



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
**Senate**  
Pasay City

# Journal

**SESSION NO. 62**

Monday and Wednesday, March 9 and 11, 2020

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

Prepared by the  
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Senate of the Philippines

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**CALL TO ORDER**

At 3:00 p.m., Monday, March 9, 2020, the Senate President, Hon. Vicente C. Sotto III, called the session to order.

**PRAYER**

Sen. Joel Villanueva led the prayer on behalf of President Pro Tempore Recto, to wit:

Heavenly Father, we come before You humbling ourselves, knowing that indeed, without You, we can do nothing. But if You are with us, no one, nothing, and no circumstances here on earth can be against us.

We pray that You cover us all tightly with Your most precious blood that was shed in Calvary and help all of us, especially the Senate, to craft laws and help our people in charting the destiny of our beloved nation.

We praise You, we give You thanks and glory, as we give back to You all the honor and grace.

In Jesus' mighty name, we pray.  
Amen.

**NATIONAL ANTHEM**

The Manila Concert Choir headed by Education Secretary Leonor Briones led the singing of the national anthem and thereafter rendered the song, entitled "*Sabihin Mong Tagumpay ng Iisang Lahi*", a medley arranged by Mr. Joel Navarro.

**MANIFESTATION  
OF SENATOR DRILON**

Senator Drilon commended the Manila Concert Choir for serenading the senators for the day's session. He said that it was the first time in 21 years since he became a senator in 1995 that a Cabinet member in the person of Sec. Leonor Briones of the Department of Education serenaded the Senate.

He narrated that he and Secretary Briones were contemporaries in the University of the Philippines in the mid-1960s, and that she was personally associated with his late cousin, Ed Nathan Drilon, who was a member of a premier singing group organized by Prof. Andrea O. Veneracion, the UP Madrigal Singers.

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## ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Senate President, the Secretary of the Senate, Atty. Myra Marie D. Villarica, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

Angara, S.	Marcos, I. R.
Binay, M. L. N. S.	Pacquiao, E. M. D.
Cayetano, P. S.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Dela Rosa, R. B. M.	Poe, G.
Drilon, F. M.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Gatchalian, W.	Sotto III, V. C.
Go, C. L. T.	Tolentino, F. T. N.
Gordon, R. J.	Villanueva, J.
Hontiveros, R.	Villar, C. A.
Lacson, P. M.	Zubiri, J. M. F.
Lapid, M. L. M.	

With 21 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senators Pimentel and Recto arrived after the roll call.

Senator De Lima was unable to attend the session as she was under detention.

## APPROVAL OF THE JOURNALS

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journals of Session No. 60 (March 3, 2020) and Session No. 61 (March 4, 2020) and considered them approved.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senator Zubiri acknowledged the presence in the gallery of the following guests:

- Mayor Eufemia A. Dacayo of Solano, Nueva Vizcaya;
- Municipal mayors of the Province of Biliran, namely, Mayor Joseph C. Caingcoy of Maripipi, Mayor Rhodessa D. Evita of Caibiran, Mayor Humphrey B. Olimba of Culaba, and Mayor Grace J. Casil of Biliran;
- Municipal mayors of the Province of Agusan del Sur, namely, Mayor William E. Calvez of Trento, Mayor Michael D. Lim of La Paz, Mayor

Solomon T. Rufila of San Francisco, Mayor Jupiter C. Abulog of Rosario, and Blandina Rufila of San Francisco;

- Mayor Carlos O. Cabangal, Jr. of Banate, Iloilo;
- Local officials from Camarines Sur, namely, Mayor Sylvia “Baby” B. Elorde of Bunawan and Vice Mayor Belyne “Belle” B. Prades of Tinambac;
- Mayor Joan P. Abejuela of Dumingag, Zamboanga del Sur; and
- Board Member Errol Conrad B. Dela Cruz, and Board Secretary Alberto Pahayhay of Dinagat Islands.

## PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF SENATOR CAYETANO

Senator Cayetano disclosed that earlier today, the Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Senator Imee Marcos took up Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339 entitled, “Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate Committee to Conduct an Inquiry, In Aid of Legislation, into the Effectivity of the Investment Promotions Agencies and Its Corresponding Incentive Regimes in Generating Revenues, Creating Jobs, and Providing Business Opportunities for the People.”

She pointed out that the Committee on Ways and Means, prior to its submission of Committee Report No. 5 which was already being taken up on the floor on Second Reading, conducted numerous hearings, including a briefing for the legislative staff of senators on the Corporate Income Tax and Incentives Reform Act (CITIRA), which was the Package 2 of the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program. She then questioned why another committee was conducting its own hearing on the effects of CITIRA when the Committee on Ways and Means has already submitted the proposed measure in plenary. Specifically, she invited the attention of the Body to a “whereas” clause in Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339 which pointed to the ineffectivity of CITIRA.

Replying to Senator Cayetano’s inquiry, Senator Marcos explained that the intention of the hearing conducted by the Committee on Economic Affairs was not only focused on CITIRA and that it just happened that CITIRA was part of what the different members and the sectors of the business community were now calling the triple whammy of the Philippine

economy, namely, COVID-19, the abrogation of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), and the potential removal of the Philippines from the United States Generalized System of Preferences (GSP); and the House of Representatives version of the CITIRA. She said that the Committee on Economic Affairs covers a wide range of topics that have anything to do with the economy, and that it was not her intention to disrespect, overlap, or duplicate a hearing but simply to hear those that may suffer cumulative losses in the export and manufacturing sectors, the business process outsourcing (BPO), and other sectors.

Senator Zubiri said that it was unfortunate that there was nothing in Rules of the Senate that guides the committees in the conduct of hearings on particular topics except the rule defining their respective jurisdiction. For instance, he said that under the Rules, the Committee on Economic Affairs has under its jurisdiction "all matters relating to economic planning and programming; planning of domestic and foreign public indebtedness; general economic development; and coordination, regulation diversification of industry and investment." He noted that Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339, unfortunately, was meant to find out the effects of CITIRA on particular industries. However, he stated that as a matter of respect and interparliamentary courtesy among the members of the Body, they usually avoid hearing subject matters that may overlap the jurisdiction of other committees.

Senator Marcos maintained that there has been no overlap because the hearing on the resolution earlier in the day had to do with investment policy which unavoidably led to the discussion of the CITIRA on the side. She noted that it was of the same nature as has been occurring in the hearings of Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs) wherein there were currently three separate and simultaneous investigations in the Committee of Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality; the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations; and the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development. She clarified that the Committee did not tackle taxes but the cumulative impact of taxes on the export and BPO sectors due to the so-called triple whammy which includes the effects of CITIRA which she found to be actually speculative in nature.

But Senator Cayetano pointed out that in the hearing conducted by Senator Marcos, specific

provisions of the CITIRA bill, including the creation of the Fiscal Incentives Review Board (FRIB), the footloose industries, and the sunset provisions, were taken up. She said that the use of POGOs should not have been used by Senator Marcos as an analogy because in the case of the chair of the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development, when he decided to have a hearing, Senator Villanueva discussed with her and, in fact, manifested on the floor that he would not touch on the tax measure since there were already pending bills before the Committee on Ways and Means. She said that as the Majority Leader pointed out, it may not be in the Rules but it has long been an accepted practice of the Body.

She also noted that one of the resource persons of the Committee on Economic Affairs was the director general of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), who is known for her very vocal opposition to the CITIRA Bill and who at some point said she will support but seemed to have opposed it again. She narrated that the PEZA director general was given the platform to speak in the said hearing. She said that Senator Marcos can speak to resource persons and can invite them to her office but she disagreed on having them in a hearing on a matter that was already pending on the floor. She said that it was difficult on her part to be chairing and sponsoring a difficult subject matter which was also the subject of a parallel hearing attended by the same resource persons who have attended the hearings she conducted and who already gave their official statements and then would later turn out to have changed their positions.

At this juncture, Senator Drilon stated that the situation highlighted the need for the Body to be extra careful when referring bills and resolutions. He noted that in the particular case at hand, it was very obvious that two committees were hearing the same subject matter and that it would be entirely possible that the findings on one committee would differ from the findings of the other committee; for instance, the Committee on Economic Affairs may find that there is a need to maintain the incentives, while the Committee on Ways and Means already recommended that certain incentives must be cut. Thus, he emphasized that in the referral of bills and resolutions, they should be conscious of the Rules, in particular the rule which defined the jurisdictions of the committee as well as precedents. He agreed with Senator Cayetano that there cannot be two committee reports on the

same subject on the floor, especially if the findings may, in fact, be different.

Senator Marcos maintained that her committee did not hear the same subject alone, pointing out that the what committee actually discussed were the export promotion of trade and other aspects of the country's economic development that had little or nothing to do with CITIRA. In fact, she said that as the transcript of the hearing would bear her out, the Committee on Economic Affairs spent an extremely large chunk of the hearing dedicated to the COVID-19 effects and the VFA, while the proposed CITIRA was raised by many of the exporters at the very end of the hearing in a very short period. She said that she will be asking Philippine exporters to keep their complaints against some of the specific provisions of the CITIRA out of the hearing and instead focus on those threats that already confront them at present such as the COVID-19 as well as the VFA abrogation.

At this juncture, Senate President Sotto said that according to the Legislative Bills and Index Service, the original intent of the resolution was focused on investment promotions agencies but in the fourth "whereas" clause, the CITIRA was very prominent which was the reason that prompted the chairperson of the Committee on Ways and Means to make an inquiry.

Senator Marcos explained that in economic planning and development, there is a disconnection between encouraging export and CITIRA. She said that she would endeavor to avoid taking up CITIRA and the specific provisions in the next committee hearing.

Commenting on Senator Drilon's advice regarding the referral of bills and resolutions, Senator Zubiri said that it would be more prudent now to instruct the Legislative Bills and Index Service that all resolutions filed be referred to the Committee on Rules first for purposes of studying and determining their proper committee referral, an arrangement that would cause a slight delay but would lessen the friction among the members of the Body regarding committee referrals.

Senate President Sotto suggested that the inquiry of Senator Cayetano, as chairperson of the Committee on Ways and Means, be referred to the Committee on Rules for further study and recommendation. As regards Senator Zubiri's suggestion, he noted, however, that there are simple resolutions that need

not be referred to the Committee on Rules first, but in the case of complex resolutions, they should be referred to the Committee on Rules and the Legislative Bills and Index Service should accordingly be directed to do so.

Also, Senate President Sotto asked what would happen to other scheduled hearing on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339 in Cebu next week.

For his part, Senator Pangilinan said that during his time as Majority Leader in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Congress, all bills and resolutions had to go through the Committee on Rules which, in turn would determine their proper committee referral, taking into consideration the recommendation of the Legislative Bills and Index Service. He said that as Majority Leader and Chairman of the Committee on Rules, there were many instances when he overruled the recommendation of the Legislative Bills and Index Service and instead, he himself recommended what he felt was the proper referral, including referring them first to the Committee on Rules.

Senator Zubiri said that to be fair to both committees, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339, on its face, was referring to the economic impacts of recent developments confronting the country, the reason the Bills and Index Service and the members of the Committee on Rules felt that it should be referred to the Committee on Economic Affairs. He acknowledged that questions on the committee referrals are unavoidable due to the broad responsibilities of many of the committees.

Senate President Sotto asked the Committee on Rules to look into the issue raised by Senator Cayetano: whether a subject matter already being discussed on the floor could still be a subject matter of a hearing of another committee. Senator Zubiri replied that precisely he mentioned the need to observe interparliamentary courtesy among colleagues and to give due respect to topics or issues covered in a bill that is already pending in plenary.

Senator Pangilinan stated that in instances wherein resolutions would cover several subject matters over which some committees would have concurrent jurisdiction, said resolution should be referred to committees with concurrent jurisdiction with qualifications: for instance, in the issue of POGO, the labor aspect of it was referred to the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; as regards

prostitution and women trafficking arising out of POGO, these were referred to the Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality. Thus, in the case of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339, he proposed that the Committee of Economic Affairs tackle the impact of investments and avoid discussing issues related to the CITIRA, which has already been heard by the Committee on Ways and Means.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR MARCOS**

Senator Marcos apologized to Senator Cayetano, saying that it was unfortunate that the scope of economic affairs was so wide that even in the Rules, the definitions and delineations of jurisdiction were unclear. She said that should there be position papers submitted to the committee which have something to do with the CITIRA, she would submit them to the chairperson of the Committee on Ways and Means. In the spirit of Women's Day the previous day, she hoped that Senator Cayetano accepts her personal apology for her failure to personally apprise her of what could occur during the hearing.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI**

Senator Zubiri stated that henceforth, as a matter of policy, change of committee referrals must be a product of consensus between the chairs of the committees involved, especially the chair of the primary committee. He informed the Body that insofar as Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339 (*Effectivity of the Investment Promotions Agencies*) was concerned, he only learned of the issue last Saturday when Senator Cayetano called him and that a hearing had already been set for Monday morning. Had he learned earlier or assuming the hearing was scheduled on Wednesday, he said that he would have asked the staff of Senator Marcos to speak to Senator Cayetano about it. He hoped that the issue would not arise again, and he assured the Body that he would be more discerning in referring measures to committees. He directed the Committee on Rules secretariat to refer the complex resolutions to the Committee on Rules and the simpler resolutions directly to the appropriate committees.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO**

At the outset, Senator Cayetano accepted the apology of Senator Marcos. However, she admitted

that she had difficulty understanding the explanation that the committee covers a wide range of topics because Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339 has at least two "whereas" clauses pertaining specifically to CITIRA, while the other two resolutions were specifically about the CITIRA. She asked how the committee could exclude the concerns on CITIRA in the next hearing when the whole resolution was all about CITIRA.

She then asked for a clear resolution of the issue that she raised because it could happen again.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI**

Senator Zubiri appealed to the chairperson of the Committee on Economic Affairs to postpone the hearing in Cebu scheduled next week until the issue is resolved.

Senator Marcos gave the assurance that the Cebu hearing, if it would be allowed to push through, would avoid touching on CITIRA. She again clarified that the topic was taken cumulatively with the COVID-19, VFA, and all other threats being faced by the country including ASF, Taal volcano eruption, and the need for an emergency stimulus package as recommended by Senator Gatchalian.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR HONTIVEROS**

Senator Hontiveros noted that the hearings on the CITIRA were not at all similar to the hearings on the Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGOs) because the three committees that conducted the hearings, namely, the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resource Development, Women, Children and Family Relations and Gender Equality, and Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations confined themselves to the issues that fell under their respective jurisdictions: the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations heard allegations of the corruption, money laundering and threats to national security; the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development conducted hearings on labor violations and tax evasion; while the Committee on Women, Children and Family Relations and Gender Equality tackled the issue on POGO-related prostitution. She said that what the three committees did was a display of synergy.

## **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA**

Senator Villanueva agreed with Senator Hontiveros that there was indeed a synergy among the committees involved, as he also mentioned the Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship that jointly heard with the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development labor issues related to the POGOs. He disclosed that he, along with Senators Hontiveros and Gordon, had talked about the possibility of their committees jointly looking into the issues regarding the POGO. Thus, he said that it would help if there is constant and open communication among the Members.

## **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR GORDON**

Senator Gordon supposed that there might not have been a chance to determine the primary committee because a topic, like POGO, could be tackled by almost all committees, including the Committee on Foreign Relations, and National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation. He noted that synergy happens when there is respect for one another.

He pointed out that there would be times when there would be a communion of issues; however, when there is none, people who disagree with one committee could express their sentiments on the same issue in a forum handled by a different committee. He believed that there should be some generosity and candor among the committees. He stated that the issue should not have even been taken up in plenary as it could have been resolved privately or with the Committee on Rules. In essence, he said that they should not lose their respect for each other.

## **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO**

Senator Cayetano expressed her gratitude for the mediation efforts of the other Members, but she pointed out that the issue was not about mediation but of clarifying the jurisdiction. She said that she accepted Senator Marcos' apology but the issue on jurisdiction still remains.

Senator Cayetano insisted that the last part of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339 was about an investigation in aid of legislation on the effect of the incentive scheme which was precisely the essence of her committee report. She said that she respects

the prerogative of anyone to interpellate and make statements of support or opposition on the measure, but if another committee conducts a hearing on the same topic, she asked why there would be a need for her to defend the same topic on the floor. As such, she requested that the issue on jurisdiction be resolved so that the committees could move on with their respective work.

Senate President Sotto pointed out that the issue has been referred to the Committee on Rules for proper disposition.

## **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR MARCOS**

Senator Marcos assured the chairperson of the Committee on Ways and Means that she would await the decision of the Majority Leader regarding the issue of jurisdiction. In the meantime, she said that her committee would hold in abeyance any discussion on issues related to CITIRA.

Senator Zubiri noted that the hearing conducted in the morning covered three resolutions on COVID-19, the VFA and CITIRA, and he informed the Body that Senator Marcos had agreed to his request to withhold the discussion on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339 during the scheduled hearing in Cebu. He said that they could continue their hearing and cover the issues on COVID-19 and VFA.

## **CHANGE OF COMMITTEE REFERRAL**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body approved the change of referral of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339 which was originally referred to the Committee on Economic Affairs as the primary committee and the Committee on Ways and Means as the secondary committee, instead, to the Committee on Rules.

## **PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF SENATOR DRILON**

To Senator Drilon's observation that the second "whereas" clause of the resolution referred to the VFA, Senator Zubiri clarified that it was covered by a different resolution.

Senate President Sotto explained that a reading of its "whereas" clauses would show that Proposed Resolution No. 339 was too encompassing. He clarified that the motion of the Majority Leader was

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to recall Proposed Senate Resolution No. 339 from the Committee on Economic Affairs and the Committee on Ways and Means, and to refer it to the Committee on Rules for proper disposition.

Asked by Senator Drilon to which committee Proposed Senate Resolution No. 323 (*Economic Effects of the Abrogation of the Visiting Forces Agreement with the United States of America*) was referred, Senator Zubiri confirmed that it was referred to the Committee on Economic Affairs.

However, Senator Drilon pointed out that the second "whereas" clause specifically referred to the Visiting Forces Agreement which was also being heard, and rightly so pursuant to the Rules of the Senate, by the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Senator Zubiri explained that he signed the resolution not because of the political ramification but due to the economic impact that the abrogation of the VFA may cause, like the possible abrogation of the priority status of the country's export products to the United States, including pineapples and bananas from Bukidnon which has not been tackled by the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Senator Drilon believed that the economic consequences of the VFA termination are a matter that should be consolidated and heard by the Committee on Foreign Relations. He said, however, that he was leaving it to the Committee on Rules to finally rule on the matter.

Senator Zubiri said that if the Minority Leader wanted the Committee on Rules to be strict, then it would no longer be liberal with respect to committee referrals and all legislative measures would be referred to it and should a Member raise jurisdictional issue, the Body would have to take a vote on each committee referral.

That being the case, Senate President Sotto said that henceforth, all resolutions should be referred to the Committee on Rules which, in turn, should decide within the next 24 or 48 hours on the proper committee referral.

#### **MOTION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body approved that all resolutions be referred to the Committee on Rules for review.

#### **PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR ZUBIRI**

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Zubiri called on the Body to seriously consider the threat of COVID-19 to public health. He informed the Body that from three COVID-19 patients a few days ago, the number has risen to 10 patients, or an increase of over 200% in a few days. Thus, he appealed for a stricter quarantine measures and protocols not only for hospitals but also in places and areas visited by patients who have been confirmed to have the virus. He recalled that when the news about a patient broke out, he saw Mayor Zamora inspecting the Greenhills area with only a face mask but no Hazmat gear, followed by several people who are either his staff, who could have actually been in danger of being contaminated.

He said that there was a need to know the protocols in place and the instructions from the DOH on what to do if there is a particular localized transmission in an area. He cited news footages of CNN and BBC showing people in Hazmat suits disinfecting areas already cordoned off of people, areas which were frequented by a suspected patient.

He also mentioned another case of COVID-19 involving an employee of Deloitte Consultancy Firm office at the Bonifacio Global City in Taguig City, who tested positive with the virus. He informed the Body that the building where the company is located is full of restaurants and bars frequented by people all the time; thus, at the very least, the place should have been cordoned off, disinfected and cleaned up. He clarified that while he does not want to create panic among the people, he would not want the country to fall into complacency that initially pervaded countries such as Iran, South Korea and Italy which now have thousands of cases and hundreds of deaths. Italy, according to him, has placed its northern region, including Lombardy, under a total lockdown, affecting 16 million of its people, unparalleled in European history.

He emphasized that the government could not afford a slow, reactive response to COVID-19, as he urged a more proactive approach. He thanked the government for coming out with presidential proclamation declaring a state of public health emergency.

As regards the current school calendar, Senator Zubiri said that there were only two weeks left, and taking note of what other countries like Italy,

Singapore and Japan, did which was to stop their students from going to school to enable the schools to be disinfected. He asked Education Secretary Briones to look into the possibility of ending the school calendar earlier. He recalled that during EDSA 1, when he was still a student, many of the schools at that time just gave a “pass” or “fail” grade since classes were suspended from February throughout March. He said that an early summer vacation would allow the children to stay safe at home and allow the schools to be disinfected and to avoid contamination and spread of the virus.

As regards the matter of DOH testing, Senator Zubiri urged the DOH to make testing kits available at all hospitals. He revealed that he received a text message from his wife who was very concerned about what was going on. He then read the text message from his wife’s friend, to wit: “Hello, my girlfriend works at Net Lima, the same building as Deloitte. She had a dry cough for a week and she went to St. Luke’s BGC to get tested and they would not entertain us. The DOH apparently only allows them to test people with travel histories or confirmed close contacts with infected. God help us all.”

Senator Zubiri stated that as proven by the case of the patient in Greenhills, which was called “localized contamination” because he had no history of travel nor history of meeting anyone who was sick or contaminated, people who are getting sick should undergo testing but sadly, he said, no testing was being done on them. He said that he was, in fact, infuriated when he heard one of the DOH under-secretaries say, “It was not necessary to get tested and do not panic because, if you did not travel or did not get close to any particular COVID-19-positive person, you need not be tested.”

He warned that there may be localized transmissions happening but which were now being reported because of the lack of testing kits. He said that based on what he learned from the day’s earlier hearing, there were only 2,000 testing kits available. He hoped that by declaring a state of public health emergency, the government would be able to buy more testing kits and make them available nationwide.

He said that he would not be surprised if the COVID-19 cases would reach a hundred by the following week and he feared that the RITM, whose 50-bed capacity was already 20% occupied, would not have enough to accommodate them all. Thus, he

called on the DOH to allow more facilities, both private and public, to be prepared and ready for an outbreak. He stressed the need for the DOH to make testing kits available in all hospitals so that anyone with cough or cold could be tested. He believed that his request was not excessive. He said that the government should not be complacent, knowing fully well how the virus has completely terrorized countries like South Korea and Italy and even superpowers such as US with 19 deaths and China, the second-largest economic powerhouse of the world, which has been paralyzed because of COVID-19.

On the matter of social distancing, Senator Zubiri said that aside from washing the hands and not touching the face, another protocol was that of social distancing. He appealed to the Catholic church that some hygienic protocols should be applied or done in churches, noting that in South Korea, COVID-19 cases that were registered involved members of a Christian sect who, during a congregation, sat closely together in a confined area. He said that a similar case happened in Iran where the virus contamination began in a mosque. It was quite obvious, he said, that the virus knows no religion. He said that even the Vatican has cancelled some of its services. He said that as the Lenten Season draws closer, there should be social distancing and proper hygiene protocols like putting rubbing alcohol in every church entrances and reviewing religious practices such as kissing the feet of Christ on the cross.

In closing, he called on the government to be more proactive as he welcomed the declaration of the state of public health emergency. He called on the DOH and the DepEd to undertake to more proactive or even drastic measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

#### **REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Zubiri to the Committee on Health.

#### **REMARKS OF THE CHAIR**

At this point, Senate President Sotto said that earlier, Senators Drilon and Lacson wanted to discuss in caucus some of the issues raised by Senator Zubiri in his privilege speech, while Senator Villar has requested that the Body go on a break to talk about

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some other important matters and to lessen the tension in the Session hall.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR GORDON**

At the outset, Senator Gordon agreed with the observation that Senator Zubiri raised in his privilege speech of Senator Zubiri, particularly his call on the testing kits and the cancellation of classes. But he also raised another matter of urgent concern. He said that anytime somebody is assassinated, he is personally affected because he is reminded of his own father's assassination.

At this point, he called the attention of the Body to the video on screen which showed a man in white who just got into his car and was quickly followed and shot to death by motorcycle-riding assassins who pumped bullets into him and made sure that he was dead. He said that the slain man was a policeman assigned to PNP Chief Archie Gamboa and the crime happened in the premiere city of Makati.

He said that as they rightfully worry about COVID-19, they must equally be worried of rampant killings in the country, as he revealed that from January to December 2019, there were 3,236 civilians killed, including 11 judges and lawyers; 188 government employees; 293 businessmen; 90 police officers; six journalists; and 18 military officers. He said that from January 1 to March 4, 2020, based on the news monitoring of his staff, 66 persons have been killed: 38 civilians, 12 government employees, five police officers, four judges, lawyers and prosecutors, six businessmen, and one other person. He reiterated that the killings have become an epidemic and have been going on for several years, and that there was no more umbrage whether people bring in tremendous amounts of money or whether people are killed as if there is nothing that the country could do about it.

Senator Gordon also mentioned that two weeks earlier, Atty. Frederick Santos was killed in Muntinlupa and prior to that 15 persons were also killed, mostly by perpetrators riding in tandem, and yet nothing has been solved.

Senator Gordon stated that Republic Act No. 11235 or the Motorcycle Crime Prevention Act was intended to make motorcycle plates readable, but he disclosed that when he asked the NBI if the plates were noted down, he was told that they were

hardly visible. He lamented that since the previous year when the law was enacted the LTO has yet to release the plates.

Similar to the COVID-19 issue, Senator Gordon stated that he would want the Body to be as concerned with the situation as well.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATE PRESIDENT SOTTO**

As regards the call of Senator Zubiri for religious groups to observe health protocols relative to COVID-19, Senate President Sotto informed the Body that the television program that he has been associated with for 40 years would no longer allow studio audience to avoid the possible spread of the coronavirus.

On the matter of killings perpetuated by criminals riding-in-tandem, Senate President Sotto believed that it was about time that the Committee on Justice and Human Rights looked for other solutions, like considering the possibility of repealing the law that requires the use of crash helmets because according to Senator Honasan, an avid motorcyclist, helmets do not save lives because the usual cause of death is a broken spine.

Responding thereto, Senator Gordon stated that he would look into the suggestion of the Senate President. He reiterated that the government should make sure that the plate numbers are done and the operation centers of the police and LTO are working because under the law, when a person loses his/her license plate, he/she must report it, otherwise, he/she would be penalized especially if a crime is committed using the said motorcycle bearing the lost plate.

As regards helmets, Senator Gordon said that the Committee could study the possibility of not requiring a helmet in Metro Manila and in certain cities or requiring the plate numbers to be placed on the helmets for identification.

Senator Gordon said that even the van of Kim Chiu, a television star, was not spared by motorcycle-riding gunmen. He said that it is important that people take note of the malady happening, as he lamented that there was something wrong with the government's efforts in handling peace and order.

Moreover, Senator Gordon revealed that there are 18.8 million motorcycles out in the streets, half of

which are not registered, and that the number was still growing. He said that with half of the motorcycles remaining unregistered, the crime rate would still grow. He underscored the need for government to ensure that people are safe from riding-in-tandem monsters who wear crash helmets and are determined to kill their targets.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI**

Senator Zubiri underscored the importance of police visibility. He recalled that during the time of General Dela Rosa as Chief PNP, police visibility was felt in strategic areas where those riding-in-tandem were automatically inspected.

Senator Zubiri believed that the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; and the Justice and Human Rights could look into the possibility of requiring all motorcycles to have RFID for proper identification. He stated that many countries like Singapore have applied the RFID system on all cars and motorcycles for identification purposes and toll collection when entering the Central Business District. He believed that his proposal could be a start as it is not difficult to implement.

Senate President Sotto lauded the suggestion of Senator Zubiri. However, he cautioned that Body to be ready with the complaints from the motorcycle associations.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA**

At the outset, Senator Villanueva commended Senator Gordon for ensuring that the Body was doing its best in addressing matters that concern the public's safety. He described the video that was earlier presented as terrifying and unacceptable. Thus, he urged the Body to see to it that the 11,000 unlicensed motorcycles are registered. He then joined Senator Gordon in condemning the act of cowardice that was shown in the video.

As regards the concern of Senator Zubiri, Senator Villanueva agreed that it was important to increase the number of testing kits. He recalled that during the hearing, it was mentioned that the UP Genome Center was developing a testing kit that could be made available in a week's time. He expressed hope that the government would not miss the opportunity of availing such.

On the matter of suspending classes, Senator Villanueva informed that Body that there would be nine board examinations scheduled in March and April, and that the biggest number of examinees would be on March 29 when about 300,000 would-be teachers are expected to flock 29 testing centers for the LET, and on March 15 when about 250,000 individuals would take the Civil Service Commission examination. He hoped that these upcoming examinations would likewise be suspended.

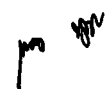
#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR GORDON**

As regards his earlier statement that there were 18.8 million motorcycles and the rest are big bikes, scooters, and the like flooding the streets, he informed the Body that 65% or more than 12 million of the bikes are either delinquent or unregistered. He reiterated that there is failure in enforcement and that, perhaps, there is a racket going on that the Blue Ribbon intends to investigate at the proper time. He said that dealings like pawning of official receipts and certificates of registration or OR/CRs are prevalent especially when an owner is unable to pay a debt.

Senator Gordon also informed the Body that the policeman who was shown in the video was a close aide of General Gamboa, and that a lieutenant from the National Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa was shot two weeks before. He also conveyed the information relayed to him by Senator Pacquiao that there were more killings of the same nature in Mindanao and that they all started there until they propagated to the entire country.

He likewise expressed concern that most of the extrajudicial killings were perpetuated by gunmen riding-in-tandem. He said that while his office has been recording the statistics, it would appear that they have a smaller number than what the PNP has. He added that he would not be surprised at the figures of the PNP. However, he pointed out that the police knew that something must be done about the situation.

Senator Gordon stated that he was informed by Senator Gatchalian that motorcycle riders in Brazil and Colombia put their plate numbers in their vests. He said that the committee would take note of all the suggestions. He supposed that having the vests bear the plate number could also create jobs. He stressed the need to stop the crimes and that the Senate should lead in the effort.



He stated that while the motorcycle community is a very big group and everyone supports it as a form of transportation, it is incumbent upon the Body to protect the masses and to make sure that they are safe. He then thanked Senators Villanueva, Gatchalian, Pacquiao, Zubiri and the other Members for their comments.

On another matter, Senator Gordon informed the Body that the Red Cross was purchasing five negative pressure ambulances and was also requested by the San Lazaro Hospital to provide a ventilator and to bring a patient to RITM. He said that the five negative pressure ambulances would protect the volunteers and drivers from contamination. Moreover, he said that the DOH was requesting airconditioned tents so that patients could be segregated and would not have to go inside the emergency room and that the volunteers are also provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) which is a one-time use and must be destroyed after use.

Senator Gordon stated that everyone must be together in the fight against COVID-19 and riding-in-tandem killers.

Lastly, Senator Gordon said that since many Filipino workers work in cruise ships like the one docked in California, USA, and in Japan, they could be held in quarantine in an island such as the Caballo Island or Corregidor where there are existing barracks. He said that the government could provide for the needed contraptions and facilities so that those who need to be quarantined are completely isolated and could be monitored safely.

**MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI**

As regards his earlier suggestion on the RFID, Senator Zubiri stated that if motorcycles are unregistered, they could be detected once they enter into a particular city and they could motorcycle as unregistered and to order its impounded. He said that a law requiring RFID on motorcycles would be the initiative of the 18<sup>th</sup> Congress, through the committee headed by Senator Dela Rosa, and a legacy bill that would put a stop to the riding-in-tandem killings.

**REFERRAL OF MANIFESTATION TO COMMITTEE**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair referred the manifestation of

Senator Gordon and the related manifestations thereon to the Committee on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs as the primary committee and to the Committee on Justice and Human Rights as the secondary committee.

**APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 640 ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, Senate Bill No. 640, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 4, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF BICOL MEDICAL CENTER FROM FIVE HUNDRED (500) BEDS TO ONE THOUSAND (1,000) BEDS, UPGRADING ITS SERVICE FACILITIES AND PROFESSIONAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES, AUTHORIZING THE INCREASE OF ITS MEDICAL WORKFORCE COMPLEMENT, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8053, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

- |            |            |
|------------|------------|
| Angara     | Lacson     |
| Cayetano   | Pacquiao   |
| Dela Rosa  | Pangilinan |
| Drilon     | Tolentino  |
| Gatchalian | Sotto      |
| Gordon     | Villanueva |
| Hontiveros | Zubiri     |

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 14 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared Senate Bill No. 640 approved on Third Reading.

**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 1477 ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 1477, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 4, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF THE CARAGA REGIONAL HOSPITAL IN BARANGAY WASHINGTON, SURIGAO CITY, SURIGAO DEL NORTE FROM ONE HUNDRED FIFTY (150) TO FIVE HUNDRED (500) BEDS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Angara	Lapid
Binay	Pacquiao
Cayetano	Pangilinan
Dela Rosa	Poe
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Gordon	Sotto
Hontiveros	Villanueva
Lacson	Zubiri

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 18 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 1477 approved on Third Reading.

**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 5871 ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 5871, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 4, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT UPGRADING THE MARIA L. ELEAZAR DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TAGKAWAYAN, PROVINCE OF QUEZON INTO A LEVEL III GENERAL HOSPITAL TO BE KNOWN AS THE MARIA L. ELEAZAR GENERAL HOSPITAL, UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION AND CONTROL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Angara	Pacquiao
Binay	Pangilinan
Cayetano	Poe
Dela Rosa	Recto
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Gordon	Sotto
Hontiveros	Villanueva
Lacson	Villar
Lapid	Zubiri

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 20 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 5871 approved on Third Reading.

**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 1799 ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 1799, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 4, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT UPGRADING THE TALISAY DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN TALISAY CITY, PROVINCE OF CEBU, INTO A MEDICAL CENTER, TO BE KNOWN AS THE CEBU SOUTH MEDICAL CENTER, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7799.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Angara	Pacquiao
Binay	Pangilinan
Cayetano	Poe
Dela Rosa	Recto
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Gordon	Sotto
Hontiveros	Villanueva
Lacson	Villar
Lapid	Zubiri

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 20 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 1799 approved on Third Reading.

**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4961 ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 4961, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 4, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY H-2 IN THE CITY OF DASMARIÑAS, PROVINCE OF CAVITE.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Angara	Pacquiao
Binay	Pangilinan
Cayetano	Poe
Dela Rosa	Recto
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Gordon	Sotto
Hontiveros	Villanueva
Lacson	Villar
Lapid	Zubiri

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 20 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 4961 approved on Third Reading.

**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 2998  
ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 2998, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 4, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT TRANSFERRING THE CAPITAL AND SEAT OF GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL FROM THE CITY OF PASIG, METRO MANILA TO THE CITY OF ANTIPOLO, PROVINCE OF RIZAL.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Angara	Pangilinan
Binay	Poe
Cayetano	Recto
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Gordon	Sotto
Hontiveros	Villanueva
Lacson	Villar
Lapid	Zubiri
Pacquiao	

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 19 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 2998 approved on Third Reading.

**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4583  
ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 4583, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 5, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO BROADCAST ENTERPRISES AND AFFILIATED MEDIA, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8098 TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Angara	Pangilinan
Binay	Poe
Cayetano	Recto
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Gordon	Sotto
Hontiveros	Villanueva
Lacson	Villar
Lapid	Zubiri
Pacquiao	

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 19 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 4583 approved on Third Reading.



**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4584  
ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 4584, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 5, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO CRUSADERS BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC., UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8091, ENTITLED AN ACT GRANTING THE CRUSADERS BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC., A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, ESTABLISH, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS WITHIN THE PHILIPPINES.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Angara	Pangilinan
Binay	Poe
Cayetano	Recto
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Gordon	Sotto
Hontiveros	Villanueva
Lacson	Villar
Lapid	Zubiri
Pacquiao	

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 19 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 4584 approved on Third Reading.

**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 5490  
ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 5490, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 5, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO BICOL BROADCASTING SYSTEMS, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8092. ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING THE BICOL BROADCASTING SYSTEMS, INC. (BBSI), A FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN REGION V."

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Angara	Pangilinan
Binay	Poe
Cayetano	Recto
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Gordon	Sotto
Hontiveros	Villanueva
Lacson	Villar
Lapid	Zubiri
Pacquiao	

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 19 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 5490 approved on Third Reading.

**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4581  
ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 4581, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 5, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO GOLDEN BROADCAST PROFESSIONAL, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8025, ENTITLED AN ACT GRANTING THE GOLDEN BROADCAST PROFESSIONAL, INC., A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE A STATION FOR FM RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING IN THE ISLAND OF MINDANAO, AND EXPANDING ITS COVERAGE TO THE ENTIRE PHILIPPINES.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Angara	Pangilinan
Binay	Poe
Cayetano	Recto
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Gordon	Sotto
Hontiveros	Villanueva
Lacson	Villar
Lapid	Zubiri
Pacquiao	

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 19 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 4581 approved on Third Reading.

**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4582  
ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 4582, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 5, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO GOLD LABEL BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC. UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8087, ENTITLED AN ACT GRANTING TO THE GOLD LABEL BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC., A FRANCHISE TO ESTABLISH, MAINTAIN, AND OPERATE RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN DUMAGUETE CITY AND OTHER AREAS IN THE VISAYAS AND MINDANAO WHERE FREQUENCIES AND/OR CHANNELS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Angara	Pangilinan
Binay	Poe
Cayetano	Recto
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Gordon	Sotto
Hontiveros	Villanueva
Lacson	Villar
Lapid	Zubiri
Pacquiao	

*Against*

None

*ms* *gn*

*Abstention*

None

With 19 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 4582 approved on Third Reading.

**APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4463 ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, House Bill No. 4463, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on March 5, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT EXTENDING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO FIRST UNITED BROADCASTING CORPORATION, PRESENTLY KNOWN AS GLOBAL SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES INC., AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8079, AS AMENDED, ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING THE FIRST UNITED BROADCASTING CORPORATION (FUBC) A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE, AND MAINTAIN FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS ANYWHERE IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

- |            |            |
|------------|------------|
| Angara     | Pangilinan |
| Binay      | Poe        |
| Cayetano   | Recto      |
| Drilon     | Revilla    |
| Gatchalian | Tolentino  |
| Gordon     | Sotto      |
| Hontiveros | Villanueva |
| Lacson     | Villar     |
| Lapid      | Zubiri     |
| Pacquiao   |            |

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 19 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared House Bill No. 4463 approved on Third Reading.

**MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI**

Senator Zubiri informed the Body that the DOH had announced 10 new cases of COVID-19, bringing the total number of cases in the Philippines to 20 as of that day.

Asked by Senate President where the 20 patients were currently admitted, Senator Zubiri replied that he has yet to find out.

Senate President Sotto said that Senator Zubiri's call for a caucus on the matter therefore was very urgent.

However, Senator Zubiri asked that Senator Hontiveros be allowed to deliver a privilege speech to commemorate International Women' Month.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Hontiveros.

**PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR HONTIVEROS**

Availing herself to the privilege hour, Senator Hontiveros delivered the following speech in commemoration of the International Women's Month:

A few days ago, an international survey by the Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) reported some important and shocking global statistics. Nearly 90% of men and women from all over the world hold some bias against women. Furthermore, according to the index, 50% believe that men make better political leaders, over 40% feel that men make better business executives, and 28% feel that it is justified for a man to beat up his wife.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, in 2020.

*Ang diskriminasyon laban sa mga kababaihan ay nakahabi na sa iba't ibang aspeto ng aming buhay. From our earliest memories, we*

are taught and told to negotiate a world that constantly tells us we are not enough. That unless we conform to its exacting standards, we have no value.

It starts innocuously enough: *kapag batang babae, ipinapasuot ng pink, the flouncier, the better. Binibilhan ng doll, o plantsa-plantsahan, o lutu-lutuan. Kung medyo mahilig sa sports, iyong iba ay dini-discourage, baka raw maging "tomboy," o baka magkapeklat ang legs.*

It continues when the little girl becomes an adolescent. Lose the baby fat, she is told. The thinner, the better. The sexier, the better. *Huwag masyadong mahiyain, baka walang manligaw. Dapat demure kumain, baka sabihing matakaw. Huwag masyadong pa-sexy, baka sabihin "easy." Huwag pabibo, baka sabihin bossy.*

All these are a violence of their own—persistent, pernicious, day-to-day structural violence that creates the lens by which a woman views herself and is viewed by the world. This, in a nutshell, is why 90% of women and men hold some form of bias against women; why, along with economic inequality, women stay in toxic relationships; why women are paid less than men for the same jobs; why rape victims are afraid to tell their stories; why misogyny still remains a potent political tool of strongmen all over the world.

But there are things that can be done. Ways that we can fight back. Today, I want to talk about three.

*At this juncture, Senate President Sotto relinquished the Chair to Senate President Pro Tempore Recto.*

*First, our stories matter.*

The stories we tell our children matter. In schools and in homes, we need to tell stories of strong, courageous women. *Ikuwento natin sa ating mga kabataan ang kuwento ni Nazaria Lagos, kilalang Florence Nightingale ng Panay na kumupkop at kumalinga sa mga Katipunero sa kaniyang bahay sa Duenas, Iloilo. O di kaya ang kuwento ni Lorena Barros, aktibista, student leader at manunulat noong panahon ng martial law, tinortyur ng mga puwersa ng pamahalaan habang buntis na naging dahilan ng kaniyang pagkunan bago siya tuluyang pinatay.* Or more recently, we tell them the story of Maria Ressa, journalist and truth-teller, unflinching in the face of various state-sponsored incursions.

Maybe, we also tell the stories of Filipinas who excel in their fields. In the field of science,

there is Reinabelle Reyes, astrophysicist and data scientist, who proved Albert Einstein's theory of relativity correct on a scale larger than our own solar system. *Sino sa atin ang hindi nakaka-kilala kay Hidilyn Diaz, weightlifter and air-woman, and the first Filipino woman to win an Olympic medal of any color?*

Little girls need to be told they can be anything they want to be. To quote Elizabeth Warren, "They can dream big and fight hard."

*Second, the small and invisible things matter.*

Inequality persists because we allow the small things to go unquestioned, and the invisible to stay invisible.

*Pag pumunta tayo ng mall, bakit ang baby changing station nasa ladies' room lamang at wala sa men's room? Dahil ba ang tungkulin ng pagpapalit ng diaper ng sanggol ay automatic na sa nanay na lamang? Is care work automatically women's work? Bakit pagpunta sa toy stores, may girls' toy section and may boys' toy section? At ang mga science sets, mga sports games ay nandoon sa boy's section habang ang mga kulay pink, mga manika, at bahay-bahayan ay nasa girls' toys?*

When little boys roughhouse each other, or hurt other people, we excuse their behavior and say, "Boys will be boys." Girls, we hold to a different standard *kaya walang "girls will be girls," hindi ba?*

*Third, what we tell our boys matters.*

Creating a gender-equal world is not just talking to girls. It is also talking to boys. Dear men, *sa pakikibaka para sa karapatan naming mga kababaihan kasama kayo.* You are part of the struggle for women's rights and gender equality—an important part of the struggle.

To our men, we need you to unlearn "boy's talk"—whether in locker rooms where sexist jokes are exchanged, or in board rooms where big decisions are made. We need you to unlearn the idea that domestic work is only women's work and we need you, today, to not only put that toilet seat down but to change that diaper, wash that dirty plate, sweep that dusty floor, and take paternity leave. Care work should be shared work.

Lastly, we need you—the men we love, the men we choose—to unlearn your sense of ownership over us just because of our relationships with you. This includes the clothes that we put on our bodies and all the other choices we make everyday. We are your partners, and we are your equals.

*ps*

And to all of us, let us raise little boys who do not need to unlearn these things, and who will grow up without the weight of social expectations of what a man should be. As policymakers, we legislators can craft policies that will institutionalize mechanisms towards gender equality. But as parents, as a community, our work is larger. We must come together to raise kind little boys and strong little girls. We must come together to tell women we are worthy; men, you are understood, and everybody of all genders that they are accepted. We must come together to craft a fairer, more gender-equal world for all.

Happy International Women's Month *sa ating lahat! Mabuhay at salamat.*

#### MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO

Senator Cayetano said that she would like to interpellate on the speech of Senator Hontiveros the following day to show support and add examples to the very detailed and interesting points of view that many women take for granted but may be worth enlightening.

Senator Zubiri said that he would refer the speech of Senator Hontiveros to a committee after the interpellation of Senator Cayetano.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the session was suspended.

*It was 4:59 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:59 p.m., the session was resumed with Senate President Sotto presiding.

#### COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 35 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1318

*(Continuation)*

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1318 (Committee Report No. 35), entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10068 OR THE ORGANIC AGRICULTURE ACT OF 2010.

Senator Zubiri stated that the parliamentary status was the period of interpellations.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Villar, sponsor of the measure.

#### MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Senator Zubiri stated that Senator Pimentel and the members of the minority already signified that they would no longer interpellate on the measure. He said that he too would no longer interpellate but that he would only manifest his support for the measure.

*Following is the manifestation of Senator Zubiri:*

It has been a decade since we passed Republic Act No. 10068 or the Organic Agriculture Act and became a law. I was the author and principal sponsor of the law at that time. I believe it is appropriate to amend it now in response to the changing needs of our agriculture sector.

In 2010, organic agriculture was a relatively new agricultural practice and an evolving one, at least here in the Philippines, so there was a need to require independent or third party certification to ensure that supplies meet safety and quality standards before their products are categorically labeled and sold as organically produced. *Ibig po sabihin, ayaw po nating mabola ang publiko ng mga labels of organically grown na hindi naman pala organically produced.* This process would assure our consumers of the quality of the product, and would also allow our organic farmers to enter the international trade and satisfy the growing demand for organic produce in other countries.

But there was a problem in the implementation. As it turns out, it is cumbersome and expensive to acquire this certification. That was not what we had planned from the very beginning. And if you ask me, I think it was lost in the Implementing Rules and Regulations. Rates vary per crop and per inspecting body, and they are pretty much in the same ballpark; applicants have to shell out an application fee of P2,000, plus an inspection fee that goes as high as P5,000 by the day. And to top all of that, there is a certification fee that goes from P20,000 to P25,000. This can hurt the pocket of our farmers, but it is a reasonable enough investment in the long term. Unfortunately, this certification is only valid for 12 months, and so our organic farming practitioners would have to cough up

exorbitant amounts again for the next farming cycles. It makes no sense. And our farmers have a lot to pay—*kapital pa lamang, nababaon na sila sa utang. Napakabigat na, kasama pa itong* third party certification. That is why organic agriculture practitioners have been asking for some leeway in the implementation of this third party certification requirement.

We had feared, even then, that the process would be complicated, rates are exorbitant, and we already raised these concerns with the stockholders then ten years ago. With this bill, we are finally going to be able to streamline the process of certification and make it affordable to our farmers and practitioners through the Participatory Guarantee System. The PGS will address the certification problems that our farmers are having, while still ensuring the organic produce meet safety and quality standards.

Thus, I support my dear chairperson, Sen. Cynthia A. Villar, and ask all our colleagues to support the measure. And I laud our distinguished chairperson for pushing for this.

#### **TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INTERPELLATIONS**

There being no interpellation, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of interpellations.

#### **SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1318**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 51 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1365**

*(Continuation)*

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1365 (Committee Report No. 51), entitled

**AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM IN BASIC EDUCATION FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH, ADULTS, AND CHILDREN IN SPECIAL EXTREME CASES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.**

Senator Zubiri stated that the parliamentary status of the bill was the period of interpellations.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Gatchalian, sponsor of the measure.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR HONTIVEROS**

At this juncture, Senator Hontiveros stated that she would no longer interpellate on the measure and that she would just like to place on record her appreciation for the bill as it finally gives the Alternative Learning System the standing it deserves within the overall education system which encompasses not only formal but the nonformal and informal education.

She also cited the value of the bill as it upholds the right to education and provides pathways to education for out-of-school youth, for adults within the context of lifelong learning and for children in extreme special cases such as those who have suffered the trauma of displacement due to armed conflicts or natural disasters and those who need to find their way back to completing their basic education as the platform for both higher learning and for gainful employment or entrepreneurship later in life.

She likewise expressed her appreciation for the creation of a Bureau of Alternative Education within the Department of Education which would be a permanent and a strategic home within the education sector of the Alternative Learning System.

Senator Gatchalian thanked Senator Hontiveros for her efforts in fighting for the welfare of teenagers and the youth, acknowledging it as one of her most notable advocacies to reduce or eliminate instances of teenage pregnancies in the country, and taking note of studies showing that young girls who become pregnant likely quit school and bear children without formal education; thus, they fall into poverty. He affirmed that the bill, which allows young girls to participate in the Alternative Learning System, would not only enable them to continue their schooling but would also capacitate them to find better jobs, to earn better wages, and to raise their children more capably.

Relative thereto, Senator Gatchalian mentioned Senator Hontiveros' another notable advocacy which aims to reduce or eliminate early marriages in the

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country that lead young girls to quit school; hence, they become vulnerable to poverty. Relative thereto, he believed that the bill is complementary to her advocacies since ALS is another mechanism for the girls to enter education by getting equivalency examination.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO**

At this juncture, Senator Cayetano recalled the assumption that she heard during the committee hearing with Secretary Briones in attendance, that girls would get pregnant and leave school. She believed that while that assumption was true to a certain extent, it was also possible that a lot of girls and boys already belong to homes that do not provide the support they need and do not send them to school. Thus, aside from the good manners bill, she said that what also comes into play is the ALS bill for kids who are already outside of the educational system.

Senator Gatchalian stated that there are about 2.4 million children between ages 5 to 14 who are not in school and are vulnerable to a lot of social ills such early pregnancies. He reiterated that the aim of the bill is to give them a mechanism to go back to school and hopefully, if they pass the equivalency test, could get better jobs to empower their families in the future.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI**

Senator Zubiri expressed his support for the measure that would allow children who were not given the opportunity to finish their basic or high school education to regain knowledge through the Alternative Learning System.

#### **COAUTHORS**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, all Members present were made coauthors of Senate Bill No. 1365.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR GATCHALIAN**

Senator Gatchalian lauded Senator Zubiri for the latter's effort to fight poverty in his home province by expanding the province's education efforts. Saying

that education is truly a weapon to eradicate poverty, he believed that ALS is a good complementary program to Senator Zubiri's fight against poverty in Bukidnon.

Senator Zubiri confirmed that the additional education centers in Bukidnon that were put up and which were funded through his amendments to the 2016 budget contributed to the 21% reduction of poverty incident in the province and he hoped that it would drop even further with the allocation of several other learning centers such as the Alternative Learning System (ALS). He said that he would look forward to the passage of the measure so that the Body could correspondingly amend the budgets to allow more alternative learning classrooms not only in Bukidnon but all throughout Mindanao which has one of highest in terms of poverty incidence.

#### **TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INTERPELLATIONS**

There being no further interpellation, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of interpellations and proceeded to the period of individual amendments, Senate Bill No. 1365 being a substitute bill.

#### **GATCHALIAN AMENDMENTS**

As proposed by Senator Gatchalian, there being no objection, the Body approved the following amendments, one after the other:

##### *Page 3*

- On line 20, replace the phrase "refers to education" with the word IS;
- On line 22, delete the words "early childhood" and the comma (,);

##### *Page 9*

- On line 17, before the acronym "ALS," insert the word EXISTING;
- On the same line, after the acronym "CLS," insert the phrase AND THOSE ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS ACT;
- On line 19, after the period (.), insert a new sentence, to read as follows: GUIDELINES SHALL BE DEVELOPED BY THE BUREAU OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION IN COLLABORATION WITH THE STRANDS OF OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION OF DEPED ON THE USE OF FACILITIES OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR THE DELIVERY OF ALS PROGRAMS;

- On line 22, after the word “adequate,” insert the phrase LEARNING RESOURCES AND;
- On the same line, after the word “facilities,” insert a comma (,);

**Page 13**

- On lines 13 to 14, replace the words “and subsequent General Appropriations Act” with the phrase APPROPRIATIONS OF THE DEPED; and
- On line 14, after the period (.), insert a new sentence, to read as follows: THEREAFTER, THE AMOUNT NECESSARY FOR THE CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT, INCLUDING THE CONSTRUCTION AND ESTABLISHMENTS OF ALS CLCS, SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE ANNUAL GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS**

There being no other individual amendment, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of individual amendments.

**APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 1365 ON SECOND READING**

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, Senate Bill No. 1365 was approved on Second Reading.

**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1365**

Upon motion Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

**SPECIAL ORDER**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 48 on Senate Bill No. 670 from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders.

**COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 48 ON SENATE BILL NO. 670**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading,

Senate Bill No. 670 (Committee Report No. 48), entitled

**AN ACT DECLARING AUGUST 30 OF EVERY YEAR AS NATIONAL PRESS FREEDOM DAY.**

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, with the permission of the Body, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, only the title of the bill was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

The Chair recognized Senator Revilla for the sponsorship.

**SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR REVILLA**

Senator Revilla, chairperson of the Committee on Public Information and Mass Media, stated that freedom of the press broadened the views of the Filipino people, enabling them to engage in fruitful debates and exchange of ideas regarding relevant matters to ensure the effective and lawful governance of public officials.

Thereupon, he presented for plenary consideration Senate Bill No. 670 under Committee Report No. 48, entitled “An Act Declaring August 30 of Every Year as National Press Freedom Day,” which mandates the Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education, and TESDA to organize consciousness-raising activities that would inform and educate the public on the importance of the press, their rights and social responsibilities, and the need to eliminate all forms of violence against them. He said that the measure also directs all government agencies, local government units, and the private sector to organize activities highlighting the significance of press freedom.

*The full text of Senator Revilla's sponsorship speech follows:*

No less than our Constitution, the highest law of the land, assures press freedom when it explicitly provided that “No law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press.” This is rightly so since the freedom of the press has been an essential part of our country's history and an important part of our nationhood.

*Ang mga magiging nating kasamahan na mamamahayag ang araw at gabi na nagtitiyagang bigyan tayo ng sapat na impormasyon*





*at imulat ang ating kamalayan sa mga pang-yayari sa ating lipunan. Kung wala tayong alam at mananatiling mangmang, wala tayong lakas. Kaya mahalaga ang ginagampanang tungkulin ng mga mamamahayag.*

*Dito sa ating bansa, kinikilalang “Father of Journalism” si Marcelo H. del Pilar o mas kilala sa tawag na “Plaridel.” He contributed significantly to the freedom which the press is enjoying now and is endeavoring to enjoy.*

In 1882, Del Pilar founded the newspaper “Diariong Tagalog” to propagate democratic liberal ideas among the farmers and peasants. In 1888, fleeing from clerical prosecution, Marcelo went to Spain, leaving his family behind. And while in Spain, he succeeded Graciano Lopez Jaena as editor of the Filipino reformist periodical “La Solidaridad.”

*Nasa ibayong dagat man si Plaridel, ang abogadong Bulakenyo na masigasig na bumatikos sa naghaharing-uri noon, hindi siya tumigil sa pagsusulat para sa kalayaan ng bansa kahit siya pa ay naghihirap at may sakit. Ginampanan niya ang pagsusulat upang imulat ang kamalayan ng mga Pilipino at maihayag ang tunay na kalagayan ng ating bansa noon. Ginamit din niyang sandata ang kaniyang talento at angking talino upang tumulong sa paghubog ng diwang makabayan at maka-Filipino.*

*Bilang tinitingalang “Ama ng Pamamahayag sa Pilipinas,” isinusulong natin na ideklara ang araw ng kapanganakan ni Plaridel bilang National Press Freedom Day. But more than anything else, this proposed measure is a tribute to and a celebration of the dedication, resilience, professionalism, and patriotism of the long line of Filipino press corps who minister to the needs of the people to be informed.*

*Sa suporta ng bawat isa sa atin na narito ngayon, tiwala ako na mas mapapayabong at mapapalakas natin ang malayang pamamahayag sa bansa.*

## **SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 670**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

## **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR POE**

Acting on the request of Senator Poe, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection,

the manifestation of Senator Poe regarding the National Press Freedom Day bill was deemed inserted into the record.

*The full text of Senator Poe’s manifestation follows:*

Article III, Section 4 of the 1987 Constitution states that “No law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press.” *Nakasaad din sa Article 19 ng Universal Declaration on Human Rights na ang kalayaan sa pamamahayag ay isang napakahalagang karapatang pantao.*

Notwithstanding, we all know of events in our history when freedom of the press in this country was challenged. *Araw-araw ay sinusubok ang kakayanan ng ating media bilang isang demokratikong institusyon.* Even the media watchdog—Reporters without Borders, reported a decline in the ranking of the Philippines in the World Press Freedom Index in 2019.

This is alarming as I believe that media is really the watchdog which keeps all the three branches of government on its toes.

Press freedom is critical to our democratic setup.

On our end, in the Committee on Public Services, every time we pass a broadcast franchise, we uphold press freedom. Not because the loss of one franchise will take away the freedom of the press but because every broadcast franchise—if it sticks to the terms and conditions of its franchise—is an additional platform for timely information and public service announcements.

Precisely because of the constant challenges to press freedom, I believe that we should celebrate and protect this Fourth Estate. Thus, I am in full support of declaring August 30 of every year as National Press Freedom Day. This will serve as a reminder to the public about the importance of the press, their rights and social responsibilities, and the elimination of all forms of violence against them.

## **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR MARCOS**

Senator Marcos requested the Body to issue a resolution, subject to style, expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the impact of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) to the health of the general public and to the country’s economy and to

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urge the national government to release all available funds under the 2020 General Appropriations Act by way of economic inoculation and pump-priming in a thorough-going stimulus package.

Relatively, Senator Zubiri stated that the idea really is to pump-prime the economy because as projected by Senator Recto, the country's economic growth for the first quarter would not lose but would also not improve which is below what the NEDA and the national government expected.

Considering that many industries, such as tourism, airline, manufacturing, and export, suffered because of COVID-19 he believed that the only way to boost the economy is to allow the national government to spend the 2020 budget for structural projects.

#### **ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body adopted, subject to style, the resolution expressing the sense of the Senate to pump-prime the economy to soften the impact of COVID-19 to the health of the general public and to the economy.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI**

Senator Zubiri stated that as agreed upon by the senators during their caucus, the Body would suspend the session until one o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, to help avoid the transmission of COVID-19 virus in the Senate. He said that while there would still be a hearing of the Commission on Appointments on Wednesday morning, the senators involved therein need not come. He also dissuaded the public and the Secretariat staff from entering the Senate premises.

He said that while committees may conduct their scheduled hearings at their own risk, he advised the chairpersons to be very careful especially since the number of COVID-19 patients has doubled overnight. Considering the minimal number of available testing kits and the penchant of some Filipinos to hide their sickness out of stigma, he believed that the number of COVID-19 patients might increase exponentially in the next few days.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR TOLENTINO**

Senator Tolentino stated that without prejudice to

the good intentions of Senator Zubiri to shield the employees from the lingering threat of COVID-19 coronavirus, the Committee on Local Government would proceed with its hearing notwithstanding the risk, as he has already invited a number of resource persons including members of the diplomatic corps to attend the first Bangsamoro oversight hearing the following day.

#### **INQUIRY OF SENATOR DRILON**

Asked by Senator Drilon if the committee staff are required to attend the hearing, Senator Tolentino said that the committee secretariat had been prepared for the hearing for the past two weeks.

Asked why the committee would risk the health of employees, Senator Tolentino reasoned that several local government officials from distant areas have already been invited to attend the hearing.

Senator Zubiri clarified that he called Senator Tolentino to ask him to postpone the hearing pursuant to the requests of Bangsamoro Chief Minister and Vice Chair Iqbal; however, Senator Tolentino insisted on conducting a hearing before the session adjourns.

But Senator Drilon questioned the propriety of putting the Secretariat at risk by requesting them to attend the hearing. He also asked if the public would be allowed to witness the hearing considering that the leaders of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority would bring their staff with them, which number may not be small since they travel by the hundreds.

In reply, Senator Tolentino agreed that the public should be barred from attending hearings; thus, the hearing would just be in the presence of the resource persons.

#### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA**

Senator Villanueva manifested that his committee was supposed to conduct a hearing the next session day but given the very high risk of the coronavirus spread, he said that he would postpone the hearing but would ask the resource persons to work from home so they could submit their position papers.

With the passage of the Telecommuting Law, he said that Senate committees could work anytime

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and could still come up with a report using the position papers submitted to them. He said that he would also attend the hearing of the Commission on Appointments on Wednesday.

Senator Zubiri stated that the hearing of the Commission on Appointments would be limited only to the appointees and people would no longer be allowed to accompany them. He appealed to the colleagues to keep their staff safe from the virus.

At this point, Senator Tolentino said that he would personally consult and seek the guidance of Senate President Sotto as to how the scheduled hearings would proceed the following day.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Senate President Sotto declared the session suspended until one o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, March 11, 2020.

*It was 6:40 p.m.*

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 2:51 p.m., Wednesday, March 11, 2020, the session was resumed with Senate President Vicente C. Sotto III presiding.

**REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

The Secretary of the Senate, read the following matters and the Chair made the corresponding referrals:

**MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Letter from the House of Representatives, informing the Senate that on 3 March 2020, the House of Representatives passed the following House bills, in which it requested the concurrence of the Senate:

House Bill No. 5925, entitled

AN ACT MAKING THE POSITION OF A COOPERATIVES OFFICER MANDATORY IN THE MUNICIPAL, CITY AND PROVINCIAL LEVELS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC

ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991"

**To the Committees on Local Government; and Cooperatives**

House Bill No. 1338, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE SERVICE INCENTIVE LEAVE OF EMPLOYEES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 95 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES

**To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development**

House Bill No. 6228, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING ALL BARANGAYS TO CREATE A REGISTRY OF SKILLED WORKERS

**To the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Local Government**

House Bill No. 6312, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SPORTS SYSTEM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

**To the Committee on Rules**

House Bill No. 6167, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TESDA) TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT CENTER IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TUBOD, PROVINCE OF LANA DEL NORTE, TO BE KNOWN AS THE TUBOD TESDA TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT CENTER, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

**To the Committees on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education; and Finance**

House Bill No. 6216, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TESDA) TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT CENTER IN THE CITY OF ANTIPOLO, PROVINCE OF RIZAL, TO BE KNOWN AS THE ANTIPOLO CITY TESDA TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT CENTER, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

**To the Committees on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education; and Finance**

House Bill No. 6181, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PROFESSIONAL REGULATION COMMISSION (PRC) OFFICE IN THE CITY OF BACOLOD, PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

House Bill No. 6218, entitled

AN ACT RENAMING THE MALITA DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN BARANGAY POBLACION, MUNICIPALITY OF MALITA, PROVINCE OF DAVAO OCCIDENTAL TO MALITA WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S WELLNESS CENTER

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance**

House Bill No. 6227, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A NEW DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICE IN THE THIRD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

**To the Committees on Public Works; and Finance**

and House Bill No. 6255, entitled

AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO ROMEO CABRESTANCE SERVANDO, PRESENTLY KNOWN AS ROLIN BROADCASTING ENTERPRISES, INC., UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8202, ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING ROMEO CABRESTANCE SERVANDO, A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN"

**To the Committee on Public Services**

Letter from the House of Representatives, informing the Senate that on 3 March 2020, the House of Representatives designated Representatives Romulo, Martinez, Duterte, Go, Yap and Castro as conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee, on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 6312, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SPORTS SYSTEM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, and

Senate Bill No. 1086, entitled

AN ACT CREATING AND ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE HIGH SCHOOL FOR SPORTS AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

**To the Committee on Rules**

**BILLS ON FIRST READING**

Senate Bill No. 1394, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING COURTS FROM ISSUING RESTRAINING ORDERS OR PRELIMINARY INJUNCTIONS IN CERTAIN CASES INVOLVING

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**EXTRA-JUDICIAL AND JUDICIAL FORECLOSURE OF REAL ESTATE MORTGAGES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

Introduced by Senator Binay

**To the Committee on Justice and Human Rights**

Senate Bill No. 1395, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING MONETARY COMPENSATION FOR THE LOSS OR DESTRUCTION OF RESIDENTIAL, CULTURAL, COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES, AND OTHER PROPERTIES IN THE MAIN AFFECTED AREA (MAA) AND THE GREATER MARAWI AREA (GMA) DURING THE SIEGE OF 2017, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senators Zubiri, Dela Rosa, Tolentino, Go and Marcos

**To the Committee on Rules**

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Committee Report No. 65, prepared and submitted jointly by the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; and Finance, on Senate Bill No. 1396, with Senators Pangilinan, Recto, Villar and Marcos as authors thereof, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE COCONUT FARMERS AND INDUSTRY TRUST FUND, PROVIDING FOR ITS MANAGEMENT AND UTILIZATION, RECONSTITUTING FOR THE PURPOSE THE PHILIPPINE COCONUT AUTHORITY BOARD, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill Nos. 31, 266, 1052 and 1127.

Sponsor: Senator Villar

**To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

**MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Letter from the House of Representatives, informing the Senate that on 4 March 2020, the House of Representatives ratified the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 5829, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING VALUES EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM BY INCORPORATING "GOOD MANNERS AND RIGHT CONDUCT" AS A SUBJECT IN KINDERGARTEN UP TO THE GRADE 3 LEVEL; and

Senate Bill No. 1224, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING COMPREHENSIVE VALUES EDUCATION IN THE K TO 12 CURRICULUM AS A CORE SUBJECT INCLUDING GOOD MANNERS AND RIGHT CONDUCT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

**To the Archives**

**BILLS ON FIRST READING**

Senate Bill No. 1397, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF MAGSINGAL DISTRICT HOSPITAL, ILOCOS SUR FROM TWENTY-FIVE (25) TO ONE HUNDRED (100) AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1398, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY SAN VICENTE, MUNICIPALITY OF UMINGAN, PROVINCE OF PANGASINAN TO BE KNOWN AS

SAN VICENTE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

**To the Committee on Rules**

Senate Bill No. 1399, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF THE EASTERN PANGASINAN DISTRICT HOSPITAL FROM ONE HUNDRED FIFTY (150) TO TWO HUNDRED FIFTY (250) BEDS, UPGRADING ITS SERVICES AND FACILITIES, AUTHORIZING THE INCREASE OF ITS MEDICAL PERSONNEL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1400, entitled

AN ACT URGING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND EXPORT PROMOTION OF THE MORINGA (*MORINGA OLEIFERA*) LOCALLY KNOWN AS "MALUNG-GAY," AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

**To the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1401, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT 10742 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "SANG-GUNIANG KABATAAN REFORM ACT OF 2015," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

**To the Committees on Youth; Local Government; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1403, entitled

AN ACT RENEWING FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-FIVE (25) YEARS THE FRANCHISE GRANTED TO ABS-CBN BROADCASTING CORPORATION, PRESENTLY KNOWN AS ABS-CBN CORPORATION, UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7966, ENTITLED "AN ACT GRANTING THE ABS-CBN BROADCASTING CORPORATION A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCASTING STATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

**To the Committee on Rules**

Senate Bill No. 1404, entitled

AN ACT FURTHER AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8759, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICE ACT OF 1999, AS AMENDED, TO INCLUDE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE SCOPE OF THE LAW, TO RENAME THE PRESENT PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OFFICE (PESO) INTO THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP OFFICE (PEESO), AND TO ESTABLISH THE BARANGAY EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP OFFICES (BEESO) NATIONWIDE, DEFINING ITS ROLE WITHIN THE EXISTING NETWORK, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

**To the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; Local Government; and Finance**

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**RESOLUTIONS**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 345, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE NOVEL CORONA VIRUS OUTBREAK WITH THE END VIEW OF STRENGTHENING MACROECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS AND PROPOSING ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGES SUPPORTED BY APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

**To the Committee on Economic Affairs**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 346, entitled

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON INITIATIVES OF ENERGY AGENCIES AND STAKEHOLDERS TO ENSURE THE QUALITY, RELIABILITY, SECURITY, AND AFFORDABILITY OF ELECTRIC POWER SUPPLY DURING THE SUMMER SEASON IN ORDER TO AVOID YELLOW AND RED ALERTS LEADING TO POWER OUTAGES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

**To the Committee on Energy**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Committee Report No. 66 prepared and submitted jointly by the Committees on Economic Affairs; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; and Finance, on Senate Bill No. 1402, with Senators Gatchalian and Marcos as authors thereof, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, DEFINING

ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill Nos. 169 and 1256.

Sponsor: Senator Marcos

**To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

Committee Report No. 67, submitted by the Committee on Public Information and Mass Media on Senate Bill No. 448 introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr., entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF WORDS THAT WOULD DENOTE RELIGIOUS, REGIONAL OR ETHNIC AFFILIATION IN PRINT, RADIO, TELEVISION INCLUDING CABLE TELEVISION AND OTHER FORMS OF BROADCAST MEDIA TO REFER TO OR DESCRIBE ANY PERSON SUSPECTED OR CONVICTED OF A CRIME OR UNLAWFUL ACT AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR,

recommending its approval without amendment.

Sponsor: Senator Revilla, Jr.

**To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

Committee Report No. 68, submitted by the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance, on House Bill No. 2444, introduced by Representative Villafuerte (A.), *et al.*, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PAMPLONA IN THE PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR, TO BE KNOWN AS THE BICOL WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR,

recommending its approval with amendments.

Sponsor: Senator Go

**To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

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**SECOND ADDITIONAL  
REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

**MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE PHILIPPINES**

Letter of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, dated 9 March 2020, certifying to the necessity of the immediate enactment of Senate Bill No. 1357, entitled

AN ACT REFORMING THE CORPORATE INCOME TAX AND INCENTIVES SYSTEM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 4, 20, 27, 28, 34 AND 290 OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED, AND CREATING THEREIN NEW TITLE XIII, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

to further institute tax reforms by rationalizing the corporate income tax and incentives system in order to promote foreign direct investment inflows and the expansion of business ventures conducive to economic growth and job generation.

**To the Committee on Rules**

**THIRD ADDITIONAL  
REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

**BILLS ON FIRST READING**

Senate Bill No. 1405, entitled

AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE BIDDING STRUCTURE AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION LIABILITY PROVISIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT REFORM ACT, AMENDING FOR THAT PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9184, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Pacquiao

**To the Committee on Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1406, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE ACT OF

INDISCRIMINATE SPITTING AND EXPELLING NASAL MUCOUS IN PUBLIC PLACES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Pacquiao

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; Local Government; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1407, entitled

AN ACT EXPANDING THE RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR TROPICAL MEDICINE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1408, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN THE DETECTION AND CONTAINMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES, INCLUDING THE QUARANTINE OF INFECTED PERSONS AND LOCKDOWN OF INFECTED AREAS, AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9271, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Local Government**

Senate Bill No. 1409, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE SPECIAL MECHANISMS FOR ACTIVE VOLCANO AREAS AND MANDATING LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS TO DESIGNATE VOLCANIC DISASTER EMERGENCY AREAS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

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**To the Committees on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; Local Government; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1410, entitled

AN ACT REPEALING ARTICLE 247 OF THE REVISED PENAL CODE

Introduced by Senator Poe

**To the Committee on Justice and Human Rights**

**RESOLUTIONS**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 347, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMPETITIVENESS ENHANCEMENT FUND-SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CREATED THROUGH REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8178, AND FURTHER EXTENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10848 OR THE AGRICULTURAL TARIFFICATION ACT WITH THE END VIEW OF DETERMINING THE EFFICIENCY OF THE LEAD IMPLEMENTING AGENCY AS WELL AS IN DETERMINING WHETHER THE FUND IS UTILIZED FOR THE INTENDED PURPOSES SET BY THE LAW

Introduced by Senator Villar

**To the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 348, entitled

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT PHILIPPINE OFFSHORE GAMING OPERATIONS SHOULD BE SUSPENDED UNTIL ITS FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL COSTS ARE ADEQUATELY MEASURED

Introduced by Senator Marcos

**To the Committee on Rules**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 349, entitled

RESOLUTION URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, IN COORDINATION WITH THE NATIONAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT COUNCIL, AND MOBILE PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS TO SEND FREE MOBILE ALERTS ON THE 2019 NOVEL CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19)

Introduced by Senator Poe

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Public Services**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Letters from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, transmitting to the Senate copies of the following certified and authenticated BSP issuances in compliance with Section 15 (a) of Republic Act No. 7653 (The New Central Bank Act):

Memorandum Nos. M-2020-003 and 004 dated 13 and 19 February 2020;

Circular Nos. 1076 and 1077 dated 18 and 26 February 2020;

and Circular Letter Nos. CL-2020-010, 011 and 012 dated 21, 26 and 27 February 2020.

**To the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies**

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Committee Report No. 69, prepared and submitted jointly by the Committees on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality; Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; Ways and Means; and Finance on Senate Bill No. 1411 with Senators Gordon, Hontiveros, Go, Sotto III, Zubiri, Revilla, Jr., and Marcos as authors thereof, entitled:

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8972 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES TO SOLO

*MS MV*

PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN,  
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR  
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,”

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill Nos. 86, 164, 206, 238, 307, 951 and 1014.

Sponsor: Senator Hontiveros

**To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

**FOURTH ADDITIONAL  
REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

**MESSAGES FROM THE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Letters from the Secretary General of the House of Representatives, dated 18 February 2020, informing the Senate of the following constituted Oversight Committees:

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 11223, Oversight Committee on Universal Health Care Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Angelina Tan  
*Members* : Representative Maria Laarni Cayetano  
Representative Mike Defensor  
Representative Maricel Nagano  
Natividad  
Representative Yedda Romualdez

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 11032, Oversight Committee on Ease of Doing Business Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Weslie Gatchalian  
*Members* : Representative Frederick Siao  
Representative Marvey Marino  
Representative Sharon Garin  
Representative Camille Villar

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9207, Oversight Committee on Housing and Land Utilization Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Elpidio Barzaga Jr.  
*Members* : Representative Strike Revilla  
Representative Naella Aguinaldo

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593, Oversight Committee on Tourism

*Chairperson* : Representative Marisol Aragonés  
*Members* : Representative Isidro Ungab  
Representative Lucy Torres-Gomez

Representative Edgar Chatto  
Representative Luis Raymund Villafuerte

Pursuant to Joint Resolution No. 2, Oversight Committee on Visiting Forces Agreement

*Chairperson* : Representative Ann Hofer,  
Co-Chairperson  
Representative Raul Tupas,  
Co-Chairperson

*Members* : Representative McNell Lusotan  
Representative Francis Abaya  
Representative Lawrence Fortun  
Representative Sharee Ann Tan

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 10708, Oversight Committee on Tax Incentives Management Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Joel Salceda  
*Members* : Representative Weslie Gatchalian  
Representative Manuel Zubiri  
Representative Ramon Nolasco Jr.  
Representative Joet Garcia III

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9182, Oversight Committee on Special Purpose Vehicle Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Lorna Silverio  
*Members* : Representative Alexie Tutor  
Representative Naella Aguinaldo  
Representative Alan Dujali  
Representative Jake Vincent Villa  
Representative Stella Quimbo  
Representative Godofredo Guya

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 8800, Oversight Committee on Safeguard Measures Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Weslie Gatchalian  
*Members* : Representative Joey Salceda  
Representative Mark Enverga

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 10354, Oversight Committee on Reproductive Health Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Lucille Nava  
*Members* : Representative Janet Garin  
Representative Yedda Marie Romualdez  
Representative Geraldine Roman  
Representative Helen Tan

Pursuant to the 2020 General Appropriations Act, Oversight Committee on Quality Affordable Medicines

*Chairperson* : Representative Weslie Gatchalian  
*Vice Chairperson* : Representative Helen Tan

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*Members* : Representative Braeden John Biron  
Representative Mike Defensor  
Representative Franz "Chicoy" Alvarez

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9136, Oversight  
Committee on Joint Congressional Power  
Commission

*Chairperson* : Representative Lord Allan Velasco

*Members* : Representative Presley De Jesus  
Representative Amanda Christina  
Bagatsing  
Representative Rodolfo Albano  
Representative Sergio Dago-oc  
Representative Sergio Cesar  
"Jawo" Jimenez Jr.

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 10121, Oversight  
Committee on Philippine Disaster Risk  
Reduction

*Chairperson* : Representative Raul Buboy Tupas

*Members* : Representative Lucy Torres-Gomez  
Representative Sandra Eriquel  
Representative Jocelyn Fortuno  
Representative Ferdinand Cabredo  
Representative Bienvenido M. Abante  
Representative Christopher Belmonte 4

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 10667, Oversight  
Committee on Philippine Competition Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Sharon Garin,  
Co-Chairperson

*Vice Chairperson* : Representative Weslie Gatchalian,  
Co-Vice Chairperson

*Members* : Representative Isidro Ungab  
Representative Argel Cabatbat  
Representative Bienvenido M. Abante

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9275, Oversight  
Committee on Philippine Clean Water Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Sonny Mangaoang

*Members* : Representative Aloysia T. Lim  
Representative Victor Yap  
Representative Rommel Angara  
Representative Danilo Fernandez

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 10022, Oversight  
Committee on Migrant Workers Overseas Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Raymond Mendoza

*Members* : Representative Alberto Pacquiao  
Representative Dulce Ann Hofer  
Representative Godofredo Guya  
Representative Domingo Rivera

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9189, Oversight  
Committee on Overseas Absentee Voting

*Chairperson* : Representative Juliette Ferrer

*Members* : Representative Yedda Marie Romualdez  
Representative Luis Raymund Villafuerte  
Representative Fred Siao  
Representative Eric Yap  
Representative Sharee Ann Tan  
Representative Lawrence Lemuel Fortun  
Representative Alfred Delos Santos 5

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 8182, Oversight  
Committee on Overseas Development Assist-  
ance

*Chairperson* : Representative Joey Salceda

*Members* : Representative Luis Raymund Villafuerte  
Representative Strike Revilla  
Representative Estrellita Suansing  
Representative Alex Advincula  
Representative Bonito Singson

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 10606, Oversight  
Committee on National Health Insurance

*Chairperson* : Representative Helen Tan

*Members* : Representative Mike Defensor  
Representative Edgar Eric  
Representative Resurreccion Acop  
Representative Lucy Torres-Gomez

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9372, Oversight  
Committee on Human Security Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Narciso Bravo Jr.

*Members* : Representative Jorge Bustos  
Representative Raul Buboy Tupas  
Representative Alex Advincula  
Representative Sharee Ann Tan

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 8792, Oversight  
Committee on Electronic Commerce Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Weslie Gatchalian

*Members* : Representative Aris Aumentado  
Representative Isidro Ungab

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9003, Oversight  
Committee on Ecological Solid Waste Manage-  
ment Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Faustino "Inno" Dy

*Members* : Representative Jeffrey Khonghun  
Representative Jonathan Sy-Alvarado  
Representative Victor Yap  
Representative Edward Maceda 6

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Pursuant to Republic Act No. 10863, Oversight  
Committee on Customs Modernization and  
Tariff Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Joey Salceda  
*Members* : Representative Horacio P. Suansing  
Representative Roland Valeriano  
Representative Eric Yap  
Representative Alyssa Sheena Tan

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 8424, Oversight  
Committee on Comprehensive Tax Reform  
Program

*Chairperson* : Representative Joey Salceda  
*Members* : Representative Naella Aguinaldo  
Representative Estrellita Suansing  
Representative Paul Daza  
Representative Sharon Garin

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9497, Oversight  
Committee on Civil Aviation Authority

*Chairperson* : Representative Edgar Mary Sarmiento  
*Members* : Representative Ramon Guico III  
Representative Gavini Apol Pancho  
Representative Teodorico Haresco  
Representative Claudine Bautista

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9175, Oversight  
Committee on Chainsaw Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Elpidio Barzaga  
*Members* : Representative Franz "Chicoy" Alvarez  
Representative Rommel Angara  
Representative Rudy S. Caoagdan  
Representative Isagani Amatong  
Representative Irene Saulog

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 209367, Oversight  
Committee on Biofuels

*Chairperson* : Representative Lord Allan Velasco  
*Members* : Representative Mark Enverga,  
Ex-officio  
Representative Weslie Gatchalian,  
Ex-officio  
Representative Edward Maceda  
Representative Manuel F. Zubiri  
Representative Lorenz "Nonoy"  
Defensor  
Representative Irene Saulog

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 8752, Oversight  
Committee on Anti-Dumping Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Weslie Gatchalian  
*Members* : Representative Michael B. Gorriceta

Representative Joselito S. Sacdalan

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9745, Oversight  
Committee on Anti-Torture Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Vicente Veloso III  
*Members* : Representative Jesus C. Suntay  
Representative Bienvenido M. Abante

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 10349, Oversight  
Committee on AFP Modernization Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Raul Tupas  
*Members* : Representative Rozzano Rufino Biazon  
Representative Arnold Celeste  
Representative Munir M. Arbison  
Representative Arnulfo A. Teves  
Representative Bayani F. Fernando

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9369, Oversight  
Committee on the Automated Election Law

*Chairperson* : Representative Elpidio Barzaga  
*Members* : Representative Juliette Marie Ferrer  
Representative Ronie Ong  
Representative Edgar R. Erice  
Representative Lawrence Lemuel Fortun  
Representative Stephan Faduano  
Representative Argel Joseph Cabatbat

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9160, Oversight  
Committee on Anti-Money Laundering Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Abraham Tolentino  
*Members* : Representative Mike Defensor  
Representative Tyrone D. Agabas  
Representative Hector Sabeniano  
Sanchez  
Representative Faustino Michael Dy  
Representative Bayani F. Fernando  
Representative Bienvenido M. Abante

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9501, Oversight  
Committee on Micro, Small, and Medium  
Enterprises

*Chairperson* : Representative Virgilio Lacson  
*Members* : Representative Weslie Gatchalian  
Representative Junie Cua  
Representative Isidro Ungab  
Representative Joseph Paduano  
Representative Sharee Ann Tan

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 8435 Oversight  
Committee on the Agricultural and Fisheries  
Modernization

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*Chairperson* : Representative Wilfredo Mark  
M. Enverga  
*Members* : Representative Deogracias Victor  
B. Savellano  
Representative Jose Singson Jr.  
Representative Juan Pablo P. Bondoc  
Representative Rosanna Vergara  
Representative Noel L. Villanueva

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 9165, Oversight  
Committee on Dangerous Drugs

*Chairperson* : Representative Robert Ace Barbers  
*Members* : Representative Narciso Bravo Jr.  
Representative Jorge Bustos  
Representative Ma. Theresa Collantes  
Representative Rommel Angara  
Representative Jose Singson Jr.

Pursuant to the 2020 General Appropriations Act,  
Oversight Committee on Public Expenditures

*Chairperson* : Representative Isidro Ungab  
*Members* : Representative Luis Raymund  
Villafuerte  
Representative Jonathan Sy - Alvarado  
Representative Juan Pablo Bondoc  
Representative Neptali Gonzales II  
Representative Eric Yap  
Representative Alex Advincola

Oversight Committee on Motor Vehicle User's  
Charge

*Chairperson* : Representative Luis Raymund  
Villafuerte  
*Members* : Representative Jonathan Sy-Alvarado  
Representative Eileen Ermita - Buhain  
Representative Jocelyn Tulfo  
Representative Faustino Bienvenido  
Abante

Oversight Committee on Climate Change

*Chairperson* : Representative Edgar Chatto  
*Members* : Representative Lucy Torres-Gomez  
Representative Faustino Michael Dy III  
Representative Mark E. Go  
Representative Cyrille Abueg- Zaldivar

### To the Committee on Rules

Letter from the Secretary General of the House  
of Representatives, dated 26 February 2020,  
informing the Senate that pursuant to Republic  
Act No. 8749, the House of Representatives  
has constituted the Oversight Committee on the  
Clean Air Act

*Chairperson* : Representative Alfonso Umali  
*Members* : Representative Munir Arbison  
Representative Michael B. Gorriceta  
Representative Aloysia Lim  
Representative Faustino "Inno" A. Dy

### To the Committee on Rules

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senator Zubiri acknowledged  
the presence in the gallery of the following guests:

- Mayors from Zamboanga Sibugay: Mayor Anamel C. Olegario of Ipil; Mayor Katrina Cainglet of Kabasalan; Mayor Dionesia Lagas of Buug; Mayor Roselyn Silva of Imelda; Mayor Edreluisa O. Caloñge of Mabuhay; Mayor Marcelo M. Baquial Jr. of Malangas; Mayor Leonardo B. Talania of Titay; Mayor Carlan Climaco of Tungawan; Mayor Joeper H. Mendoza of Payao; Mayor Danilo J. Pineda of Roseller Lim; Mayor Arthur P. Ruste Sr. of Olutanga; Mayor Orlando A. Ramiso of Talusan; and Mayor Yashier S. Musa of Alicia;
- Mayors from Zamboanga Del Norte: Mayor Julius S. Lobrigas of Siocon; Mayor Eddie T. Quimbo of Labason; and Mayor Joel M. Ventura of Sibuco;
- Mayor Alkhadar T. Loong and Vice Mayor Madzhar T. Loong of Parang, Sulu; and
- Kagawad Jade Jamolod of Talon-Talon, Zamboanga City.

### MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

At this point, Senator Zubiri asked the Chamber's  
permission to allow the use of the rostrum after the  
adjournment for the official turnover to the National  
Telecommunications Commission of the approved  
resolution on the grant of a provisional authority to  
broadcast to ABS-CBN.

He stated that NTC Deputy Commissioner  
Edgardo V. Cabarios would receive the resolution  
on behalf of Commissioner Gamaliel A. Cordoba,  
who was not feeling well.

Furthermore, Senator Zubiri said that although  
there was a standing resolution, Senate Resolution  
No. 15, which authorizes the Senate committees to

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conduct hearings during recess, the senators should exercise extra caution and better judgment whether or not to proceed with their committee hearings in view of the COVID-19 outbreak.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of Monday, May 4, 2020.

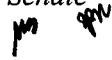
*It was 3:11 p.m.*

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.



**ATTY. MYRA MARIE D. VILLARICA**

*Secretary of the Senate*



Approved on May 4, 2020