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Journal

SESSION NO. 65
Tuesday, February 21, 2017

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

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CALL TO ORDER

At 3:16 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III, called the session to order.

PRAYER

The Body observed a minute of silent prayer.

ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Senate President, the Secretary of the Senate, Atty. Lutgardo B. Barbo, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

Angara, S.	Hontiveros, R.
Aquino, P. B. IV B.	Lacson, P. M.
Binay, M. L. N. S.	Pacquiao, E. M. D.
De Lima, L. M.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Drilon, F. M.	Pimentel III, A. K.
Ejercito, J. V. G.	Sotto III, V. C.
Escudero, F. J. G.	Trillanes IV, A. F.
Gatchalian, W.	Villanueva, J.
Gordon, R. J.	Villar, C. A.
Honasan, G. B.	

With 19 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senators Legarda, Recto and Zubiri arrived after the roll call.

Senator Cayetano was on official mission as indicated in the February 21, 2017 letter of the Senator’s chief of staff.

Senator Poe was on official mission “to attend a meeting with transportation experts and stakeholders in relation to the proposed Traffic and Congestion Crisis Act” as indicated in the February 21, 2017 letter of the Senator’s chief of staff.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journal of Session No. 64 (February 20, 2017) and considered it approved.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary of the Senate read the following



Senate bills and resolutions which the Chair referred to the committees hereunder indicated:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1336, entitled

AN ACT PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF AIRLINE PASSENGERS AND ESTABLISHING THE DUTIES AND LIABILITIES OF AIRLINE CARRIERS

Introduced by Senator Zubiri

To the Committee on Public Services

Senate Bill No. 1337, entitled

AN ACT RIGHTSIZING THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Introduced by Senator Zubiri

To the Committees on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1338, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 84, 86, 88, 89, 90 AND 97 OF TITLE III, CHAPTER I, ESTATE TAX OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Zubiri

To the Committee on Ways and Means

RESOLUTION

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 296, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING MAUNLAD CANNING CORPORATION THE MANUFACTURER OF YOUNG'S TOWN SARDINES FOR WINNING THE INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND BEVERAGE QUALITY AWARD IN MADRID, SPAIN

Introduced by Senator Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay

To the Committee on Rules

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

Senator Sotto acknowledged the presence in the gallery of the following guests:

- Maj. Rene Jensik, Chief of Police, Federal Police of the Justice and Police Department of Geneva, Switzerland, with his wife, Jopet Valeriano Jensik;
- Delegation from the Filipino Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii headed by Ms. Bernadeth Dario Fajardo and Mr. Paul Gaerlan Alimbuyao with Hon. Gina Jamoralin, Consul General of the Philippines to Honolulu;
- Atty. Marvic Van Guillermo, councilor of the municipality of Abad Santos, Davao Occidental;
- Mr. Ben and Tess Manzano;
- Visitors from the University of Batangas, Lipa Campus and the College of Legal Management and Criminology headed by Atty. Ricardo Manalo and Mr. Joseph Reyes; and
- DENR Secretary Gina Lopez.

Senate President Pimentel welcomed the guests to the Senate.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR SOTTO

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Sotto spoke on the series of road accidents since 2013 involving passenger buses.

Senator Sotto recalled that in a privilege speech he delivered on February 10, 2014, he already called the attention of the Body to a number of road accidents happening all over the country. To refresh the Body, he narrated that in that speech, he asked the Senate to particularly look into the following road accidents, all of which, as consistently claimed, were allegedly caused by faulty brakes:

- November 14, 2013 an MGB Transport



Passenger Bus and an Elena Bus line figured in an accident at the EDSA Magallanes Interchange that left six people dead and 33 others injured;

- December 2, 2013, along NLEX Bulacan, a road accident involving a Philippine Rabbit passenger bus and a dump truck that left one person dead and 26 injured;
- December 11, 2013, in Concepcion Uno, Marikina City, a passenger bus and a truck figured in an accident that left four people dead and 14 injured;
- December 16, 2013, along the Bicutan - Taguig City Skyway, a Don Mariano passenger bus and a closed van figured in an accident that left 21 people dead and 20 injured; and
- February 7, 2014, a Florida passenger bus fell into a ravine in Mountain Province, leaving 14 people dead and 32 injured.

Senator Sotto stated that just the previous day, February 20, 2017, a school field trip, the purpose of which was for a medical and survival training as part of the National Service Training Program, turned into a horrific tragedy when at 8:40 in the morning, the tourist bus, Panda Coach Tours, carrying 62 passengers although its manifest reflected 58 passengers only, smashed into an electric post along a curved road in Barangay, Sampaloc, Tanay, leaving at least 15 people killed and 40 college students from the Bestlink College of the Philippines injured.

Senator Sotto disclosed that based on the initial investigation of Rizal Police Director Senior Superintendent Peralta, the driver lost control of the wheel when the bus lost its brakes, and that one of the survivors recalled smelling a burning tire before the accident. He surmised that the student probably does not drive because experienced drivers would know that the smell of a burning tire would indicate that there was something wrong with the vehicle's brakes and not the tires.

He said that as a result of the accident, the LTRFB issued a 30-day preventive suspension against the Panda Coach Tourist and Transport, Inc., while CHED Commissioner Prospero de Vera proposed to put on hold all educational trips in colleges and universities.

Senator Sotto said that in his February 2014 speech, he already asked who should be liable and responsible for the road accidents, and he recalled eliciting answers, even from media, laying the blaming either on the driver, bus owner and operators, or the school officials.

He further recalled that in 2014, he already asked the DOTr to find out who were responsible for issuing certifications of road worthiness to the buses because, to him, it is the people who issued these certificates to these "rolling caskets" that must be made responsible and held accountable.

Thereupon, he moved that the Senate Committee on Public Services conduct an investigation into the accidents and find out from the DOTr what has been done to address the problem which has been happening since three years ago.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Aquino, the session was suspended.

It was 3:27 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:27 p.m., the session was resumed.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Chair referred the speech of Senator Sotto jointly to the Committee on Public Services and to the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture.

MOTION TO CONSIDER PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 289

Senator Sotto moved for the consideration of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 289, entitled

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT TERMINATION OF, OR WITHDRAWAL FROM, TREATIES AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS CONCURRED IN BY THE SENATE SHALL BE VALID AND EFFECTIVE ONLY UPON CONCURRENCE BY THE SENATE.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Gordon, the session was suspended for an all-senators caucus.

It was 3:28 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:57 p.m., the session was resumed.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no

objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of the following day.

It was 4:57 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.


ATTY. LUTGARDO B. BARBO

Atty. Secretary of the Senate

Approved on February 22, 2017