — the questions regarding the charges, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, sa inyong kasagutan, at we welcome kung talagang mayroong ganoong moves from the Commission dahil kung ang charge lang pala sa industrial users is 0.98 centavos per kilowatt ay dapat ganoon din ang itsa-charge doon sa ating mga residential users dahil this will logically reduce, significantly reduce the burden of our consumers, especially during this time of pandemic. Nag-a-agree po ba doon ang ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Opo, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

As a matter of fact, hindi lang naman po sa residential, pati po sa industrial at sa

mga commercial na mga lugar ay dapat po ikonsidera ng ERC na kausapin ang mga distribution utility po because, again, this is not only the distinguished Gentleman’s concern but it is the Sponsor’s concern, it is the concern of everybody. So, we agree with you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Well, thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Just for the record, and I know the good Sponsor knows this and also the ERC, if they are conducting an investigation, it is estimated, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, that in April and May alone, during the height of the lockdown, there were about 700 million kilowatts per hour of industrial and large commercial power that were not used due to the lockdown; and instead, these were sold at P2 higher per kilowatt hour, as I have mentioned earlier, to the residential consumers na, siyempre, dahil sa lockdown at kwarantina ay talagang napilitan silang mag-stay at home, ‘no. So, ito siguro dahil talagang napakalaki ng mga bills, na nagkaroon ng “electric shock,” if I may term it, iyong ating mga consumers noong matanggap nila ang kanilang bills. May isang estimate na ang parang windfall dito ay parang nasa P1.4 billion a month for big utilities like Meralco during these difficult times. I am not saying that the other distribution utilities did not also do this but ang Meralco ang ating tinitingnan dahil sila ang pinakamalaki.

So, along this line, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, I hope the Commission — dahil itong pandemya natin ay tuloy-tuloy pa naman, tuloy-tuloy pa rin ito — in fact, nasa iba’t ibang levels pa rin of quarantine ang iba’t ibang mga lugar, lalong-lalo na dito sa Metro Manila, at may impact pa rin ito doon sa problema ng ating mamamayan sa pagbabayad ng kanilang mga utilities like kuryente. Everyday nakakatanggap pa rin tayo ng mga reklamo.

So, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, in relation to that, kung ito ang titingnan nating nangyari during the time of pandemic, hindi po ba parang lumampas na ang Meralco sa kanilang Annual Rate of Recovery or ARR doon sa pinayagan lang ng ERC? So ano po ang — again, ang tanong ko, ano po ang concrete steps na gagawin ng Commission dito, as well

as to the other utilities that may have violated this, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, let me simplify things so that everyone will understand. Pareho po tayo na when we got our bill, tayo po ay nagulat. Sabi nga e “electric shock” kasi napakalaki po ng bill natin at hindi natin alam how the distribution utility arrived at that certain computation of our bill. Panahon pa ng pandemya. Nagamit man o hindi, nagtipid man o gumastos, we do not know how they arrived at that bill, kaya po tayo ay nagkaroon ng tinatawag na “electric shock.”

Ngayon po, dahil dito marami pong umangal sa ERC at ang ERC naman po motu proprio, they decided to investigate or to ask the distribution utilities, how did they come up with this price or through what method did they come up with this, the distribution utilities. Sabi pa nga, “Paano ho kayo—how did you arrive at this price na ito ang sinisingil ninyo sa ating mga kababayan?” Dahil po dito, they studied, nag-imbetiga, they had a dialogue and Meralco and the other distribution utilities were really, really also very cooperative. At dahil doon, inuulit ko, marami na po tayong binabawas na mga singilin. Ang suma total po niyan ay bababa iyong—mako-correct po ang sinisingil sa ating kuryente at iyong mga ekstrang ibinayad po natin, uulitin ko, ang nais mangyari po ng ERC ay kung hindi ibabalik sa ating mga consumers, itsa-charge natin sa mga susunod na mga buwan na dapat babayaran. Kung baga mayroon po tayong advance. We will credit the excess charge to future expenses, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po doon sa inyong katugunan, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to say, basically, is that all of these things are being reviewed by the Commission. Adjustments will surely be made and refunded, if necessary.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Let us make that clear, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, because the ERC’s purpose is to protect the interest of our citizens and they will do that mandate, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, for stating that for the record. Indeed, nitong mga nakaraan, the ERC, I think, announced that they penalized Meralco in the amount of P19 million, in the past, and there were reductions totaling to P200 million already, but these are nothing. If we cannot immediately correct this to prevent this from being a recurring incident or a recurring measure in the coming months or years, talagang mahihirapan dito ang ating mga consumers while big power utilities like Meralco will be earning millions if not billions, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. So, in relation to that, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, the ERC, the Commission, in the coming days, will be coming out with clear guidelines on this matter, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, they are trying their very best to speed up this process, although we must give them some time, so that at least hindi po nila minamadali ang kanilang review. Importante po is the review is properly done and is very detailedly done so at least mistakes will be minimal. They are prioritizing this, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

On to my next series of questions, still all related to how big utilities like Meralco are operating. We detected in BAYANMUNA and the MSK, Matuwid na Singil sa Kuryente na grupo, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, that in these past years the power purchases of Meralco, both in its quantity and in the generating cost that they reported to the Commission and vis-à-vis iyong kanilang electricity sales in quantity and purchase power cost, ay parang mayroong mga disparity compared to kung ano iyong inire-report nila, iyong audited financial statements and the annual reports to stockholders. For example, in 2019, Meralco’s purchase of generation supply was worth

33.585 billion kilowatt per hour or P174.859 billion. However, in their financial statements, Mr. Sponsor, it shows that they only sold 46.81 billion kilowatt hours with a purchase power cost of P241.032 billion. So, it appears that there is an excess pass-on charge of P66.173 billion for 2019 alone. Ito bang mga practice na ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ay nakita na ng ating Commission, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, there are monthly submissions that the Commission will review and evaluate to validate these. This is a never-ending story, this is a never-ending review. As long as they are doing it, I feel that the ERC will be fulfilling its mandate to protect our people. But they need an earnest-to-goodness review of this valid issue that the Gentleman from the BAYAN MUNA has raised, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, for admitting that these are valid issues and may we just get a commitment from the ERC. I know that they are looking into this pero can we have, probably, timelines so that the Commission can share with us, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, when are they going to speed up this process?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, it is not only their job to make a commitment; more importantly, it is the very essence of their existence, which is to protect the consumers. Their very existence rests on protecting the consumers and they must do this by the end of the year, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker. They commit to do this by the end of the year.

REP. ZARATE. Well, salamat, Ginoong Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Siguro to end this issue, there is already that commitment that we will be looking forward to and we will hold the Commission accountable on that at the end of the year. But previously, there was this proposal and, in fact, there was already a precedent in the past, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, that an audit was conducted on a public utility. We also asked the Commission

on Audit if they can help in auditing the books of public utilities like Meralco, and COA said that they are willing to help, especially para matingnan iyong mga overcharges at ano ba ang dapat ibalik sa mga consumers.

My question along this line, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, is: Has the Commission already approached and made representations or arrangements with the Commission on Audit so that they can also help in the conduct of audit on these issues related to charges, particularly by Meralco, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker? And if so, what is the status now of that, if there is one?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, they have written the COA to ask for help in auditing these numbers. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the COA denied their request saying that it is not in the mandate of COA to do this. As a matter of fact, it is the mandate of the ERC to do this, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker. What we can do is we can ask the ERC to provide a letter to our office, to our offices, to Congress, or to the Secretariat and then you can get it there, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker. It is better that we just give you directly the copy of the letter.

REP. ZARATE. Well, thank you, Mr. Sponsor. I am surprised because I remember I asked this question to the Commission on Audit and, initially, yes, they said that it is the primary duty of the ERC, but we pointed out that the expertise, of course, in auditing numbers along this line ay nasa COA, at may precedent na rin in the past na nag-conduct ng audit ang COA kaya nagkaroon ng refund sa ating mga consumers. So, I remember na Chairman Aguinaldo of COA said that if, indeed, they can help the ERC rin, for as long as there is a formal request from the ERC stating that they really need the Commission, the ERC really needs the help of COA, then they will, they said that they will do that. So, may we get a commitment from the Commission to get a clarification on this dahil malinaw – of course, pagdating doon sa budget ng COA sa Plenary ay tatanungin ulit natin ito, pero is the Commission still willing to pursue that option, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Distinguished colleague, I did not get your question. Was the question if the ERC—are they willing to pursue that line, that COA should help audit their numbers? Is that the right question you are asking?

REP. ZARATE. Yes, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. If perhaps they can file a letter for reconsideration, but maybe what is better, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, is for us to ask COA why they denied that request of the ERC. Anyway, they will come here for their budget defense this Wednesday; perhaps we can ask them.

REP. ZARATE. Yes. Certainly, we will also ask the COA this particular question. But at this point, I hope the ERC will not just leave it at that dahil na-deny na ng COA initially ay (*Inaudible*).

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. But, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, what is comforting to us is even though COA denied the request, they have an internal auditing system which they are using right now.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, I certainly agree with you, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Perhaps, this will be faster, Your Honor, if they are just auditing themselves. COA is auditing so many other agencies.

REP. ZARATE. Yes.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Perhaps, what is important is that we get the results sooner than later and I believe that even without COA, if they are using their internal resources to do the audit, I believe they can come up with a report to the people before the year ends, as they promised, because at least it is within their hands, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po, Ginoong Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, kung iyan po ang

commitment ng ERC, although alam po ng kagalang-galang na Sponsor and this Representation na kaya nga nagbabalankas tayo ng panibagong charter or batas para sa ERC dahil alam natin iyong kakulangan ng kanilang staffing complement to perform all these responsibilities na nasa mandato nila bilang regulator ng ating energy sector. But be that as it may, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, we will be looking forward doon sa sinasabi ninyong results ng investigation ng ERC at the end of the year, even without the participation of COA conducting a thorough audit of all these alleged overcharging, especially sa pinakamalaking distribution utility, ang Meralco.

Now, my last ...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, if I may make a comment, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, as Vice Chairman, as a Senior Vice Chairman of the Committee on Energy, I promise you, we will do this together, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

So bilang ano na lang po, bilang panghuli, sa budget po ng Department of Energy kanina, isang mahabang talakayan ang usapin pa rin ng Competitive Selection Process, although, primarily, nasa mandato na ito ng DOE proper. May I just solicit opinions from the Commission, since they are the regulator, how, sa tingin nila, mai-improve pa itong Competitive Selection Process doon ho sa paghahanap natin ng murang kuryente. Dahil kanina, malinaw na kung sinasabi nating “least cost” ay hindi ito equivalent kaagad sa sinasabi nating murang kuryente na matagal nang ipinangako nang maipasa itong batas ng EPIRA. Dahil as experienced, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, for example, in 2013, nagkaroon ng kutsabahan ang mga distribution utility at ang mga generation companies para i-game nila or laruin nila iyong presyuhan ng kuryente. So, probably, it may appear doon sa — halimbawa ngayon, ang ating regime na i-Competitive Selection Process, posibleng lumalabas na ito iyong pinakamura, but dahil sa kutsabahan noong mga players in the industry, from the generation to the distribution, ay iyong

sinasabi nilang “least cost” ay napakamahal pa rin. So, may we solicit from the Commission, through the good Sponsor, the thoughts of the Commission since they are the regulator, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, with the CSP’s effect in generation rates, the ERC’s hands are actually tied, unfortunately, because the rules of the CSP is the mandate of the DOE, as you pointed out and that is per the Supreme Court decision.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, yes, that is why as I have said earlier, I am just soliciting their thoughts on this matter, on how this can probably be improved. But nonetheless, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, gaya nga ng nabanggit ko kanina, naging mahabang talakayan ito dito sa budget kanina ng Department of Energy and previously, malaki ang papel ng ERC rito pero dahil nga sa ang desisyon ng Korte Suprema ay nasa papel na ito ng Department of Energy.

So, I will just ...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. ZARATE. ... leave it at that, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Salamat sa panahon na ibinigay po ninyo.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, mayroon kasing study ang ERC, napakakapal po nito. We cannot finish discussing that issue today, but if the Gentleman from BAYAN MUNA will allow me to send at least their position paper to your office, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker,...

REP. ZARATE. We will appreciate that, the good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, for our reference.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Abu relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Henry S. Oaminal.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Yes.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to ask some clarificatory questions sa budget po ng ERC. By the way, to end na lang, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, may we just know kung ano na ang status noong proposed law that will enhance or improve the capability and even the powers of the ERC?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Iyong proposed law po empowering the ERC, is that what you are asking?

REP. ZARATE. Yes, there is a pending bill to supposedly reorganize ...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Yes.

REP. ZARATE. ... and give the ERC more powers.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Yes.

REP. ZARATE. May we ...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Yes.

REP. ZARATE. Just for the information of this Body, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, it is still pending in the Committee level.

REP. ZARATE. So, still pending, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Yes, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Okay.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Perhaps after the budget debates, perhaps, we can focus on that.

REP. ZARATE. So, thank you, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, because in the deliberations in the past, isa iyon sa tinitingnan nating supposedly magfa-fast-track doon sa resolution ng iba’t ibang samut-saring problema noong ating

energy sector, especially doon sa papel ng ERC as the regulator ng ating energy sector. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, wala na po akong ibang katanungan. Salamat po sa inyong panahon.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Salamat po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, next to interpellate the Sponsor, I move that we recognize Deputy Speaker from the SAGIP Party-List, Rodante Marcoleta.

May I move that he be recognized, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Hon. Rodante Marcoleta, Deputy Speaker, is recognized.

REP. MARCOLETA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Sponsor. Mr. Sponsor, ...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Opo.

REP. MARCOLETA. ... Mr. Speaker, I started a while ago, during the presentation of the budget of the DOE, considering that some issues are interconnected, more particularly, the price of electricity that is a perennial and recurring problem to most of our constituents, if not all. Earlier, I made reference to Republic Act No. 9209, this is the franchise of Meralco. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, under Section 4 of this franchise, states that the grantee or Meralco "shall supply electricity to its captive market in the least cost manner." Also, under the same section: the grantee or Meralco "shall charge reasonable, just and competitive power rates." This descriptive or modifiers of the price of electricity – "least cost manner," "reasonable, just and competitive power rates" – these have to be processed, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, because ordinary consumers will not be able to understand how it is operationalized. Why would, for example, the franchise talk about reasonable price, just and competitive price

of electricity when in reality, the consumers are confronted with the difficulty of being able to pay their monthly bills? How can we rationalize this, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, is the distinguished Gentleman from SAGIP asking how the ERC is fulfilling their mandate in making sure that the concerns of the citizens are met and that the prices of electricity and power, for that matter, are just and reliable? Is that the question, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. MARCOLETA. The question, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, will probably fall on the responsibility of the ERC to operationalize this because that appears in the franchise of one of the biggest distributors or distribution utility, which is Meralco. I would like to believe, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, that "reasonable, just, and competitive" and "least cost manner" can only be justified if the regulator will work on the very foundations of this section under Republic Act No. 9209; otherwise, it will only be a matter of provision because, as I said, the consumers are confronted with the actual difficulty of being able to pay their monthly bills. But we cannot say that they are reasonable, we cannot say they are just and competitive because consumers continue to complain about the increasing price of electricity. That is why I would like to find rationalization. I think we should rationalize. I think we have to harmonize the provision of their franchise with the realities on the ground. We cannot keep our eyes closed amidst the complaints of people, particularly today when the pandemic has affected our economy and their ability to continue with their lives, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. This is the main point.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Ano po?

REP. MARCOLETA. How can we explain to them that under the franchise of Meralco, it is happening – because there is a clause here, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, that under the term of its franchise, under Section 9, I will read:

“This franchise shall be for a term of twenty-five (25) years from the date of effectivity of this Act, x x x.”

By the way, Mr. Speaker, I think the franchise of Meralco was approved in 2003 and so it has up to 2028. It says here “unless sooner revoked or cancelled by Congress for any violation of the terms and/or provisions of the franchise herein granted.” One of the conditions—among the provisions, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, is to keep the price reasonable, just, competitive, and that they are produced in the least cost manner, but this is not happening. It seems to me, there is a violation and considering that under this section, any violation can prod Congress to probably revoke or cancel the franchise—I do not wish to insinuate anything, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. I am only trying to point out a clear provision of this franchise and the ERC, I think, is in a position to rationalize this and explain to our people how come, in your power, there is this distribution utility, Meralco, there is an approved franchise, you are the regulator, but how come this condition is not happening, how come this condition is not felt by our people?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, I agree fully with the Gentleman from SAGIP that the ERC mandate is to make sure that the price of electricity and power for that matter, in any case which may be, must be reasonably priced, reliable and sustainable. It must be just. That is why the ERC, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, has a system of constant evaluation wherein they engage the consumers. For example, let us not just talk about Meralco because I do not want to specify their policy, but in any distribution utility, the ERC must conduct a regular evaluation, which they do. In any rate application, they must engage the consumer and the ERC must be fully engaged in the whole system of the distribution utilities and power generation, so they will check where the power will come from. Mr. Sponsor, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, I agree fully with the distinguished Deputy Speaker.

REP. MARCOLETA. But the problem remains, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

I think the Energy Regulatory Commission miserably failed in being able to explain to our people by way of, let us say, comparison. How do we say that the price that they pay today is reasonable? How can you convince the ordinary consumers that the price they pay monthly is just and it is competitive?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, all the prices are always not just for me. As far as this Sponsor is concerned, of the ERC, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, for me, there is no just price. It is always very high for the consumers, and that is very unfortunate. That is why the ERC must work harder and faster to make sure that the consumers feel good when they pay for the electricity they use, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MARCOLETA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the consumer will feel good only if the ERC is able to explain adequately, honestly, truthfully and openly that the price is competitive. But how would the ERC be able to explain that it is competitive? It is very easy, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, to say that the price is competitive. Ganito po iyon e. Hindi po natin puwedeng sabihing, “O, ito ay maganda.” Ang maganda po ay puwede nating i-conclude kung may comparison. Ito, maganda siya talaga kung ikukumpara mo kay ganito. So, competitive is relative, just is relative, reasonable is relative. It has to relate to something so that people will be convinced that the monthly bill that they pay is the one that has been institutionalized, that has been placed under the franchise of Meralco.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, ...

REP. MARCOLETA. This is the whole problem here, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, the ERC conducts regular consultations and public consultations with consumers to the best of their abilities. Of course, it is not enough. Nothing is ever enough, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker. As long

as we are having a hard time paying for electricity, nothing is ever enough, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker. I admit that. But let us allow the ERC to try to fulfill their mandate. Is it enough? It is not enough. It will never be enough because we, the consumers, will always complain about what we pay for. And I agree with that because I, myself, complains about what I pay for, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MARCOLETA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I hope I will not be belaboring this issue. But ordinary people like the constituencies of this Representation need to know what is RORB, what is PBR, what is price competitive power supply contracting? What is feed-in tariff? What do you mean by "retail competition and open access system" or why do consumers have to pay the tax on standard debts of the National Power Corporation? At the very least, you have to explain the net-metering program for renewable energy. Ordinary consumers do not understand all these, Mr. Speaker. You can only relate to them. The ERC will become relevant to them if they feel that what they pay is competitive, what they pay is just, what they pay is reasonable.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, we should implore the ERC to expand their consultations and their dialogues with the people whom they are sworn to serve, whom they are mandated to protect. Perhaps after this pandemic is over, when big gatherings can be done, perhaps they can do this in a more exhaustive manner. The Gentleman from SAGIP is correct and this Sponsor agrees with him. The ERC should find a more exhaustive way of explaining to the people what are these terms.

REP. MARCOLETA. Thank you for that answer. Let us go to that process.

Can the ERC, at the very least, explain to us the process of consulting with the people? How do they do this? For example, Meralco would apply for a new rate, the ERC would study the rate being presented by Meralco, they would call for public hearing, would

the people understand the algebraic and mathematical equations behind the power rate application of Meralco? They would not be able to understand. I asked them, because they will give you at least several compendiums, six-inches thick, "That is the equation, that is the formula." I do not think even the Commissioners of ERC will be able to explain or understand the complications behind those numbers. So, how would the consultation be practical if Members of Congress will not be able to understand those mathematical computations because they are not only complicated...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, this industry is really complicated, that I must admit. But the ERC, again, is trying their best, we are not saying it is enough. They should try further, but for now, basically, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, when there is a rate application, it is published in the newspaper even before it is accepted and then there is dialogue with the consumers. Is it enough? It is not enough. Should they do more? They should. Can everybody understand these numbers, these terms? No. Even Members of Congress, professors in universities, they cannot understand these things. Indeed, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, the power industry is very, very complicated.

REP. MARCOLETA. That is the problem, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. It is complicated, they made this complicated for people not to be able to understand it. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the first element of due process is to inform. If the ERC fails in the basic element of informing the people how the rate is fixed, there is no due process. If the Chairperson or even the Commissioners of the ERC will not be able to understand the mathematical computation behind these rates, there will be no due process, with more reason that our consumers will not be able to understand. That is why until today, we are still approximating what is conservative, what is competitive, what is reasonable and what is just. It is in the franchise of Meralco. Somebody should explain to our ordinary people that what they pay is reasonable.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. MARCOLETA. I think they gained their right, Mr. Speaker, to be able to know that what they pay is what was written in the franchise of Meralco.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, we have been dwelling on this issue for the past 10 minutes. The Sponsor agrees with the Gentleman, the distinguished Deputy Speaker. As I said, the power industry is really a very technical and complicated industry. It is hard to explain to our people. Even Members of Congress, technocrats, they cannot understand everything, what more our constituents who unfortunately did not even finish high school? Perhaps the Gentleman from SAGIP can propose some ideas, that he can write to the ERC about some ideas on how they can exhaustively explain to the consumers whom they have sworn to protect, some ways and means to engage the consumers more exhaustively because, you know, how the ERC engages the consumers, apparently, is not enough.

REP. MARCOLETA. Gusto ko iyan, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Katulad po halimbawa ng system loss na matagal po nating pinag-uusapan. Dalawa po kasi ang klase ng system loss, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Ang sinasabi nila, isang technical, isang non-technical. Gusto ko pong tulungan ang ERC na magpaliwanag sa aming mga constituents pero tatapatin ko kayo, kahit ako po, parang lumalaban ang kalooban ko na ipaliwanag nang ganoon sapagkat parang napakahirap intindihin. Halimbawa po, nakalagay po doon sa non-technical factors noong system loss, halimbawa po, nasira iyong metro, hindi po kasalanan ng consumer iyon. Ang metro po ay pag-aari po ng Meralco. Iyon pong kaniyang bookkeeper ay nagkamali ng kakakwenta, iyong accountant po niya ay nagkamali ng filing, iyong pagkakamali po na iyon ay babayaran ng consumer as system loss. Papaano ko pong ipapaliwanag iyon?

Iyon pong natural causes, halimbawa po, nabalatan iyong kuryente, iyong heat

at saka iyong – talagang ganoon mayroong nadi-dissipate na kuryente magmula doon sa power generation to transmission until the distribution to the households, mayroon po talaga. But I think the distribution utility knows it perfectly na ito po talaga ang sistema ng kaniyang negosyo. Alam niya bago pa siya nagpasya na pumunta sa ganitong negosyo, alam niyang mayroong loss, alam niyang mayroong mawawala. Parang yelo po iyon. Pagkabili mo po sa planta ng ice plant at dadalhin mo po doon sa nagtitinda ng halo-halo, mayroon pong natutunaw talaga doon. Iyon ang loss pero alam po noong gumagawa ng halo-halo na pagkabili niya, pagdating niya doon sa kaniyang pagawaan, bawas na iyon, pero hindi niya po itsa-charge doon sa bumibili ng halo-halo sapagkat parte na po noong kaniyang risk. Every business...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Tama po, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, dapat po...

REP. MARCOLETA. ... must accept the element of risks.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Tama po. Ang negosyante dapat...

REP. MARCOLETA. Hindi po, ganito po kasi...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. ... would be the one to take the loss, not the consumer.

REP. MARCOLETA. ... ang sabi ninyo, kailangan mag-propose ako. Sana iyong system loss, huwag na po nating ipabayad sa kanila. Wala naman po silang kasalanan doon. Either natural cause, either man-made, iyon po iyong risk ng isang negosyo. Mas madali pong ipaliwanag na kayo na po ang magbayad noon, huwag na po iyong consumer.

Isa pa po, bakit po iyong sa government tax, nagbayad na po siya ng generation charge, bakit po iyong tax ng generation charge, bakit po iyong consumer ang magbabayad? Nagbayad po siya ng transmission charge, bakit po naman iyong tax ng charge na iyon, bakit consumer pa po ang magbabayad? Nagbayad po siya ng distribution charge,

bakit po iyong tax ng distribution, bakit consumer pa ang magbabayad? Bakit? May I ask, categorically, is it clearly provided under the law na iyong magbabayad lang po ba ng tax na iyon iyong consumer lang? Wala po bang babalikatin iyong generation, iyong transmission, at saka iyong distribution? Tanging-tangi po bang ang consumer lang ang babalikang noong cost na iyon?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, alam ninyo lahat po ng sinabi ninyo ako'y sumasang-ayon. Kailangan po iyong mga ganoon—kunyari, assuming iyong sinabi ninyo po, iyong metro ng kuryente, sino ba ang may pagmamay-ari niyan? Iyong distribution utility. Masisira nga naman po, e bakit ita-charge sa consumer? Hindi ba? Halimbawa po, ang...

REP. MARCOLETA. Iyon po iyong itinatanong ko sa inyo.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Oo nga po. Ako ho'y sumasang-ayon sa inyo. Patapusin naman po ninyo ako. Ang problema po, it is the law that prevents that. Perhaps, we can repeal the law, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker. Ang sabi po nila, iyong mga tax naman po, lahat po sila ay sumusunod sa mga BIR circular po. Anyway, the BIR naman po, their budget got deferred, perhaps we can ask them together when they come here next week.

REP. MARCOLETA. Mayroon po akong simpleng suggestion, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, para matapos na lang ako at ito po'y simpleng-simple.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Opo.

REP. MARCOLETA. Halimbawa, kakausapin ko po si Cong. Ace Barbers, mag-file na po siya ng bill, alisin na po natin iyong VAT na mayroong charge sa distribution, manggagaling pa iyong VAT doon, ang magbabayad ay consumer. Alisin po natin ang system loss, pagkatapos ang ERC kakausapin po niya ang Meralco, huwag na siyang kokontra, huwag na po siya makikipag-usap dito sa Congress, kakasangkapanin niya iyong

marami sa amin para i-block po iyong bill ni Congressman Barbers kasi po sa debate pa lang, baka matalo na po si Congressman Barbers sa laki ng kalaban niya. Pero kung halimbawa makikipag-cooperate, nasa usapan lang naman po ito, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Halimbawa pumayag ang Meralco, "Sige, hindi na kami kokontra diyan, hindi na kami magla-lobby, hindi na kami pupunta sa Senado. Basta kung ano iyong bill ni Congressman Barbers, kung gusto ninyo isang araw, i-Third Reading kaagad iyan." O, wala tayong problema sapagkat inalis natin iyong impediment na nakalagay sa batas. Puwede po bang tumulong ang ERC, na let us persuade Meralco? Ito lang ang paraan po para maramdaman naman po ng consumer, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Matagal na pong panahon na sana ...

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Puwede na pong sumagot?

REP. MARCOLETA. ... sana po maibaba natin nang kahit kaunti lang. Ang laking bagay po noon. Alam po ba ninyo, 'ika nila, "Iyong P50 hanggang P100 monthly na matitipid namin, napakalaking bagay na po sa amin noon?" Pero kung ibababa po ng Meralco, one percent lang po ng system loss, ang katapat noon po, pitong sentimos lang, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Parang wala ring mararamdaman ang consumer.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, tama po iyong sinabi ninyo. Iminumungkahi rin po ng ERC iyan. Ang problema nga po ay sila—kami po ay nakatali sa batas. Pero sila po, pumapayag po. Tutulong po sila sa atin, na they will support that law na ating iminumungkahi, na ang batas ay i-repeal po natin. Now, the lobbyists who will come here, who will go to the Senate, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak for them. I cannot commit that they will not do it but, of course, we will fight them as long as we serve the people and what is good for the people, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MARCOLETA. Ito po, huli na lamang po, Mr. Speaker.

Salamat po sa pagtanggap ninyo ng mungkahi na iyon.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, ...

REP. MARCOLETA. Sana man lang kung mapapirma natin ang ERC doon.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. ... iyong mungkahi po na iyon ay tinatangap rin ng ERC, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MARCOLETA. Salamat po.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. We are on the same page as the distinguished Deputy Speaker.

REP. MARCOLETA. Ito po iyong naging problema po ng pangkaraniwang mamamayan nitong nakaraang pandemic. Palagay ko po lahat tayo rito ay nagkaroon ng problema tungkol dito. Dahil nga po hindi ginamit ang metro, ang sabi ng Meralco, nakipag-Zoom po sa akin – mabuti naman, ako’y nagpapasalamat at sa pagpapaliwanag nila, ginamit pa nila ang Zoom, pero ako po ay nag-i-guilty, sana man lang bawat mamamayan i-Zoom nila, hindi lamang dahil ako po ay kasama sa Congress. Pero doon sa pagpapaliwanag po nila, hindi ko pa rin maintindihan iyong karamihan. Halimbawa po, sa billing period po ng January 19, 2020 to February 18, 2020, kinuwenta ko po iyong price per kilowatt, P10.34. Iyong sumunod na billing period po naging P21.41. Hindi ko po maintindihan iyon, bakit paiba-iba? Sumunod po, naging P7.40; sumunod na naman po, P9.96, at kahulihulihan po lumundag ulit, P22.50 per kilowatt. Hindi ko po maintindihan iyon. Kung ako po na Miyembro na ng Kongreso, hindi ko kayang intindihin bakit palundag-lundag, sa kanila naman po galing ito, hindi po nila maipaliwanag nang mabuti ito.

Ngayon, kaya po nananatili iyong problema, kakulangan po ng komunikasyon mula sa ERC kung paano ipapaliwanag sa tao talaga. Unang-una, kailangan pong maramdaman nila. Alam po natin ang gawain ng ERC, regulator po kayo. Ang problema

lang sa pagre-regulate natin, kinakailangan po kasi ang transparency. Paano magkakaroon ng transparency kung iyong mathematical and algebraic equations na kung saan fini-fix ang rate, wala pong nakakaintindi. Paano po magiging transparent kung isa man sa atin hindi natin kayang intindihin kung paano kinukuwenta iyong rates? Ito po iyong pinakaproblema, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. At ako po ay nagpapasalamat at sana ay naiparating nating mabuti sa ERC kung ano po iyong damdamin ng karaniwang tao na hanggang ngayon po ay naghahanap ng katuwiran. Gusto lang naman nilang maipaliwanag nang mabuti, ito po bang binabayaran ko ay ito na po ba iyong ultimo? Ito po ba iyong nakasaad talaga doon sa prangkisa ng Meralco? Palagay ko kapag naipaliwanag natin, baka iyong nagsisikip po niyang kalooban ay baka naman mapagaan. Sa kawalan po ng paliwanag, kaya lalo pong nahahapis na iyong puso niya, pati bulsa niya nahahapis, pandemic po, kaya nanlulumo po ang ordinaryong consumer.

Mr. Speaker, salamat po sa inyong panahon na ibinigay. Mr. Sponsor, salamat at tinanggap ninyo iyong mga mungkahi. Sana naman sa lalong madaling panahon makagawa tayo ng paraan kahit na kinakailangan natin siguro ng milagro at lalong-lalo na po, kung papayagan po ninyo, iyong projected bill na ipa-file po ni Cong. Ace Barbers.

Salamat po.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Maraming salamat po, Ginoong Deputy Speaker. Let me assure you that I agree with everything you said. Ang problema lang po, sometimes, the system’s hands are tied because of the law. We might need to repeal some laws, we might need to check some BIR Circulars, but if the Gentleman from SAGIP so desires, I will file the bill with him.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Okay. Thank you very much, distinguished colleague, Deputy Speaker Rodante Marcoleta, for your substantive interpellation. Thank you very much also, the Hon. Mikey Arroyo for defending the position of the ERC.

Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, next to interpellate the Sponsor, I move that we recognize Rep. Godofredo N. Guya from the RECOBODA Party-List.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Hon. Godofredo Guya is recognized.

REP. GUYA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Magandang gabi sa lahat ng ating mga colleagues diyan sa plenary at sa mga kasamahan natin sa Zoom na hanggang ngayon ay nagtatrabaho pa dahil sa mga kababayan natin. So, magandang gabi, Ginoong Speaker, honorable Sponsor. Mayroon lang akong konting katanungan, Mr. Speaker, kung tatanggapin ba iyong mga katanungan natin, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Opo.

REP. GUYA. Salamat po, Ginoong Sponsor.

Nabanggit kasi ni Congressman Zarate kanina about sa pending bill natin sa Energy Committee regarding sa iyong strengthening ng Energy Regulatory Commission. In anticipation of the possible changes proposed by the said bill, may I then ask if the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget is already reflective of the pending bill strengthening the ERC?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Wala pa po, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GUYA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, moving forward, I urge the ERC and this Chamber to take into serious consideration the bill filed in the Energy Committee seeking to strengthen the Energy Regulatory Commission. We assure you, Mr. Sponsor, that we, in the Power bloc, are more than willing to support the budget needed to enact measures that will transform the ERC into a stronger power regulator.

Additional question, Ginoong Sponsor, and this is related to capex. Kasi marami tayong followers sa Facebook ngayon, siguro dapat ma-explain natin sa mga electric consumers,

bakit kailangang mag-file ng capex application ang isang distribution utility, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Pasensya na po kayo, hindi ko po narinig. Medyo masama po ang dating ng – nandito na kami – ng Zoom. Pakiulit nga po, Sir, iyong direct question po.

REP. GUYA. This is related to capex or capital expenditure application, Your Honor. Bakit kaya kailangang mag-apply iyong isang distribution utility ng capital expenditure projects?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, may I read the position of the ERC if it is okay with you.

REP. GUYA. Okay lang, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Verbatimly, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, as per the notes given to me by the ERC regarding capex cases, that is your question, if it is correct, that is your question, Your Honor?

REP. GUYA. Yes, Your Honor.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Capex cases refer to projects that the ECs will implement to ensure they are able to serve the needs of their consumers. The ERC commits to finish the 153 pending cases in two to three years, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker. We have asked – they have asked in their 2021 Budget for funds to hire additional technical staff even on a contractual basis to evaluate the capex pending cases.

Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, if you remember in last year's budget deliberations, this was also the topic of our exchange and both of us know, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, that the ERC needs funds to hire people so at least they can fast-track these pending cases.

REP. GUYA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, Mr. Sponsor. If I may siguro, ang capex application, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, ay kailangan po ng isang distribution utility

to meet the growing demand, 'no, to meet the growing power demand of its customers para po hindi mag-o-overload iyong kaniyang mga distribution facilities, substation at saka iba pa. So, kailangan talaga ng isang electric cooperative, for example, na mag-file ng capex application para po mabigyang serbisyo iyong mga incoming na mga additional customers. Considering that ngayong pandemya, ano, almost babalik na tayo sa new normal, talagang tataas iyong demand ng kuryente.

So in order not to overload the system in the distribution utilities, kailangang mag-file ng capex application. Kaya nga, Your Honor, in relation to the ERC capacity as an institution that ensures the competitive operations of electricity market, we also call on the Commission to hear our distribution utilities' concerns on capex application delays. Why this is so important? Capex applications are related to system improvement and upgrading, which result in the reduction of the system losses by electric cooperatives which eventually results in lower system loss charges, and improved reliability. Those will redound to a reduction of the rates and improved quality of service for electricity consumers, respectively.

I would like to bring up the previous concern of all 121 electric cooperatives on the delays that they are experiencing on capex applications approval. Mr. Sponsor, this matter was already discussed during last year's budget hearing. We have even supported the additional budget needed by the ERC to hire additional technical experts in the hope that it will vastly lessen the delay being experienced by electric cooperatives in application processes. This does not seem to be the case now as we are still receiving reports from electric cooperatives on their pending capex approval.

So again, I would like to get the Sponsor's, as well as the ERC's commitment on improving their processes, specifically to facilitate faster capex application approval because this matter has a direct impact on our customers. Capex of electric cooperatives include technology or modernization of its facilities that can address system losses in their operation, thus bringing the rates of electricity down for the benefit of the consumers. I urge the Commission to

issue a resolution allowing the provisional approval of capex applications that have hurdled hearings without opposition and complied with the required documentary submission. This would allow the immediate implementation of capex applications that have already complied with all requirements pursuant to ERC guidelines. A provision on emergency capital expenditure in the ERC capex application manual has already laid down specifics that may be adhered to by the projects which are deemed necessary in order to maintain a safe, reliable, secure and efficient operation of the power system.

Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate that all of these efforts in the end are in the best interests of our consumers. To the ERC, we commit to working hand-in-hand with you to provide the Filipino people the quality service they deserve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Thank you very much, distinguished colleague from the Power bloc.

May I humbly ask that you submit that written manifestation you just read. Please submit it to the Committee Secretary and he will give it to the ERC because these are very valid points. Unfortunately, as we mentioned a while ago, we only have 12 staff who take care of that, but they commit to finishing these cases within two to three years. Again, please submit your written – that manifestation you just read to us. Thank you, Your Honor. Thank you.

REP. GUYA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Salamat po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
The Majority Leader.

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, the next to interpellate the Sponsor, I move that we recognize Rep. Adriano Ebcas of the AKO PADAYON Party-List.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
The Hon. Adriano Ebcas is recognized.
Honorable Ebcas, are you online?
Majority Leader.

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker — okay.

REP. EBCAS. Can be I heard, Mr. Speaker?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Okay. You are now online. You may proceed, Honorable Ebcas, for your interpellation.

REP. EBCAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, my colleagues in the Eighteenth Congress, ERC Commissioners, spearheaded by Madam Chair Agnes Devanadera, and its employees and to everyone, good evening.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, this is only a manifestation and I would like to commend the ERC for being mindful of the energy sector's difficulties and challenges as it continues to serve the Filipino people during this pandemic. The Commission's directives did not only provide assistance to the generation, transmission and distribution participants in the energy sector but also gave relief to electricity consumers in coping with the current crisis. From the suspension of FIT-All and UCEC collection, extension of deadline of payments of distribution utilities to generation companies, extension of deadline of payments for consumers' electricity bills, even providing for an installment scheme for said use, they were all done with Filipino consumers' welfare in mind. A week ago, to be specific, last September 24, the Energy Regulatory Commission issued an advisory which extends the deadline of supervision and regulation fee, a fee paid by the distribution utilities from September 30, 2020 to December 15, 2020 without interest or penalties. The Commission's actions on these matters are greatly appreciated by this Representation. However, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, it is my duty to point out a certain matter that has been troubling me and my constituents.

Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, can you confirm that as of this moment, the distribution charges have not changed since the unbundling of rates in 2004 was implemented? Puwede ko bang malaman, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, iyong sagot sa tanong ko doon sa unbundling of rates sa 2004?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, you made a manifestation, correct?

REP. EBCAS. Kanina tinanong ko, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, can you confirm that, as of this moment, the distribution service charge has not changed since the unbundling of rates in 2004 was implemented?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, will you allow me to read verbatim the position of the ERC: "The Distribution Supply Metering or DSM Rates for electric cooperatives under the RESC-WR. - The DSM or the Distribution, Supply, Metering for the ECs, the electric cooperatives, was last set in 2009 through RSEC-WR. We are starting to close these cases. Hopefully, by the end of 2020, " that is this year, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, "to the first quarter of 2021, we will be able to close all of these. Notwithstanding, the RSEC-WR provides for an avenue for ECs to file a separate application, if it deems it necessary, to the opt-out provision." That verbatim, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, is the position of the ERC.

REP. EBCAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, for that answer and I would like to launch my formal request, with the indulgence of the Energy Regulatory Commission, to revisit the supposed effects of the unbundling of rates in 2004. The distribution charge has remained the same for 16 years, yet we are experiencing an annual incremental rise in the rates of electricity. For the past few years, distribution utilities have borne the brunt of the consumers because of the surging electricity bills almost every year. It is the Energy Regulatory Commission's job to look closely into the energy supply chain, especially at generation and transmission, in order to determine the main cause of this problem. The distribution utilities are doing their part by ensuring distribution charges do not increase for the benefit of our consumers. We need to see the same level of commitment from all participants of the power sector to give Filipinos the lower electricity rates that

they demand and deserve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Thank you very much distinguished colleague. The ERC commits to review these, the issues you talked about. Fortunately, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, the 2021 Budget gives them some space and logistics to review such issues.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Majority Leader.

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, next to interpellate the distinguished Sponsor, I move that we recognize Rep. Ria Vergara from the Third District of Nueva Ecija for her interpellation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Hon. Ria Vergara from the Third District of Nueva Ecija is recognized.

REP. VERGARA. Hello, good evening. Mr. Speaker, can you hear me?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Go ahead. You are loud and clear.

REP. VERGARA. Thank you, Sir.

Good evening, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, to the Members of the Eighteenth Congress in the plenary, our fellow colleagues in Zoom and, of course, to the officials of the Department of Energy and the ERC Commissioners.

Honorable Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, you mentioned that the budget of the ERC was greatly reduced from P1.1 billion to P564 million. Will these reductions severely impact its regulatory function to monitor price manipulations, irregularities and perform its quasi-judicial functions, Sir?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, the Sponsor appreciates that query. Unfortunately, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, it will greatly reduce their capacity to perform their duties.

REP. VERGARA. So, honorable Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, right now, one of the issues often

brought against the ERC is the length of time it takes for them to process applications, as manifested by the Power bloc Representatives who spoke before me, Congressman Dagooc and Congressman Guya. Sometimes it takes years for them to release just a provisional authority and during the hearings of the Committee, honorable Sponsor, of which we are both members, they do not deny this and they say that in order to review, study and approve faster, they need more lawyers, more engineers, and more people working on all these applications. So, this lowered budget will exacerbate this existing problem and not address the current problem, is that right, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Yes, distinguished colleague.

REP. VERGARA. So, is it fair to say, Mr. Sponsor, honorable Speaker that because of this lowered budget, then instances like what was mentioned, that price manipulation that happened in December 2013, might happen again because of the lack of manpower?

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Your Honor, Mr. Speaker, the Sponsor cannot commit that that will not happen again. But what the Sponsor can commit is that the ERC will try its best, they will try its best so that it will not occur again.

REP. VERGARA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, honorable Sponsor, my dear friend, Cong. Mikey. I would just like then to make a short manifestation to support the increase in the budget of the ERC to P1.1 billion from P564 million given their critical regulatory role and quasi-judicial functions in relation to numerous transactions and projects amounting to billions the ERC handles.

It is imperative that we in Congress ensure that the ERC is sufficiently equipped with the manpower, technical capabilities and budget that will empower them to perform their duty with competence, integrity and efficiency. Our country can benefit from the huge potential and opportunities that the ERC can harness. Our firm support for the increase in the ERC's

budget will, indeed, be a step in the right direction. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and honorable Sponsor, for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the ERC. It is not a very easy job they are in. I mean, people love to attack them so I think with the load that they handle, they should be equipped at least with the manpower, if not the, you know, technical capability in order to address all the complaints lodged. Thank you very much, Sir, and good evening.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend for a few minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The session is suspended.

It was 9:20 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 9:21 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The session is resumed.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Kit Belmonte from the Sixth District of Quezon City.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BELMONTE. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Hon. Christopher Belmonte is recognized.

REP. BELMONTE. Thank you very much and good evening, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there being no other member of the Minority who wishes to propound questions to the Hon. Mikey

Macapagal Arroyo, I move that we terminate the period of interpellation on the budget of the ERC.

I so move, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). There is a motion from the Minority. Shall we hear from the Majority?

Majority Leader.

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Majority, we join the Minority in their motion to terminate the period of interpellation on the proposed budget of the ERC.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). There is a joint motion from the Majority and the Minority to terminate the budget deliberations on the Office of the Energy Regulatory Commission. Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Congratulations to the ERC and congratulations to the Hon. Mikey Macapagal Arroyo for defending the position and the budget of the ERC well. (*Applause*)

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. BAGATSING. Mr. Speaker, I move for a one-minute suspension.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The session is suspended.

It was 9:23 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 9:25 p.m., the session was resumed with Rep. Juan Miguel Macapagal Arroyo presiding.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Macapagal Arroyo). The session is resumed. Majority Leader.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
Continuation

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we resume the consideration of the budget of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, including its attached agencies.

At this juncture, Rep. Macapagal Arroyo relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Henry S. Oaminal.

And I move that we recognize the Sponsor, Rep. Luis N. Campos from the Second District of Makati City. But before we proceed, Mr. Speaker, may we acknowledge the presence of our guests from the National Youth Commission, Chairperson Ryan Enriquez; from the OASPP, Renelyn De Claro; from the Philippine National Police, Police Lt. Col. Rowena Acosta, Police Maj. Gen. Emmanuel Luis Licup; Asec. Francisco Cruz; Asec. Ester Aldana; Usec. Rico Echiverri; Usec. Jonathan Malaya; Usec. Epimaco Densing; Usec. Bernardo Florece Jr. ; Usec. Marivel Sacendoncillo; Dir. Allan Iral; Dir. Jose Embang Jr. ; PNP Chief Camilo Cascolan; and Sec. Eduardo M. Año.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). To the official family of the DILG, including its attached agencies, welcome to the House of Representatives.

Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize Rep. Luis M. Campos, Vice Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, to answer questions on the proposed budget of the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Hon. Luis Campos is recognized to present the budget of the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

Majority Leader.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, my apologies, I move that we recognize the

proponent, Vice Chairperson Romeo M. Jalosjos Jr. from the First District of Zamboanga del Norte to answer the questions on the proposed budget.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Hon. Romeo Jalosjos Jr. of the First District of Zamboanga del Norte is recognized to present and defend the budget of the DILG, including its attached agencies. You are recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, may I ask for a one-minute suspension.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Okay, as requested by the Honorable Jalosjos, one-minute suspension.

It was 9:29 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 9:33 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The session is resumed.

Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize the Hon. Jose Christopher Belmonte of the Sixth District of Quezon City for his interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Hon. Jose Christopher Belmonte of the Sixth District of Quezon City is recognized.

REP. BELMONTE. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Majority Floor Leader.

Will the Sponsor accede to a few questions, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The honorable Sponsor, Honorable Jalosjos, are you now ready to answer the questions from the Honorable Belmonte?

REP. JALOSJOS. Certainly, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Go ahead, Honorable Belmonte.

REP. BELMONTE. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Normally, I would be asking a lot of questions about the DILG but in deference to my old friends, I will endeavor to confine myself to only one topic because nakita ko po iyong listahan namin sa Minority, medyo mahaba-haba po. We are in for a long night it seems, Mr. Speaker, so I will just confine myself to one topic.

I must confess that I did not pay much attention to the work of our barangay health workers and our barangay tanod prior to COVID. However, I realized noong height ng pandemic, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, ang frontliners po natin ay ang mga barangay health workers at saka iyong mga tanod. Sila po iyong nagko-control ng mga hot zones, sila po iyong pumapasok, sila po iyong gumaganap na BHERT, sila iyong gumaganap na contact tracers on the ground, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

I would just like to know, ano po ang mayroong training, ano ang mayroong support ang DILG para po sa mga frontliners na ito sa ating mga barangay, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. JALOSJOS. The barangay officials were trained by BHERTs in contact tracing po.

REP. BELMONTE. May funds for contact tracing, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo, which is known as "BHERTs."

REP. BELMONTE. Okay. Magkano po—I am trying to understand you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. On the ground, in reality, nagko-contact tracing po ang BHWs natin, iyong mga tanod po ay nagko-contact tracing. Paano ho sila—may pondo ba iyon para sa paghahanda sila? Kasi ngayon, practical experience lang po

silang, pero paano sila ihinahanda? May training ba iyan, even on how to do their basic job as barangay health workers? Iyong minsan nag-a-act na kumadrona, sila iyong primary health care, mayroon bang mga trainings sila para diyan, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, po, tine-train po natin sila pero kulang po ang panahon talaga dahil po biglaan po ang COVID, 'di po natin inaasahan, and we have 42,000 barangays po. Ang barangay health workers naman po, ang directly may hawak po sa kanila ay ang Department of Health po. So, ang nagbibigay po ng training sa barangay health workers is ang DOH po.

REP. BELMONTE. Yes, I understand that, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. However, malaki ho ang—at least sa experience ko po sa Quezon City, iyong barangay health workers ay may dalawang klase, iyong city level and iyong mga barangay hired health workers, not to mention po iyong mga tanod po natin. Of course, lahat tayo hindi prepared noong pumasok ang COVID, pero mahaba pa ho ito, hindi pa po tapos. Until lumabas po ang virus, mahaba pa po tayo dito. In fact, the Secretary of the Interior and Local Government, tinamaan na nga ho siya, dalawang beses na po, 'di ba po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor? Iyong mga frontliners natin po sa barangay, ganoon din po iyan, and yet sumasabak sila na walang funds, walang resources to prepare them for this, even to do their basic job, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Sir. Actually po, ang nagko-conduct po ng trainings sa mga barangay officials, ang LGA po. In fact, LGA, Local Government Academy po ...

REP. BELMONTE. Kung meron po,...

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo.

REP. BELMONTE. ...magkano po iyong funds na naka-allot dito sa 2021 Budget po natin para diyan, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Sa 2021 Budget, I think embedded na lang sa ano—pero po kasi ang

nangyari po ngayon sa 2021, nag-create na lang po tayo ng 50,000 na local tracers.

REP. BELMONTE. Fifty thousand local tracers?

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo. Imbes na po ang barangay official lang po ang maglo-locate at humaharap sa pandemya, starting now hanggang 2021 po, we will be hiring 50,000 po na local tracers all over the Philippines.

REP. BELMONTE. I understood, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

Ang point ko, what I am trying to drive at, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, is, so may funds tayo to hire the contact tracers and to prepare them. Ang point ko po, iyong BHWs, iyong mga tanod, iyong mga purok leaders, iyong mga volunteers ng mga barangay, iyan po ang frontliners. Maybe sa 50,000 contact tracers, 42,000 barangay sa buong Pilipinas, ibig sabihin noon, iyong ibang barangay dito sa NCR, sabihin na nating makakakuha kayo ng 10, 20, pero hindi ba maganda na nasu-supplement din sila ng iyong mga in place na, iyong mga meron na, nasa plantilla or contractuales nang mga barangay tanod at saka mga barangay health workers na maaarmasan din po natin, mabibigyan din po natin ng training, mabibigyan din po natin ng suporta at equipment para hindi lang po COVID, kundi para matrabaho nila iyong basic na trabaho nila as the frontliners sa laban natin sa health and sa peace and order, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, aking kagalang-galang na kasamahan, sa totoo lang po, wala po tayong pondong nakalaan para sa pagte-training ng mga barangay officials po. It will take an additional P50 million po. Kung maaari rin po, e di puwede po tayong magpanukala na maglagay ng additional.

REP. BELMONTE. That sounds very good, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. I would like to ask the honorable colleague, sa tingin ninyo ho, just to provide just our BHWs and the tanod, the volunteer tanods ng mga barangay, iyong may plantilla na 20 per barangay, pero

iyong actuality dito sa mga barangay natin sa Quezon City, Usec. Diño, ay daan ang kailangan na mga tanod. Sa tingin ninyo ho, magkano iyong kailangan nating additional funds para ma-train sila nang tama, para maarmasan sila, para maharap natin itong COVID pandemic na ito, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, our dear colleague, ang estimated po natin is P50 million po.

REP. BELMONTE. Fifty million?

REP. JALOSJOS. That is for the training po, for handling pati ng patients po, local patients in barangays.

REP. BELMONTE. And satisfied na ang Sponsor, Mr. Speaker? Satisfied po ang Sponsor at ang responsible officials natin sa P50 million for 42,000 barangays times ilang tanod, ilang health workers, ilang volunteers na nasa frontline? Sapat na po ang P50 million? Sabagay, sa laki ng budget po natin, baka naman kayang-kaya po nating ilagay iyong P50 million, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. JALOSJOS. Sa amin pong palagay dahil hindi lang naman po ang DILG po ang makakatulong sa pagpondo, pati na po ang local government units po ay may kakayahan din po, at pati na po ang sariling budget po ng barangay ay puwedeng maglaan din po at magamit para madagdagan. Sa initial lang po na estimate lang po ng ahensiya, P50 million will do. We can start na po especially sa mga areas na heavily infested po ng COVID-19.

REP. BELMONTE. Well then, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I suppose the honorable Sponsor, being a member of the Appropriations, being a Vice Chairman of the Appropriations Committee and the House leadership, I am sure, as well as my colleagues in the Minority and my colleagues in the Majority, knowing how important the roles of our frontliners, barangay health workers, the tanods, and the volunteers are—I am sure all of you will support this Representation if we ask that the

budget be adjusted just a little more to put in these necessary funds for our frontliners to equip them, to arm them properly in facing this pandemic and in performing their basic duties, lalong-lalo na po sa situation ngayon. May I have that sort of promise from the Sponsor, that they will endeavor to add this necessary fund for our frontliners in the barangay?

REP. JALOSJOS. In due time, Mr. Speaker, iginagalang nating kasamahan, at hindi lang po iyan ang puwede pa nating irekomenda. Isa po iyan sa irerekomenda po natin.

REP. BELMONTE. Thank you very much for that commitment, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Hindi na po ako magdadagdag ng tanong on other matters, iiwanan ko na po diyari. Thank you very much for your time, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, the next House Member to interpellate is the Hon. Anthony Peter “Onyx” D. Crisologo from the First District of Quezon City.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Hon. Anthony Peter “Onyx” D. Crisologo from the First District of Quezon City is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Sponsor a few questions which are actually related to those of our colleague in the Minority, who asked questions with regard to our barangay officials who are considered frontliners, especially in the fight for the “new normal” in the next year which is the COVID-19 pandemic. As we all know, the adverse effects of COVID-19 are expected to continue way past 2021.

Now, the Executive Department has tasked the barangay officials to lead the battle against this pandemic. In this battle, health workers play an important and risky role. We rely heavily on them. We should

provide them with budgetary support and assistance, not only to enhance their skills and capabilities to perform their functions but to also protect them from this disease. The proposed 2021 DILG budget includes several support programs for LGUs, Mr. Speaker—improvement of LGU competitiveness in ease of doing business, 911 emergency services, anti-illegal drugs, to name a few. However, looking at the General Appropriations Bill, particularly, Volume I-A, the administrative needs are sort of lacking, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the same question with regard to the budget of our tanod, our health workers, our Lupong Tagapamayapa, and our barangay health workers. Gusto ko pong tanungin ang ating Sponsor kung ito po ay naisama sa ating 2021 Budget, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Again, Mr. Speaker, as much as we would like na maisama, apparently po, Mr. Speaker, our good colleagues, hindi po natin nalagyan ng pondo po ang training ng mga barangay officials natin for response sa COVID po.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Mr. Speaker, it is worth mentioning po noong 2020, ang ating barangay tanod ay nakakuha ng para sa barangay skills enhancement na P14.2 million. Itong 2021 po, ito po ay naibaba sa P10.3 million, sabi nga po, for 42,000 barangays. Ang ating Lupong Tagapamayapa, from P4.4 million noong 2020, ito po ay iniangat nang P14.5 million, so tayo po ay nagpapasalamat dahil tinutukan po ang ating Lupong Tagapamayapa. Pero again, I would like to reiterate, wala po ang ating barangay health workers. Sila po ang nahihirapan; sila po ang rumiresponde 24/7. I would like to ask—I have a few questions, Mr. Speaker, but I will get right to the point dahil mahaba pa po ang ating proceedings. Mayroon po tayong P506,435,000 sa Monitoring and Evaluation of Assistance to LGUs. Hindi ba po puwede nating kunin doon sa portion na iyon ang allocation para i-train ang ating barangay health workers dahil kailangan na kailangan po nila ito, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang nating kasamahan sa Kongreso, iyong

P506 million po kasi, iyan po ang ginagamit natin para ma-train, ito po iyong ginagamit na monitoring para—under sa LGSF po, siya po ang ginagamit para ma-monitor natin kung tama po ang paggamit po ng pondo ng LGSF.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Iyon nga po, Mr. Speaker, with regard to budgetary requirements, alam po natin sa DBM kung gaano kahirap po maiprograma ang LGSF, not because of any problems with our LGUs but because of the number of requirements na dadaanan for COA purposes. Ang alam po kasi natin ngayon, time is of the essence kaya po hinihiling po natin again, sana po, na dahil napakagaling ng ating Secretary ng DILG, Secretary Año, na kasama rin po natin ang ating mga Usecs dito, sana po mapag-aralan natin na mas mabigyang pansin dahil alam ninyo po, noong bigayan ng SAP, itong Bayanihan 1, Bayanihan 2, sila po ang umiikot sa ating mga barangay at karamihan po sa kanila ay nagkasakit ng COVID-19. So, ang hiling po ng inyong lingkod sa ating tagasulong ng budget ng DILG, again, is a commitment na tututukan po natin ang ating barangay health workers, particularly dahil sila po ay naghihintay minsan—alam po ni Cong. Kit Belmonte iyan, minsan dose oras sila naghihintay ng mga pasyente para mai-admit sa ospital. Sabi nga po, wala pa tayo sa peak ng ating pandemic o palapit na tayo, sana po sa lalong madaling panahon ay matulungan natin ang ating mga barangay officials at ang ating mga barangay health workers.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na kasamahan sa House, mayroon po tayong P261,468,000 sa Local Government Academy na puwede natin partially magamit para ma-train na po ngayon, maumpisahan na po ang training. Alam po namin na hindi po sapat ang perang ito pero po mauumpisahan na po natin ang hinihiling po natin na ma-train na natin ang ating barangay officials, lalo na ang ating barangay health workers.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Well, iyan po, hahayaan po natin while we do not want to mix numbers po, alam ho ng DILG, pero sana po, iyon

talaga ang hiling namin dahil in other LGUs like Quezon City, Manila, Taguig or Pasig, kaya naman ho pero sana isipin po natin, sa iba't ibang lalawigan natin, maliliit din po ang kanilang pondo kaya hindi kayang sagutin kaya po sana sa DILG nating pondo, makagawa tayo ng paraan lalong mas matulungan sila. Ayaw ko na hong magtanong, Mr. Speaker, dahil nasagot naman po nang mabuti ng ating proponent ang katanungan natin at alam kong kasama siya na sumusuporta na bigyan ang ating mga barangay officials at health workers ng pondo para lumaban sa susunod na taon.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, minamahal nating kasamahan sa House, huwag po kayong mag-alala, sisiguraduhin po natin na malalagyan po at matututukan na po dahil alam po natin na hindi lang po ito ang tanging pandemic na haharapin natin at hindi lang po ngayong taon at sa susunod na taon, mukhang magtatagal po tayo at marami pa ho tayong haharapin. Nakita po natin ang butas, nakita po ng Secretary natin ang butas sa ating sistema kaya huwag po kayong mag-alala, sa susunod na budget po, lalagyan po natin ng mas malaki at mas sakto, na tamang programa para sa kanila po.

REP. CRISOLOGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to our proponent and to our Secretaries this evening. Maraming salamat po.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize the Hon. Sarah Jane Elago of the KABATAAN Party-List for her interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Hon. Sarah Jane Elago, of the Party-List KABATAAN is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. JALOSJOS. May I ask for a one-minute suspension.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
The session is suspended.

It was 9:54 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 9:54 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
The session is resumed.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
Majority Leader.

NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, to sponsor the proposed budget of the agencies concerned, I move that we recognize Rep. Luis N. Campos Jr. from the Second District of Makati City.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
The Hon. Luis Campos from Makati is recognized.

REP. CAMPOS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. This Representation is now ready to be interpellated on the budget of the National Youth Commission for Fiscal Year 2021.

Thank you, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize, again, Rep. Sarah Jane Elago of the Party-List KABATAAN for her chance to interpellate.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
The Hon. Sarah Jane Elago of the Party-List KABATAAN is recognized to interpellate the Sponsor for the National Youth Commission.

REP. ELAGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First, let me ask if I will be allowed to go on a second round since I prepared two sets of questions: one for the DILG and another set with regard to the National Youth Commission.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
Go ahead.

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, can the Honorable Elago kindly repeat her question because it did not come quite clearly.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
She has not yet raised any question. She was just asking if she could have a second round — one for the NYC and one for the DILG.

REP. CAMPOS. Thank you, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal).
Honorable Elago, you may now proceed with your question.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker. Maraming salamat po sa pagkakataon na mabigyan ng kaliwanagan ang Representasyon na ito sa ilang mahahalagang usapin na may kinalaman sa pondo at mandato ng National Youth Commission.

Will the honorable Sponsor be willing to answer a few clarificatory questions from this Youth Representation?

REP. CAMPOS. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker.

Una po, ang Representasyon na ito ay nakatanggap na ng sagot mula sa Chairperson ng National Youth Commission hinggil sa mga demands ng NYC Employees Association tungkol po sa mga alegasyon ng abuse of authority at gayundin sa panawagan ng kaniyang pagbibitiw. Nais po ng Representasyon na ito, dahil marami pang kailangang tingnan, marami pang kailangang busisiin at malaman ang taumbayan dito. Hangad po namin na magpanukala ng resolusyon upang malaman

ang katotohanan dito at mapanagot po natin ang lahat ng sangkot, kung mapapatunayan man na may pagkakasala o pananagutan sa ilalim ng batas.

Will the honorable Sponsor join us in this endeavor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. CAMPOS. The last statement, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, of the Honorable Elago, the last statement, please, can she repeat that?

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, will the honorable Sponsor join us in the filing of a resolution to ferret out the truth on the allegations against the Chairperson of the NYC, and the concerns and demands of the NYC Employees Association?

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, this Representation would willingly join Honorable Elago in authoring a resolution to ferret out the truth as to these allegations regarding the Chairman of the National Youth Commission. Because unsubstantiated allegations are merely allegations. They have to be proven with substance so as to be able to do justice to all parties involved, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker.

Hangad din po natin na magkaroon po ng pananagutan ang lahat ng ating opisyal, kabilang na ang ating mga kabataang lingkodbayan na binigyan po ng mabigat na tungkulin bilang boses at advocate ng mga kabataan.

Ngayon, Ginoong Speaker, let me refer to the response submitted by the National Youth Commission with regard to the queries of this Representation during the NYC budget briefing. First po, on their low budget absorption, sa maliit po na utilization rate ng NYC, they responded, and I quote, "There is no quorum at the Commission proper, the highest decision-making body of the agency, from May to July 2019 due to the ipso facto resignation of the then Chairman Ronald Cardema."

May we know for the record, Mr. Speaker, when the previous Chairman Cardema resigned from his position.

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, with reference to the question of Honorable Elago, July 15, 2019 was the day the Chairman assumed office in the NYC, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, I asked about the resignation of his predecessor, Chairman Cardema, kailan po siya nag-resign mula sa kaniyang position?

REP. CAMPOS. To the recollection of the current Chairman, former Chairman Cardema resigned around March to May of 2019 and the OIC at that time was the Assistant Secretary of the DILG and Commissioner Paul Pangilinan of the NYC, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, it was also said in their response that the approval and implementation of various projects and programs were hindered and/or affected. The agency cannot negotiate and enter into contracts because of the absence of a quorum. Ano po ang masasabi dito ng ating distinguished Sponsor? Lubos na naapektuhan ho ang mga programa ng NYC dahil sa biglaang pagre-resign ng kanilang Chairperson noong panahon na iyon – May 2019.

REP. CAMPOS. Nakahabol na po ang pamunuan at ang administrasyon ng NYC sa pag-fulfill ng kanilang mga obligasyon. Ang current utilization po nila ay nasa 75 percent already of their budget for 2020, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, hangad natin na mapataas pa ang utilization ng nilagak na pondo, iyong para sa National Youth Commission, sa mahalagang mga proyekto at programa nito para sa kabataan. Ngayon, Ginoong Speaker, mayroon pong mga panawagan para imbestigahan ang paggamit ng posisyon ng Chairperson noong panahon na bago ang May 2019, mula January hanggang May 2019, sa eleksyon para sa 2019. Ang imbestigasyon po ba na ito, ano na po ang status? Mayroon na po bang napanagot? Ano po ang findings nito, Mr. Speaker?

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, puwede po bang ulitin ni Honorable Elago iyong kaniyang katanungan dahil hindi po masyadong malinaw.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Honorable Elago is requested to ...

REP. ELAGO. Okay. Ginoong Speaker, ano po ang update sa imbestigasyon hinggil sa diumano'y paggamit ng posisyon at resources ng NYC ng dating Chairperson nito na si Ronald Cardema para sa eleksyon ng 2019?

REP. CAMPOS. Hindi po within the administrative responsibilities ng pamunuan po ng DILG nor ng NYC ang kasong ito kung kaya naman po ang pamunuan ng dalawang ahensiya ay nagko-commit na i-update po si Honorable Elago dito sa pinaka-latest sa kaniyang katanungan po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The Honorable Elago, you can proceed. Are you still online?

REP. ELAGO. Yes, Mr. Speaker. Paumanhin po, ako po ay na-mute.

But I would like to proceed with the responsibilities of the NYC in ensuring the welfare and rights of the Sangguniang Kabataan as they perform their significant mandate in youth and good governance. First po, I would like them to report on their current appropriations for mandatory and continuing training of SK. May natitira pa po kayo ng 2018 at 2019. Magkano po ito kung para sa nasabing mga taon?

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, pakiulit lang po, Congresswoman Elago, iyong huling katanungan.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, magkano po ang natitira pang pondo para sa mandatory and continuing training ng Sangguniang Kabataan para sa 2018 hanggang 2019?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. CAMPOS. May I ask for a one-minute suspension, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The session is suspended.

It was 10:06 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:07 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Oaminal). The session is resumed.

The honorable Sponsor, you are recognized. You may proceed to answer the question.

REP. CAMPOS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, for the year 2019, ubos na po iyong P35-million budget. Naibigay na po sa COVID efforts iyong balanse. For 2020 po – 2019, may continuing appropriation na P8.6 million.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, sa 42,000 po na mga barangays, ilan po ang nasakop ng ginugol na ito na pondo ng NYC para sa Sangguniang Kabataan training?

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, approximately, 10 percent of the 42,000 barangays po ang na-cover ng budget for training po na ito ng NYC, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, bakit po 10 porsiyento lamang ang naabot ng pondo na ito na dapat po ay nasakop ang lahat ng ating mga Sangguniang Kabataan? At kung kulang naman po ang pondo, ano po ang mga efforts na ginawa ng NYC para matiyak na tuloy-tuloy, at masasakop, at walang maiiwan ang pag-eensayo, ang capacity building at iba pang mga training programs para sa Sangguniang Kabataan?

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the concern of the Honorable Elago is well appreciated. Katunayan po, kapanayam ko

po—kapanayam po ng inyong Kinatawan ang Chairman ng NYC kanina at iyan po ang aming pinag-usapan. Ang katanungan ko nga po, bakit po 10 percent lang ng 42,000 barangays? Ang sagot naman po, if we break it into a per capita spending, it only comes up to less than P8,000 per training per capita, so napakababa po.

Ngayon po, puwede naman po natin, katulad ng gusto ni Congresswoman Elago, mapalawig po natin ang mga trainings ng SK dahil iyan naman po talaga ay para sa kabataan. Ang kailangan po natin ay additional budget. If we prorate the P35 million and multiply that 10 times over, we need at least P350 million and we also need additional manpower and logistical support to be able to effectively conduct these trainings in all corners of the country, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

Thank you.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, ang obligasyon na ito sa ilalim ng SK Reform Act ay dapat sa pakikipagtulungan ng DAP, ng NCPAG, ng CSC at ng local government units po natin. Maaari bang malaman kung ano na ang update pagdating sa module development ng continuing training para sa SK?

REP. CAMPOS. Ito po’y ongoing, bagama’t naampat po ito nang panandalian dahil designed po ang training, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, for face-to-face. E alam n’yo naman po ang epekto ng pandemya sa ating lahat, tayo po’y natigilan, nanibago, ngunit ngayon po’y tayo’y—we are rebounding. So, nandodoon po tayo sa kasalukuyang sitwasyon, pero dere-derecho na po. Wala pong ampat ang pagbababa ng trainings, bagama’t medyo naantala for a while, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, ilang taon na po itong module development para sa continuing training? Naintindihan po natin na ito ay maaaring mapagbuti pa at mapaunlad dulot ng praktika natin sa paglulunsad ng iba’t ibang training, ngunit hangad din natin na maging malinaw. Para sa bahagi naman ng Kongreso, alam po natin kung saan napupunta ang pondo na inilalaan natin mula sa pera ng taumbayan.

Ngayon, Ginoong Speaker, nabanggit na rin ang epekto ng COVID-19 pandemic, maaari po bang malaman kung ano na ang pinakahuling balita tungkol sa panawagan para sa PhilHealth coverage ng mga SK officials? Ang NYC po ay nagkaroon ng commitment sa atin nitong nakaraang taon na sasama sila doon sa pagpapanawagan sa mga ahensiya bilang parte ng Executive para tiyakin ang pondo para sa PhilHealth coverage ng Sangguniang Kabataan. Mas mahalaga iyan ngayon, Ginoong Speaker, na kasama po doon sa mga frontliners natin, sa mga barangay health emergency response teams at sa community-based management ng COVID-19 ang Sangguniang Kabataan.

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, in reaction to the statements and questions of the Honorable Elago, ito pong PhilHealth coverage ng SK officials ay ipaloloob po natin sa isusumite ng NYC na proposal nila para sa amendment po ng SK Law. Katulad po ng sinabi ko kanina, kapanayam ko po si Chairman at isa po sa napag-usapan namin na talagang kailangan pong i-update ang SK Law. Nangangalap po sa kasalukuyan ng data, ng datos ukol po sa pangangailangan ng PhilHealth coverage ng SK officials sa kasalukuyang panahon, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor,

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, sang-ayon po sa PhilHealth, nagkakaroon sila ng difficulties pagdating sa paglalaan ng pondo para dito dahil doon na rin sa mga vacant na positions sa Sangguniang Kabataan. Kumusta po ba ang panawagan para sa special elections para sa Sangguniang Kabataan at ano na po ang ating mga kongkretong aksiyon na ginagawa para suportahan iyong mga SK na halos hindi po makagalaw dahil sa kakulangan ng quorum sa kanilang mga barangay at gayundin, hirap po sa gitna ng pandemya?

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, mayroon na pong diskusyon with PhilHealth kung ilan po talagang SK members ang nangangailangan ng coverage at binibigyan po, nag-usap po kami ni

Chairman, binibigyan po niya ang mga barangays ng until the end of December 2020 para maisumite lahat ng datos na kailangan ng NYC upang makipag-coordinate nang lubusan sa PhilHealth, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, we checked with PhilHealth during their budget briefing and they said na zero budget ang PhilHealth coverage para sa SK para sa 2021. Sasamahan ba ng Sponsor ang Representasyon na ito sa pagsusulong at pagtutulak na ibigay na ang long overdue na pondo para sa PhilHealth coverage ng SK?

REP. CAMPOS. Dadamayan ko po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, si Congresswoman Elago dito at kung hihilingin din niya sa resolusyon na dagdagan ang budget ng training ng SK, na gawin natin para sa 42,000 barangays, sasamahan ko rin po siya. Sasamahan po siya ng inyong Kinatawan, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, tungkol naman sa, isa pa, sa responsibilidad ng Commission para sa mga pribilehiyo at benepisyo ng SK officials na pareho po iyong mga elected at iyong appointed na officials ay ang exemption mula sa National Service Training Program ano na po ang update sa paggawa ng guidelines na ito at nakipag-ugnayan na po ba sa mga pampubliko at pampridadong higher education institutions tungkol sa pagpapatupad nito?

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Oaminal relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Raneo "Ranie" E. Abu.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. CAMPOS. May I ask for a one-minute suspension, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

It was 10:17 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:17 p.m., session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.
Honorable Sponsor.

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, Congresswoman Elago, bilang tugon po sa inyong katanungan, ang NYC po ay mayroon nang pakikipag-ugnayan na ongoing sa CHED para dito sa mga guidelines na ito, NSTP Guidelines. Ang CHED po ang naatasang maglabas nitong guidelines na ito, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

Thank you.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, malinaw po, sang-ayon sa SK Reform Act, na ito po ay responsibilidad ng National Youth Commission at ng CHED kaya kailangan po na madaliin na ang pagsasagawa nito dahil ilang taon na po ang nakalipas, matatapos na lamang ang termino, aabutan na lang ng susunod na eleksiyon ay hindi pa natatapos ang gabay para sa exemption sa NSTP ng mga SK officials. Ito po ay bilang pagkilala doon sa kanilang napakahalaga din na serbisyo na ginagawa sa kanilang komunidad kaya kung ano iyong nakalagay sa batas na nakatatak na espiritu ng batas ay dapat nating tupdin at maisakatuparan.

Ngayon, Ginoong Speaker, nais ko pong magpunta muli doon sa mandatory and continuing training. Ilan na po ba ang accredited ng NYC na magbigay ng training para sa SK? Makakatulong po ito kung sakaling kailangan ng NYC ng dagdag na pondo para sa training. Kailangan din po nating malaman kung ilan na ba ang mga accredited na training providers nila.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. CAMPOS. I move for a one-minute suspension, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

It was 10:19 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:21 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

Honorable Sponsor.

REP. CAMPOS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In answer to the question of the Honorable Elago, currently, all trainings for SK officials are conducted in-house by the NYC. As to what she was asking if we have any accredited training organizations or companies, we are still in consultation with the steering committee to draft the guidelines for accreditation. So as of now, there are none, all in-house.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, it has been four years since the IRR for the SK Reform Act was signed. Sino po ba ang responsible dapat dito sa paggawa ng accreditation system kasi baka malaki po itong factor na kung bakit maliit lamang iyong naabot ng NYC pagdating sa mandatory at continuing training? Nakalagay po sa batas na maaari naman sila na gumawa ng accreditation system para mas mapalawig iyong naabot ng training.

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, dependent po sa members ng steering committee ang drafting schedule ng guidelines. Ang mga miyembro po nito ay NCPAG, DILG, CHED, at DAP or Development Academy of the Philippines. Hindi po kasama dito ang NYC, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, sang-ayon po sa batas, and I would like to read it now for the record, na "The Commission in coordination with DILG and CHED and other relevant agencies shall develop an accreditation system for mandatory and continuing training providers." Kaya malinaw po ang pananagutan ng NYC pagdating dito at hangad po natin at nanawagan tayo sa NYC na tapusin na itong mga obligasyon po nila pagdating sa training, mga pribilehiyo na

dapat po natatamasa ng ating Sangguniang Kabataan bilang paraan na rin ng pagpapakita ng ating suporta, mga kapwa nila lingkodbayan at trabaho na kanilang ginagawa.

Ngayon, Ginoong Speaker, hayaan ninyo po akong magpunta naman doon sa mga pangunahing programa ng NYC pagdating sa edukasyon, sa kalusugan at sa partisipasyon ng mga kabataan. Dito po nila tinitingnan kung paano ba napapaunlad ang youth engagement sa pamamagitan ng tatlong aspeto na ito. Ano po ang mga programa ng NYC pagdating sa edukasyon, sa kalusugan at sa partisipasyon ngayon na tayo ay humaharap sa krisis ng COVID-19 pandemic?

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, can the Honorable Elago kindly elucidate on her last question para masagot ko po nang mas malinaw.

REP. ELAGO. Salamat, Ginoong Speaker. Ano po ang mga pangunahing programa ng NYC pagdating sa edukasyon, sa kalusugan at sa partisipasyon ng mga kabataan? Ito po ang ginagamit ng NYC na measures din pagdating sa pagbubuo ng sitwasyon ng assessment ng mga kabataang Pilipino sa buong bansa.

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, pagdating po sa edukasyon, hindi po pupuwedeng mag-implement ang NYC pero puwede po silang mag-formulate ng mga programa upang makatugon sa tawag ng panahon. Katulad po dito sa kasalukuyang pandemya, mayroon po silang mga programang pinagsasama-sama at binubuo upang matugunan ang kakulangan sa edukasyon ng ibang mga areas natin at mga demographic sectors. Mayroon po silang journalism programs for the SK; mayroon po silang cyberspace management; mayroon po silang pagreport sa mga radio stations at pag-aaral para maging anchor, maging field reporter; mag-minimize ng fake news, tamang info, para tamang info po ang dadating sa mga SK at youth organizations. Ang mga issues and concerns po ng mga SK ay sa mga ganitong paraan natutugunan nang mas mabilis.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, may we know the position of the NYC regarding the upcoming opening of classes?

REP. CAMPOS. Mayroon pong mga – tumutulong po ang NYC sa pag-formulate ng blended learning programs pero katulad po ng sinabi ko kanina, hindi po sila puwedeng mag-implement kung hindi puwede lang po silang tumulong magbuo ng mga programa na i-implement po ng DepEd and LGUs as well as TESDA and you can make recommendations to TESDA. Iyon lang po, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Last question, Honorable Elago.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, ano po ang kanilang posisyon pagdating sa online distance learning? At mayroon pa po akong ilang minuto, Ginoong Speaker?

Ginoong Speaker, kukunin na lang po ng Representasyon na ito ang mga naging rekomendasyon ng NYC dahil sila ay nakaupo rin sa mga mahahalagang board at iba't iba pang mga bodies na kung saan may kinalaman sa welfare ng youth at ng mga estudyante. Halimbawa iyong UniFAST Board, sila po ang nakaupo diyan para iparating ang mga pangangailangan ng mga kabataan na may kinalaman sa Student Financial Assistance Program na nakakaranas po ng malalaki ring kaltas sa kanilang pondo para sa taong 2021. Maaari rin po bang magsumite ang NYC ng kanilang report ukol sa paggampan sa General Principles, doon sa provision sa General Appropriations Act taon-taon na sila po ay may responsibilidad na magbigay ng mga rekomendasyon sa lahat ng ahensiya ng gobyerno na may kinalaman sa pagpapatupad ng Philippine Youth Development Plan. Sa ngayon po kasi, for the record, Ginoong Speaker, nangingi rin tayo ng 2019 Accomplishment Report ng NYC ngunit hindi po ito makikita sa kanilang website at hindi pa nagsusumite ang NYC ng kanilang accomplishment report para sa 2019.

Now, down to my last set of questions, Mr. Speaker, I would like ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Your time has expired. Sorry, Honorable Elago.

REP. CAMPOS. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the Chairman of NYC commits to submit all the documents needed by the Honorable Elago and to update the posting on the website, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you, Honorable Elago. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, once again, may we recognize the Hon. Romeo M. Jalosjos Jr. of the First District of Zamboanga del Norte for his sponsorship.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Honorable Jalosjos is recognized to sponsor the budget.

Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to our rules, for her second round of questions, once again, may we recognize the Hon. Sarah Jane Elago of KABATAAN Party-List.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Sarah Jane Elago from the KABATAAN Party-List is recognized for her interpellation.

Please proceed.

REP. ELAGO. Maraming salamat po, Ginoong Speaker.

Sa ulat ng NYC, mayroon silang communications budget para sa 2019 at 2020 na P242,000 at P500,000, tama po ba ito, Ginoong Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Tama po.

REP. ELAGO. Your Honor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Tama po.

REP. ELAGO. Magkano po dito ang ginugugol para sa social media?

REP. JALOSJOS. Pakiulit po iyong tanong dahil medyo garbled po.

REP. ELAGO. My apologies, my queries are still for the NYC, Mr. Speaker, but I hope that Sponsor Jalosjos can also respond to this important query of this Representation.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please proceed, Honorable Elago.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, I asked, how much is being spent for social media by the DILG, by the PNP and the NYC specifically? Magkano po sa kabuuan sa DILG? Magkano naman po sa PNP at magkano sa NYC?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang allotment po sa NYC is P30,000 po, specifically po for postpaid promotion, social media boosting po, sa NYC po ito, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, mukhang mayroon po tayong technical difficulties o naririnig pa po ba tayo?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Representative Elago, Representative Elago. The session is suspended.

It was 10:33 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 10:33 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, since Representative Elago's connection seems to have been disconnected, I move that, in the meantime, we recognize our distinguished colleague, Deputy Speaker Rodante Marcoleta, for his chance to interpellate the Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the SAGIP Party-List, honorable Deputy Speaker Rodante D. Marcoleta, is recognized to interpellate the distinguished Sponsor.

REP. MARCOLETA. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make reference to an incident that happened in the city of Ozamiz. It came to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, through the intercession of some constituents, and I found out, Mr. Speaker, that a certain project in that area was implemented with several marks of irregularity, if not illegal processes.

Mr. Speaker, for starters, I would like to ask the Sponsor if he is familiar with DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2020-068. It is entitled, "Postponement of All Administrative Demolition and Eviction Activities during the Enhanced Community Quarantine and State of National Emergency."

REP. JALOSJOS. MC No. 2020-068 po.

REP. MARCOLETA. MC No. 2020-068.

REP. JALOSJOS. You are correct, Mr. Speaker.

REP. MARCOLETA. Thank you. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, this memorandum circular was issued by the DILG in connection with the declaration of a national state of calamity by the President and if I quote from the memorandum itself, it says, "This Memorandum Circular is issued to direct all LGUs to postpone all demolition and eviction activities and ensure that all homeless citizens within the respective jurisdictions are properly accommodated." I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this particular memorandum was in response to the declared national emergency and to shelter our people from the onslaught of the pandemic, COVID-19. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the proponent of the project in that area deliberately disregarded the circular. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I have all documents to show, I have photographs, I have video footages that demolitions of

residential units in that area were conducted between April to August 2020.

Mr. Speaker, the most painful experience that I experienced or this Representation experienced in connection with this incident is when I asked for assistance from the DILG. I could not reach the Secretary at that time because I was informed that he was under quarantine at that time and I was able to extend some text messages to the OIC by the name of Usec. Florece. I explained to him the necessity of postponing or even preventing the demolition of residences because this is not what the circular is all about. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, I found out, through the intercession of Usec. Echiverri, that the demolition in that area was not covered by a court order for demolition. It was Usec. Echiverri himself who coordinated with the Regional Director of DILG and he found out that there was no court order to demolish. What the proponent had was a writ of possession allegedly issued by the court. That would be okay, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, but a writ of possession without the writ of demolition issued by the court, and to undertake the demolition would be illegal. And so the question, Mr. Speaker, is why did the Regional Director or even the Undersecretary not explain to the proponent of that project in that area that there was an existing memorandum circular advising all LGUs to postpone evictions and demolition? As a matter of fact, they were all advised to take care of the residents because of the pandemic. The order, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, was to stay at home but precisely, Mr. Speaker, the homes were being demolished during the pandemic. Why is it that the DILG was unable to at least restrain the proponent of the project to at least stop the demolition? There was a circular and they found out that there is no order of demolitions issued by the court, how come the demolition continued unabated?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, our good Congressman, the demolition started, as per the DILG's recollection, on December 7, 2019 and it was a self-demolition. However, as Usec. Florece acknowledged, the communication

between you and the Usec., April to August, was still on self-demolition. There was a demolition but it was not forced demolition but self-demolition.

REP. MARCOLETA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the report was wrong. There was no demolition that happened on December 7, 2019. What was the reason that that demolition could not have happened during that period? First of all, the writ of possession was obtained by the proponent of that project on January 31, 2020. And so if the basis of the demolition was the writ of possession, December 7 was too early in the day. Secondly, I have photographs, as I said, I have footages to prove that demolition was undertaken between April to August 2020. As a matter of fact, the Regional Director of the DILG met with the lawyers of the residents and he was given all the pictures and even a copy of a USB for him to appreciate the existence or the demolition that took place between April to August 2020.

Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, the question remains unanswered. How come that despite the plea of this Representation, despite the fact that the DILG itself found out that there were no court orders or writ of demolition, but just the same, the demolition took place during the pandemic, Mr. Speaker, when the people are supposed to stay at home, and here is the proponent of the project too busy dismantling and demolishing houses of small landowners?

Mr. Speaker, if you have read the report of the DILG, I do not know what the basis of this report is. He was there. He talked to the complaining residents and the lawyers were there. He was given pictures. How come he ended up submitting a report that gave rise to a complaint disposition, the complaint disposition took the report of the Regional Director hook, line and sinker. It is all wrong, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor. I can prove to you that this is all wrong. But again, I even talked, not necessarily talked, I texted the Chief PNP, Archie Gamboa. The text messages are in my cell phone. I did not receive any reply. Because those residents feared for their lives. There were mobsters encircling the residents. Nobody, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor – the entire

DILG was not responding. The PNP did not even reply to my text messages. Why so?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ah ...

REP. MARCOLETA. Mr. Speaker, if you are unable to provide the answers to these questions, we can probably defer the consideration of your budget until I am able to convince you that these questions must be answered because there are aggrieved people.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, our fellow Congressman, the record shows that even on August 10, there were investigations conducted by the local regional DILG and by July – and August, reports were released for the said findings. There were actual actions taken by the DILG as late as in July and August.

REP. MARCOLETA. I did not understand the answer, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. JALOSJOS. Well, the action taken by the DILG was to conduct a preliminary investigation. Usec. Florece instructed the regional office to conduct an investigation based on your request. The findings of the regional ...

REP. MARCOLETA. Mr. Speaker, Your Honor, what I am asking is, how come the DILG, notwithstanding the existence of a memorandum circular stopping and postponing all evictions and demolition during the pandemic, how come he failed to even advise the LGU to discontinue the demolition?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, my good colleague, the answer – may I ask for a one-minute suspension to gather the answer.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

It was 10:48 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:08 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

We would like to thank our Deputy Speaker Rodante Marcoleta and Secretary Año, and our Sponsor, Congressman Jalosjos, for doing things, what is right for the good of the plenary.

Majority Leader, next interpellator, please.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, may we, once again, recognize the Hon. Sarah Jane Elago of the KABATAAN Party-List for her interpellation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Hon. Sarah Jane Elago of the KABATAAN Party-List is recognized to continue her interpellation, the second round, on the budget of the DILG.

REP. ELAGO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On the role of the DILG in the Joint Task Force COVID Shield, there is a total of 372,929 persons who allegedly disobeyed authorities or violated curfews from March 17 to September 5. Does the DILG-PNP have the more recent numbers? How many of these people who allegedly violated quarantine protocols were arrested? How many are still in detention?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, our distinguished colleague, I just want to ask, is it quarantine – how many quarantine violators are there? Is that the right question?

REP. ELAGO. Yes, Mr. Speaker. And how many of these were arrested? How many are still in detention?

REP. JALOSJOS. Okay.

As of noon, quarantine detained – those still detained are 1,427 out of 18,689 arrested; in Visayas, we have 50 still detained out of 4,052 arrested; Mindanao, we have 32 still detained out of 8,748 arrested. So there is a

total of 1,509 still detained out of 31,489, Mr. Speaker, Your Honor.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, hihingin ng Representasyon na ito ang kabuuang report ukol dito, ngunit nais ko lang maiparating sa ating Sponsor ang concerns natin hinggil sa mga pag-aresto ng quarantine violators. Noong May 1, Mayo 1, ang Q.C. police po ay nag-aresto ng 18 na community kitchen volunteers at mismong mga beneficiaries ng community kitchen o Kusinang Bayan. Kasama po sa mga community kitchen organizers ay tatlong estudyante mula sa UP; kasama rin po dito sa Marikina naman, 10 tao na inaresto rin na mga kasama sa paglulunsad ng Kusinang Bayan. Samantala, noong May 8 po, noong si General Sinas ng NCRPO ay nag-hold ng manyanita ay wala naman pong inaresto. Mayroon po bang double standard ang DILG, ang PNP pagdating dito? Ano na po ang update tungkol sa sinasabing ikinaso na administratibo laban kay General Sinas at sa mga nakasama niya po na lumahok sa manyanita?

REP. JALOSJOS. Wala pong double standard, pero po papaimbestigahan po ng ating pulisya, ng Chief PNP ang nangyari po – ang mga pangyayaring ito at ‘pag natapos iyong imbestigasyon, bibigyan po namin kayo ng kopya.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, ano po ang update doon sa kaso laban kay General Sinas? Kailan po ito naisampa at katulad po ba ng ibang kaso, wala pa pong update dito?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, ating iginagalang-galang na kasama sa Kongreso, as of today, nasa Fiscal’s Office pa po ang kaso at hindi pa po naifa-file sa tamang hukuman.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, kailan po balak na i-file ito? Dahil mayroon po tayo, ‘no, nagho-hold ng Kusinang Bayan, inaresto po agad at na-expose pa sa banta ng pagkakaroon ng COVID-19, samantalang ang mga opisyal ng PNP ay ganito po na walang inaaresto at gayundin ay hindi kinakasuhan.

REP. JALOSJOS. Bagama’t po wala sa kamay ng PNP po, nasa kamay na po ng fiscal, aalamin po namin sa piskalya kung saan siya na-under investigation kung kailan po niya puwedeng mai-file, kung sapat na po ang ebidensya para ma-file-lan po natin siya.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, nananawagan po ang Representasyon na ito ng pantay na proteksyon sa ilalim ng batas. Hindi po porke’t isang opisyal ay makakatakas pagdating sa kamay ng batas. Ngunit pinababantayan din po natin ito mismong pag-aresto sa quarantine violators dahil sa karanasan po ng Representasyon na ito, may mga kaso po tayo na sinuportahan na kung saan iyong mga nagpaparating lamang ng kanilang hinaing sa gobyerno, sa kinauukulan, halimbawa po iyong mga jeepney drivers ng PISTON na nagsagawa ng kalampagan para sa balik-pasada, nakaranas po ng ilegal na pag-aresto, gayundin na-expose sa banta ng COVID-19. Gayundin po iyong mga community kitchen volunteers at idagdag na natin iyong mga ikinulong dahil sa kanilang pagpoprotesta laban sa Anti-Terror Law na natagurian na “terror law” dahil sa maaaring mga implikasyon nito sa karapatang-pantao at mismo, na kahit hindi pa ito naging effective noong panahon na iyon ng Mayo hanggang bago ito mapirmahan ay nangyayari na ang mga pag-abuso. Kaya naman, Ginoong Speaker, nais ko ring maiparating sa Sponsor ang atin pong mga katanungan at mga nais malinawan hinggil sa mga binabawian ng buhay sa mismong mga selda ng PNP o iyong mga namamatay po na nasa custody ng pulisiya. Sa ngayon po ba, as of September 2020, ilan na po sa tala ng PNP ang mga deaths under police custody?

REP. JALOSJOS. The policy of our new Chief PNP does not tolerate such things happening inside the PNP and if indeed there is one, we can assure you that the PNP Chief is asking anybody who can help to just call him and he will act on it. But we are still looking for the actual number if, indeed, mayroon pong namatay under ng kustodya po ng PNP.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, I have here a copy of the report of the Philippine National Police-Internal Affairs Service released in October 2019 and according to the PNP-IAS, 461 suspects have died while under police custody. Ano na po ang ginawa ng PNP tungkol dito? Ano po ang dahilan kung bakit nasa 461 na suspects ang namamatay nang nasa ilalim ng kustodya ng pulis?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, the Chief PNP has not seen that report yet and he will look into it, and write a report and send it to your office for that question.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, the PNP-IAS is the internal police monitor. They are tasked to investigate police abuses. Maaari po ba tayong makakuha ng commitment mula sa PNP upang ito ay lubusan na maimbestigahan dahil nakakabahala ito, Ginoong Speaker. Hindi po biro ang bilang na 461, at sang-ayon din po sa kanilang report, na hindi pa sila tapos magbilang. At ang pinakanakabahala po dito, hindi ma-identify iyong aktuwal na dahilan ng mga pagkamatay na ito at mayroon pang na-note na irregularities tungkol sa deaths na ito. Ano po ang magiging assurance natin na sa loob po ng detensiyon ay maiiwasan ang ganitong mga pangyayari?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na colleague, ako rin po ay nababahala sa laki po ng bilang na 461 po at ang ating Chief PNP ay nababahala rin po kaya po sa lalong madaling panahon po, sana po maibigay n'yo po ang report na iyan sa opisina ko para maipadala ko po sa ating Chief PNP para imbestigahang agaran kung ano ang mga totoong nangyari sa report po na hawak n'yo.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, dapat po nilang tawagan agad iyong PNP-IAS kasi nanggaling naman ito doon sa Internal Affairs Service na siya ngang dapat lumalaban dito sa mga abuso dahil iyan po ay mariing kinokondena ng Representasyon na ito, na imbes na mapanagot ay napapatay na agad or nagkakaroon ng ganitong mga pangyayari

sa ilalim ng kustodya ng kapulisan. Ngayon, Ginoong Speaker, bakit natin ito dinala sa atensiyon ng Kapulungan na ito? Dahil sa bagong Terror Law, sa bagong kakapirma na batas ay maaari nang malagay sa detensiyon, pinakamahaba ang 24 days, para sa isang pinagsususpetsahan na may kinalaman sa terorismo. Ano pong assurance natin na itong nangyayari ngayon na wala tayong kaalaman tungkol sa deaths under police custody ay hindi mangyayari sa bagong ipinasang batas?

REP. JALOSJOS. Hindi po hahayaan ng pamunuan ng DILG, ng ating Secretary at ng ating Chief PNP, Mr. Speaker, na magamit po iyan ng tiwaling kasamahan nila para sa report na mayroon po kayo. Asahan ninyo po na iimbestigahan nila po ito. Kung kaya ninyo pong mabigyan ako at since nasabi ninyo na po kung saan nakuha ang report ay sure na po na ang ating Chief PNP na sa lalong madaling panahon po, iimbestigahan niya po ang report.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, maaari ba nating malaman kung ilan pong mga kaso ng police abuse ang kasalukuyan na iniimbestigahan ng PNP-IAS? Nais ko pong malaman, hindi lang doon tungkol sa deaths under police custody, ngunit sa iba pang mga kaso pa ng police abuse?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, our dear colleague, we have 4,567 PNP personnel dismissed from service, ito po ay galing sa DILG, from July 16 to August 2020. As of August 2020, 835 personnel po were demoted po at 7,781 were suspended po regarding po sa mga abuses po ng ating mga PNP po.

REP. ELAGO. May we know, Mr. Speaker, the nature of such abuses? Ano po ang breakdown?

REP. JALOSJOS. It varies po but mainly po allegations sa drugs ang main concern dahil cleansing po ito sa misconduct ng mga PNP po.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, mayroon bang datos ang PNP na tungkol dito sa mga

nasuspende o nade-demote para matiyak na hindi po ito magpapatuloy sa krimen na kung saan sila kasangkot?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mayroon po, Mr. Speaker, ating kasamahan, mayroon po.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, sa mga kaso ba na ito may napapanagot hinggil sa pagpapakalat ng fabricated statements at iba pang tipo ng false viral claim?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mayroon po.

REP. ELAGO. Ilan na po ito at sino-sino, Ginoong Speaker? Ano pong mga units ang involved dito?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang nating kasama sa Kongreso, pakiulit nga po ang katanungan para mas klaro ko pong sasagutin. Marami pong datos kasi.

REP. ELAGO. Sa mga kaso po na hinahawakan ng IAS, ilan po dito ang may kinalaman sa paglabag sa social media guidelines ng PNP?

REP. JALOSJOS. So far po, sa red-tagging po, isa pa lang po ang under investigation at ang—kasi under investigation po, hindi ko po puwedeng sabihin ang pangalan na involved.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, ang Representasyon po na ito ay hawak ang isang ulat o commitment po mula sa ating PNP na iimbestigahan nila ang pinakalat na naging viral na claim ng PNP Police Community Relations Group—PULISerbis page na ibinahagi din ng iba pang mga pages na may anonymous na post at anonymous pages. Sino po ba ang administrator ng PNP Police Community Relations Group na Facebook page?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ginoong Speaker, ating kagalang-galang na kasamahan sa Kongreso, nakadalawang memo na po ang ating Chief PNP at ang mga sites na ito po ay ipinababa na po, tanggal na po at two memos have already

been ano—kung ipagpapatuloy pa rin po nila ay magfa-file na po ng kaso sa kanila.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, dapat po may managot hinggil dito sa mga pagpapakalat ng mga fabricated statements dahil hindi po biro ang naranasan natin na pag-aakusa nang walang batayan, nang dahil sa peke naman na pahayag na ipinakalat mismo ng PNP Police Community Relations Group. Kaya hindi po tayo makakapayag na basta na lamang ito burahin nang walang pananagutan. Maaari po ba nating malaman, saan po ba naka-post, ano po ba ang polisiya ng PNP pagdating sa paggamit ng social media?

REP. JALOSJOS. Sa unang tanong ninyo po tungkol doon sa kung hindi pababayaan ng PNP, hindi lang basta tatanggalin ang site, mayroon pong formal investigation po ang ginagawa as of today. Isa po ang actual na nai-file na. Ang iba pa po is under investigation, ongoing po dahil po ang iba po kasing mga local, municipal PNP station po mismo ang naglagay ng site, kaya po pinag-aaralan po ngayon at iniimbestigahan po kung sino. Ang polisiya naman po, sa pangalawang tanong n'yo po, the PNP has taken steps to monitor and manage social media postings to avoid any form of violation online recently. A social media policy was crafted and approved on May 20, 2020, entitled: "Guidelines and Procedures on Social Media Content, Post and Engagement Utilizing Official Social Media Accounts and Individual Accounts of PNP Personnel." Upon its approval, it is being echoed to all offices and units, reiterating their observance and compliance to the policy to include action taken on the monitoring of the official account.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, ibig sabihin po, bago mag-May 20, wala pang guidelines ang PNP sa paggamit ng social media?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mayroon po, in-enhance lang po iyong guidelines, ni-reiterate lang po. Ang guidelines po niyan is, ang reference po is utilizing social media accounts, individual accounts of the PNP personnel—(a) Republic Act No. 10173 known as the "Data Privacy

Act of 2012” and R.A. No. 10175 known as the “Cybercrime Prevention Act.” We can give you a copy of the earlier memorandum circular regarding social media accounts of individuals or of PNP personnel and also the new guidelines of the PNP on social media po.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, sa ilalim ng naturang guidelines, ano ang pananagutan ng isang Facebook page ng kapulisan na nagpapakalat ng nakapapanganib at nakapapahamak na mga posts?

REP. JALOSJOS. “Any PNP personnel who violates any of the general guidelines of this MC shall be charged with less grave neglect of duty. However, if the act committed also constitutes a violation of law, he or she shall be charged for such an act depending on the duration of the imposable penalty in relation to NMC No. 2016-002,” and the Cybercrime Law.

REP. ELAGO. Mr. Speaker, I just checked now on social media, sa Facebook, itong page ng Police Community Affairs and Development Group, ay nandito pa rin po at hindi naman po tine-take down. Ito po iyong may “#PULISerbis.” Ito po iyong nagpapakalat ng fake na statement, fabricated statement na lubos na nakapagpahamak at naglagay ng panganib sa Representasyon na ito at hindi po totoo na ito ay nabura na. Baka po nabura iyong certain post pero malaya pa rin po na nakakapag-share itong naturang page. At ito po ay may 218,000 na likes kaya hindi po biro ang impluwensiya, ang bigat ng naaabot ng page na ito na nagpapakalat po ng false allegations at ng mga fabricated statements. Kaya aasahan po ng Representasyon na ito ang commitment din ng Sponsor, na tayo po ay makakasingil ng pananagutan hinggil sa pagpapakalat po ng mga peke na pahayag at hindi po maaari na mag-act with impunity itong mga pages na ito dahil marami rin, anonymous ho talaga ang author at walang nakasaad na administrators. Ngayon, Ginoong Speaker, nabanggit kanina na P30,000 ang ginugugol ng NYC para sa social media posts. Sa PNP po, magkano po ang kanilang ginugugol para sa social media posting?

REP. JALOSJOS. None. Sa current budget and the 2021 Budget, wala pong nakalaan for social media. It is all embedded in the MOOE po.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, saan po kumukuha ng mga ipino-post ang mga municipal stations at ang mga Facebook pages na ito? Kasi sa amin pong pagtatala, pare-pareho po iyong kanilang mga ipino-post, lalo na iyong may kinalaman sa nakapampapahamak na terrorist-tagging. Saan, sino po ang gumagawa ng mga content na ito? Ano pong opisina ng PNP?

REP. JALOSJOS. That is under investigation po. If you can give the exact site so that our Chief PNP will be properly guided kung saan po ninyo po nakita because malaki po ang web po, ang Internet natin po is unlimited po, so if ever po mayroon tayong tinutukoy, pakibigyan na lang po kami ng hint. Pero po iyong alam po ng PNP ay under investigation na po ngayon.

REP. ELAGO. Ginoong Speaker, mayroon po kami dito na daan-daan na mga posts na hindi lang po tungkol sa Representasyon na ito pero maski ang aming pamilya at lahat po ng mga iba’t ibang mga organisasyon, mga personalidad na nagpapahayag ng kanilang mga saloobin o mga hinaing ay nagiging target at nagiging subject po ng mga fake news at false viral claims. Kung sa Kongreso po, naging subject din ng false viral claims ang mga Kongresista na bumoboto ng tutol sa mga bills ng administration. Kaya lubos po tayong nababahala sa role na ito ng PNP pagdating sa demokratikong mga proseso sa ating bayan at pagtitiyak ng proteksyon sa mandato ng mga Representante ng mamamayan para bigyan ng boses ang mga panawagan ng kanilang mga constituents. Kaya tiyak ko po, Ginoong Speaker, na ito ay muli ring bibigyang-pansin ng mga susunod na interpellators at muli tayo ay hindi titigil na mag-demand ng accountability sa lahat ng posts na ito. Kailangan ang immediate na takedown. Hanggang ngayon andiyan pa rin po ang mga posts at kinakailangan po ng accountability ng lahat ng involved dito, lalong-lalo na iyong

mga creators po ng mapanganib na content ng mga pages na ito. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker. Maraming salamat, Mr. Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Maraming salamat po. Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, the next House Member to interpellate is the Hon. Ace Barbers from the Second District of Surigao del Norte.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the Second District of Surigao del Norte, Hon. Ace "Alas" Barbers, is recognized to interpellate the good Sponsor.

REP. BARBERS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Majority Leader.

I really appreciate the scheduling of my time to interpellate the distinguished Gentleman from Zamboanga because I really wanted to, first and foremost, greet our DILG family, headed by the good Secretary, a good evening and few more minutes from now, it will become good morning, so uunahan ko na, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Gentleman.

May I know if the distinguished Gentleman would be willing to accede to some clarificatory points or questions from this Representation?

REP. JALOSJOS. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, especially coming from an idol.

REP. BARBERS. Maraming salamat, iyon po ang idol natin, iyong nakaupo po doon bilang Deputy Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Mas lalo po kayo, kahit ng mga nasa business sector.

REP. BARBERS. Mutual admiration club pala ito.

Anyway, hindi ko na po hahabaan, I would have asked a lot of questions, policy questions, but there are just a few which I would pursue as the rest have already been asked by some of

our colleagues in their time, during the time that they interpellated. So, ang tanong ko lang po, unang-una, ano pong provision doon sa Bayanihan 1 Law na kung saan ay nagbibigay ng assistance sa lahat po ng mga LGU? Is the distinguished Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, familiar with that provision of the Bayanihan Law?

REP. JALOSJOS. That provision, I have to check on our resources. The DILG, Bayanihan Act One is to give a one-month IRA to each LGU and one-half to the provinces po.

REP. BARBERS. So, they were authorized – to just put it clearly, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, the law authorized the local government units to spend on all COVID mitigating strategies. Is that correct?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, yes, my dear colleague.

REP. BARBERS. So, sa madaling sabi po, sila po ay gumastos, ang mga LGUs, ang mga probinsiya, ang mga mayors ay gumastos po using iyong kanilang budget because this was allowed under the Bayanihan Law para gamitin sa mga COVID response expenses, 'di ba po, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, opo.

REP. BARBERS. Okay, so now that they have spent the money intended sana for other purposes within the purview of the expenses by a local government unit at ito ay inilagay nila diyan sa COVID response, isa ho doon sa provision sa Bayanihan Law, as far as I can recall, but the distinguished Sponsor can correct me if I am wrong, hindi po ba dapat ay mayroong liquidation noong expenses?

REP. JALOSJOS. Dapat ho mayroon po.

REP. BARBERS. And dahil po na-extend itong ating mga quarantine at itong pagtugon sa problema ng COVID ay every month, doon sa IRA ng mga LGUs ay gumagastos sila. Is that correct, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo.

REP. BARBERS. So, masasabi natin na ang mga local government units, bilang frontliner din, have enough capacity and capability to be able to respond to a COVID-mitigating program. And in this case, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, natse-check ho ba natin na ang—is there a mechanism, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, na natse-check natin ang mga expenses nitong mga LGUs?

REP. JALOSJOS. May liquidation po kasi po may additional na one month nga po na ibinigay ang ...

REP. BARBERS. Okay. For instance lang, example lang po, an LGU bought PPEs at ang idineklara ho niya doon sa kaniyang expenses ay ginastusan niya iyong isang pirasong PPE nang P5,000. Iyan po ba ay tama?

REP. JALOSJOS. Depende po kasi dumadaan po lahat ng expenditure po sa daanan natin po, traditional expenditure program or ...

REP. BARBERS. Yes, I agree, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, pero ang akin pong tanong ay papaano ho mamonitor at mako-control at mare-regulate iyong paggastos ng pondo ng ating mga LGU officials sa mga sinasabi nilang ginastos nila para sa COVID response? Halimbawa, iyong Quezon City, bumili ng isang PPE na nagkakahalaga ng P5,000, bumili naman ang lungsod ng Maynila ng PPE din of the same quality, the same number, the same color, the same specifications, but they spent P7,000. Wala po ba tayong ceiling, wala po ba tayong regulasyon diyan, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Lahat po kasi ito, ng ginagastos po, is under COA audit po.

REP. BARBERS. I agree. I absolutely agree with the distinguished Sponsor that this will all be subject to all government auditing rules pagkatapos, kaya lang nagastos na e. Ang punto ko lamang, Mr. Speaker, distinguished

Sponsor, ay kung nagastos na, kahit sabihin pa nating in-audit iyan ng COA and COA finally decides that disallowed iyan, ay nagastos na po ang pera ng taumbayan. Ang punto ko lamang po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, siguro dapat in monitoring the expenses of the LGU with respect to expenses or expenditures relative to the COVID response, siguro dapat mayroon hong, ano ba ang tawag doon? Iyon parang may guidelines, iyon ho ang gusto kong malaman kung mayroong tayong guidelines.

Kasi, let me just be specific, in the city of Surigao which belongs to my district, apparently, iyong mayor ay namigay daw ng mga relief goods when the time that the lockdown or the quarantine was implemented at itong mga relief goods na ito ay, apparently, I may be wrong, cost P3,000 per bag. Sabi ko, aba, medyo may kamahalan siguro iyon, ano? Kung ang perang ito ay walang kontrol sa paggastos, hindi ba, any local chief executive can just say, I spent P5,000 on relief goods which I distributed to Barangay A, Barangay B and Barangay C. So, this Representation, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, knows that may mga local chief executives na inaabuso itong paggastos ng kanilang certain percentage of the IRA, 'no, for COVID response. I am sure you are all aware of that. In fact, there were already, I think, cases, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, that were filed against some local chief executives. Tama po ba ako?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, tama po kayo. I agree po na during this time of uncertainty, marami po rin na minsan nagsasamantala sa sitwasyon. Rest assured po ang mga price po at kung mayroon po talagang violation na ginawa, ang DILG po, kasama po ang inyong Secretary, ay hindi pababayaang, iimbestigahan po niya ang pangyayari. Kung mayroon po kayong alam, puwede ninyo pong ipadala sa amin ang inyong reklamo. Kailangan lang po may reklamo para po maipakita naman po ng ating Secretary na hindi niya hinahayaan po ang pang-aabuso po sa paggamit ng pondo ng bayan.

REP. BARBERS. Maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. Malaki naman po ang aking tiwala sa Kalihim, sa Secretary ng DILG, sa kaniyang unquestionable integrity and credibility dahil isa ho si Secretary Año na inaasahan at binibigyan ng full trust and confidence at kumpiyansa ng ating Pangulo. So, I am sure that if reports will reach his office with respect to some violations committed by the local chief executives ay hindi po uupuan ng ating Secretary iyan at iyan po ang isang nakakapagbigay ng kumpiyansa sa Representasyong ito because alam ko na hindi makakalusot iyong mga ganyang palusot na mga magagaling lumusot na mga local chief executives. But, you know, I will not belabor that point anymore, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, dahil nga aabutin na ho ng good morning. Isang tanong lang ho, can you please educate me, pardon my ignorance, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, can you educate me as to—ano ho ba'ng nangyari ngayon doon sa kampanya ng constitutional change being headed by the DILG?

REP. JALOSJOS. As of today po, naka-hold po ngayon ang constitutional amendment na programa ng DILG kasi po naka-focus po tayo sa COVID, sa ating recovery po.

REP. BARBERS. Okay. Salamat sa impormasyon, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. Kaya ko po naitanong iyan because I was consulted by the municipal mayors in my district with respect to the core where I know Usec. Jonathan Malaya, a fraternity brother of mine, is in charge. So, the reason why I wanted to ask for an update on this particular strategy or this particular activity because ako po ay isa sa mga sumusuporta niyan. In fact, I have been advocating for charter change since I became a Member of this Congress in the Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Congresses in the past, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. So, maraming salamat po sa impormasyon na iyan.

Moving on to another topic, doon ho sa usapin ng contact tracers, kanina ho naitanong ni Cong. Kit Belmonte at nasagot naman po nang tama at maayos ang kaniyang mga katanungan. Gusto ko lamang pong dagdagan

ng konting tanong, 'no. I do not know if I heard it right earlier, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, iyong sagot na kung saan naitanong kung may training ba itong mga contact tracers. I do not know, ang pagkakarinig ko, correct me if I am wrong, ang sinabi ninyo ay wala. Is that correct? Is that accurate?

REP. JALOSJOS. Hindi po iyong contact tracers. Ang wala pong training, ano po, are the barangay officials and barangay health workers. Ang contact tracing team na 50,000 sa buong bansa natin ay may training po, either by LGA or by Zoom.

REP. BARBERS. Okay. So, sa madaling salita, meron po palang training. So, para alam ho nila kung ano ang gagawin nila, kasi mahirap iyong isasabak sila sa giyera na hindi nila naiintindihan. Unang-una, hindi natin nakikita iyong kalaban natin, hindi pa rin natin alam kung anong gagawin natin in the event that we discover or we get information na meron palang isang—mayroong positive. So, kung merong training, ang sunod kong katanungan, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, ay sino hong mamimili noong mga 50,000 tracers or contact tracers? Sino pong may authority to choose the contact tracers?

REP. JALOSJOS. DILG rin po.

REP. BARBERS. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, are we referring to the DILG Office of the Secretary?

REP. JALOSJOS. Regional Directors and Provincial Directors, because localized po tayo, down to the municipal level, may certain allocation po each region, each province, based po sa population, at may qualification po, dalawang qualification, isa po ang medical at criminology. At meron po tayong selection board din.

REP. BARBERS. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Again for my education, distinguished Sponsor, iyon bang pipiliin natin na mga contact tracers, gaya po ng nasagot ninyo, ang pipili ay Regional Directors ng DILG. Tama po ba?

REP. JALOSJOS. Through a selection board process po. There is a selection board.

REP. BARBERS. So, each region will constitute.

REP. JALOSJOS. Each province din po.

REP. BARBERS. So, ano ba ang mamimili, ang province o ang region?

REP. JALOSJOS. Decentralized po sa province.

REP. BARBERS. So in other words, the answer to my question of who is in charge of choosing the contact tracers is the province. Is that accurate?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Your Honor, the selection board of the province will decide who will be hired as contact tracers.

REP. BARBERS. And the selection board will be composed of who?

REP. JALOSJOS. The regular selection board po of the provincial level because in every provincial office of the DILG, there is a selection board na embedded na po. So, hindi po ang elected officials, kung hindi po ang DILG selection board na embedded na po sa provincial offices.

REP. BARBERS. Okay. So, salamat po sa inyong sagot.

Let me be parochial just for this particular issue, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

Halimbawa po ay ang may awtoridad o ang in charge sa pagpili ay ang provincial government. Nagkataon po na si Congressman at ang provincial governor ay hindi magkaalyado, hindi magkakampi at more often than not, iyong ganitong power to choose people who are contact tracers, that could be potentially abused by local chief executives. Kaya nga po, ano ba iyong – kung wala kayong sistema, siguro it is high time that the DILG come up with a system as to who will choose. What are the criteria in choosing these particular contact tracers?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, ang magtsu-choose po talaga ay ang DILG provincial office, not the provincial government. There is no elected official that can choose who will be hired.

REP. BARBERS. That is the best answer that I ever heard tonight, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

You know why? Because we do not want any activity related to the COVID response to be politicized. In other words, kung maaari, insulated from politics iyan. Because if you are giving power to one or two of those people to choose kung sino iyong contact tracers, then that is going to be a big problem because mapupulitika lang ho iyan. For all we know, pagka napulitika iyan, kahit ako walang COVID, dahil kalaban ko iyong contact tracer, sasabihin na-COVID ako. So, those are just points that I would like to raise so that the DILG will be aware. I am sure you are pretty much aware of the situation in politics all over the country.

So ito, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, I will not let this night pass without, first of all, congratulating the Drug Enforcement Group of the Philippine National Police. Ito pong DEG, in coordination with PDEA, ay napakaganda ng kanilang accomplishments. In fact, these accomplishments, as I am aware of, are accomplishments that are unprecedented. May I know if my information is correct as to the number of arrests or apprehensions made by the Philippine National Police on the anti-illegal drug campaign, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. The present PNP directive po ngayon is to not only focus on the small barangay level but now, they are introducing the high-value targets. In fact, in the recent activities of the PNP, they garnered more per gram of illegal drugs although a lower number of arrests because the targets now are the high-value targets na po.

REP. BARBERS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that information, distinguished Sponsor, and I think that particular information you shared is an information na dapat siguro

ma-highlight, ano, na itong accomplishment na ito ng PNP-DEG should be highlighted in terms of letting the public know na ang apprehensions ngayon ay hindi na iyong ordinary street peddlers kundi iyong mga high-value targets identified by the Philippine National Police. Kaya napakagandang accomplishment iyan na hindi dapat nating hindi ina-announce.

So, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, doon ho sa aming lugar sa Siargao Island, mayroon hong na-discover na lumulutang-lutang na mga cocaine. I think it happened, if I am not mistaken, in 2019, and no less than the regional director, then Regional Director of the Philippine National Police in Caraga was the one who attended to it. I just wanted to be updated as to ano ho bang information that the Philippine National Police gathered as to saan ho galing iyon? Pangalawa, sino ho iyong recipient dapat noon? Pangatlo, ay marami pa sigurong sumunod because as far as I can recall, tatlong beses po nagkaroon ng floating cocaine doon sa aming probinsiya, doon mismo sa isla ng Siargao. Siargao is now becoming famous doon sa mga surfers and a lot of tourists come to Siargao, foreign and domestic tourists. So, siguro nakita na viable iyong merkado ng ilegal na droga doon kaya siguro mayroong ganyan.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, there were actual molecular testings that mayroong kaparehas na galing sa Australia. Meaning to say, hindi pa natin malaman kung totoong galing Australia but mayroong katulad sa Australia iyong drugs na nakita dito sa Pilipinas, but it does not mean na galing pong Australia. It only means that international po ang syndicate po na nagbagsak po niyan dito sa atin.

REP. BARBERS. Iyan po bang drogang iyan ay ibinagsak para sa mga Filipino consumers?

REP. JALOSJOS. As of today po, hindi po natin pa — under investigation pa po.

REP. BARBERS. Okay. The reason I wanted to get an update on that is because the area, before COVID happened, the pandemic

happened, the Island of Siargao has been frequently visited by a lot of tourists from all over the world and a lot of tourists as well from the different regions in the country. So, ayaw po namin na mabahiran ng negatibong issue itong aming probinsiya dahil dito ho kumukuha ng pangkabuhayan ang amin pong mga kababayan sa aming probinsiya. So, I do hope that this Representation will be updated as far as the status of this issue is concerned.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Good morning.

REP. BARBERS. Good morning. And since it is already good morning, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, on my last point, the DILG is tasked to ensure peace and order. Incidentally, in relation to my concern, both the local government function and the police power of the agency are considered inseparably involved. Ibig sabihin, hindi po mapapaghiwalay iyong usapin tungkol sa peace and order. Am I correct, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. I do agree with the good Gentleman.

REP. BARBERS. Okay. Maganda ho ang performance ng ating Philippine National Police doon sa usapin ng droga. Let me ask you, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, papaano naman po iyong usapin tungkol sa illegal gambling? Do we have statistics on illegal gambling, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, we do. Well, Mr. Speaker, our good colleague, dear colleague, we do have operations under illegal gambling by the PNP, with a total of 29,410 arrested and a total amount confiscated of P9,219,031.18 po.

REP. BARBERS. And these statistics are statistics of the illegal numbers game? Is that accurate, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. In total, illegal gambling...

REP. BARBERS. Total, so ...

REP. JALOSJOS. ... including illegal numbers game.

REP. BARBERS. So, kasama ho diyan iyong jueteng, masiao, Last Two at iba pa. Mayroon po ba kayong ibang maidadagdag diyan, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor na considered to be illegal gambling?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, distinguished Gentleman, this is the current report, covering January 1 to June 30, 2020, for illegal gambling activities.

REP. BARBERS. Mr. Speaker, ano po ba iyong mga illegal gambling?

REP. JALOSJOS. Medyo mababa po ngayon ang illegal gambling because of the pandemic, medyo nagtatago po lahat at wala pong pera.

REP. BARBERS. Pero ano po ba iyong mga sugal na masasabi nating ilegal?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Please wind up.

REP. JALOSJOS. Illegal gambling is gambling that is not authorized by the PCSO po.

REP. BARBERS. Okay. So, salamat po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. This Representation, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, was informed that there are a lot of illegal betting sites of the e-sabong. Are you familiar with that, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, yes, I am aware of the e-sabong.

REP. BARBERS. Does this e-sabong have a legal basis to operate, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. As per our records and findings, there is none.

REP. BARBERS. Since there is none, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, what is the Philippine National Police doing with the e-sabong? May I be informed, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Currently, right now, it is under investigation and as an ongoing illegal activity, it is to be considered also as one of the primary cybercrimes ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The time has expired.

REP. BARBERS. I will just wrap up, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Okay.

REP. JALOSJOS. Under Cybercrime Law, that is one of the violations that the PNP is looking into, ...

REP. BARBERS. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. JALOSJOS. ... the e-sabong.

REP. BARBERS. This is very important, Mr. Speaker, kasi po iyong e-sabong ay namamayagpag ngayon sa atin sa—in fact, in all of social media platforms, marami pong e-sabong. Kahit po doon sa aking lugar, marami po akong constituents na tumataya ho dito. So, my point being, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor, since there is no law authorizing the operation of this kind of gambling which is e-sabong, therefore, this is illegal and if this is illegal, maybe it is just but right for the Philippine National Police to close them down. Marami pong illegal betting stations, Mr. Speaker, at apparently, I was also told na marami rin hong tumataya, hindi lamang ho lokal na Pilipino kundi marami rin hong tumataya from abroad. But how can the ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Honorable Barbers, ...

REP. BARBERS. ... local government unit...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). ... please.

REP. BARBERS. Yes, Mr. Speaker, last na po ito. I just wanted to clear this issue because this is a major illegal gambling issue today. And if this is illegal, and there are no taxes being paid to the national government, then, we are losing a lot of money, we are losing a lot of revenue and income. Kaya po naitatanong ko na siguro the good Secretary and the Chief PNP will probably start raiding or if not, closing down all these betting stations.

Mayroon pa, ang information po namin, iyong modes of payment nila, na iyong mga taya ho na galing sa abroad ay gumagamit ng WeChat Pay and PayMaya, which is an indication na hindi lamang ho Pilipino ang tumataya rito or maaaring hindi sila Pilipino...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). With all due respect to my colleagues in the Nacionalista Party, the three of us came from that party, please, your time has expired.

REP. BARBERS. Let me just get a commitment from the Philippine National Police and the good Secretary as to the campaign against this illegal e-sabong.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, the PNP and the Secretary will do that, especially if they can improve and enhance their cybercrime capability.

REP. BARBERS. Okay, maraming salamat po.

Mr. Speaker, dahil good morning na ho, hindi ko na po hahabaan, kagaya ho ng pangako ko kanina. So, maraming salamat, Mr. Speaker, distinguished Sponsor. And to the DILG family, maraming salamat po for your patience.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you, Honorable Barbers. Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize the Hon. Angelica Natasha Co of the BHW Party-List for her manifestation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the BHW Party-List, Hon. Angelica Natasha Co, is recognized for her manifestation.

REP. CO (A.). Magandang gabi po sa ating lahat, Mr. Speaker, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Magandang umaga na po.

REP. CO (A.). ... Mr. Sponsor, gayundin sa ating butihing pinuno at kawani ng DILG, sa pangunguna ni Secretary Año.

Una po sa lahat, nais ko pong magpasalamat sa DILG sa maagap nitong pagtugon sa ilang mga kahilingan ng mga barangay health workers, lalong-lalo na po sa opisina ni Undersecretary Martin Diño at Undersecretary Jonathan Malaya. Ang una ko pong katanungan, actually po – sorry, ang una ko pong katanungan ay kung ano ang mga programang nakalaan para sa ating mga BHW sa ilalim ng DILG at sa harap ng COVID-19 pandemic?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, can you repeat the question?

REP. CO (A.). Ang katanungan ko po, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ay kung ano ang mga programang nakalaan para sa ating mga BHW sa ilalim ng DILG sa harap ng COVID-19 pandemic?

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I am actually asking this because it is a fact that our barangay health workers have been contributing greatly in our fight against COVID-19. For one, they are part of the Barangay Health Emergency Response Teams by virtue of the DILG's memorandum circular which was formed even long before this pandemic. Ibig sabihin po nito, Mr. Speaker, simula't sapul, ang atin pong mga BHWs ay laging gumagampan sa tungkulin bilang mga health frontliners sa harap ng public or health emergencies. Noon pa man o ngayon, marami pong dumaaan, whether it is an infectious disease or a noncommunicable disease gaya po ng dengue, SARS, TB, at ngayon nga po ang COVID-19, umulan, bumagyo, El Niño man o lindol, sa

harap po ng mga sakunang ito ay nariyan po lagi ang ating mga BHWs. Sa puntong ito po, Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, nais ko pong umapila sa DILG na tiyakin ang kapakanan at pangangailangan ng ating mga BHWs. Kung tutuusin, ang kanilang hinihiling, Mr. Speaker, ay ang suporta. Hindi naman mapupunta po sa pansariling kapakanan ng mga BHWs kung 'di upang mapag-ibayo at mapaghusay pa nila ang kanilang mga sarili para po sa serbisyo.

Sa akin pong patuloy na pag-iikot, ang kinakailangan po ng mga BHWs ay suporta: suporta sa PPE, mga basic na gamit tulad po ng stethoscope, BP and, of course, siguro under the DILG sa pagkakataong ito, hinihiling din po nila na mapagbigyan sila na magkaroon din ng uniporme, kahit po vest, dahil po minsan nagrereklamo na 'pag nagbabahay-bahay sila, hindi po kilala na sila po ay BHW, at saka po bisikleta para sa kanilang pag-iikot sa kanilang mga barangay, Mr. Speaker. Hinihiling po ng ating mga BHWs na sila ay ma-prioritize para po sa contact tracing program, bagay na praktikal lamang sapagkat ang mga BHW po ay may mga kasanayan na para sa gawaing iyan at sila ang sadyang lubog at pamilyar sa kanilang mga kabarangay. So, may I have a response from the DILG through the good Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, ating dear colleague, ang response po natin, opo, in fact, sinusuportahan po kayo sa inyong panukala na gawing institutionalized ang barangay health workers at i-amend ang Local Government Code nang maiparehas ang kanilang benepisyong sa isang barangay official. At ang isa naman po ay sa pagtutok o pagbibigay ng preparasyon sa mga ating kukuning contact tracer, e number one po sila sa tinitingnan po ng DILG na i-hire sa contact tracing sa bawat barangay o lungsod.

REP. CO (A.). I am very happy, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, for the positive response from the DILG. But let me just reiterate po, I hope mayroon din po silang iba pang mga benepisyong gaya po ng uniporme, kahit po vest man lang po doon po sa mga nagdyu-duty at nagbabahay-bahay, at saka po mga bisikleta

dahil kailangan po nila ito sa pag-iikot, lalo na po ngayong pandemic. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I hope that you would agree with me on this matter and let me go to my second question.

Ang akin pong pangalawang tanong, Mr. Speaker, ay may kinalaman naman sa pahayag ni Pangulong Duterte kamakailan lamang. Anya, palalakasin niya daw ang mga BHWs. Lubos pong nagpapasalamat ang Representasyong ito from the BHW Party-List dahil po ang BHW po sa buong kapuluan, sa pahayag na ito ng Pangulong Duterte, ay napakasaya. Ito po ay indikasyon ng pagpapahalaga sa susing papel na ginagampanan ng ating mga BHWs sa primary health care na naaayon sa Universal Health Care Act. Maaari po bang malaman mula sa DILG, through our distinguished Sponsor, kung ano-ano po ang mga kongkretong hakbang na ginagawa at gagawin ng DILG upang maisakatuparan ang pahayag na ito ng ating Pangulo?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, ang DILG po ay sumusuporta sa panukala ng ating Pangulo at naghahanap po sila ng karagdagang pondo para madagdagan ang benepisyong na maibibigay, hindi lang sa nasyonal, pati po sa mga lokal na pamahalaan po.

REP. CO (A.). Mr. Speaker, sa mahabang panahon po, kahabag-habag po talaga ang katayuan ng ating mga BHWs and I am pretty sure that all the Representatives here, lahat naman po ay may BHWs and you know na talagang kawawa ang ating mga BHWs. Nananatili pong hikahos ang mga BHWs at gayundin ang primary health care program o programang pangkalusugan sa mga pamayanan o barangay sa buong kapuluan. Sa ganang akin, Mr. Speaker, it is incumbent upon Congress now to revisit the law relative to health promotion and the plight of our BHWs at the local level. This Representation believes that our weak health system at the local level is due to the structural weakness, which requires immediate policy reforms. Time and again, Mr. Speaker, the BHWs are mistakenly considered as public

health workers as defined by the Magna Carta of Public Health Workers or R.A. No. 7305. BHWs have been considered and treated merely as volunteers for the longest time under the Local Government Code, thus they do not and cannot receive salaries nor the same benefits as may be contemplated under the said law.

Our BHWs do not even have security of tenure, Mr. Speaker. Madalas po pinupulitika ang katungkulan ng ating mga BHWs. Marami sa kanila ang matagal nang naninilbihan at tumanda na sa serbisyo nang wala man lang inaasahang matatag na suporta sa kanilang pagreretiro. Mr. Speaker, the volunteer status of our BHWs is not a reason at all to deny them of much needed benefits. To delay or deny them of their rights and welfare is tantamount to a grave injustice, and with this, our health programs at the community and barangay levels suffer severely and go down the drain because of structural and policy flaws.

Mr. Speaker, this predicament is something that the Executive Department and Congress must address. In this light, this Representation has filed H.B. No. 3985 since August 2019. This is entitled, "AN ACT STRENGTHENING AND INSTITUTIONALIZING THE BARANGAY PRIMARY HEALTH CARE PROGRAM, PROVIDING SECURITY OF TENURE, BENEFITS AND INCENTIVES TO BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR."

I wish to entreat the support of the DILG on this proposed legislation, Your Honor, Mr. Speaker. May I know if the DILG would be willing to work with this Representation, Your Honor, in crafting critical policy reforms for our BHWs?

REP. JALOSJOS. Siyempre, Mr. Speaker, dear colleague. Siyempre po sang-ayon at tutulong po ang DILG at itong Representante ng Zamboanga del Norte ay hihingi pa po ng pabor sa inyo na puwede bang isama ninyo ako as coauthor diyan sa panukala ninyong iyan?

REP. CO (A.). Thank you very much for the positive response, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. I have no other questions, and with that, I

want to end my interpellation. Thank you very much.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Thank you. Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize the Hon. Sergio Dagooc of the APEC Party-List for his manifestation.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the APEC Party-List, Hon. Sergio Dagooc, is recognized for his manifestation.

REP. DAGOOC. Hello? Hello?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). You may proceed, please.

REP. DAGOOC. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ginoong Sponsor, magandang umaga po.

REP. JALOSJOS. Magandang umaga din po.

REP. DAGOOC. Para mabilis lang po, I would like to inform that we have two existing laws that will address, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, the issues that were being raised during the interpellation on the budget of the Department of Energy and the ERC by our colleagues on system loss. Mayroon po tayong dalawang batas: Republic Act No. 7832, iyong Anti-Electricity Pilferage Act, at Republic Act No. 11361, iyong Anti-Power Lines Obstruction Act. Ang problema po diyan ay kung minsan hindi namin ma-apprehend iyong mga pilferers of electricity because of the lack of assistance from the PNP; hindi namin ma-clear iyong mga linya kung mag-resist iyong mga landowners, although it is allowed by law na i-clear siya. So, may I have the commitment, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, of the PNP to schedule, if possible, a meeting on Monday, virtually, to discuss the rules of engagement or memorandum of agreement on the assistance that we need during electricity pilferage apprehension and line clearing, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, yes po. Ang commitment po ng DILG ay it will partner with your group, starting po sa Monday, sa virtual meeting n'yo po. Rest assured that the DILG and the PNP are also concerned because it is a crime to steal and even if electricity cannot be seen, it is still a crime and our consumers are paying for their theft. So, rest assured, dear colleague, na makikipagtulungan po ang DILG at PNP sa inyo, especially sa meeting n'yo sa Monday.

REP. DAGOOC. That is all, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, for this Representation.

Maraming salamat po at magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat diyan, including Secretary Año and the DILG family.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Maraming salamat po. Majority Leader.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, next to interpellate is the honorable Deputy Speaker Eddie Villanueva.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The honorable Representative from the CIBAC Party-List, Deputy Speaker Eduardo "Bro. Eddie" Villanueva, is recognized.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, he is not on Zoom. I would like to, for the record, after we texted him, make a second call for our distinguished Deputy Speaker "Bro. Eddie" Villanueva.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Deputy Speaker "Bro. Eddie" Villanueva, you are recognized.

REP. MACAPAGAL ARROYO. Mr. Speaker, since he is not on Zoom anymore, I would like to recognize from the Party-List ACT TEACHERS, the Hon. France Castro.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the ACT TEACHERS Party-List, Hon. France Castro, is recognized.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Magandang umaga po sa ating lahat, Ginoong Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, at siyempre po sa DILG.

REP. JALOSJOS. Magandang umaga po.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Mayroon po akong PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Speaker. Puwede po bang makiusap sa ating Secretariat na maipresinta ito?

Ito po iyong may kaugnayan din po sa mga tanong kanina ni Representative Sarah dahil ako po ay naniningil, Mr. Sponsor, sa ating PNP Chief regarding doon sa ni-raise ko doon sa briefing about iyong terrorist-tagging ng Makabayan bloc at iba pa pong mga lehitimong mga progresibong grupo na hiniling ko po na maimbestigahan at ma-take down itong mga post na ito. So, puwede po bang maipresinta, Ginoong Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na ating kasamahan, puwedeng pakiulit lang po ang katanungan?

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Ginoong Sponsor, mayroon po akong gustong ipakita sa inyo na mga posts ng mga PNP social media account para maipakita po sa ating Sponsor, sa Speaker, at siyempre sa DILG, at kay PNP Chief dahil nangako po sa akin ang PNP Chief, nangako po sa Representasyong ito na magbibigay ng ulat base doon sa imbestigasyon sa mga ni-raise po ng Representasyong ito na mga terrorist-tagging ng mga PNP social media na mga ano po, mga social media posts po, dahil sinabi po, na nag-commit naman na maite-take down kung sakali maiimbestigahan po ito at nakita ko po, hanggang ngayon ay nandoodon pa. So, halimbawa po, five days ago, tayo po ay nag-usap, Mr. Sponsor, Ginoong Speaker, September 10 po iyong briefing ng DILG, so mula po noong September 15 hanggang September 30, nag-monitor po tayo at nakita po natin na nandoodon pa rin iyong mga social media posts na kinu-question natin. Halimbawa po—so hindi na po ba maipapakita? So, anyway, halimbawa po, five days ago, iyong PNP-Ifugao, Aguinaldo, nakalagay po doon—at iyong mga ginamit ay iyong mga picture

namin, ng Makabayan bloc—“Teroristang NPA, nagbabalat-kayong aktibista.” So, iyon po, iyong PNP-Ifugao five days ago.

Ganoon din po iyong, Ifugao din po ito, PCAG Unit, nakalagay din po ito, one day, kahapon lang po ito, nakikita doon iyong picture ni Rep. Sarah Elago, okay, so nandodoon pa rin po ito: “Tigilan na ang pagre-recruit ng mga kabataan para maging terorista.” Iyan po. September 15, inulit po ulit ng PNP-Ifugao, iyong mga—ito po, iyong mga Makabayan bloc na nandidito pa rin po sa picture. So, kung maipapakita po sana ng ating Secretariat iyan po. Ipinabigay ko iyan kaninang umaga po. Okay, so, iyan po, ang dami pa po sa Dao MPS, September 2, nandidiyan pa rin; PMFC—ano ba ito—PMFC NOPPO, nandidiyan pa rin po, September 15. September 24, ayun po, iyong PMFC NCPO, PNP-Naga, (*Inaudible*) nandidiyan pa rin po iyong mga terrorist-tagging po sa Makabayan bloc. Surigao City Police, iyan January 27, nandidiyan pa rin po at saka January 9. Okay. So, puwede po bang malaman ang sagot ng Secretariat po o ng ating Speaker at hindi na po naipakita iyong aking presentasyon?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, I call on the Rules to act on the matter.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. JALOSJOS. May I ask for a one-minute suspension. Sir, may I ask for a one-minute suspension? (*Inaudible*) the Rules if it is allowed for a ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

It was 12:30 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 12:34 a.m., the session was resumed with Rep. Anthony Peter “Onyx” D. Crisologo presiding.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Crisologo). The session is resumed. Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, may we allow our Sponsor and our distinguished colleague to continue with the interpellation.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Crisologo). The Chair recognizes Rep. France Castro to continue her interpellation.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Sige po. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

So, iyon pong PowerPoint ko po, nagpapakita dito na basically, katulad ng sinabi ni Cong. Sarah kanina, na hindi pa talaga nate-take down. So ilang araw na po, September 10 noong nagkaroon po tayo ng briefing at iyong PNP ay nangako na mag-iimbestiga at narinig ko kaninang ongoing na ang investigation at isa lang iyong iniimbestigahan nila pero sangkatutak po na mga PNP, na mga social media posts na naririto po sa atin, na sayang lang po at hindi na naipakita. So, puwede po bang malaman sa ating PNP Chief, through our Sponsor, iyong kanilang dahilan bakit po hindi po tumupad sa commitment ang PNP Chief?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, isa lang po ang—marami po ang naimbestigahan pero isa pa lang po ang nai-file po nila.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Thank you, Mr. Sponsor.

Magbibigay po ako ng example—itung PNP-Ifugao, naimbestigahan po ba ito?

REP. JALOSJOS. Under investigation po siya at naglabas na po ng final memorandum ang ating Chief PNP sa mga complaints against the cybercrime po.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Ito po bang Dao MPS, inimbestigahan po ba ito, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, opo.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). How about Surigao City Police?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, yes.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Naga, PNP-Naga CPS po? Nandidito po iyong sinasabi nating mga ilan sa mga kinu-question po natin na mga fake news, pagbabanta, pagpapahamak sa mga Makabayan bloc Representatives at iba pang mga lehitimong mga organisasyon. So, nabanggit ninyo kanina – puwede ko po bang malaman ang sagot, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Under investigation po lahat ng binanggit po natin at mayroon pa pong hindi pa po nababanggit, under investigation po.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So kung titingnan ninyo po, ang lahat po ng PNP, parang polisiya talaga ng PNP ang ganitong pagpapalabas sa kanilang mga social media platforms. Tama po ba ako na ito ay sa ngalan ng whole-of-nation approach at itong sinasabi nating Executive Order No. 70 ay naging policy na iyong magkaroon ng mga ganitong terror-tagging sa Makabayan bloc?

REP. JALOSJOS. It is not the policy of the PNP po, ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Policy po ba?

REP. JALOSJOS. ... Mr. Speaker, dear colleague. Hindi po iyan ang polisiya po ng PNP. Rest assured po na iimbestigahan nila nang mabuti ang insidenteng nangyayari sa Internet na ito po.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Kailan? Hanggang kailan po iyong imbestigasyon kasi titingnan lang naman po lahat ng mga social media sites? Kasi ang bilis-bilis ninyo naman pong ano – ang dami pong mga pulis, ginagamit ang social media. So, ano po ba ang nag-iimbestiga dito, Ginoong Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor? Anong unit po ng PNP?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, alam – talagang mahirap po ang cybercrime dahil puwedeng ilagay, tanggalin,

hindi natin alam kung sino ang naglagay, puwedeng i-hack ang accounts kaya nga po kailangan natin na palakasin pa po ang cybercrime-fighting law – o ang capability po ng PNP, para po mas mabilis po nilang maaksyunan ito, at ang Cybercrime Law po. Sa ngayon po, kung kanina po nakinig tayo na wala po tayong budget para sa anti-cybercrime capability po ng PNP, pero sinisikap po ng ating Kagawaran ng PNP, kasama ng ating Chief PNP po na gawin ang makakaya niya na maimbestigahan at maparusahan ang mga taong lumabag sa batas.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, salamat po, distinguished Sponsor.

With due respect, parang general – parang iyong sagot po ng ating taga-PNP ay general statements na lang po iyan kasi sila naman po talaga iyong nag-aano – malinaw po na sa mga nakikita natin, official Facebook account ito ng mga pulis sa iba't ibang mga lugar. Nabanggit ninyo dito iyong memorandum circular dated May 2020 regarding doon sa mga paggamit ng mga personnel ng PNP ng Facebook or social media. (*Inaudible*) memorandum, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. To guide the PNP personnel on the usage of media, social media.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. So, hawak-hawak ko po dito iyong kopya noong memorandum. Ang purpose po niyon ay tatlo. So, iyong una po, bukod po sa sinabi ninyo, to promote accountability and responsibility in information sharing using social media platform, so i-promote po iyong accountability and responsibility po noong pagshe-share ng ano mang mga information sa social media; number two, to encourage self-regulation and discipline in the use of social media accounts as public servants; pangatlo po, to provide a safer and more secure use of official PNP social media accounts and individual social media accounts. So, ito po ang malinaw na purpose nitong sinasabi ninyong memorandum circular. Ano po ba iyong guidelines para maipatupad ito, iyong mga purpose noong memorandum circular, Ginoong Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na ating kasama sa Kongreso, ang guidelines po:

1. Ensure that all posts are not libelous, do not trigger cyber-bullying, and do not violate the Data Privacy Act and Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines;

2. Ensure that all posts shall not disclose confidential information detrimental to the safety of any individual;

3. Ensure that all posts shall not be inimical to the interest of the organization and to the national security;

4. Ensure that all posts shall not contain fake news, lewd materials, comments or rumors about someone that are mean, harmful and embarrassing;

5. Ensure that all posts shall not violate the rights of any individual;

6. Ensure that all posts pertaining to official press releases of the PNP or any post containing ideas that would affect the PNP as a whole or any of its units, shall observe due regard to protocols on chain of command for its approval;

7. PNP personnel are prohibited to post any grievance/complaints against the PNP if the subject of his/her grievance/complaints is covered by the PNP Grievance Machinery or Disciplinary Machinery; and to fully observe "exhaustion of administrative remedies principle";

8. Ensure avoidance of any reckless, pointless, defamatory expression of personnel reactions or emotions that may affect the institution; and

9. To observe PNP fundamental principles of social awareness that encourage PNP members and their immediate family members to actively get involved in religious, social and civil activities to enhance the image of organization without affecting their official duties even through online social media, and that would not be

detrimental to the doctrinal principle of the PNP organization.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. Salamat po sa ating butihing Sponsor, doon sa guidelines. Nakikita po natin dito, malinaw po na una, dapat ay hindi po libelous; pangawala, hindi po ito detrimental, it is not safe – dapat safe po to any individuals at ensure the safety ng any individual. So, ito po iyong nakita natin na mga guidelines na ipinapatupad nitong MC na ito. So, nakikita n'yo po dito sa mga post na ito iyong mga libelous na mga materials na sinasabi po dito sa mga posts na ito. So, puwede po bang malaman, anong unit ng PNP iyong nagpapatupad nitong MC 2020 na ito, anong particular na unit ang nagtse-check po nitong mga ganito?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, Directorate for Police Community Relations.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. So, tama po, iyong directorate. So, katulad nga po ng nasabi ko kanina, mukhang naging policy po dahil hindi naman po tumugon iyong ating PNP Chief doon sa sinasabi nating report, hindi po siya nagbigay ng report kahit na sinasabi niyang mayroong isang inimbestigahan kaugnay nito. So, gusto lang nating i-reiterate itong mga ganitong mga pagre-red-tag, terror-tagging sa mga indibidwal – ang critics, mga oposisyon, mga nagpapahayag ng mga saloobin, complaints na gustong ipahayag sa ating gobyerno, hindi po masama ito, freedom of expression ito. In fact, noon nga pong nagkaroon ng findings ang Facebook Philippines regarding doon sa mga accounts, mga pages, profiles, dalawang networks po iyong tinatawag nilang o ang na-take down – 57 Facebook accounts, 31 pages and 20 Instagram accounts with links to military and police. The military- and police-linked network focused their inauthentic behavior on domestic politics and military activities against terrorism, the Anti-Terrorism Bill, criticism on communism, youth activities and opposition, the CPP, the NPA, and the National Democratic Front. So, kabilang po ang PNP na nagagamit itong Facebook doon

sa mga fake accounts na nagpapakalat ng mga fake news at mga hindi po talaga kaaya-aya at nakakapagpahamak na mga post sa mga indibidwal. So, ano po ba ang masasabi ng ating Sponsor dito kaugnay noong findings po ng Facebook at ano na po iyong ginagawa ng PNP kaugnay nito?

REP. JALOSJOS. Hindi naman po natin puwedeng ipagkait ang nakikita natin sa Facebook, ang pangyayari, kaya po ang PNP po ay iniimbestigahang mabuti at naglabas na po ng dalawang memorandum circular, at ngayon pong gabi, naglabas ng final warning sa mga PNP personnel at ahensiya ng PNP na patuloy na nagva-violate po ng direktiba po ng Chief PNP.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Okay. So, ang ano po, kaugnay po niyan, iyon iyong mga fake accounts na patuloy po na ipinapakalat ng PNP po, ang Makabayan bloc po ay – anyway, dito sa findings ng Facebook na ito, nag-file na rin po ang Makabayan bloc ng House Resolution No. 1269, pushing for the probe into the use of social media by the AFP and PNP for red-tagging and demonizing progressive organizations and the possible use of public funds for these operations, dahil nakita naman natin sa findings ng Facebook, talagang mga warm bodies ng military at ng pulis ang gumagamit ng mga ganitong mga karumal-dumal na krimen sa Facebook, kaya po sana, dapat maimbestigahan at dapat maipakita iyong katotohanan. May masasabi po ba ang ating Sponsor, Ginoong Speaker, sa sinabi ko po?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang report po, tama po kayo, na ang report po natin is, sa social media, sa FB, nagagamit, kaya nga po gusto sana po na palakasin po ang kakayahan ng PNP para makahuli or mapalakas ang paglaban niya sa cybercrime. At pangalawa po, seryoso po ang PNP na labanan pero mahirap po talaga dahil puwede mong i-post, puwede mong tanggalin, puwede mong i-repost at puwedeng i-hack, kaya nga hindi basta-basta kapag nakita mo na nasa site ng isang police station, sila na ang may kasalanan o sila na nag-post kasi baka na-hack po, mas marami pong hacker ngayon

po na may COVID pandemya na wala pong ginagawa sa mga bahay-bahay. So, ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Salamat po, Ginoong Sponsor.

REP. JALOSJOS. ... rest assured po na ...

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Siyempre po, 'no, kung sinsero po ang PNP sa kanilang mga sinasabi, dapat po mayroon silang isinabmit sa atin na report. But anyway, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, another ano po, 'no, memo, ito, another memo po noong September 18, 2020 from the Directorate for Police Community Relations. Ito po iyong guidelines – ah, Social Media Monitoring for Quarantine Violations. So again, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, paggamit na naman po ng social media para makita daw po iyong mga nagva-violate ng quarantine protocols, na hindi nagsusuot ng face mask, iyong mga nagva-violate doon sa IATF guidelines, walang face shield, mayroong social gathering at iba pa po, 'di ba? So, ang tanong ko lang po, 'no, mayroon po ba kayong guidelines dito? So, halimbawa po makakita at makapag-report po na mga social gatherings, basta-basta ba pong huhulihin na katulad ng ginawa natin doon sa mga nag-violate ng quarantine sa mga nakaraang panahon? Ano po ba iyong guidelines dito? Ito, kakaiba ito, using social media. Ano pong masasabi dito ng PNP through our Sponsor po?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, wala po tayong guidelines. Kung kanina po nasabi natin na wala nga pong enhanced capability po sa cybercrime po at wala pong pondo para sa paggamit po ng Internet, 'no, so definitely po, the PNP is relying on regular citizens para mag-report at magsabi sa kanila kung saan makikitang site ang mga violation. But regarding sa guidelines po, there are no guidelines being developed or have been released by the PNP Chief for the said violations.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Nabigla po ako diyan, Ginoong Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor. Mayroon kayong ganitong memo, Social Media Monitoring for Quarantine Violation,

September 18, 2020, bago lang ito, at nagtataka ako at nagugulat ako na wala kayong guidelines. So, paano ito ipatutupad ng ating PNP kung wala itong guidelines? Basta na lang ba kayong manghuhuli, basta na lang ba kayong—violation yata ito sa privacy, hindi ba, ng mga tao at malamang iyong human rights ng mga tao dito ay ma-violate din. Kung wala po kayong malinaw na guidelines kung paano niyo ipatutupad itong memo na ito, I suggest ibasura po itong guidelines na ito, Ginoong Speaker, distinguished Sponsor.

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang PNP is only guided ng local codes po, local government codes na ive-verify muna. Kung mayroon pong nag-report, ive-verify po, but hindi po gumawa ng guidelines po kasi po depende na po sa kaniya-kaniyang locality po kung ano po ang penalties, ang karampatang penalties sa mga violators po. Kaya po walang general code na ginawa dahil it depends on the locality po, LGUs, kung ano po ang kanilang kaparusahan sa mga violators sa lockdown.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). So, iyon na nga po, 'no, Ginoong Sponsor, Ginoong Speaker, na talagang nagpapalabas kayo ng mga ganitong memo na walang malinaw na guidelines at incorporated sana iyong paano anuhin ano iyong karapatan ng ating mga mamamayan at ito ay iiwan ninyo na naman doon sa mga LGU iyong ano, 'no, iyong responsibilidad at iyong sinasabing guidelines doon sa LGU. So siguro, ano, dahil wala pa itong guidelines, dapat mayroon itong general guidelines mula man lang sa PNP kasi mayroon dito sa number 4, pertains to violation of quarantine rules such as social distancing, curfew hours, and non-wearing of mask. So, ibig sabihin po nito, gagamitin ninyo ang social media at iyong mamamayan na iyong bahalang magsumbong sa pulis. So, gagamitin ninyo pa iyong mga mamamayan na mag-"tsutsu" dito sa mga pulis, mga LGU para ituro iyong kanilang mga kabarangay. So, delikado po ito, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor.

So kung ako po ay magsa-suggest, dahil meron na rin po namang sinusunod na mga guidelines sa mga LGU in terms of curfew, iyong pagsusuot ng mask, et cetera ay puwede

na itong ibasura ng ating PNP. Ano po iyong masasabi nang ating Sponsor dito?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang nating kasamahan, susubukan po natin, ang kagawaran ng PNP, susubukang gumawa ng guidelines. Pero po kasi medyo mahirap po kasi iba-iba po ang local laws na para sa mga violators po natin sa lockdown sa pag-implement po. Katulad po ng curfew, iba-iba po ang iniimplemento po ng kaniya-kaniyang—sa NCR pa lang po iba-iba na pong oras ang kanilang curfew at pati ang kaparusahan po. So, susubukan po ng pamunuan ng PNP na magawan ng guidelines, maging flexible enough para maka-absorb kung ano ang local laws. Iyan po ang puwedeng gawin ng ating PNP.

REP. CASTRO (F.L.). Thank you, Ginoong Sponsor.

Iyon pong kakaiba dito, iyong paggamit ng social media. So halimbawa po nag-post iyong isang tao noong mga gatherings, halimbawa kung merong gatherings, at nai-report ito ng isang mamamayan din, so iyon, wala iyong guidelines kung ano ang gagawin doon. Ano ba ito, papasukin ninyo iyong bahay, titingnan ninyo iyong tao doon sa post niya? Kasi ganyan din po iyong ginawa ninyo, ginamit ninyo iyong social media para hulihin din iyong mga nag-post ng, halimbawa, may nag-complain tungkol doon sa mga ayuda, nagko-complain po tungkol doon sa problema nila doon sa walang makain, na wala nang kung ano-ano pa, so madali na ginawa ninyo iyong pag-aresto sa mga taong ito. So, ito lang po, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, reminder lang po doon sa ating mga kapulisan, sa ating PNP na igalang po natin iyong karapatan ng ating mga mamamayan sa kaniyang privacy, iyong karapatan niya sa pagpapahayag at dahil din po sinasabi ninyo na dapat igalang din iyong karapatan ninyo sa pagpapahayag. So, iyon lang po, Mr. Speaker at Ginoong Sponsor. Marami pong salamat.

At this juncture, Representative Crisolago relinquished the Chair to Deputy Speaker Raneo "Ranie" E. Abu.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Marami pong salamat. Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we recognize for his chance to interpellate, the Gentleman from the Third District of Cebu, Deputy Speaker Pablo John Garcia.

Mr. Speaker, it would seem that Deputy Speaker Garcia is not online. I shall move that we recognize Rep. Ferdinand Gaité of the Party-List BAYAN MUNA for his chance to interpellate the Sponsor.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the BAYANMUNA Party-List, Hon. Ferdinand Gaité, is recognized.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

May ilang katanungan lang po ako sa budget ng DILG kung pahihintulutan ng ating kapita-pitagang Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. JALOSJOS. Maaari po, ikagagalak ko po na sagutin ang mga katanungan.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po.

Magandang umaga muna sa ating lahat. At may mga ilang questions lang ako hinggil sa usapin ng DILG, ngunit bago ko po ipagpatuloy, tulad ng nabanggit ng una nating nag-interpellate, si Cong. France Castro, ipinapaalala muli natin sa PNP, sa kanilang mga ipino-post sa social media, na mismo ang internal guidelines nila ang kanilang vina-violate. At gaya ng nabanggit nga ni Cong. France Castro, ang Kinatawang ito ay kasama rin doon sa na ni-red-tag o tinerorist-tag ng mga iba't ibang opisina ng PNP.

Patungkol po rin sa DILG, patungkol naman sa kalagayan ng ating mga persons deprived of liberty o PDLs, isa sa mga ahensiya sa ilalim ng DILG ang BJMP, ngunit ang kalagayan ngayon, lalo na sa panahon ng pandemya, ay naglalagay sa kanila sa matinding panganib. Ayon sa World Prison Brief ng University of London, Birkbeck, ang Pilipinas daw ang ikalawa sa buong daigdig na may mataas na occupancy level by more than 500 percent based on official capacity. Kasama na rito iyong National Bilibid Prison

na nasa ilalim ng Department of Justice. Ang total population ng PDLs ay 130,667 as of December 31, 2019, exceeding iyong total capacity of – ang capacity lang ay 24,306. Kaya itong sinasabing variance ay napakalayo, talagang siksikan na talaga sa mga kulungan. This is despite the fact that in Rule 10 of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, dapat daw ay: “All accommodation provided for the use of prisons and in particular all sleeping accommodation shall meet all requirements of health, due regard being paid to climatic conditions and particularly to cubic content of air, minimum floor space, lighting, heating and ventilation.”

Maraming jails nagko-comprise ng district jails, city jails, municipal jails, at iba pa na nasa ilalim ng BJMP. Pero tulad sa nabanggit, napakataas ng congestion rate. Dito sa data nga, 438 percent in excess of the capacity of the current jail population. On the other hand, sabi rin dito, may mga iba't ibang moda naman ng pag-release. Dahil congested nga ang ating mga kulungan, may mga paraan para i-decongest tulad noong Recognizance Act of 2012, granting the release on recognizance which aims to, one, guarantee the appearance of the accused before any court when so required; two, prevent the undue incarceration of an accused who may be released after trial unless proven guilty; and three, protect the people and the peace of the community which may be disturbed upon the temporary release of the accused.

So, sa ganitong sitwasyon, kahit ang Kamara de Representantes ay naglabas din ng kaniyang rekomendasyon for the temporary release on bail of low-level offenders as well as the sick elderly prisoners and especially now because of the coronavirus pandemic which further threatens our country. So, marami rin na mga iba't ibang organisasyon na nanawagan na rin ng prisoner release: UN, Human Rights Watch, Karapatan, Kapatid, United Nations Committee Against Torture. Other countries, because of the COVID-19, have followed suit: Afghanistan, Indonesia, Iran and the United Kingdom, and yet, the OSG made a position opposing the plea of inmates seeking temporary release dahil tinitake advantage daw ng, again, mga komunista

ang pagkakaroon ng temporary liberty ng mga nakakulong.

Isa pang nagpalala sa bilang ng congestion sa loob ng mga preso ay iyong lumalaking bilang, hindi lamang ng sinasabing suspects ng droga at iba pa which comprise a large portion of those currently incarcerated, but also political prisoners na ganyan na rin ang kalagayan. Based sa data, there are 635 political prisoners, among them are 53 elderly and 95 sick around the Philippines. Ang isang preso, si Rodrigo Lazar, died from an illness just this September 9 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Lazar died from complications from hypertension and diabetes in the Sorsogon Provincial Jail. More recently, political prisoner Reina Mae Nasino, who spent her pregnancy in jail, gave birth on July 1 and was separated from her newborn daughter on August 13. Mga katanungan, Mr. Speaker, noong April, nag-submit ng report ang BJMP na may inisyal itong listahan ng 3,300 PDLs na higit na ang edad sa 60 years old at mayroon lamang light offenses. Mula Abril hanggang ngayon, may idadagdag pa ba sa listahan na ito? Ilan na po ang nasa listahan na ito ang aktwal na nakalaya na, Mr. Chair, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleagues, ang total na na-release during this pandemic is 34,123. Special release within the 34,000 is iyong mga elderly natin, iyong may sakit, at saka iyong buntis o pregnant ay 1,728 na po.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, 1,728 at 34,000 na special release, so dito po, practically, nadagdagan pa iyong sa listahan na 3,300 noong inisyal itong ilabas, tama po, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Yes po, kasi po ang datos na ito is April 1 to September 27.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But if we will again measure the congestion, this will just be a small dent on the current congestion being experienced by the BJMP in their existing jails. Tanong pong sunod, anong naging tugon ng BJMP sa rekomendasyon

mismo ng Committee on Justice sa House of Representatives para palayain ang mga maysakit, bulnerable, at low-risk na PDLs, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mase-secure po natin sa Department of Justice ang release order ng mga presong ito. Ang BJMP po ay ibibigay ang kanilang release, lalo na po ngayong pandemya na pati po ang mga – marami rin po sa ating mga guard po sa BJMP ay nagkakasakit din po dahil po sa congestion ng mga kulungan natin. Kaya nga mas gugustuhin din nila kung pagbibigyan lang ng Department of Justice ang kanilang release ay gagawin po ng BJMP po at tatanggapin po nang mas maayos dahil po, sabi ko nga kanina, kasama po ang mga guards na nagkakasakit po.

REP. GAITE. Yes, Mr. Speaker. Nakuha rin namin iyong impormasyon na iyon pero hindi nakatulong iyong ginawa ng PNP doon sa pagpapakulong na I had a firsthand experience, doon sa ating mga driver ng jeep, iyong “PISTON 6” diyan sa Caloocan na kung saan anim sa kanila ay hinuli hindi dahil sa ginawa nilang mapayapang protesta, kundi dahil pinatigil ang kanilang pagpapasada. Bunga nito, iyong anim ay mahigit isang linggo, dinala sa kulungan sa Caloocan at sa kasamaang palad, dalawa sa kanila ang nagkaroon ng COVID. Ang isa rito’y mahigit 70 anyos na – at buti na lang at hindi naging seryoso ang kaniyang sakit na COVID – at ang pinakaposibilidad ng kaniyang pagkahawa ay mismo sa loob ng kulungan. Dahil ayon mismo sa jail guards na nakausap namin, mayroon nang nag-positive doon sa loob ng kulungan ng Caloocan City Jail noong sila ay dalhin sa naturang lugar.

Mr. Speaker, ano ang datos ng bilang ng mga PDLs na nakakulong pa rin sa mga pasilidad ng BJMP nang higit pa sa dapat na maximum na penalty ng pagkakulong na maaaring ipataw sa kanila? Meaning, Mr. Speaker, lagpas na doon sa maximum na penalty na batay doon sa kasong isinampa sa kanila. Mayroon ho bang datos ang BJMP patungkol dito, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, Ginoong colleague, sa ngayon po ay dahan-dahan na pong nawawala na dahil sa paralegal po ng ahensiya ng BJMP. Kapag wala naman pong nagfa-file ng kaso, pinapakawalan na po ang mga nakakulong po doon.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker, pero ang tanong ko lang ...

REP. JALOSJOS. Iyan po ang tinatawag na mga "overstaying" po.

REP. GAITE. Opo, iyon po. Ang tanong ng Kinatawag ito, kung ilan pa ang nakakulong na mga PDLs na lagpas na doon sa maximum penalty ng imprisonment at nananatili pa rin sa kulungan? May datos po ba ang BJMP, Mr. Speaker?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, one-minute suspension.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

It was 1:11 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 1:12 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

REP. GAITE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, puwede po bang masagot iyong katanungan hinggil sa kung ilan pa ang nakakulong sa mga pasilidad ng BJMP na higit pa sa dapat na maximum penalty na imprisonment na ipapataw dapat sa kanila, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Dahil po sa paralegal efforts natin, naiwasan na natin na tumagal pa ang mga preso nang higit sa kanilang dapat itagal. Ang total po na paralegal natin na napalaya po natin, ang releases natin sa buong Pilipinas ay 28,860 po.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, hindi pa rin nasasagot iyong tanong ko. Ilan po ba ang nakakulong pa rin sa mga pasilidad ng BJMP nang higit pa sa dapat na maximum na penalty of imprisonment na maaaring ipataw sa kanila?

REP. JALOSJOS. Wala na po dahil sa sistema, paralegal system, po ngayon na binabantayan po na ang overstaying po ay mapalaya na. Iyon po iyong katumbas ng pinalaya natin na 28,860 po.

REP. GAITE. Hihingiin po namin iyong datos hinggil sa nabanggit para ma-validate natin doon sa aktuwal na mga PDLs na lumabis doon sa kanilang maximum penalty of imprisonment. Puwede ho bang mahingi iyan, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Pakiulit po ang katanungan.

REP. GAITE. Puwede ho bang makuha iyong istatistika o datos ng mga binabanggit na napalaya para ma-validate po iyong sitwasyon na sinasabing wala na daw nananatili sa kulungan na labis na doon sa maximum penalty of imprisonment na maaaring ipataw sa kanila?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ginoong Speaker, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong kasama, ito po ba iyong mga overstaying?

REP. GAITE. Opo.

REP. JALOSJOS. Itong binabanggit ko? Puwede po, puwede naming ibigay. Ready po ang BJMP na magbigay ng datos para sa inyo.

REP. GAITE. Kasi sinasabi ninyo po, wala na po pero iyong term na sinabi ninyong "overstaying" indicates that they have overstayed.

REP. JALOSJOS. Ngayon lang po kasi dahil po sa sistema ng paralegal, na tinutukan po ngayon ng BJMP, ayaw na nilang sumobra sa araw o mag-overstay pa kaya pinalaya na po ng BJMP po, kaya po umabot ng 28,000.

REP. GAITE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Parang hindi klaro iyong sitwasyon na nabanggit dahil the term itself, when you say “overstay,” nanatili nang labis doon sa itinatakda ng penalty. Nevertheless, ano ho ba ang mga dahilan bakit nasasabi minsan na nagkakaroon ng ganyan ngang sitwasyon na, actually, you used the term “overstaying”? Bakit ho ba nag-overstay in the first place?

REP. JALOSJOS. Legally po, Mr. Speaker, Ginoong kasama sa Kongreso, isa po sa rason is wala na pong interes sa kaso, natural death na po ng case, kaya hindi na po umandar. Kaya ang paralegal po ang nagsasabi sa korte na i-dismiss na lang at palayain na po ang mga presong ito dahil wala na pong interesadong magtuloy ng kaso sa kanila.

REP. GAITE. Wala na pong interes iyong nagsampa ng kaso para i-pursue iyong kanilang reklamo. Tama po, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Tama po.

REP. GAITE. Kung gayon, talagang dapat may internal guidelines pa rin ang BJMP kung paano mafa-facilitate ito and at the same time ma-decongest iyong ating mga kulungan. Patungkol naman sa kalagayang pangkalusugan ng ating mga BJMP, ilan ho ang medical doctors na currently employed sa BJMP sa kabuuan?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang ating medical doctors ay 14 po.

REP. GAITE. Fourteen for how many – ilan po ang kulungan ng BJMP?

REP. JALOSJOS. Four hundred seventy po under the BJMP po.

REP. GAITE. So, 14 for 400 – hindi ho ba napakalayo ng bilang ng doctors to – and we are talking about the number of facilities. Hindi pa natin pinag-uusapan iyong ratio ng doctor sa PDLs. Tama po, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Tama po, sadyang mababa po ang number of doctors. Kaya nga

po nag-i-invite pa po tayo ng mga doktor sa kasalukuyan na gustong tumulong at pumasok sa serbisyo po sa BJMP.

REP. GAITE. Ilan po ba dapat ang idadagdag na medical doctors and other health workers sa BJMP, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Pakiulit po ulit ang katanungan.

REP. GAITE. Ilan pa po ba ang idadagdag na medical doctors at ibang health workers sa BJMP para matugunan iyong health requirements ng BJMP?

REP. JALOSJOS. Lima hanggang 10 po.

REP. GAITE. Lima hanggang 10 for 400 facilities, for 1,000 – sorry, 130,000 prisoners. Hindi ho kaya sobrang – in terms of ratio ay hindi iyan sasapat, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na kasama, talaga pong kulang na kulang po ang doktor, pero sinasamahan po naman natin ng nurses na 1,092 po para ma-augment. Pero po sa aming ano ay kulang pa rin. Kahit na magdagdag pa tayo ng 10 ay malayo pa rin talaga po ang ratio ng mga preso at ng mga doktor. Hirap po kasi maghanap ng doktor ang BJMP dahil po sa salary grade na puwede nating ibigay sa isang doktor sa panggobyernong sweldo.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po doon sa kasagutan.

Isang concern ito dahil nga po – lalo na sa panahon ng COVID, tiyak na mas nangangailangan sila ng health services at tugon sa mga iba’t ibang suliranin pang bunga nito. Sa kasalukuyan, ilan ho ba sa datos ng BJMP ang kabuuang namatay na mga, una, ilan ang nahawa at ikalawa, ilan na po ang namatay na under the custody of the BJMP sa panahon ng COVID kung may datos po ang ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal na kasama, ang total na namatay ng COVID po is 20 po under sa BJMP.

REP. GAITE. At sa nahawa, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, 1,429 po.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po doon sa datos. Kaya po naitanong ng Kinatawang ito iyong kalagayang medikal at health sa ating mga overly congested na mga preso dahil hindi katakata na ganyan kataas ang bilang ng infections at pati na rin ang pagkamatay. Hindi pa siguro kasama diyan iyong bilang ng namatay hindi dahil sa COVID kung hindi sa iba pang sakit, Mr. Speaker. Tama po ba ako, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Tama po kayo.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po.

Ayon sa huling report ng inyong ahensiya, nasa 200 pa lang na isolation centers ang naitayo sa halos nabanggit ninyong 400-plus jail facilities. Ilan na ngayon ang isolation centers? Ito'y, as I understand, para sa COVID patients. Lahat ba'y may medical personnel para matugunan ang mga pangangailangan ng mga PDLs na infected, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Maliban sa mga selda ng BJMP, mayroon na po talagang isolation po doon na maliliit. Mayroon po tayong regional—sa NCR po, sa Quezon City Jail-LCC; sa Region III, San Fernando City Jail-LCC; sa Region VI, Talisay City Jail-LCC; Region VII, Cebu City Jail-LCC; at Mandaue City Jail-LCC; sa Region IX, Zamboanga City Jail-LCC; and Region X, Cagayan de Oro City Jail-LCC.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Ang tanong kasi po kung 468 ang jail facilities, hindi ho ba dapat ang ratio is 1:1, isang isolation center for every jail or depende sa laki noong isolation center? Kaya lumalabas po kung kino-confirm ninyo ito, less than half of our jail facilities have isolation centers. Tama po, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang datos po is lahat po ng BJMP jail ay may nakalaan po talaga dapat, 'no, unless super congested po at medyo highly infected na po ang jail. Ang ano po ng

BJMP, mayroon po dapat talagang isolation, may mga isolation na ano sila na jail...

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat.

REP. JALOSJOS. ... o kuwarto, hindi lang po dahil sa COVID, dahil po sa iba pa pong mga sakit noong una pa. So, ang problema lang po e minsan po sa isang jail po, sa isang lugar ng BJMP, medyo madami po ang nahahawa kaya po parang nawawala na po ang isolation center.

REP. GAITE. Maraming salamat po, Mr. Sponsor, sa sagot.

REP. JALOSJOS. Pero na-manage naman natin kasi out of 1,429, ang recovered po natin is 1,184. So, 82.86 percent ang recovery rate po natin.

REP. GAITE. Salamat po, Mr. Speaker. Panghuli po, ano po ba ang datos ngayon ng BJMP doon sa nabanggit na pagpapalaya sa ilalim noong Recognizance Act? Mayroon po ba na napalaya in the first place, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Latest po under R.A. No. 10389 is 1,172; under R.A. No. 6036, it is 175.

REP. GAITE. Mr. Speaker, 175 plus one thousand ...

REP. JALOSJOS. One hundred seventy-two.

REP. GAITE. Relatively, hindi ganoon kalaki iyong bilang, ano, kung kaya't again, this would only result in a small dent in the more than 130,000 currently incarcerated in the BJMP. Ano ho ba iyong mga dahilan kung bakit hindi masyadong nai-implement ang probisyon ng batas na ito para lalong ma-decongest ang mga kulungan sa ating bansa? Ano ho ba ang requirements para maisakatuparan iyong Recognizance Act?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, Ginoong kasama, ang court process po ang nagpapatagal.

REP. GAITE. So, talagang dapat mag—noong huling nagkaroon ng pagkakataon na maimbitahan namin ang mga kinatawan ng BJMP, marami rin silang ilang mungkahi tulad ng, although this will, of course, require legislation, sa ibang bansa, pinahihintulutan nila iyong community service instead of ginagawang direktang kulong ang mga preso, kahit doon sa mga minor na mga offenses lamang. Nagmungkahi sila ng mga iba't ibang paraan para iyong problema ng congestion ay mabigyan din ng kaukulang aksyon. At tama iyong binanggit n'yo kanina, this not only presents a threat to the PDLs but also to the jail guards who, as you have said—hindi ko na pala naitanong iyon. Ilan ho ba ang infected na employees ng BJMP ngayon bunga na nga rin ng COVID-19? Mayroon din po ba tayong datos? At huwag naman sana, mayroon din bang fatalities, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang personnel ng BJMP na nahawa is 738 na po.

REP. GAITE. Ang infected, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang infected—ang gumaling po is 610. Ang active cases po natin ay 124. Ang namatay po na jail guard po natin is apat po.

REP. GAITE. Apat?

REP. JALOSJOS. Apat.

REP. GAITE. Nakikiramay kami doon sa mga kasamahan natin sa BJMP na pumanaw sa COVID-19 sa kanilang pagtatrabaho ngunit talagang alam naman natin, bunga na nga ng congestion na, ito ay malinaw na naka-exacerbate noong sitwasyon, hindi lamang noong ating mga preso kundi pati rin iyong ating mga manggagawa sa loob ng BJMP. Kung kaya't iyon lang po ang aking mga katanungan. Maraming salamat po sa mga kasagutan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Maraming salamat po. Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, the next to interpellate is the Hon. Carlos Isagani Zarate of BAYAN MUNA Party-List.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from the BAYAN MUNA Party-List, Hon. Carlos Isagani Zarate, is recognized for his interpellation.

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat po.

Magandang umaga po sa lahat, Mr. Speaker, at sa ating kagalang-galang na Sponsor, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Magandang umaga po.

REP. ZARATE. ... at sa ating mga kasamahan at mga bisita diyan sa plenary.

Malinaw po ba ang dating ko diyan sa plenary, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Maraming salamat po.

Bago po ako magsimula sa aking mga katanungan, noon pong budget briefing ay mayroon po akong mga katanungan na nangangailangan ng mga datos at dokumento na hindi po naibigay noong panahon ng budget briefing at nangako po ang pamunuan, especially ang PNP and the entire DILG, na ito po ay ibibigay nila bago dumating tayo sa plenaryo. Pero I have to register it for the record na hanggang ngayon po ay hindi pa ho natin natatanggap iyon, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. JALOSJOS. Naipadala po natin sa House of Representatives, October 1, 2020. Hindi po sa opisina ninyo pero po sa House of Representatives through Chairman Eric Go Yap of the Committee on Appropriations po.

REP. ZARATE. Well, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, malinaw po ang commitment noon na magpapadala sa House of Representatives at sa Kinatawang ito dahil gagamitin po ng Kinatawang ito ang mga datos na iyon para

po sa ating gagawing debate sa plenaryo, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Kaya kung kahapon lang po ipinadala iyan, October 1, ay napakahaba ng panahon na ibinigay natin sa PNP at iyan po ang isang problema ngayon at naabutan na tayo ng umaga ngayon ay wala man lang effort, especially from the PNP, na ipadala itong mga datos na ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo, nagpunta po ang PNP no'ng September 18 sa opisina po ng ating Chairman ng Appropriations Committee, Eric Go Yap, at nag-furnish po ng copy, para sa inyong opisina, na-receive po ng House of Representatives noong October 1, 2020.

REP. ZARATE. Well, at any rate, Mr. Speaker, I have to register my disappointment and hindi ho natin natanggap iyon. At any rate, mayroon ho bang extra copy ang PNP ng nasabing report na atin pong hinihingi, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang nating kasamahan sa Kongreso, puwede pong pakiulit dahil garbled po ang...

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po. Ang sinasabi ko po, mayroon po bang extra copy na dala ang PNP as of now, habang nag-uusap po tayo ngayon?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mayroon po, hawak ko po ngayon.

REP. ZARATE. Well, mangyari po na ibigay ang kopyang iyan dahil iyan po ay atin ding magiging basehan sa mga susunod pa pong mga engagement natin, lalong-lalo na at tuloy-tuloy naman ang mga usaping ito pagkatapos ng plenary debate. Maaari po bang magbigay ng kopya, halimbawa po, sa ating kasamahan na nandiyan ngayon sa plenaryo, kay Kagalang-galang na Ferdinand Gaito o sa ating Deputy Minority Leader na si Kagalang-galang na Kit Belmonte, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, aming kasamahan, opo, mag-iiwan po kami ng kopya na hinihingi ninyo po.

REP. ZARATE. Well, punta na po ako doon within my interpellation po. Kanina po nabanggit na rin ng ating mga kasamahan ito at gusto ko lang ilagay din sa record iyon pong mga pagkakalat ng mga fake news and I can recall that during the budget briefing, General Cascolan committed, made the explicit commitment na all of these will be investigated and in fact maglalabas ng guidelines, at sa katumayan ay tatanggalin ito. Just for the information of the leadership of the PNP and the DILG for that matter, I just accessed one Facebook account of the First Abra Provincial Mobile Force Company. Ngayon lang po, in-access ko po iyan dahil para po mapatunayan natin na hindi ho sinunod ang mga—kung mayroon mang guidelines o mayroon mang kautusan na inilabas ang liderato ng PNP ay hindi ho sinusunod iyan ng Kagawaran ng PNP. At ito ngang sa First Abra Provincial Mobile Force Company ay ang naka-post po doon ay ganoon pa rin, mga fake news at ang atin pong—I take exception dito po dahil hindi na lang po ito sa aking personal, na apektado po ng fake news ang Kinatawang ito. Halal po tayo ng bayan at naiintindihan po natin iyan, pero ang hindi po natin mapapalampas, Ginoong Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, ay isinasama po ang mga pamilya ng mga Kinatawan, ang mga pribadong mga mamamayan. Can we get—this is now the consideration sa plenary ng budget ng PNP, ano po bang gagawin ng PNP dito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasama, nag-final warning na po ang ating Chief PNP at isa na po ang na-file-lan at marami na pong susunod na fa-file-lan po ng administrative cases po.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, certainly, we expect not just a warning, final warning. Kaya po pinangalanan ito, the First Abra Provincial Mobile Force Company na, this was posted actually July 5 pa. So, kung talagang nakikinig po sila sa pronouncement ng kanilang Chief at sinusundan nila itong budget deliberation dahil budget nila ito ay nalaman nila na mayroong ganoong kautusan. This was posted July 5 at 8:19 a.m. by one Facebook account, but ang Abra First Mobile Force Company ay

pinost po niya ito, ni-repost niya three days ago. So, from one site, it was reposted by the First Abra Provincial Mobile Force Company. So, if you can check that out, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, and this Representation expects a report on that matter kung ano na po ang nangyari.

Now, moving to my other questions and interpellation, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, during the budget presentation, I did inquire on the statistics, doon po sa conduct ng ating campaign, campaign ng pulis against illegal drugs. May we be informed, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, habang nag-uusap ho tayo ngayon, ano po ang pinaka-latest na istatistika ng PNP as far as those suspected drug personalities who were killed during anti-drug operations are concerned?

REP. JALOSJOS. The record po of those who died during police operations, September 15, 2019 to March 16, 2020, a total of 438 po.

REP. ZARATE. From September – what period Mr. Sponsor? March to September?

REP. JALOSJOS. September 15, 2019 to March 16, 2020, 438; March 17, 2020 to September 16, 2020, may karagdagan po, additional 448.

REP. ZARATE. Gusto ko pong linawin iyan, ano, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, dahil noon pa man ay sinabi na ng PNP na iyong mga personalities, persons who died during anti-drug operations ay umabot na sa mahigit 5,000. Bakit po mukhang lumiit yata ngayon? Are you saying that itong 438 na binanggit ninyo, high-value personalities lang ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker? Ganoon po ba ang pagkakalatag ninyo?

REP. JALOSJOS. Iyon po iyong period covered po ng report.

REP. ZARATE. Okay. Again, lilinawin ko po. Ang itinatatanong ko po na istatistika o numero ay mula po noong June 30, 2016 hanggang sa kasalukuyan na nag-uusap po tayo ngayon dito sa plenaryo. Ano na po ang bilang ng mga personalidad o mga

mamamayan natin na napaslang sa panahon ng anti-drug operations, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Actual po na datos po ng PNP, July 1, 2016 to August 22, 2020, ang total po is 5,857.

REP. ZARATE. So, 5,857, salamat po. Kasi po mayroon ho akong nabasang isang report na sinabi ng PNP na umabot na ito sa 7,000. Puwede po bang linawin ano ang pagkakaiba nito kung bakit mayroon pong discrepancy doon sa isang report na aking nabasa at ngayon po sa sinabi ninyo na 5,857, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasama sa Kongreso, the 7,000 was the initial report during actual investigation po and evaluation. Ang totoo lang po is nagdoble-doble lang po iyong datos sa iba kaya naging 7,000, pero after evaluation po, 5,857 po ang accounted po na namatay during police operation.

REP. ZARATE. Thank you po. Salamat po doon sa sagot ninyo, kasi iyong nabasa ko nga, 7,884 na ang nasa tala ng PNP base po doon sa Directorate for Operations Report na sinasabi, so mayroon pong mahigit 2,000 na sinasabi ninyong double entry or – ano po ang nangyari dito sa 2,000 na ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang iba po ay double entry, same incident na found twice.

REP. ZARATE. Hindi naman po double dead, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Iyong iba po hindi drug-related.

REP. ZARATE. Ah, sige, hindi drug-related. So ito pong – sige po, I will take that.

Ito pong sinasabi ninyong 5,857 na official figure, ito po lahat ay namatay during operations. Ano po ang kadahilanan? Bakit po sila napaslang during operations?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasama, nanlaban po noong during operations po.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, iyon po naman talaga ang official na rason diyan, nanlaban itong mga ito, 5,857. By the way, ilan naman din po iyong mga kinonsidera ng PNP na napaslang din na related sa drugs, iyong tinatawag po nating o kino-consider ng PNP na “death under investigation,” Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, “but related to drugs”?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ito na po iyon. Iyong kaninang binanggit ko po na “died during police operation.” Iyon ba po ang gusto nating itanong?

REP. ZARATE. Mayroon pong pagkakaiba. Iyong 5,000 po ay iyon ang namatay sa panahon ng police operations but mayroon pong kino-consider ang pulis na mga drug-related din but these are considered death or namatay under investigation dahil ito iyong mga ginagawa ng sinasabi nilang mga riding-in-tandem or mga vigilantes? Mayroon ho ba kayong mga istatistika patungkol po dito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasama, hindi na po natin puwedeng ma-verify pa ngayon or magkaroon ng final na listing dahil po viné-verify pa po ang mga kaso kung totoo ba pong drug-related or not at kung sino po ang perpetrators.

REP. ZARATE. But be that as it may, mayroon na po bang istatistika ang — siyempre, these are considered crimes even if these are not related directly to drugs but dapat ho mayroon tayong ganyan. But ilan ho ba iyong mga napaslang na ang mga perpetrators po e iyong mga sinasabi nilang mga riding-in-tandem or mga vigilantes? Mayroon po bang ganoong istatistika ang PNP, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasama, ibibigay na lang po namin ang report ng datos na iyan as soon as possible po dahil right now po, wala po kaming report.

REP. ZARATE. Well, thank you. Sige po, para po sa dahilang ano po tayo sa oras, ang sunod ko pong katanungan, balikan ko lang iyong binanggit ninyo kanina na 5,857 na mga nanlaban. So ang una ko pong tanong patungkol diyan, base po sa manual mismo ng PNP, sa panahon po, during operations, police operations, na mayroon pong napaslang or mayroong namatay, base po sa manual ng PNP, kailangang mag-conduct po ng inquest proceedings. So ang tanong ko po rito, out of the 5,857 na mga personalities na napaslang po during police operations, how many inquest proceedings were conducted by the police as against those PNP personnel who were involved in the operations, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. PNP personnel po?

REP. ZARATE. Well, hindi po ba itong 5,857 ay napaslang sa panahon ng police operations. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Tama po kayo, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZARATE. Tama po. At base po sa manual ng PNP, kung mayroon pong napapaslang, mayroong namatay sa panahon ng police operations ay dapat nagkakaroon po ng inquest proceedings para po malaman kung totoo nga bang sila ay namatay, may pagsisiyasat na ginagawa ang mga piskalya kung ito nga, kung totoo ngang sila ay napaslang sa panahon ng operation at ito ay legitimate operation. Ginawa po ba ng PNP iyan? At kung ginawa nila sa kasong ito na 5,857, ilan po ang proceedings or inquest proceedings na ginawa po? Iyon po ang katanungan ko, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo, ginawa po ng ahensiyang may hawak sa PNP, under PNP. Yes, ang final listing po ay isasama na rin po namin sa mga isa-submit sa opisina n’yo po.

REP. ZARATE. Ilan po ba, kung natatandaan ng ating mga opisyal na nasa plenaryo po ngayon, kung maaalala nila, ilang

inquest proceedings po ang ginawa ng PNP out of these 5,857 deaths as a result of these police operations?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, one-minute suspension.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

It was 1:46 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 1:48 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker at iginagalang nating kasamahan, lahat po ito ay motu proprio cases po, pero may kasunduan po under ICAD na i-publish in November lahat po ng kaso arising sa mga death, sa mga drug operations po.

REP. ZARATE. Well, thank you. We will welcome that and I hope the PNP will also furnish this Representation as well as the Committee, iyong sinasabi nilang mga cases dito po sa 5,857 deaths na ito. Ang kasunod ko pong tanong and, in relation to that, dahil sinabi po ninyo na ito lahat ay napaslang sila sa panahon ng operations, ibig pong sabihin, sabi po ninyo nanlaban sila, e mayroon po silang mga dalang mga armas, tama po ba iyon, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Tama po iyon, kaya po nanlaban po, kaya po nagkaroon ng encounter.

REP. ZARATE. Yes. And dahil po sila ay nanlaban, nagkaroon ng encounter, armado po sila, mayroon pong na-recover na mga armas ang PNP. Is that correct, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear

colleague, tama po kayo, mayroon pong mga na-recover na mga firearms.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po at iyan po ang isa nga po sa aking hinihingi na datos o data na mag-furnish ang PNP sa ating Komite at sa Representasyong ito noong imbentaryo noong mga armas na na-recover ng PNP dito sa 5,857 na mga personalities na napaslang during police operations, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. Mayroon po bang imbentaryo ang PNP, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo, magbibigay po as soon as ma-clear po sa mga korte po ang mga firearms because some are ongoing cases pa po.

REP. ZARATE. Well, paano po magkaroon ng ongoing cases kung napatay na po ito, napaslang na po itong mga 5,857 na personalities na ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker? Sino po ang sinampahan nila ng kaso kung napaslang na itong 5,857 na ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, medyo pakiulit nga po dahil medyo garbled na po dumating sa amin po ang ...

REP. ZARATE. Okay. Uulitin ko po, naririnig na po ba ako?

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo.

REP. ZARATE. Yes. I am just surprised na kaya wala pang inventory ngayon ay nasa korte pa. Kung napaslang po itong 5,857 personalities na ito, sino pa po ang sinampahan nila ng kaso kung napaslang na ang mga personalities na ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Hindi naman lahat po ng engkuwentro ay lahat po namamatay, mayroon pong iba na nahuhuli kaya po may ongoing cases po at ang isa sa mga ebidensya rito is ang weapon na gamit ng drug suspect.

REP. ZARATE. Well, I will accept that for

now, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, but again, I expect, ine-expect po natin – naririnig po ba ako, Mr. Sponsor? Mr. Sponsor.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang nating kasama, makakaasa po kayo na maisasama ang listahan po ng mga firearms sa hinihingi ninyo.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po. I will accept that for now, pero sana po ay mas maagang maipabigay sa atin iyan. So, ano na lang po, related pa rin diyan at ito na iyong last point ko sa usapin ng campaign against drugs. Sinabi po kanina na may mga high-value – nagshi-shift ang operations ng PNP at ito rin actually, ang sinabi rin ng PDEA, ganito rin, na ang operations ngayon are directed at high-value targets.

Sinabi po doon sa isang nabasa ko na report na mayroong 10,500 high-value targets ang mga law enforcement agencies natin, both the PNP and PDEA, but so far, out of that high-value targets of 10,500, other statistics say 10,308 so far ang nahuhuli pa lang po diyan or the so-called neutralized ay nasa 2,600 or barely 25 percent of that number. Maitanong ko lang po sa PNP, is this correct statistics at kung magkaganoon po, bakit kung identified na iyong high-value targets na iyan ay hindi pa rin ho sila nahuhuli? Bakit 25 percent lang po, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. With the 10,000 high-value targets, the PNP has to look into it pa po; 10,000 mismo po is accurate enough to get the percentage po.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, and in fact, my question is, if these personalities were already identified, 10,500, bakit ho napakaliit noong percentage or 25 percent ang nahuhuli pa lamang? Kung sila ay identified na ay bakit hindi ho natin nahuhuli at least 50 percent or 60 percent of these high-value targets, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker? No wonder na napakalaking problema pa rin ng droga ngayon dahil itong sinasabi nating mga high-value targets already identified by our law enforcement of both the PNP and PDEA, pero nakakapag-operate pa rin po sila. So, iyon po

ang gusto kong malinawan, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, dear colleague, ang high-value targets po natin is mahirap ho talaga. Kaya medyo mababa po ang nahuhuli dahil po mahirap, dahil halos hindi na po sila humahawak ng mga droga. Ang humahawak po ay ang barangay street-level po. Pero kapag nahuli naman po, malaki naman po. Katulad po ng ah – kasi kakaumpisa pa lang po nito, ng direktiba ng PNP under sa bagong Chief PNP na subukan nang isama na pala ang high-value targets sa mga prayoridad. Sa 448 na operations po ha, drug operations, ang katumbas na droga ay 1.5 million-plus na gramo, kontra noon sa 438 na halos pareho lang ang operations, ang nakuha lang is 868,000 grams po. So doon po ang diperensya. Mahirap po talagang makuha ang high-value targets dahil po maingat po sila, at pangalawa po, kakaumpisa lang natin sa ating pagtutok sa high-value targets po.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po. Gusto ko nang tuldukan iyong aking mga katanungan diyan, ‘no, but it is very unfortunate that after more than 5,000, almost 6,000 officially killed in anti-drug operations ay ngayon lang na-realize ng PNP na iyong matagal nang sinasabi ng maraming sektor na puro ang napapaslang dito iyong mga maliliit, mga mahihirap, karamihan ay mahihirap. Dapat tutukan kung saan ba talaga iyong source ng droga at ito iyong mga high-value targets, at hindi na sana nagresulta sa ganitong napakaraming napaslang. Naging madugo po ang kampanya laban sa droga. And to say that it is unfortunate, is very light pa nga, in fact, nakakapanggalit dahil it took more than four years bago nakita kung paanong dapat pala ay tutukan ng mga law enforcement natin ang pag-neutralize or ang pagsugpo nag pinagmumulan ng mga droga.

So, now to my last point in the interpellation, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. I already inquired also about dito, ‘no, during sa budget briefing but ang Representasyon na ito ay hindi ho satisfied doon sa naging kasagutan noong ating PNP. I am referring doon ho sa mga imbestigasyon na ginawa po sa mga political

killings and I mentioned four just this year na political killings. Una, iyong pagpaslang kay Jory Porquia ng Iloilo City, who was the coordinator ng BAYAN MUNA sa Iloilo City. Napakaaktibo po niya, involved siya sa feeding operations sa Iloilo during the lockdown at siya po ay pinaslang. But prior to that, siya din po ay subject to intense vilification and terrorist-tagging sa Iloilo. Siya po ay pinaslang noong April. Pangalawa na pinaslang ay ang Secretary General ng urban poor group na Kadamay, si Mr. Carlito Badion. At ito po, sinabi ko during budget briefing, siya po ay in-abduct doon sa Leyte at noong makita ang kaniyang bangkay, itinapon na lang sa tabing daan at sinunog pa, at hanggang ngayon ay wala ho kaming narinig na resulta ng masusing imbestigasyon na ginawa dito. Pangatlo, iyong pagpaslang kay Mr. Randall Echanis, at ang pang-apat, iyong pagpaslang kay Ms. Zara Alvarez doon sa Bacolod City nitong Agosto rin, na halos ilang mga araw or linggo lang pagkatapos mapaslang si Mr. Randall Echanis. So, ano po ba ang maibibigay na ulat ng PNP tungkol dito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker at ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Isang minuto na lang ho ang natitira.

REP. JALOSJOS. ... mahal nating kasamahan, the PNP will dig into those cases that you mentioned. We will write a formal report on the said cases that, ah ...

REP. ZARATE. Pasensiya na po pero iyon din po ang binanggit na sagot sa akin noong mag-budget presentation and we expect a development on those cases, Mr. Sponsor, at least for now. Kung gaano po tayo kabilis magresponde doon ho sa panghuhuli ng kahit na violation lamang ng quarantine or health protocol violation, huling-huli kaagad ang marami, pero dito po, bakit po napakabagal ng pag-usad noong imbestigasyon ng ating PNP, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker. At meron bang naitalagang mga task force tungkol dito na magkokonsentra sa pag-iimbestiga sa mga high-profile political killings na ito, Mr. Sponsor, Mr. Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasama, kasama pala ito sa mga itinanong ninyo at meron pong report na ibibigay po, kasama po rin ngayon na maibibigay natin sa mga kasamahan natin dito.

Okay, the date was September 18, submitted through Rep. Eric Go Yap, Chairman ng Committee on Appropriations, pertaining to your queries during the Department of the Interior and Local Government budget hearing for Fiscal Year 2021, September 10, 2020, regarding the following cases po: 1. case of Jose Reynaldo Porquia y Castillo, 53 years old; 2. case of Carlito Badion y Paroma, 52 years old; 3. case of Randall Anacleto Echanis y Barber, 70 years old; and 4. case of Zara Alvarez y Ribotan. May report po siya na kasama po noong ipinasa po sa ating Chairman of Committee on Appropriations noong October 1. Isasama na rin po natin doon sa hinihingi ninyo po noong una.

REP. ZARATE. Salamat po.

Sige na lang po, bilang panghuli, dahil wala na ho akong oras.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Time expired, time expired na po tayo.

REP. ZARATE. Ang hinihinging report na iyan ay isang substantial report at hindi ho gaya noong nabanggit during budget briefing na sinasabi lang diyan ay tinitingnan iyong mga anggulo, at sana po ay pagtuunan din ng pansin dahil ito po ay malinaw na sila po ay mga biktima ng extrajudicial killings as opposed to other killings. Prior to their deaths, bago po sila napaslang, sabi ko nga po, sila ay biktima ng matinding red-tagging, terrorist-tagging at iyan po ang pinakamasaklap, pinakamasama, nakakapanggalit na epekto ng terrorist-tagging na ginagawa rin ng mga kagawad ng PNP. Kaya sina-cite po natin iyong mga social media postings dahil meron pong matinding epekto itong mga ganitong mga gawain na walang basehan, na hindi lang ang masampahan ka ng gawa-gawang kaso, ang pinakamasaklap po ay ikaw, kayo po ay mapapaslang. So, ...

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Marami pong salamat. Time expired na po tayo.

REP. ZARATE. Yes, po, I am just wrapping up, Mr. Speaker.

So, iyon lang po ang ating panawagan diyan at ine-expect po natin iyong mga report nating hinihingi ay atin pong matatanggap sa Lunes while we continue considering their budget for 2021. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Sponsor. Maraming salamat sa mga resource persons natin from the PNP and DILG at maraming salamat din, Mr. Speaker. Magandang umaga pong muli sa ating lahat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Salamat po. Magandang umaga din po. Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, the next House Member to interpellate is the Hon. Eufemia “Ka Femia” Cullamat of BAYAN MUNA Party-List.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from BAYAN MUNA Party-List, Hon. Eufemia “Ka Femia” Cullamat, is recognized.

REP. CULLAMAT. Maraming salamat, Ginoong Speaker, at magandang umaga sa ating lahat at sa ating mga kagalang-galang na mga resource persons na nanggaling sa PNP at saka sa DILG.

Muli, magandang umaga sa ating lahat.

Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, ang tanong ko po ay hinggil po ito sa budget na nakasaad sa Local Government Support Fund ng LGU, na P12 billion ang nakalaang budget para sa financial assistance para sa mga LGU. Tama po ba, kagalang-galang na Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Tama naman po.

REP. CULLAMAT. Hello, naririnig ba ako sa floor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasama, tama po kayo, P12 billion po.

REP. CULLAMAT. Okay. P12 billion para sa financial assistance sa LGU, habang P16 billion naman ng P19 billion na budget ng NTF-ELCAC ang nakalaan para sa Barangay Development Program. Tama po ba, Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasama, opo, tama po kayo.

REP. CULLAMAT. Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, hindi ba pareho lamang ang layunin ng mga pondong ito? Bakit pa kailangan ng P16 billion na budget mula sa NTF-ELCAC, Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang bagong programa sa P16 billion na Barangay Development Program, ito po ang mga projects na ibinibigay po natin sa mga barangay para sa programang ELCAC po ng ating Pangulo.

REP. CULLAMAT. Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, kung titingnan natin sa Special Provision, nakalagay na ang pondo mula sa NTF-ELCAC para sa Barangay Development Program ay maaaring gamitin sa farm-to-market roads, for school buildings, water sanitation systems, health stations, electrification, agricultural, livelihood, and technical-vocational training project, and assistance to indigent individual or family in any of the following forms of assistance: medical, burial, transportation, food, cash-for-work, and educational. Ngunit hindi ba tungkulin ng ibang ahensiya ng pamahalaan ang mga nakalagay dito? Hindi ba mayroong budget na rin na nakalaan para sa LGU at tulong pinansyal na P12 billion mula sa local government unit fund, kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang nating kasama sa House, ang budget na inilaan para dito ay para sa mga maliliit na barangay, sa outskirts ng mga bawat LGU na hindi napapansin dahil maliit lang ang mga

botante at malayo talaga. Kaya po nakita po ng ating pamunuan, ng ating Pangulo, na napapabayaan, kaya po nagkakarason po sila na sumali sa rebelyon, kaya ang tawag dito is “ELCAC,” to end communist rebels. Kaya po ang layunin po nito is, dahil nakalimutan sila ng local government dahil nga hindi sila vote-rich, ay bibigyan natin ng pondo, tutok, ang kanilang mga maliliit na barangay kahit na maliit lang ang botante para naman umabot sa kanila ang basic services ng gobyerno, para wala nang rason humawak ng baril o mag-revolt ang mga tao o mamamayan dito.

REP. CULLAMAT. Kagalang-galang na Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, redundant o hindi naman kailangan ng pondo na P16 billion mula sa NTF-ELCAC dahil kung susuriin ang mga maaaring paggamitan ng Barangay Development Program ay tungkulin ito ng mga iba’t ibang ahensiya ng pamahalaan, gaya ng DepEd, DSWD, DOH at iba pa. Maaari pang maging sanhi ng mas malalang korapsyon ang pondo ng NTF-ELCAC na hindi naman malinaw kung paano magagamit. Dagdag pa rito, baka ito ay maging posibilidad, ano, ng mga fake surrender batay na sa karanasan po, pag-harass o abuso ng mamamayan upang makuha ang clearance ng NTF-ELCAC para sa P20 million kada barangay.

Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, hinggil naman din sa fake news, bilyon-bilyon ang hininging pondo para sa mga kampanya ng DILG sa pagpapa-surrender ng mga ‘di umano’y NPA. May P19 billion sa NTF-ELCAC at may P99 million para sa E-CLIP. Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, ilan ang tinatayang bilang ng NPA, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, minamahal nating — can you repeat the question?

REP. CULLAMAT. Bilyon-bilyon ang hininging pondo para sa mga kampanya ng DILG sa pagpapa-surrender ng mga diumano’y NPA, may P19 billion sa NTF-ELCAC at may P9 million para sa E-CLIP. Ilan ang tinatayang bilang ng NPA, ilan ang nag-surrender noong 2019, at ilan na

NPA ang surrenderees mula 2016 hanggang 2020, Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleague, ang total po natin is 4,625 surrenderees, 2,882 po ay galing sa Militia ng Bayan at 1,743 ay galing sa regular NPA po.

REP. CULLAMAT. Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, lahat ba sila na nabanggit ay talagang mga armado dahil sa mga report ng nakaraang taon, kasama sa bilang ang mga diumano’y supporter? Ilan dito ang mga armadong rebelde at ilan ang diumano’y supporter, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, kagalang-galang na Speaker?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na kasama sa House, ang regular na rebelde po ay 1,743.

REP. CULLAMAT. Ginoong Speaker, 1,700...

REP. JALOSJOS. ...43 po.

REP. CULLAMAT. ...43, at ilan naman iyong sinasabi diumanong supporters?

REP. JALOSJOS. Ang Militia ng Bayan po is 2,882.

REP. CULLAMAT. Ah, 2,882 — Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, noong February, ayon kay dating AFP Chief Año, may 3,700 na NPA, pagkatapos ng tatlong araw, noong February 7, 2017, sinabi naman ni Secretary Lorenzana, inamin ng DND na dumami sa 5,000 ang NPA. Noong Enero 2018, sa simula ng taon, sinabi ni Armed Forces of the Philippine Chief General Rey Guerrero na nasa 3,700 ang NPA. Bago matapos ang taon, noong December 2018, ayon kay Col. Noel Detoyato ng AFP, may 11,000 na NPA at supporters ang sumuko.

Ngayon, sinabi na 2,808 ang Militia ng Bayan at 1,743 ang regular na NPA. Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, patuloy nating pinopondohan ang mga programang andito na tila hindi naman magkakatumaga

ang mga numero. Sa mga sumurender, ilan ang nakatanggap ng assistance sa ilalim ng mga programa para sa mga surrenderees mula 2016? Lahat ba ay nakatanggap? Magkano ang nagastos para sa assistance sa mga surrenderee mula 2016, Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasamahan sa House, mayroon po tayong 4,353 na immediate assistance po na tig-P15,000. Mayroon din po tayong 2,665 livelihood assistance na tig-P50,000 po per surrenderee. Mayroon po tayong 962 firearms remuneration po. Mayroon po tayong 3,629 reintegration assistance worth P21,000 per surrenderee.

REP. CULLAMAT. Ilan bang indibidwal ito, kagalang-galang na Sponsor? May 2,000 livelihood, 962 na ...

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, 2,662 po sa livelihood assistance na tig-P50,000; 962 firearms remuneration; at mayroong 4,653 na immediate assistance po na tig-P15,000 po.

REP. CULLAMAT. Ginoong Sponsor, ilang indibidwal lahat mula 2016 hanggang sa kasalukuyan?

REP. JALOSJOS. Pakiulit po ang katanungan, medyo garbled po at huli ko na lang po napakinggan—o dumating na maliwanag.

REP. CULLAMAT. Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, milyon-milyon ang inilalaan sa E-CLIP sa mga nakaraang taon at ngayon, humingi ulit ng P99 milyon, ngunit sa aktuwal, ang programang ito ay nagtutulak ng puwersahang pagpapa-surrender sa mga inosenteng mga magsasaka at katutubo para lang makuha ang milyon-milyong pondo na hindi naman umaabot sa mga dapat ay benepisyaryo. Libo-libo ang inire-report na surrenderees, ngunit iilan lang ang nakatatanggap ng assistance. At katunayan nito, kagalang-galang na Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, mayroon po tayong nakausap na bahagi nitong nag-surrender na wala daw

silang natanggap. Ibig sabihin, ang mga sinasabi ng mga nagsi-surrender ay hindi lahat nakatanggap ng ipinangakong ayuda.

Sa komunidad namin mismo, Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, napakaraming inosenteng sibilyan ang puwersahang pina-surrender at madalas ay wala talagang natanggap. Saan po napunta ang mga pondo? Napakabulnerable ng pondong ito sa korapsyon. Kung ganito lang naman ang nangyari sa daan-daang milyong pera ng taumbayan, mas mainam na ilagay na lang ang pondong ito sa mga serbisyong pangkalusugan at ayuda. Malinaw pa na makikinabang ang mga taumbayan lalo na sa hinaharap, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, kagalang-galang na Speaker, hindi pa natin alam kung kailan tayo makakaiwas dito sa COVID-19.

Ang inaasahan po ng Kinatawang ito, na ang pondo na ilalaan natin sa 2021 na national budget ay sana mapunta doon sa mga batayang pangangailangan ng mga mamamayan tulad ng pagtugon na ayuda para sa mga biktima ng COVID-19, free mass testings at contact tracing para sa ating mga kababayan na nabiktima ng COVID-19. Ginoong Speaker, kagalang-galang na Sponsor, wala na po akong ibang tanong. Maraming salamat sa pagbibigay ng pagkakataong makapagbahagi at magandang umaga sa ating lahat.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Maraming salamat po, Kagalang-galang na Cullamat.

Majority Leader.

REP. TADURAN. Mr. Speaker, may we recognize the Hon. Arlene D. Brosas of GABRIELA Party-List, our last but not the least interpellator for today.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The Representative from GABRIELA Party-List, Hon. Arlene Brosas, is recognized.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Kagalang-galang na Arlene Brosas, okay ka na ba?

REP. BROSAS. Okay na po, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Bawal ang mapuyat sa iyo.

REP. BROSAS. Opo, opo.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Kailangang magpalakas ka.

REP. BROSAS. Opo.

Okay na, Mr. Speaker. Hindi lang natin mapalampas iyong interpellation para dito sa DILG. Alam ninyo naman po kung paano ko himayin at alamin kung ano ang nilalaman ng DILG budget.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Sige po, tapusin na po natin at nang makapagpahinga na kayo at baka kayo ay hindi maka-recover nang maganda.

REP. BROSAS. Okay.

Salamat, Mr. Speaker. Huwag ka pong mag-alala, kaya ko po iyan.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Salamat po.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, ang mga katanungan ko po ay kaugnay sa—actually, naitanong ko na po ito last time pero gusto po nating malinawan pa doon sa Fabel Pineda case.

Mr. Speaker, matapos po magtanong ng Representasyong ito sa DILG budget deliberations sa committee kaugnay po sa status ng kasong isinampa in relation to Fabel Pineda, sinabi po sa press conference ni PNP Chief Cascolan na hindi raw dismissed ang administrative charges. Batay din sa case update na natanggap namin mula kay Police Brigadier General Alessandro Abella, ongoing pa ang proceedings hinggil sa administrative charges, subalit hindi nabanggit kung ano ang status ng acts of lasciviousness case laban kay PSSg Marawi Torda. Para po mas klaro, baka puwedeng isa-isahin iyong kaso, iyong case status.

Unang-una po, iyong admin charges, sino-sino pong pulis ang sinampahan, PNP-

IAS po ba ang nag-file? Pangalawa, acts of lasciviousness, ano po ang status nito? Rape case, ano po ang status nito at saan nakasampa? Murder case, ano pong status nito at saan nakasampa, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Sa kaso po ni Ramos, na-dismiss po, 'no, for conduct unbecoming, for immorality, and for having sexual intercourse aside from his wife. He filed a motion for reconsideration which is being deliberated pa po. The status of the criminal case of rape and murder is still with the DOJ-Manila, which was jointly filed by IMEG and Ilocos Sur PPO. We are waiting for the conduct of the preliminary investigation and subsequent issuance of a warrant of arrest.

As for Torda, on the Fabel Pineda case, the acts of lasciviousness case was dismissed due to a lack of substantial evidence because the complaint-affidavit was unsigned before she was killed. According to lawyers from the RIAS and the case investigator, considering that it was not signed, it cannot be used in any proceedings. This is the reason why we filed an admin case for neglect of duty against the WCPC personnel who took cognizance of the case. With regard naman po sa—nevertheless, Torda and Ramos are still facing several admin cases such as breach of discipline, conduct unbecoming of a police officer, including the admin case for the murder of Fabel Pineda being investigated by the IAS crime—under Attorney Alfegar Triambulo.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, linawin po natin. Si PSSg Torda na sinasabing nanggahasa sa biktima ay wala pong kaso sa ngayon except for the administrative cases, saka iyong nakahain sa kaniya. Tama po ba, facing administrative cases lang ngayon? Wala pong sanction sa kaniya ngayon, so malaya po siya?

REP. JALOSJOS. Si Randy Ramos po ay may rape case number na po, 2060086; murder case po, Marawi Torda, 2060094. Subject personnel were directed to submit their counter affidavits and the case are pending a resolution at the DOJ po.

REP. BROSAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

Inaalam po natin itong mga cases na ito kasi apparently, lumalabas nga po sa inyong sinasabi ngayon na malaya pa at wala pa talaga, 'no, hindi pa – dahil ongoing pa lang iyong case, hindi pa o wala pang sanction both kay PSSg Torda at PSSg Ramos. Iyong kay PSSg Ramos, except for na-dismiss po siya at nag-go on iyong kaniyang administrative case, ano po, 'no, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Ginoong Sponsor, sobrang glaring po ng kaso na ito ni Fabel Pineda sa pang-aabuso at pagpaslang ng mga miyembro mismo ng kapulisan sa kababaihan sa panahon ng COVID-19. Napakahalaga po na mahatulan at maparusahan ang mga pulis na sangkot dito. As far as we can remember, wala pa nga pong mga nasentensiyahan pero ito nga, at least nalaman natin iyong case na ito, mayroon tayong pagsisimulan. Nakatutok po kami dito, ang GABRIELA Women's Party, para sa kasong ito para mabigyan ng hustisya ang biktima at hindi po namin titigilan, lalong-lalo na ang PNP at lokal na awtoridad, sa kasong ito para matiyak nga iyong katarungan para kay Fabel Pineda.

Now, my next question, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ay tungkol sa NTF-ELCAC. Under the proposed 2021 Budget, nasa P19.1 billion po ang kabuuang budget ng NTF-ELCAC. Ngayon, may line item po na budget under the DILG and other agencies, pero gusto po nating malaman – kasi noong nakaraang hearing po, nag-request kami sa DILG na magbigay ng report kaugnay sa paggastos ng pondo sa mga programang ito, kabilang ang programa ng PNP na End Local Communist Armed Conflict dahil for next year, the program will continue to receive P1.008 billion, same as its budget for this year. Ngayon, may maibibigay na bang report ang DILG kaugnay dito? Ang sinabi lang po ni Secretary Año last time ay para sa operations ng PNP, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasama, nag-submit po ang DILG noong September 17, through Committee on Appropriations Chairman Eric Yap, copy furnished po si Rep. Arlene D. Brosas,

regarding po sa breakdown po ng ELCAC fund na P1,084,,433,000.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, wala pa pong natatanggap ang Kinatawang ito kaugnay sa report na iyan. Maaari pong i-follow up siguro sa Committee ng Appropriations.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, I will go on with my question. Lumalabas po kasi – actually, nahihiwagaan po kami dito sa P19 billion na ito e kasi, in fact, malaki iyong budget na ito kaysa sa pinagsamang budget ng Department of Trade and Industry at Department of Tourism. Ang Department of Trade and Industry nga po ay P5.34 billion at ang Department of Tourism mayroon lamang P3.84 billion, pero ang NTF-ELCAC, may P19 billion. So, lumalabas po mula sa kabuuang P19 billion, napakaliit ng naka-line item sa DILG at maging sa iba pang ahensiya. Ang P16.44 billion ay nasa porma po ng Special Purpose Fund. Tsinek po natin iyong GAB at tiningnan po natin, lump sum pa rin siya. In short, may menu man pero hindi naman identified iyong mga barangays na paglalagakan nitong sinasabi natin na P16.44 billion na LGSF. Now, can the Sponsor confirm if the DILG is the one issuing circulars and guidelines for LGSF in the past at may say ba ang DILG kaugnay sa P16.44 billion Barangay Development Program na kino-consider na part ng LGSF, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor?

REP. JALOSJOS. Tama po iyon, pero po ang P16 billion po ay hindi po nakalagay sa DILG funds po. Ito po ay nasa loob ng LGSF po. Hindi po ang DILG po. DBM po ay may hawak, not DILG.

REP. BROSAS. Linawin ninyo po, ano po ang magiging role ng DILG kaugnay dito?

REP. JALOSJOS. Isa lang po siya sa task force that will identify po ang mga barangays na makakatanggap or kasali sa requirements – may requirements na makakatanggap ng project, bilang sa pondong ito po.

REP. BROSAS. So, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, they are the ones who will identify iyong mga barangay? Tama po ba, iyon ang sinasabi ninyo?

REP. JALOSJOS. Kasama na po sa task force. Ang task force po ay ang local government, ang DILG, ang AFP, ang lahat ng ahensiya po, kasama po sa task force na ito para po ma-identify ang mga barangay na infested po ng mga rebelde.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, may malaking hiwaga sa amin ito e, kung paanong iyong task force ay may pribilehiyo na magkaroon ng line items sa iba't ibang ahensiya habang may Special Purpose Fund pa. Daig pa nito iyong Office of the Vice President e at ilang key agencies at mga legislative districts in terms of budget for next year. Lumalabas, mga P20 million, ano, iyong budget for – mga ipapamigay dito, ipapamahagi dito. Wala po akong ibang choice kundi humingi ng clarification dito sa DILG, sa NTF-ELCAC budget dahil DILG ang naglalabas ng guidelines hinggil sa Local Government Support Fund, bukod sa si Secretary Año po ay miyembro ng NTF-ELCAC. Wala rin po sa budget deliberation schedule ang pagdepensa nitong NTF-ELCAC sa kaniyang multi-billion na budget dahil hindi nga klaro kung anong entidad mayroon dito. Kaya gusto po nating itanong sa Sponsor, Mr. Speaker, kung ano po iyong naging basehan nito? Mayroon po bang batas, enabling law, bilang legal basis ng Executive – ng ano na ito, ng NTF-ELCAC na ito?

REP. JALOSJOS. E.O. No. 70 po.

REP. BROSAS. Executive Order No. 70. It is an Executive Order, the enabling law?

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. JALOSJOS. May I ask for a one-minute suspension, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

It was 2:33 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 2:35 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, mahal nating kasamahan sa Kongreso, ang batayan po na ginamit po ng E.O. No. 70, ang ginamit pa pong clause is, “maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty, and property, and promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy,” from Article 2 po of the 1987 Constitution.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, Constitution po iyang sinasabi ninyo, sina-cite ninyo. Ang itinatanong ko po ay kung may enabling law tayo na pinagbasehan nito.

REP. JALOSJOS. There is no enabling law needed because it is a constitutional provision and it is within the powers and mandate of the President.

REP. BROSAS. Kasi dapat may legal basis po kahit ang creation ng Executive Order No. 70, ano po. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, gusto ko pong tanungin sa inyo ang itinanong ko rin sa NSC at sa NICA. Mayroon po bang National Peace Framework na siya dapat naglalaman ng prinsipyo, plano at programa kaugnay sa operasyon ng NTF-ELCAC. May kopya po ba ang DILG nito?

REP. JALOSJOS. Opo. Mayroon pong National Peace Framework and the DILG can provide the good Congresswoman a copy po.

REP. BROSAS. Nasaan po?

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, paano natin bibigyan ng malaking budget ang NTF-ELCAC kung hindi po natin makikita iyong kopya na ito? Wala po tayong mechanism for audit and accountability hangga't hindi natin ito nakikita. Sa GAB pa lang po kitang-kita natin, wala po ditong mga barangay, listahan ng barangay. Even Secretary Año said na magbibigay siya ng listahan ng mga barangay kung saan po mapupunta iyong mga budget na nandito.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang nating kasama sa House, actually po, naibigay na po sa Chairman, sa Appropriation Committee po, ang listahan ng barangay at mga project niya po noong September 29 pa po.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, bakit hindi po siya inilagay sa NEP kung mayroon ng listahan o sa GAB?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, aalamin po namin sa DBM bakit hindi po niya isinama agad, ipinasa naman po ng DILG or ng ELCAC. Hindi pala DILG, ELCAC po ang nagpasa po ng listahan. Kasi po ang listahan na ito ay ginawa po noong 2016 to 2019. Hindi pa po kasama kasi sa validation po iyong 2020 to 2021. Iyan po ang kasama po. So, matagal na po ang listahan na ito dahil ang namili po ng mga proyekto na dapat sa bawat barangay, ang mga barangay din po, sa halagang P20 million bawat barangay po.

REP. BROSAS. Iyon nga, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor. Kung sila ang pumili at mayroon na palang listahan, bakit hindi ito inilabas o inilagay sa NEP para ma-cross check? Sila po iyong naghain 'di ba?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang na kasama, aalamin po namin as soon as possible po ang rason bakit hindi isinama po sa NEP.

REP. BROSAS. Kahit po ang mga district Representatives natin inilagay kung ano iyong mga menu at ano iyong mga lugar no'ng mga proyekto. At bakit po mae-exempt itong P19 billion ng NTF-ELCAC para doon, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor? Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, bagong opisina ba ito, ang NTF-ELCAC? Saan pong opisina nito? May staffing pattern ho ba ito?

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, it is a coordinating body created by the President with all agencies to end communist rebels in our country po.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, may we request Secretary Año to provide

this Chamber with a copy of the NTF-ELCAC organizational and staffing pattern, and details of their salary levels. Kasi, Mr. Speaker, kung may organizational at staffing pattern ang NTF-ELCAC, bakit hindi ito inilagay sa NEP? Kung separate office siya, new ba siya, bagong office siya? E di dapat mayroon siyang ganon. Halimbawa po, may PS allotment ba ito? Makikita natin iyon doon, hindi ba? At kahit pa po sabihin ninyo, sinasabi ninyo na coordinating body ito, kahit pa sabihin nating convergent at whole-of-nation approach ang prinsipyong pinaiiral dito, malinaw po dapat na may staffing pattern ito. Saan po kinukuha iyong pampasuweldo, halimbawa, ng mga NTF-ELCAC executive ninyo, staff ninyo, ganyan po.

REP. JALOSJOS. Mr. Speaker, kagalang-galang nating kasama, sige po magpapasa po kami. Ang secretariat po ng opisina po is sa Office of the President po. Katulad po ng sinabi ko, hindi po under the DILG po ang pondong P16 billion po. Under the DBM po siya, under the NTF-ELCAC. Kaya hindi po ang DILG ang nararapat na magbigay kung hindi ang Office of the President po. Pero bagama't ganon pala, si Secretary Año ay tutulong po para makuha at maibigay sa opisina ninyo po ang hinihingi ninyo pong mga requirements po.

REP. BROSAS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Sponsor, ganon pa man, we are asking questions like these sa DILG because it is a member-agency of the NTF-ELCAC at inaasahan po namin o pine-presume namin na si DILG Secretary Año knows this very well dahil siya po iyong nagsusuporta sa Executive Order No. 70. Kaya, Mr. Speaker, wala pong reason para hindi ito alam at masabi ng DILG. Mr. Speaker, ito ang kakaiba e, very striking sa NTF-ELCAC. Hindi po siya ahensiya, pero lahat ng ahensiya ay sa kaniya. Hindi siya new office, pero may pinapasuweldong Executive Director, may mga staff. It has programs in various agencies including the DILG, yet, it cannot fully submit to us iyong copy ng National Peace Framework.

Ngayon pa lang sinasabi ninyo, mayroon po bang ano niyan, soft copy niyan? The DILG,

in fact, should have furnished us a copy of the peace framework in advance at iyong several line items in support of the NTF-ELCAC. And it regularly issues memo circulars to the LGUs. In fact, inisa-isa nga namin iyong mga circulars e. Mayroon po kayong inilabas ng July 24, 2019 that led to the constitution of society organizations; tapos Guidelines for the Local Government Units noong August 6, 2019; tapos iyong Guidelines on the Implementation of the Retooled Community Support Program; October 11, Declaration to Condemn all Forms of Atrocities and Acts of Violence; November 25 – pinaka-new nga itong June 22, Remedial Measures on the Localization of Executive Order No. 70 and all DILG peace-building initiatives. So, ito po iyong mga ipinalabas na kopya ng mga memo circulars to LGUs to ensure their support and implementation ng EO No. 70. Now, why would we allow billions to be allocated into this task force? Shady po ito without any semblance of checks and balances and accountability. Kaya, Mr. Speaker, yaman din lang na marami pang issues ang ating mga kasamahan at kahilingan, I move to defer the deliberations on the budget of the DILG.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended.

It was 2:44 a.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 2:45 a.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is resumed.

Majority Leader.

REP. ROMUALDO. I move that we suspend the consideration of the proposed budget of the Department of the Interior and Local Government and its attached agencies.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF H.B. NO. 7727

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the consideration of House Bill No. 7727.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). Any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Majority Leader.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that we suspend the session until Monday, October 5, 2020, at ten o'clock in the morning.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Abu). The session is suspended until Monday, October 5, 2020, at ten o'clock in the morning.

It was 2:46 a.m.