



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Senate
Pasay City

Journal

SESSION NO. 26
Wednesday, September 28, 2022

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

Prepared by the
LEGISLATIVE JOURNAL SERVICE
Senate of the Philippines

SESSION NO. 26
Wednesday, September 28, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

At 5:30 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Juan Miguel “Migz” F. Zubiri, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Sonny Angara led the prayer, to wit:

Our Father in Heaven,

We pray for our brothers and sisters who had suffered and are still suffering from the ravages of Typhoon Karding these past few days, especially those in the flooded areas and in evacuation centers across Pangasinan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon, and many other parts of Luzon.

We are grateful that most of us have been spared. But we are deeply saddened that several were not, including five brave responders from Bulacan.

We pray for them and for the loved ones they left behind. We also pray for the country, that we may all arise from this calamity stronger.

Panginoon, patuloy Ninyo po kaming bigyan ng lakas para tulungan ang aming mga kababayan na lubhang natamaan.

Nawa'y manatili Kang lakas sa amin, inspirasyon at gabay sa anumang hakbang na aming gagawin.

We pray that You always fill us with Your greatness and righteousness for the good of our country and our people.

This we pray in the precious Name of our Lord Jesus.

Amen.



ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Senate President, the Secretary of the Senate, Atty. Renato N. Bantug Jr., called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

Angara, S.	Legarda, L.
Binay, M. L. N. S.	Padilla, R. C.
Cayetano, A. P. C. S.	Pimentel III, A. K.
Cayetano, P. S.	Poe, G.
Dela Rosa, R. B. M.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Ejercito, J. V. G.	Tolentino, F. T. N.
Escudero, F. J. G.	Tulfo, R. T.
Estrada, J. E.	Villanueva, J.
Gatchalian, W.	Villar, C. A.
Go, C. L. T.	Villar, M. A.
Hontiveros, R.	Zubiri, J. M. F.
Lapid, M. L. M.	

With 23 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senator Marcos was on official business in the United States of America from September 22 to 28, 2022 to meet with officials of the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C., as well as with members of the Filipino community in nearby cities, as indicated in the September 20, 2022 letter of Senate President Zubiri to Department of Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique A. Manalo.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

Senate President Zubiri apologized to the Body for the late opening of the session. He stated that despite the Commission on Appointments' efforts to limit the number of department secretary nominees that day, its plenary session still ended very late. He assured that the incident will not happen again, and that he had instructed the Commission to limit the number of appointees to two in order for its plenary session to end by 3:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the *Journal* of Session No. 25 (September 27, 2022) and considered it approved.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

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

- Mayor Abdul Hakim Benito of Calanogas, Lanao Del Sur;
- Board Member Ahmil Hussein Macapendeg of Maguindanao;
- Mayor Noel Alinsub of Bontoc, Southern Leyte;
- Mayors Rolando Sacdalan of Midsayap, Angel Rose Cuan of Libungan, Evangeline Guzman of Kabacan, Juanito Agustin of Pigkawayan, and Jonathan Mahimpit of Roxas, all in the Province of North Cotabato;
- United Filipino Global headed by Ms. Gemma Sotto and other OFW organizations;
- Mayor Salway D. Sumbo Jr. of Malapatan, Sarangani;

91

- Mayor Eddie T. Quimbo of Labason, Zamboanga Del Norte; and
- SK Federation Presidents Jamela Charis Mendoza of Bocaue, Cyndi Pearl Valencia of Angat, Imee San Gabriel of Plaridel, Niño Caparas of Meycauayan, Angelica Inducil and Councilor Andrea Duran of San Ildefonso, all in the Province of Bulacan.

Senate President Zubiri welcomed the guests to the Senate.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON SENATE BILL NO. 1310 AND HOUSE BILL NO. 14

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1310, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE REGISTRATION OF SUBSCRIBER IDENTITY
MODULE (SIM) FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES, REGULATING FOR THIS
PURPOSE ITS REGISTRATION AND USE,

and House Bill No. 14, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING THE REGISTRATION OF SUBSCRIBER IDENTITY MODULE
CARDS.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Poe to sponsor the report.

REPORT OF SENATOR POE

In sponsoring the Conference Committee Report on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 1310 and House Bill No. 14, or the SIM Registration Act, Senator Poe, chairperson of the Committee on Public Information and Mass Media, delivered the following speech:

As chairperson of the Senate contingent to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 1310 and House Bill No. 14, also known as the Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) Registration Act, I now have the privilege to report to the Body the approved version of our bill.

There were several conflicting provisions between the two bills, but through the common vision and efforts of our colleagues, Senator Ejercito, vice chairperson of the Senate Committee on Public Services, Senators Binay, Gatchalian, and Minority Leader Senator Pimentel, we were able to reconcile these differences.

In the interest of time, I would like to move that the Joint Explanation of the Bicameral Conference Committee on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 1310 and House Bill No. 14 be spread into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*.

Instead, I shall provide the highlights of the report. The Bicameral Conference Committee agreed to use the Senate version as the working draft but with numerous reconciled provisions.

Among the agreements settled by the panel are the following:

First, both Houses agree that it is time to drop the term “card” from the bill. Innovation on mobile technology is fast-paced and our law must be able to accommodate all present and future variations of SIMs.

Second, we adopted the Senate framework on registration, which goes directly through the PTE’s platform as a prerequisite to the activation of a SIM. Not only does this pose less risk of data breach, it also places less burden on small-scale resellers who may not have the proper training to handle personal information.

PN

The registration process remained mostly faithful to the Senate version, specifically on the 180-day period of registration of a SIM by a minor through a parent or guardian, and all the safeguards on the SIM Register.

Third, the few modifications made are all improvements, like specifying a non-exhaustive list of identification cards with photo that can be presented during registration. This is part of our commitment to make the registration process as clearly outlined and as seamless as possible. Further, we clarified the documentary requirements for foreign nationals who purchase local SIMs. This is also part of our commitment to make our tourism and business environment as friendly as possible to foreign visitors.

Fourth, we clarified that the data of existing postpaid subscribers should already be included in the SIM Register to ease the process for postpaid subscribers who may have already submitted personal information to their respective PTEs upon subscription.

Fifth, we require PTEs to establish the necessary registration facilities in remote areas within 60 days from the effectivity of the Act. *Wala dapat maiiwan*. The SIM registration process should be inclusive and accessible especially for those who may have limited access to the Internet, and the burden to make this happen is on the telcos who have the capacity and resources to make this happen.

Finally, we added extra measures in the confidentiality clause such as ensuring that the court order for disclosure is only upon finding of probable cause.

Today, we finally send a clear reply to these scam and spam messages: "STOP!" under pain of penalty. As the text capital of the world, we hold precious our means to communicate. And anyone who abuses or misemploys the system for their own fraudulent and unlawful interests must be traceable and subsequently held accountable.

This is not a magic cure-all to our telco problems, but it is a huge step in the right direction. I could not be more grateful and proud to be part of a Congress that prioritizes the welfare and safety of our end-users.

Thus, it is my humble submission that this Bicameral Conference Committee Report on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 1310 and House Bill No. 14 on the SIM Registration Act be ratified by this Chamber.

JOINT EXPLANATION OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

At the instance of Senator Poe, there being no objection, the Body approved the insertion of the Joint Explanation of the Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1310 and House Bill No. 14 into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*. (See Annex A)

APPROVAL OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1310 and House Bill No. 14 was ratified and approved by the Body.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (A)

Senator Cayetano (A) expressed his support for the approval of the bicameral committee report, noting that it was the last day of session and Congress would return after a one-month recess to deliberate on the 2023 budget. He emphasized the importance of the SIM Registration Law because many people have been victims of scams and fraud via mobile devices.

He stated that as a rule, the Senate should not hold bicameral conferences on the last day so that the members could have at least a day to review some pending bills, noting that the bicameral report on the SK and Barangay elections would also be taken up that day. He stated that the Body would not want to be put in a position where if it disapproves a report, the conferees would no



longer meet because Congress would be in recess. He stressed that because Senate Bill Nos. 1310 and 1306 were urgent measures, he would withhold his objections because he was in favor of the bills in substance. He supposed that the Chamber could request the House of Representatives to give two or three days to complete all bicameral reports, allowing any member who has serious objections to do so, and that if a remedy is required, the bicameral committee could meet again to discuss it.

He then congratulated Senator Poe, the members, and Senate President Zubiri for their efforts in passing the bill.

Senate President Zubiri agreed with Senator Cayetano (A) that both Houses should be given time to review and reconvene if necessary.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Senator Cayetano (P) expressed gratitude to Senator Poe and the committee for passing the bill, albeit a technical one, on Third Reading. She stated that she and Senator Pimentel contributed to its passage, which she believed was acknowledged by the committee. She then requested to be made coauthor of the bill.

COAUTHOR

Upon her request, Senator Cayetano (P) was made coauthor of Senate Bill No. 1310.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Senator Cayetano (P) stated that she was not able to deliver her cosponsorship speech recognizing the contribution of the JIL the previous day and asked that it be inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*. She then quoted a paragraph from her speech, to wit:

“JIL has been true to its mission to bring all people regardless of race, status, belief, and religious affiliation to the kingdom of the living God, in obedience to the great commission of the Lord Jesus Christ, thus experiencing all the blessings of the kingdom.”

Senator Villanueva thanked Senator Cayetano (P) and stated that he had moved the previous day to insert her cosponsorship speech, as well as those of Senators Legarda and Revilla, into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON SENATE BILL NO. 1306 AND HOUSE BILL NO. 4673

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1306, entitled

AN ACT POSTPONING THE DECEMBER 2022 BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9340, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10632, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10656, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10923, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10952, AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11462, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

and House Bill No. 4673, entitled

AN ACT POSTPONING THE DECEMBER 2022 BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC

94

ACT NO 9164, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9340, REPUBLIC ACT NO 10632, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10656, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10923, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10952 AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11462, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Ejercito to sponsor the report.

REPORT OF SENATOR EJERCITO

Senator Ejercito, chairperson of the Committee on Local Government, on behalf of the Committee on Electoral Reforms and People's Participation, submitted for the consideration of the Body the Bicameral Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions on Senate Bill No. 1306 and House Bill No. 4673 postponing the December 2022 Barangay and SK Elections.

Following is Senator Ejercito's sponsorship speech:

I have the honor of submitting for ratification the Bicameral Conference Committee Report on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 1306 and House Bill No. 4673, or an "Act Postponing the December 2022 Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 9164, as Amended and Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes."

I happen to substitute for the chairperson of the Committee on Electoral Reforms and People's Participation who is out of the country, Sen. Imee R. Marcos, but this morning, along with Senators Escudero, Binay, and Gatchalian, I represented the Senate in the Bicameral Conference Committee during the meeting. As chairperson of the Senate panel, allow me to report the provisions of the present reconciled bill accompanying our Conference Committee Report.

The Conference Committee agreed to use the Senate version as the working draft. After much deliberation, it was agreed upon by the members to hold the next synchronized Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections on the last Monday of October 2023. The subsequent Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan Elections will then be conducted every three years thereafter.

The Senate and the House of Representatives panels approved the possible changing of the date of last Monday of October 2023 for several crucial considerations, which include:


1. There is a precedence of holding the synchronized Barangay and SK elections in October;
2. The date usually falls on the school break of youth voters and will enable them to participate in choosing their leaders in the community;
3. It will be a more cost-effective reference to the position paper and computation of the Commission on Elections which was submitted to the Committee on Electoral Reforms.

Consequent to this change in the date of the next elections, Section 2 of the conference committee report now provides that the term of office of the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan officials elected under this proposed measure shall commence at noon of November 30, 2023 following their next election.

With respect to the provision on "Appropriations," the conference committee adopted Section 4 of the House version. Further, Section 5 of the Senate version, which directs the Commission on Audit to submit an audit report to Congress on the budget used for the postponed December 5, 2022 barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections within 90 days from the effectivity of the law, was deleted. It will be available any time, especially during the budget deliberations. We can already ask the COMELEC.

This humble Representation is honored to present this conference committee report, which was the result of thorough deliberation and commitment to our constituents to pass a law that would promote the welfare of our barangays.

Further, as chairperson of the Senate Committee on Local Government, this would give us ample amount of time to revisit our laws and introduce amendments to further strengthen the roles and mandate of our barangay officials.



At this juncture, allow me to extend my utmost gratitude to the chairperson of the Committee on Electoral Reforms and Peoples' Participation, Sen. Imee Marcos, for her trust and confidence toward this Representation in leading the Senate contingent in the bicameral conference. We laud her for staunchly shepherding the passage of Senate Bill No. 1306 while ensuring that all issues and challenges are addressed from the committee hearing to the plenary debates and up to its passage.

We would also like to thank our colleagues who are members of the bicameral conference committee for sharing their inputs and sound proposals that enabled us to produce a more acceptable version. We would also like to thank the House panel for meeting their counterpart halfway in every provision that we deliberated on.

Lastly, this Representation would like to thank this august Chamber for entrusting this task to me. Although it was hard, we hope that we were able to complete our task competently.

With the permission of the Body, I move that the Joint Explanatory Statement on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 1306 and House Bill No. 4673 be read *in toto* into the *Record*, and that the bicameral conference committee report be ratified.

JOINT EXPLANATION OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Pursuant to the motion of Senator Ejercito, there being no objection, the Joint Explanation of the Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1306 and House Bill No. 4673 was deemed read and inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*. (See Annex B)

INQUIRY OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Senator Pimentel pointed out that neither the Senate nor the House versions of the bill included the date that was specified in the bicameral conference committee report for the next synchronized barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) elections. He then inquired as to when the elections would be held, as agreed upon in the bicameral conference, and how the bicameral committee arrived at such a date.

Senator Ejercito replied that the Bicameral Conference agreed that the elections to be held on the last Monday of October 2023 for a variety of reasons. He informed the Body that it was Senator Escudero who proposed that the barangay and SK elections be postponed until after the holiday season because everyone would be too busy. Furthermore, he revealed that Senator Escudero initially proposed holding the elections in May 2024, which the House contingent thought was a very long delay. He also mentioned Senator Gatchalian's statement that there was a precedent for holding the barangay and SK elections in October. Finally, he stated that the date chosen was a result of negotiations between the Senate and House conferees.

Asked when the terms of the next elected barangay and SK officials would begin, Senator Ejercito responded that it would be on November 30, 2023.

On whether the said date was arbitrarily determined, Senator Ejercito noted that there had been precedents during the 2007, 2010, and 2013 barangay and SK elections, which were held on October 29, 2007, October 25, 2010, and October 28, 2013, with the terms beginning one month after the elections.

Senator Pimentel noted that under the Senate version, the elections would take place on the second Monday of December 2023, with the term beginning on January 1, 2024. Thus, he estimated that the gap between the elections and the assumption to office would be less than one month but no more than 20 days.

When asked if the same interval would be observed in the reconciled version of the bill, Senator Ejercito responded that the elections, which would be held every three years after the

last Monday of October 2023, would not conflict with the upcoming national and local elections the midterm elections in 2025 and the presidential and national elections in 2028 because the next barangay and SK elections would be in 2026.

Upon further query, Senator Ejercito clarified that the proposed election day, as worded in the reconciled version of the bill, is the “last Monday of October 2023.”

When asked if the phrase “last Monday of October 2023” was ever mentioned during the interpellations in the Senate or was mentioned for the first time in the bicameral conference committee meeting, Senator Ejercito replied that the conferees from both Houses agreed that the barangay and SK elections should be held in October, given the precedence already mentioned. He stated that October is usually the semester break of students while the last Monday of that month is around the time when people go home to their respective provinces to observe the celebration of *undas* on November 1.

Senator Pimentel acknowledged the reasons stated for the proposed election date, but added that the Senate conferees were also informed of the said reasons during the bicameral conference committee meeting. He then inquired whether the proposed election date, which is the last Monday of October 2023, was ever mentioned in Senate plenary during the period of interpellations on Senate Bill No. 1306. Senator Ejercito responded in the negative and clarified that it had only been discussed during the bicameral conference committee meeting.

Senator Pimentel stated that he had to interject even as the Body was about to approve the conference committee report on the Floor so that the members would be informed on how the conferees reasoned out and arrived at such reconciled version of the bill during the bicameral conference committee meeting. Senator Ejercito stated that while the original proposal for the conduct of the barangay and SK elections was in December of 2023, some members of the bicameral conference committee found the delay too long in comparison to October 2023, which was deemed to be more practical and cost-effective.

Senator Pimentel noted the absence of Senator Marcos, chairperson of the Committee on Local Government and sponsor of the measure; hence, she did not lead the Senate panel during the bicameral conference committee meeting.

When asked how Senator Marcos would feel if she knew that the version of the bill that she defended in the Senate was not the same version defended by the Senate conferees during the bicameral conference committee meeting, Senator Ejercito replied that Senator Marcos, who was supposed to chair the bicameral conference committee but had to leave for an official business trip to the United States, had given him full authority to represent her. He explained that she had been monitoring the progress of the bill through her staff and the committee secretary.

Senator Pimentel then stated that the reconciled version of the bill would already be the will of the House of Representatives since the Senate panel agreed to change the date of election from December 2023 to October 2023.

Asked if the Senate Minority was represented during the bicameral conference committee meeting, Senator Ejercito replied that the Senate conferees had waited for Senator Hontiveros before starting the meeting. Due to a scheduling conflict with the Commission on Appointments hearing at the time, he said that Senator Hontiveros sent word through Senator Escudero that the bicameral conference committee meeting could proceed without her.

Senator Pimentel lamented that he and Senator Hontiveros are the only members of the Senate Minority; thus, as was the case in the early stages of the 19th Congress, they cannot manage to

q

attend to all their official duties and functions with the simultaneous conduct of committee hearings. He then stated that he would vote against the Bicameral Conference Committee Report on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 1306 and House Bill No. 4673.

CLARIFICATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (A)

Asked by Senator Cayetano (A) if the age of SK candidates is between 18 and 24, Senator Ejercito replied in the affirmative, citing the SK Reform Law. He explained that voters up to the age of 30 could still vote for the SK candidates.

Senator Cayetano (A) stated that both Houses of Congress, as well as the Executive, have been trying to find the right age for training future leaders through youth leadership seminars and trainings, rather than just apprenticeship programs, and that such debates arise on whether the SK system should be continued or abolished. He recalled how he had strongly opposed the SK system's abolition amid corruption allegations thrown against it.


When asked if the Senate conferees accepted the House proposal to remove the provision allowing SK candidates who are eligible to run in the December 2022 SK elections to also be qualified to run in the October 2023 SK polls, Senator Ejercito replied in the affirmative. He stated that the House conferees rejected the original proposal because allowing disqualified candidates to run for office could violate the SK Reform Law.

Senator Cayetano (A) clarified that he was not holding Senator Ejercito and the Senate conferees responsible for the outcome of the reconciled version of the bill. He, however, reminded the Body that he and Senator Cayetano (P) are also not part of the Majority and constitute the independent Minority. He stated that they could also be invited to bicameral conference committee meetings as needed. As the independent Minority, he stated that he and Senator Cayetano (P) base their positions on issues that will affect the future of the people, such as how vape, *e-sabong*, and the suspension of the conduct of the University of the Philippines College Admission Test will affect their children.

While he believed that the bill postponing the December 2022 barangay and SK elections to October 2023 should be passed immediately, he also opined that the House of Representatives appeared to have taken over the original intent of the bill, as its proposal would disqualify all 24-year-old SK officials and aspirants from running in the October 2023 elections. Instead of extending the term of SK officials and showing compassion to the young elected leaders, he pointed out that the reconciled version of the bill effectively prevents the 24-year-old aspirants from pursuing their dream of becoming SK chairpersons.

He stated that he understood that the Senate made concessions on some provisions of the reconciled version of the bill in order to avoid a deadlock given that the bicameral conference committee meeting was held just before the last session day of Congress that month. He stated that if the proposed measure had been defeated, the December 2022 barangay and SK elections would have gone ahead as planned. He stated that he normally does not support election postponements out of respect for the democratic process and the people's mandate, but that he believed in good timing and thus supports the postponement of the barangay and SK elections in order to hold senatorial, gubernatorial, mayoral, and congressional elections in 2025. In that scenario, he stated that the next barangay and SK elections would be held in October 2026, followed by the presidential and national elections in 2028 and subsequent barangay and SK elections in October 2029.

Furthermore, he stated that while the affluent could afford to access apprenticeship programs in business and politics, impoverished youth see their involvement in the SK system as a training ground for leadership. He added that while the 17 to 24-year-old youth at the time of the October 2023 SK elections could still participate and qualify for an elected SK post, current 24-year-old



aspirants to an SK position in the would-be postponed December 2022 elections would no longer be allowed to run for the October 2023 SK elections. In that regard, he believed that bicameral conference committee meetings should be held a few days before the session's adjournment so that the Senate would have more bargaining power to negotiate some of its own provisions with its counterparts in the House of Representatives.

Finally, he thanked Senator Ejercito for his hard work and for the completion of the bicameral conference committee meeting. He then expressed his hope that the postponement of the barangay and SK elections would be beneficial to the country.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Noting her discussions with Senators Cayetano (A) and Angara regarding the legal aspects of whether or not Senator (A) Cayetano's amendment to the measure might be considered a rider, Senator Cayetano (P) recalled that Senate President Zubiri agreed to Senator Angara's recommendation to amend the title to reflect that the bill covers not only the postponement of the election but also the amendment of the SK Reform Law.

While she believed that the Senate panel did their best during the bicameral conference committee meeting, she averred that the amendment of Senator Cayetano (A) would have been discussed if only the Minority bloc had been present. She expressed her disappointment with the hasty outcome of the voting in favor of the postponement, as it would deprive youth leaders of the opportunity to run in the next elections because they will be overage by then.

Senator Ejercito responded to the appeal of Senator Cayetano (P) for the Body not to approve the bicameral report, saying that as one of the authors of the SK Reform Law, he understood her sentiments and frustrations. He assured her that the youth would be given another chance to lead.

Senator Cayetano (P) urged the Body to study and consider amending the SK Reform Law in order to allow and encourage the youth to serve the nation by running in the SK elections. Senator Ejercito agreed that it is time to amend the law to make it more responsive and effective in preparing the country's future leaders.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR HONTIVEROS

In registering her "no" vote to the bicameral version of the measure in light of the issues raised by Akbayan Youth, CYAN, and SK Youth Network, Senator Hontiveros expressed gratitude to Senator Ejercito for understanding her inability to physically attend the bicameral conference meeting earlier that day which coincided with the scheduled hearings of the Commission on Appointments. She recalled that shortly after being chosen to participate in the bicameral conference meeting for the Minority bloc, she asked Senator Villanueva for the schedule of the bicameral conference committee meeting, but no schedule was provided to her, making it impossible for her to arrange alternative schedules to attend the meeting.

She agreed with Senator Pimentel's contention during his interpellation that postponing the barangay and SK elections would deprive an entire generation of potential leaders of the opportunity to lead the Sangguniang Kabataan, stating that she would consider moving the elections to May 2023, at the most.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR PADILLA

Senator Padilla stated that when he first heard Senator Revilla speak about the barangay and SK elections, he agreed with his observation that the youth representatives would eventually

get older, which was why he was also unwilling to have the elections postponed. However, during the hearings of the Senate Committee on Constitutional Amendments and Revision of Codes with esteemed lawyers such as former Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile and Atty. Estelito Mendoza, he realized that the election would be a good opportunity to find out if people are open to amending the 1987 Constitution. Thus, he stated that at the appropriate time, he would propose a referendum to coincide with the holding of the barangay and SK elections in October 2023.

APPROVAL OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1306 and House Bill No. 4673 was approved by the Body.

Senate President Zubiri stated that Senators Pimentel, Hontiveros, and Cayetano (P) registered their negative votes on the conference committee report.

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 243

With the consent of the Body, upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 243, entitled

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ALL REGULAR STANDING COMMITTEES, OVERSIGHT COMMITTEES AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE TO CONDUCT HEARINGS, MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS DURING EVERY RECESS OF THE SENATE TO HAVE CONTINUITY IN THE PROCESS OF PASSING PENDING PROPOSED LEGISLATION AND TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS ON ISSUES OF NATIONAL INTEREST TO AID IN CRAFTING RELEVANT LEGISLATION.

With the permission of the Body, only the title of the resolution was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the *Journal* and *Record of the Senate*.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva stated that Proposed Senate Resolution No. 243 is a self-explanatory resolution that allows all standing committees to continue hearings and other legislative work including the conduct of investigations on issues concerning national importance while the Senate is in recess.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 243

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 243 was adopted by the Body, subject to style.

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 16

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 16, entitled

RESOLUTION HONORING AND COMMENDING THE EIGHT NEW NATIONAL ARTISTS BY VIRTUE OF PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION NO. 1390,

taking into consideration Proposed Senate Resolution Nos. 22 and 152.



With the permission of the Body, only the title of the resolution was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the *Journal* and *Record of the Senate*.

Senator Villanueva stated that Senators Legarda, Lapid, Angara, Revilla, and Go are authors and cosponsors of the resolution.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

Senate President Zubiri read the part of the resolution which listed the new national artist awardees, namely, Agnes Locsin for dance, Salvacion Lim Higgins for design, Nora Aunor for film and broadcast arts, Ricky Lee for film and broadcast arts, Marilou Diaz-Abaya for film and broadcast arts, Gemino Abad for literature, Fides Cuyugan-Asensio for music, and Tony Mabesa for theater. He then asked the Members of the national artist search committee, particularly Senator Binay, to look into the possibility of recognizing national artists for painting, sculpture, and visual arts in addition to movies, television, and theater personalities. Senator Villanueva remarked that Senator Binay was nodding her head in agreement to the suggestion.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR LEGARDA

At the instance of Senator Legarda and upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, following is the speech of Senator Legarda on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 16, which was deemed read and inserted into the *Journal* and *Record of the Senate*:

It has been 50 years since Fernando Amorsolo was named first National Artist of the Philippines. Since then, only 73 truly remarkable artists have been honored. Today, we have the distinct privilege to recognize and celebrate eight more.

These eight exceptional Filipinos provide the country with the best possible portrayal of itself with the rest of the world the full fruit of Filipino imagination and ingenuity. In words, photos and music show us who we are and who we can be. This is their crowning achievement.

Therefore, we bestow upon them this greatest distinction not only to express our gratitude for their efforts but also to serve as a reminder to all of us of the value of ingenuity and creativity.

At this juncture, allow me to recognize each of the National Artists:

Hailed a one of the most "progressive contemporary choreographers in the Philippines," we honor and commend Agnes Locsin as National Artist for Dance.

For innovating the terno and expertly using indigenous materials such as *piña* and *jusi* in modern dresses, we honor Salvacion Lim-Higgins as National Artist for Design.

A prolific writer and anthologist whose historical anthologies provide a comprehensive view of Philippine poetry, we honor Gemino Abad as National Artist for Literature.

In honor of her work in opera and music for the past six decades, we recognize Fides Cuyugan-Asensio as National Artist for Music.

For their contribution to Film and Broadcast Arts, we honor and commend the following artists:

- Nora Aunor for her excellent depiction of the realities of Filipino society through her extensive filmography and works in music and stage;
- Multi-awarded screenwriter and journalist Ricky Lee for his mastery of writing historical films and diasporic dramas; and
- Award-winning film and television director and screenwriter Marilou Diaz-Abaya for her many notable works as part of our country's "Second Golden Age of Cinema."

Finally, we honor "Lion of the Theater" Tony Mabesa as National Artist for Theater.

Their contribution to our national culture and national life are invaluable, and they merit our

98

greatest admiration and respect. The title of National Artist that we bestow upon them is merely a small reflection of the reverence in which their fellow countrymen hold them.

In more ways than one, art and culture have witnessed the eventful history of our nation. Indeed, they are what binds us together as a people. It is therefore our duty to preserve and advance the cultural traditions that give Filipinos their identity and serve as a unifying force among them.

This is a challenge not just to politics but to art as well, and it is a challenge that I am certain our National Artists, both current and future, will meet with the kind remarkable passion and vision that set exemplary standard.

To this year's honorees, I applaud your passion and commitment to your respective fields. On behalf of our government and the people of the Philippines, let me express out highest praise and warmest congratulations as we celebrate Filipino greatness in all its forms. May your innovative spirit and artistic prowess continue to motivate Filipinos to work together for a better and more prosperous Philippines.

In light of the foregoing, this Representation requests that the Senate adopt the resolution honoring and commending the eight new National Artists of the Philippines.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECHES ON PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 16

Pursuant to the manifestation of Senator Villanueva, following are the cosponsorship speeches on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 16, which were deemed read and inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*:

By Senator Lapid

Ang sabi ng Rusong rebolusyonaryo na si Leon Trotsky, "Art is not a mirror to hold up to society, but a hammer with which to shape it."

Ang sining ay hindi salamin ng ating lipunan kundi martilyo na siyang huhubog nito.

Ang pinakamakapangyarihang sining ay may kakayahang kilusin ang ating mga puso at baguhin ang ating mundo.

Bagama't tayo ay nabubuhay sa panahon ng siyensiya at makabagong ekonomiya kung kailan labis na pinahalagahan ng mga tao ang pagkakamit ng karunungan at pagkamal ng salapi, hindi po natin dapat ikaila ang nananatiling malaking bahagi ng sining sa ating buhay.

Hindi natin dapat ipagwalang-bahala ang sining sa ating lipunan sapagkat bahagi ang ating mga alagad ng sining sa paghubog ng ating pagka-bansa. Dapat nating tangkilikin ang kanilang mga gawa, kilalanin ang kanilang narating, at pakinggan ang kanilang mga tinig. Hindi lamang sila ang nagpapakita ng katotohanan ng ating mundo, sila rin ang nagpapakita ng liwanag gaano man dumilim ang mga panahon.

Tunay na napakahalaga ng sining na nagbibigay ng kahulugan sa atin bilang isang lipunan. Kaya naman, ngayong araw ating ipagdiwang ang mga dakilang pambansang alagad ng sining ng ating minamahal na bayan.

Sa taon pong ito, ang mga ginawaran ng Order of National Artists ay ang mga sumusunod:

- *Ang manunulat at kritiko na kinikilala para sa kanyang mga akdang pampanitikan na binubuo ng mga historikal na antolohiya na nagbibigay sa mga susunod na henerasyon ng komprehensibong pananaw ukol sa tula at panitikan sa Pilipinas, Dr. Gemino Henson Abad - Pambansang Alagad ng Sining para sa Literatura;*
- *Ang mahusay na direktor na kinikilala para sa kanyang mga likha na nagsusuri sa karanasan ng mga tao na hinango mula sa mga tunggalian sa lipunan, sa pagitan ng mga karakter na may mga magkakaibang pananaw. Ang kanyang mga likhang pelikula noong dekada otsenta na Brutal, Karnal at Moral ay nagtangi sa mga kababaihan at kanilang ibayong lakas. Siya ay isa ring kaibigan ng inyong lingkod, na nag-direct ng aking pelikula na Macho Gigolo noong 1981, Marilou Correa Diaz-Abaya - Pambansang Alagad ng Sining sa Pelikula at Sining Paghimpapawid;*

- *Ang mang-aawit at guro na nagpaunlad ng ating klasikal na dulaang pangmusika lalo na sa larangan ng opera - Professor Emiritus Fides Belza Cuyugan-Asensio – Pambansang Alagad ng Sining sa Musika;*
- *Ang tagadisenyo ng kasuotan na kinikilala sa kanyang inobasyon at pagbabago sa disenyo ng pambansang kasuotan na terno at ginawa itong moderno. Ang kanyang mga likha ay nagbigay-inspirasyon sa mga susunod na henerasyon ng mga tagadisenyo ng kasuotan, ang ina ng modernong terno, Salvacion Navera-Lim Higgins – Pambansang Alagad ng Sining sa Disenyo ng Kasuotan;*
- *Ang manunulat ng mga di malilimutang mga pelikula na bahagi ng “Second Golden Age in Philippine Cinema.” Ang kanyang mga likha ay nagtampok sa mga pang-araw-araw na realidad at mithiin ng mga karaniwang tao sa ilan sa mga pinakamahahalagang pelikulang Pilipino sa kasaysayan. Ang manunulat at manlilikha ng mga maalamat na pelikula, Ricardo “Ricky” Lee – Pambansang Alagad ng Sining sa Pelikula at Sining Paghihimpapawid;*
- *Ang mananayaw at tagadisenyo ng galaw na kinikilala para sa kanyang likha sa larangan ng sayaw na nagtatampok sa neo-ethnic na istilo ng sayaw sa mga kabataan. Ang guro, director, at isa sa mga pinaka-progresibo sa mga kontemporaryong tagadisenyo ng sayaw at galaw sa Pilipinas, Agnes Dakudao Locsin – Pambansang Alagad ng Sining sa Sayaw;*
- *Ang direktor, aktor, at guro na nagtatag ng Dulaang U.P. at U.P. Playwright’s Theater at ng kauna-unahang programang pang-akademiko sa larangan ng teatro sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas. Siya ay nagturo at nagsanay sa ilang henerasyon ng mga aktor, director, at mga tagadisenyo na kinikilala ngayon sa kani-kanilang mga larangan. Ang kinikilalang “Leon ng Dulaan sa Pilipinas,” Antonio “Tony” Ocampo Mabesa – Pambansang Alagad ng Sining sa Teatro; at*
- *Ang panghuli ay isang mahusay na mang-aawit, aktor sa tanghalan, telebisyon at pelikula na hindi malilimutan sa kanyang pagganap sa pelikulang “Himala” at “Minsa’y Isang Gamu-Gamo.” Siya rin ay naging leading lady ng inyong lingkod sa dalawang pelikulang idinerehe ng yumaong Mario O’Hara noong dekada otsenta na talaga namang pinilahan sa takilya, ang “Kastilyong Buhangin” noong 1980, at “Gaano Kita Kamahal” noong 1981. Ang leading lady ng masa na inspirasyon ng mga pangkaraniwang mamamayan, walang iba kundi ang nag-iisang Nora “Aunor” Cabaltera Villamayor – Pambansang Alagad ng Sining sa Pelikula at Sining Paghihimpapawid.*

Hindi po madali ang mabuhay bilang artista. Ang landas po ng sining ay puspos ng sakit, pait, at luha. Kaya po kinikilala natin ang natatanging buhay ng ating mga artistang nagpunyagi upang lumikha ng mga gawang sining na nagbigay inspirasyon sa buong mundo at nagpayaman sa kultura ng ating bansa.

Ang Order of the National Artist ang pinakamataas na parangal na ibinibigay sa mga artistang Pilipino na kinikilala sa kanilang natatanging kontribusyon sa pagtataguyod at pagpapaunlad ng sining at panitikang Pilipino. Ngayong araw ating ipinagdiriwang sa Senado ang ating mga bagong tanghal na Pambansang Alagad ng Sining na karapat-dapat lamang na kilalanin at bigyang papuri ng sambayanan.

Isang karangalan po sa akin na i-sponsor ang resolusyong ito.

By Senator Angara

We join our Senate President Pro Tempore Loren Legarda in sponsoring this resolution congratulating eight new national artists for the country, who include the following:

1. Agnes Locsin, a known figure in neo-ethnic choreography whose works incorporate her advocacy towards environmental awareness and preservation, is the 6th National Artist hailing from Mindanao. Prior to this distinction, Locsin was also a recipient of CCP’s Gawad Para sa Sining and Gador Award.
2. Known for her innovative, elegant, and timeless designs, fashion icon Salvacion Lim-Higgins, or Slim, not only transformed the classic Filipiniana terno into a more modern look which continues to be an inspiration to many fashion designers. Her school, Slim’s Fashion and Arts

11

School, is considered as the oldest fashion institution in the country, producing acclaimed designers such as Oliver Tolentino, Albert Andrada, Joey Samson, and Michael Cinco.

3. The late Marilou Diaz-Abaya, founder of the Marilou Diaz-Abaya Film Institute and Art Center, is regarded by many in the film industry as one of the greatest Filipino directors of all time, having made many notable cinematic works such as *Karnal*, *Jose Rizal*, *Muro-ami*, and *Bagong Buwan*, films which received critical praise not only for their technical excellence but also for their commentary on humanity and society.
4. Ricardo "Ricky" Lee, one of the most prolific screenwriters and authors of the Philippines, who achieved national icon status through his screenplays for such movies as *Himala*, *Jose Rizal*, *Karnal*, and his novel *Para kay B*, has also dedicated years of his life to sharing his knowledge and creative process to many filmmakers and writers, many of whom have gone on to become multi-awarded members of the industry.
5. Cebu native Gemino Abad, the second Cebuano to garner the status as National Artist after literary icon Resil Mojares, is an author of poems and essays which were recognized by several award-giving bodies, having received the Gawad Pambansang Alagad ni Balagtas from the Unyon ng mga Manunulat ng Pilipinas (UMPIL), U.P. Gawad Chancellor Best Literary Work, and several Palanca Awards.
6. Opera singer, actor, and librettist Fides Cuyugan-Asensio has been a well-renowned figure in Philippine theater and is the first Filipino voice scholar to be admitted by the prestigious Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. As one of the most recognizable figures in Philippine opera, Cuyugan-Asensio has used her stature to push for stronger support for the local music scene.
7. Dubbed as the "Lion of the Theater," Antonio "Tony" Mabesa has brought joy and inspiration to many generations as an actor, director, and teacher and is even considered as among the first Filipinos who laid the foundation for Philippine university theater. With his vast knowledge and experience, he led the development of theatre arts in the University of the Philippines (U.P.) Diliman.
8. Nora Cabaltera Villamayor, more famously known as Nora Aunor, is a multi-awarded actress whose roles in renowned films such as *Tatlong Taong Walang Diyos*, *Bona*, *Himala*, *The Flor Contemplacion Story*, and *Thy Womb* earned her massive success and following, and the distinction as the Philippine Cinema's "Superstar."

Who we award and give recognition to reflects not only the exemplary abilities of those who are being awarded, but also the values that we share and wish to espouse as a society. When our artists succeed and earn recognition, they not only bring honor to themselves. They do so also for their country. And that is why as a country we should elect to express our collective adulation and gratitude for their feats. Just as the English philosopher Voltaire once said, "Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well."

Sana sa pagkilala sa mga bagong national artists ng bansa, tinatanim natin sa isip ng mga susunod na henerasyon na may angking galing at talento ang Pilipino, na tunay na marami tayong maipagmamalaki sa ating lipunan. Iyan nga naman kasi ang nilalaman ng adbokasiyang Tatak Pinoy na isinusulong namin—na kayang-kaya nating mga Pilipino na magtagumpay kapag tinapat tayo sa ibang bansa. Na panahon na para iwanan ang pag-iisip na tayo ay isang atrasadong bansa, at pausbungin ang paniniwala na ang bawat Pilipino ay may maiaambag na galing at talento sa buong mundo.

Kaya kasama po ng ating mga kasamahan dito sa Senado, hinihiling namin ang mabilis na pagpasa ng resolusyon na ito.

By Senator Revilla

I would like to associate myself with the commendations delivered by our colleagues honoring our recent roster of awardees for the Order of National Artists.

Ang Order ng mga Pambansang Alagad ng Sining ay pagkilala sa mga indibidwal na kumakatawan sa pinakamataas na antas ng sining at kultura sa ating bansa. Hindi natin maitatanggi ang mga makabuluhang kontribusyon nina Slim sa Fashion Design, Direk Marilou

sa Pinilakang Tabing, at Ka Tony sa Teatro. Patuloy tayong namamangha sa lalim ng mga pagganap ni Ate Guy, sa mga makatotohanang scripts ni Ricky Lee, sa dumadagundong na tinig ni Fides Cuyugan, sa pitik ng mga sayaw ni Agnes Locsin, at mga malikhaing panulat ni Gemino Abad. Ang kanilang mga talento at kontribusyon sa larangan ng sining ay mga tunay na yaman ng ating kultura mula pa noon hanggang ngayon.

It is my humble belief that artists who have breathed life to stories, literary pieces, songs, dance, rhythm, and art pieces may also very well be considered as frontliners. *Katuwang natin ang mga likha at himig nila sa pagsuong sa mga hamon ng buhay.* They give us not only entertainment, but sweet escape. *Sa panahong nanlulumo tayo, hindi ba't sa mga awitin tayo nakakakuha ng panandaliang libangan at kawala mula sa mga pighati ng buhay? Sa mga araw na kailangan nating maaliw upang kahit sandali lamang ay malimutan natin ang mga suliranin, hindi ba't ang mga pelikula at mga dula ang ating nagiging kasama?* I think we can all agree that art and music have formed part of our lives. A song to remind us of a season, a movie to reminisce about our past, an art piece to enrich our minds. *Ano man ang panahon, may masining na likhain tayong karamay.*

Art is also an essential ingredient in social and cultural development. In our mortal existence, artistry has to confront truth critically. And depending on the interpretation of these competing realities, the artist becomes ultimately the social changemaker. Their talents are gems that have touched and inspired lives here and abroad. We are honored for their great achievements, and clearly their success is the glory of our nation. *Hangad ko ang inyong patuloy na paghubog ng mga katangi-tanging obra, o sa mga di matatawarang likha na nakaukit na sa ating kasaysayan.*

By Senator Go

It is my honor to cosponsor the resolution commending the 2022 Order of National Artists Awardees for their outstanding contributions to the development and promotion of Philippine Arts and Culture.

Despite the changes brought by the modern technological age, the fundamental value of art in our society remains. For one, works of art from Filipino artists promote creativity, showcasing Filipino talent to the world.

As a society's looking-glass, art will always be relevant because the ideas each artwork packs may serve as a force for social change. Art enables the expression of ideas and convictions. It depicts concepts and emotions, including triumph, failure, happiness, sorrow, among others, inspiring the generation of more ideas and, eventually, social action.

Only with a healthy balance between mechanical and artistically inclined human capital can a complete society be fully realized. Not only do the Philippines need a lot of scientists, but artists too.

It is for this reason that we commend our recently proclaimed national artists for their invaluable contributions to the nation's art and culture. They are:

- Gemino Henson Abad for Literature;
- Marilou Correa Diaz-Abaya for Film and Broadcast Arts;
- Fides Belza Cuyugan-Asensio for Music;
- Salvacion Navera Lim-Higgins for Fashion Design;
- Ricardo "Ricky" Lee for Film and Broadcast Arts;
- Agnes Dakudao Locsin for Dance;
- Antonio "Tony" Ocampo Mabesa for Theater; and
- Nora "Aunor" Cabaltera Villamayor for Film and Broadcast Arts.

Nandoon po ako noong sila ay pinarangalan ni dating Pangulong Rodrigo Duterte.

We admire these artists and creators because they bring all sorts of emotions and inspiration to their communities while also offering thoughtful critique of society. As a result, communities are inspired to actively participate in national discussions and, thereby, social progress.

May this honor continue to motivate more Filipinos to produce more art and contribute more to the nation's artistic community in order to sustain the vitality and vibrancy of our culture.

Mabuhay po kayong lahat!

With that, may I request to be made coauthor of this resolution.

N

By Senator Dela Rosa

It is my honor to stand and cosponsor Proposed Senate Resolution Nos. 16, 22, and 152, commending the 2022 Order of National Artists Awardees for their outstanding contributions to the development and promotion of Philippine Arts and Culture.

Many of us, whether or not we are aware of it, have been changed by art. I have met and been influenced by so many artists in the course of my life as a public servant. *Naging bahagi rin ako ng theater arts noong nasa PMA ako. Sa ngayon, ako po at ang aking pamilya ay mga taga-suporta ng sining.*

Artists such as Mindanawon sculptor Kublai Millan, Davao-based designer Edgar Buyan, and digital artist Franc Almirañez are only some of those whom I and my family have had the privilege of knowing. It is such a huge blessing for us to see, wear, and appreciate their work. *Ang aking mga anak din, they are into art, lalo na iyong aking pangalawang anak.* There are paintings she has on display in her home that are her original works.

I, for one, understand that art, and artists, are essential to a culture. They give us a new perspective, they help us to see beauty in the most unexpected circumstances, and they lead us to realize the power of a paintbrush, a written word, or even a movement in a dance.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a time of lockdowns, when safety meant being away, and sometimes even staying away. The suffering, then, was caused by the sickness, but it was also aggravated by the isolation.

One might ask, how did we survive? How did we manage to live through it all? Many of us sought comfort in music, TV shows, books, and films. It is true, therefore, what they say: in the time of the pandemic, we turned to art. We turned to art for solace, and solace is what we found.

Kung kaya malaki ang ating pasasalamat sa ating 2022 National Artists, sina Nora Aunor, Fides Cuyugan-Asensio, Ricky Lee, Agnes Locsin, Gemino Abad, Salvacion Lim-Higgins, Marilou Diaz-Abaya, at Antonio "Tony" Mabesa.

We thank them, not only for the valuable contributions they have made to keep alive Philippine arts and culture. We thank them, more importantly, because through their work, Filipinos are placed in a better position to understand beauty in all forms. Through their work, we are given the chance, not just to hope for a better world, but to actually contribute to its making.

COAUTHORS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, all senators present were made coauthors of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 16.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 16

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 16, taking into consideration Proposed Senate Resolution Nos. 22 and 152, was adopted by the Body, subject to style.

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 119

With the consent of the Body, upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 119, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL WEIGHTLIFTING TEAM ON ITS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN THE 2022 ASIAN YOUTH AND JUNIOR WEIGHTLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD LAST JULY 15-25, 2022 IN TASHKENT CITY, UZBEKISTAN,

taking into consideration Proposed Resolution No. 146.



With the permission of the Body, only the title of the resolution was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR LAPID

At the instance of Senator Lapid and upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, following is the sponsorship speech of Senator Lapid on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 119, which was deemed read and inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*:

Narito po ako ngayon para i-sponsor ang isang resolusyon upang bigyang pagkilala ang ating National Weightlifting Team na nag-uwi po ng karangalan sa ating bayan mula po sa 2022 Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships na ginanap noong July 15-25, 2022 sa Tashkent City, Uzbekistan.

Hindi po maliit na karangalan ang kanilang natamo. Ang ating delegasyon po ay nakapag-uwi ng 15 ginto, dalawang pilak, at tatlong medalyang tanso mula sa nasabing torneo.

Sa kasalukuyan, ang Pilipinas ay nasa ikapitong pwesto sa youth category at nagtala ng summary score na 549/8, samantalang nasa ika-siyam na pwesto naman sa Junior category na nagtala ng summary score na 421/6, ang pinakamataas na pwesto na nakamit ng bansa sa kasaysayan ng continental meet na nabanggit sa kabila ng limitasyon sa training dahil sa pandemya. Kaya naman ganoon na lamang ang ating pananabik sa kanilang pagsabak sa mga darating na kompetisyon na South East Asian Games at Asian Games sa 2023 at sa Paris Olympics sa 2024.

Ang delegasyon na ating pinadala sa nabanggit na paligsahan ay binubuo ng mga kabataan na produkto ng grassroots sports program, na kumukuha ng inspirasyon mula sa tagumpay na nakamit ng ating weightlifting champion at Olympic Gold medalist na si Hidilyn Diaz. Si Angeline L. Colonia ay nagtala ng bagong world at Asian records matapos niyang buhatin ang 62 kilograms sa snatch na bumasag sa kasalukuyang world at Asian youth record na 61 kgs. para sa women's 40kg category, samantalang ang kanyang pinagsanib na winning lift na nagtala ng 134 kgs ay nagtakda ng bagong continental youth record.

Ang mga nagwagi po ay ang mga sumusunod:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Prince Keil B. Delos Santos | – 2 bronze, Youth Men's 49 kg |
| 2. Angeline L. Colonia | – 2 gold, 1 silver, Youth Women's 40 kg |
| 3. Rose Jean A. Ramos | – 4 golds, 1 silver, 1 bronze, Youth Women's 45 kg |
| 4. Rosalinda B. Faustino | – 3 golds, Youth Women's 49 kg |
| 5. Rosegie A. Ramos | – 3 golds, Junior Women's 49 kg |
| 6. Vanessa P. Sarno | – 3 golds, Junior Women's 71 kg |

Isang sumusulong na larangan po ang weightlifting sa ating bansa. Ito po ang kaisa-isang sport kung saan tayo po ay may gold medal sa Olympics mula po sa kabayanihan ni Hidilyn Diaz sa Tokyo Olympics.

Dito po sa Senado, dapat po nating i-encourage ang mga atleta natin sa sports na ito sapagkat sila po ay magbibigay ng karangalan sa ating bansa sa marami pa pong pagkakataon.

Kaya po ngayong hapon ay ini-sponsor ko po ang resolusyong ito upang kilalanin ng Senado ang tagumpay ng ating weightlifting team sa 2022 Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships sa Uzbekistan.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECHES ON PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 119

Pursuant to the manifestation of Senator Villanueva, following are the cosponsorship speeches on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 119, which were deemed read and inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*:

q

By Senator Revilla

Today, I rise to congratulate our young Filipino weightlifters who brought honor to our country when they bagged awards at the 2022 Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships. *Ang pinakitang lakas at gilas ng mga kabataang atletang ito ay patunay na napakayaman ng ating bansa sa husay at talento. Hindi hadlang ang edad upang maipamalas ang galing ng Pilipino.*

We also take this opportunity to commend our young Filipina weightlifters who once again proved that prowess knows no gender. They have exemplified that with grit and dedication, one triumphs even over the preconceived notions and biases. For truly, in the end, hard work breaks down all limitations.

Muli, isang pagpupugay at masigabong palakpakan para sa ating mga kabataang atleta. Nawa ay patuloy ninyo pang pagyabungin ang inyong mga talento.

By Senator Go

As Chair of the Senate Committee on Sports and an advocate for long-term sports development in the country, I congratulate and commend the Philippine National Weightlifting Team on their outstanding performance in the 2022 Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships held on July 15 to 25 in Uzbekistan.

With a total of 15 gold medals, two silver medals, and three bronze medals won, the Philippines achieved its best results to date in the said competition. Our women weightlifters were credited for all 15 gold medals, all two silver medals, and one bronze medal to the tally.

Our very own first Olympic gold medal since we joined is from weightlifting, courtesy of Hidilyn Diaz. We have a very promising future in this sport and we hope to become a weightlifting powerhouse in Asia.

Likewise, this incredible performance will become a source of inspiration and hope for our young and aspiring athletes to take on the international sporting scene and bring pride to the country as well.

Makaaasa po kayong umpisa pa lamang ito ng muling pag-arangkada ng bansa sa mundo ng palasakan. Bilang Chair ng Committee on Sports, ipaglalaman ko po na muling mailagay ang ating bansa sa mapa ng iba't ibang sports sa pamamagitan ng pagtutulak ng mga polisiya at batas na layuning mas pagandahin ang grassroots sports development sa bansa.

Muli, congratulations po sa ating National Weightlifting Team! Saludo kami sa karangalang ibinigay ninyo sa ating bansa. Mabuhay kayong lahat!

I also request that I be made coauthor of this resolution.

By Senator Dela Rosa

I rise to cosponsor Proposed Senate Resolution No. 119 and 146, commending and congratulating the Young Filipino Weightlifters for winning the 2022 Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on July 15 to 25, 2022, and recording the country's best finish in this Regional Sports Event.

I remember last year, as if it was just yesterday, when we were all on our feet in praises, pride, and honor for the wins of our national athletes. Today, we are once again in awe of the feat that our young Filipino weightlifters have brought home to our country. Champions again, in front of every nation included in the regional sports event.

These exemplary young athletes are the following, with the number of medals they won for the country:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| a. Vanessa P. Sarno, 18 years old | – 3 golds |
| b. Angeline L. Colonia, 15 years old | – 2 golds, 1 silver |
| c. Rose Jean Ramos, 17 years old | – 4 golds, 1 silver, 1 bronze |
| d. Rosalinda B. Faustino, 15 years old | – 3 golds |
| e. Rosegie Ramos, 17 years old | – 3 golds |
| f. Prince Keil B. Delos Santos, 15 years | – 2 bronzes |

ph

The way that exemplary men and women worked hard for their success, this team went through the same. They already know what it is like to struggle and sacrifice for training while they are beginning to experience the real world. They know what it is like to feel sorrow when one fails despite the hard work exerted. They know how humility and gratitude to the people around them play a huge role in their winnings. So, when we see them as they are, as young people, and when we see how they live their lives with diligence and selflessness, only then will we come close to understanding the weight they had to bear on their shoulders.

Sabi nga ng Coach ni Olympic gold medalist Hidilyn Diaz noong siya ay nagsisimula pa lamang sa national team, "Kung hindi nila kaya mag bigay ng inspirasyon sa iyo, ikaw ang magbibigay ng inspirasyon sa kanila. Kung kaya mong buhatin ang mabibigat na barbell, kaya mo buhatin ang problema mo. Naniniwala ako sa iyo. Laban, para sa bayan."

I can just imagine the trials being faced by this team that attempted to hinder their way to success; still, they marched on and turned their weaknesses into their greatest strengths. They lifted those barbells and set a record that earned the Philippines its 15 gold medals, defeating many athletes from other similarly impressive countries. With those gold medals, we also heard our national anthem being played 15 times in front of Asia. There is nothing more that we could say that would capture the honor of what they had achieved.

When we look closer into the life of these athletes, we will see beyond the achievements they gained through their medals and winnings. When they lifted that barbell, they did it because they know the weight of their efforts, for their friends, families, and countrymen. As Sarno has shared in an interview, "*Eto po, Panalo po natin ito.*" Once again, congratulations, and thank you, proud kami sa inyo.

Maraming salamat sa pag uwi ng mga medalya para sa ating bansang Pilipinas.

COSPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

In cosponsoring Proposed Senate Resolution No. 119, Senator Villanueva delivered the following remarks:

It is with tremendous pride and honor that we congratulate these young weightlifters who bagged 15 gold medals, two silver medals, and three bronze medals in Uzbekistan last July. What an incredible feat. To quote Mr. Monico Puentevella, President of the Samahang Weightlifting ng Pilipinas, "Our future is here." Without a doubt, these young Filipinos will further cement our position in the world stage as a nation that produces world-class weightlifters. *Sila ang susunod sa yapak ni Hidilyn Diaz, our Olympic gold medalist.*

We congratulate Vanessa Sarno, siblings Rosegie and Rose Jean Ramos, Rosalinda Faustino, Angeline Colonia, Prince Keil Delos Santos, their families, coaches, and the entire Samahang Weightlifting ng Pilipinas.

COAUTHORS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, all senators were made coauthors of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 119.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 119

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 119, taking into consideration Proposed Resolution No. 146, was adopted by the Body, subject to style.

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 161

With the consent of the Body, upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 161, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE ENTIRE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION ON THEIR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN SKATE ASIA 2022, HELD FROM AUGUST 6 TO AUGUST 14, 2022 IN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA.

With the permission of the Body, only the title of the resolution was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*.

SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva, in recognizing almost every week the incredible achievements and exemplary performance of Filipino athletes, noted how the country is blessed with an abundance of talent and excellence in the field of sports, and thereafter lauded the Philippine delegation to Skate Asia 2022 for winning 45 medals, including 28 golds, 13 silvers, and four bronze medals.

He then congratulated Erphy Claire Mackenzie, Dawn Jasmine Gothong, Stacia Katherine Lee, Jodi Catherine Dino, Anicka Shanel Tan, Eriana Ericka Tan, Shekinah Vianne Angeles, Caitlin Geci Cos, Sophia Vielle Triste, Nadine How Ong, Nicole How Ong, Elisha Villanueva, Natasha How Ong as well as their families, coaches, and everyone else who assisted them. He stated that the honor bestowed upon the young athletes inspires more Filipinos to continue to support and promote the country's sports programs and local athletes.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR LAPID

At the instance of Senator Lapid, and upon motion of Senator Villanueva, following is the sponsorship speech of Senator Lapid on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 161, which was deemed read and inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*:

Mga kagalang galang na mga kasama sa Bulwagang ito, ngayong araw ating bibigyan ng pagkilala at pagpupugay ang ating mahuhusay at batang-batang mga figure skaters na bahagi ng Philippine delegation sa Skate Asia 2022.

Napakalaking karangalan po ang naiwi nila sapagkat hindi lamang kaunting panalo kundi napakalaking panalo po ang kanilang natamo sa kompetisyon na dinaluhan ng pinakamagagaling na ice skaters mula sa buong Asya.

Sa kabuuan po ay humakot sila ng 45 na medalya, kabilang ang 28 na ginto, 13 na pilak, at apat na tansong medalya.

Ang mga nagkamit ng mga medalya ay sina:

- Erphy Claire Mackenzie - 6 gold medals
- Dawn Jasmine Gothong - 5 gold medals, 1 silver medal
- Stacia Katherine Lee - 3 gold medals
- Jodi Catherine Dino - 2 gold medals, 2 silver medals
- Anicka Shanel Tan - 2 gold medals, 1 silver medal, 1 bronze medal
- Eriana Ericka Tan - 2 gold medals, 1 silver medal
- Shekinah Vianne Angeles - 2 gold medals, 1 silver medal
- Caitlin Geci Cos - 2 gold medals, 1 bronze medal
- Sophia Vielle Triste - 1 gold medal, 2 silver medals, 1 bronze medal
- Nadine Adrianna How Ong - 1 gold medal, 2 silver medals
- Nicole Alessandra How Ong - 1 gold medal, 2 silver medals
- Elisha Rae Villanueva - 1 gold medal, 1 bronze medal
- Natasha Alisson How Ong - 1 silver medal

Hindi po gaanong prestihyoso ang ice skating sa ating bansa dala marahil na tayo po ay walang winter season at kakaunti lamang ang mga ice skating rink sa atin. Subalit nais ko lang

N

pong gamitin ang pagkakataong ito upang sabihin sa ating magiging na skaters na nakikita po kayo ng inyong Senado at kinikilala po natin ang inyong tagumpay.

Narapat lamang po na bigyan ng Senado ng pagkilala at pagpupugay ang delegasyon ng Pilipinas sa Skate Asia 2022, na ginanap sa Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia noong Agosto 6 hanggang Agosto 14, 2022.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECHES ON PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 161

Pursuant to the manifestation of Senator Villanueva, following are the cosponsorship speeches on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 161, which were deemed read and inserted into the *Journal* and *Record of the Senate*:

By Senator Revilla

I join our colleagues in congratulating the entire Philippine delegation on their exemplary performance at the Skate Asia 2022.

Hindi biro ang naiwi nilang 45 medalya. At mas lalong nakakatuwang isipin na sa musmos nilang mga edad, ay nakapag-uwi na sila ng karangalan sa ating bansa. When we watch their ice skates glide through the rink, we feel the magic that the sport brings. But behind the enchantment it brings is the discipline that it entails. They train long hours to master the sport, and it takes determination to be one with the ice. As we watch them in their element, we also witness the fruits of their hard work.

Nakamamangha ito, at nakakahanga ang kanilang talento.

May you continue to be inspired to keep gliding through ice and life's ups and downs.

Again, to our artists on ice, congratulations on your win!

By Senator Go

I am glad to cosponsor this resolution commending the entire Philippine Delegation for bagging a total of 45 medals during the Skate Asia 2022 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from August 6 to 14.

Our Filipino athletes have once again proved their sporting excellence to the whole world.

The whole Philippine team has displayed incredible sportsmanship and resilience by winning medals and bringing honor to our country. They have won 28 gold, 13 silver, and four bronze medals.

With that being said, I would like to commend each and every one of you, as you are all legends and inspirations to us all.

I am confident that this is not the last that our Filipino athletes will exhibit such exemplary performance in international sporting events. Despite these unprecedented times they have successfully bounced back from any setbacks and prevailed over challenges in life.

Kahapon lang kasama natin si Kayla Sanchez, Fil-Canadian Olympic swimmer na naglaro para sa Canada noong Tokyo Olympics. Nanalo siya ng silver at bronze medal. Ngayon, lumipat siya sa atin para i-representa naman ang Pilipinas sa upcoming international competitions tulad ng Paris Olympics. Sigurado ako na marami pang tulad ni Kayla ang gustong magtayo ng bandila ng Pilipinas sa mga sports competitions lalo na kung buhusan natin ng suporta ang ating mga atleta.

As Chair of the Senate Committee on Sports, I hope that we continue to recognize the talents of our Filipino athletes and let us remain steadfast in providing all the necessary support they need to hone their abilities and motivate them for even greater achievements ahead of them.

It is in this regard that I extend my support to the resolution and request to be considered a coauthor.

Once again, congratulations to the Philippine delegation for this significant achievement. Continue chasing your dreams and I wish you all the very best in the future.

COAUTHORS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, all senators were made coauthors of Proposed Senate Resolution No.161.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 161

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 161 was adopted by the Body, subject to style.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1338, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING RONDALLA TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR MUSIC TEACHERS

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Culture and the Arts; Basic Education; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1339, entitled

AN ACT TO ENSURE GENDER-RESPONSIVE AND INCLUSIVE PROTOCOLS AND PROGRAMMING TO ADDRESS THE GENDERDIFFERENTIATED NEEDS OF WOMEN DURING COVID-19 AND OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS, EMERGENCIES, AND DISASTERS

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality; Health and Demography; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1340, entitled

AN ACT PRESERVING THE INDIGENOUS SPORTS AND GAMES OF THE PHILIPPINES

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Culture and the Arts; and Sports

Senate Bill No. 1341, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING PROTECTION TO CONSUMERS AND MERCHANTS ENGAGED IN INTERNET TRANSACTIONS, CREATING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE E-COMMERCE BUREAU, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1342, entitled

AN ACT ADOPTING INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT AS A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE HOLISTIC AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COASTAL AND MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES, ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL COASTAL GREENBELT ACTION PLAN, OTHER SUPPORTING MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1343, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A RESULTS-BASED NATIONAL EVALUATION POLICY

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Economic Affairs; And Finance

Senate Bill No. 1344, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Public Works; Economic Affairs; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1345, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE PHILIPPINE DISASTER AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; Ways and Means; and Finance

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 231, entitled

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO

96

CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE, LAND-GRABBING, AND ILLEGAL LOGGING AND QUARRYING AFFECTING THE MASUNGI GEORESERVE AND THE REST OF THE UPPER MARIKINA RIVER BASIN PROTECTED LANDSCAPE

Introduced by Senator Hontiveros

To the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 232, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING KHEVINE CRUZ FOR WINNING THE SILVER MEDAL IN THE U-11 BOYS' SINGLES CATEGORY IN THE WORLD TABLE TENNIS YOUTH CONTENDER TOURNAMENT HELD IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 6:47 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:54 p.m., the session was resumed.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Rising on a matter of collective and personal privilege, Senator Pimentel spoke about ^{the} seemingly arbitrary and hasty decision of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to change the design of banknotes as well as their material component from abaca to plastic.

Following is the full text of Senator Pimentel's privilege speech:

Our fiat money is losing value very fast compared to the almighty U.S. dollar. The last report showed P58.99 to US\$1. Our banknotes too are losing whatever intrinsic value they still have. I am worried for our overall economic health, and I am worried too about our abaca farmers.

In addition to the unfortunate deaths of our five hero first responders, who we honored yesterday, *Super Typhoon Karding* left us with around P1.3 billion in damages, mostly in agriculture. Since the typhoon originated from the east and abaca is grown on the east side of the Philippines, then I am very sure that our abaca farmers had been damaged too by *Karding*.

Before Manny Pacquiao made the Philippines famous, there was Flash Elorde. And before the Flash, there was abaca.

The abaca, also known as Manila Hemp, is a craft that is vital to the Philippine economy. In fact, our country is the largest producer of abaca fiber in the world. In 2021, the top five abaca producers in our country are: 1) Catanduanes, accounting for 28.98% share of the total production; 2) Davao Oriental at 12.89%; 3) Surigao at 8.73%; 4) Bukidnon at 4.79%; and 5) Davao del Sur at 4.37%.



For centuries, abaca fiber, because of its durability, flexibility, and resistance to salt water, among others, has established itself as a superior material for cordages and ropes used in naval warfare. With the waning of naval war, abaca found its use in oil rigging, and due to the excellent qualities of high porosity, high tensile, and folding strengths, its use extended to more sophisticated products like filter paper, high-tech capacitors, currency notes, electrolytic insulators, and nonwoven cloth. It is interesting to note that Manila paper has an abaca base and is used to make strong and sturdy envelopes known as the Manila envelope.

In our country, Philippine banknotes are made with 80% cotton and 20% abaca. Needless to say, Manila hemp provides limitless opportunities and sources of income for our abaca farmers. Truth be told, abaca should be considered a blessing to our country, bringing financial returns for us and giving our country its own identity. Abaca is the Philippines, and the Philippines is abaca.

Unfortunately, last December 11, 2021, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) announced its plan to print and use P1,000 banknotes made of polymer. Polymer is a high tech-sounding synonym for plastic. Per the BSP timetable, we are now at the stage where we are testing 10 million pieces of the polymer P1,000 note. Beginning this October 2022, the BSP's plan is to issue and release for circulation a further 490 million pieces of this plastic banknote, for a total of 500 pieces circulating together with the 1,000-peso note, which already numbers 1.5 billion pieces. On the issue of the design of our 1,000-peso legal tender, I have noticed that we now have three designs coexisting among themselves, which are all legal tender.

I asked the (Senate) Page to show around the samples of the said bank notes worth P1,000 but bearing different designs. The new 1,000-peso polymer banknote replaces the heroes on the notes with a face of an eagle. This is a question of design shift from the hero series to the flora and fauna one. This is another matter that this Representation wants to bring our attention to. However, another issue more concerning is the shift in the material that we used for our banknotes—the shift from cotton and abaca to polymer or plastic.

Antonio Pigafetta, Italian chronicler of Ferdinand Magellan's expedition, reported that indigenous Filipinos were already wearing clothes made from abaca fiber.

As early as 1825, abaca had been used in the Philippines to generate foreign exchange. Abaca is so much a part of our history and of the Filipino identity. So why shift from abaca—which shouts "I am Filipino" to the entire world—to plastic, which is considered as nothing more than plastic in the entire world?

The shift to polymer will be detrimental to the country's abaca industry, especially when the country's income from the exports of abaca fibers and manufactures amount to US\$97.1 million per year.

Fearing the loss of market and income, a group of farmers urged the Bangko Central ng Pilipinas to stop issuing the new polymer P1,000 bills and to continue using abaca fibers to produce the banknote.

According to the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF), the BSP's decision to discontinue the use of abaca in making P1000 bills has reduced the market for the product and, thus, has lessened the income of 200,000 abaca farming families in 56 provinces.

How can we promote the use of abaca when we ourselves are abandoning and not using it in the manufacture of our currency?

This Representation humbly submits the idea that products of our lands and of our hands unique to the Philippines, animals, sceneries, and events, which give us national pride should be prioritized in the making and designing of our coins and banknotes. Let our pride be shown in our banknotes.

The Philippines already has the not-so-desirable reputation of being the top three plastic polluter of the oceans. We are already taking measures to lessen our plastic usage and reckless disposal, and yet we, through the BSP, are finding ways to introduce more plastic into our ecosystem—this time, through our money.

In a recent study conducted, plastic banknotes are almost three times worse for the environment than their paper equivalents.

To respond to the alarming situation of our abaca farmers and their feeling of having been abandoned by the BSP, this Representation has filed Proposed Senate Resolution No. 3, entitled "A Resolution Calling for an Investigation, In Aid of Legislation, on the Frequent Changes in the Philippine Bank Notes and Coins Initiated by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP)."

The resolution was referred to the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies on August 9, 2022. The resolution asks the following questions:

1. Who else or what other agencies or offices are involved or consulted whenever a decision changing the monetary design of the Philippine peso is made by the BSP?
2. How much is the cost to the Filipino taxpayers whenever banknotes and coinage design is changed?
3. What were the problems encountered by the BSP when the new design series and the dollars were demonetized?
4. Whether or not there have been complaints from the public?
5. What are the reasons behind the BSP's decision to change the current 1,000-peso banknote said to be the most difficult to counterfeit, to be improved by the new P1,000 polymer note?
6. Whether or not the new 1,000-peso polymer note is truly a limited series considering that the BSP announced that around 500 million pieces of this new polymer note or 500 billion pesos in total worth will be printed.

In addition to the question we already asked in our resolution, we would also want the following questions answered: We have noticed that the new BSP logo is a perfect round, blue shape, featuring three gold stars, and a stylized Philippine eagle with white strokes, but we are more familiar with the logo on the right where a side view of an eagle in white outline against a blue background, which logo is still found in the BSP building. Is there a new BSP logo now? Has this been changed officially, and what is the cost of changing the new BSP logo?

The new logo is found in the polymer note. The old logo is found in the two other designs of the 1,000-peso note. Are polymer notes more durable than abaca notes? Are polymer notes more hygienic? Some say it will be more hygienic but only if you give the polymer note a bath once in a while, like it is a pet.

Are we going to change all the national heroes and historical personalities with a flora and fauna design, or some other design? Will the printing of polymer notes render the BSP's existing multibillion-peso worth of printing machines useless and idle? When we finally decide to shift to polymer notes, will banks need to replace their counting machines and ATMs so that the new notes can be accommodated? Are polymer notes really more difficult to counterfeit considering that the security features on polymer notes are printed and not embedded in the paper like in the paper-abaca banknotes?

So, there is really a need to inquire into the reasons for the BSP's seemingly arbitrary and hasty decisions. They have changed our bank notes design, and they have taken out the abaca in favor of plastic. We, legislators, and the public at large have been generally taken by surprise. There is a lot of opacity in the entire process of decision making in these matters. The BSP cannot be left to itself as if it is a republic unto itself. Legislation on these matters will, therefore, definitely be beneficial to the State.

So, with this, I urge the committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies to prioritize the committee hearings on this particular matter.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

At the outset, Senator Cayetano (P) agreed with Senator Pimentel on the need to further look into the BSP's decision to change the design of the country's banknotes. Disclosing that she was also studying a resolution regarding the matter, she said that she had questions for BSP in addition to the ones Senator Pimentel had already propounded.

First, she noted the use of the new Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas logo on the newly-issued banknotes. She then pointed to the screen to show the difference between the old and new BSP

logos. Senate President Zubiri noted that the eagle in the new logo resembles the Garuda in Indonesia's national emblem.

When asked by Senator Cayetano (P) what year the BSP logo was adopted, Senator Pimentel said that he was not aware as to when, but that he was certain that the new logo was the one used in the initial 10 million pieces of polymer banknotes issued and the additional 490 million pieces that would soon be released. Meanwhile, he stated that the old logo can still be found on old banknotes and is the one displayed in the BSP Building. He stated that at the appropriate time, he would question the BSP about their decision to change their logo and whether it is that simple to change it without cost.

Senate President Zubiri stated his preference for the old logo which is more distinctive and closely resembles the Philippine eagle. He reiterated that the new logo resembles the Indonesian Garuda, which is a half-man and half-eagle symbol. Senator Cayetano (P) stated that BSP's new logo is similar to the Philippine Air Force logo, which Senator Dela Rosa confirmed.


Regarding her second point, Senator Cayetano (P) cited a BSP digital document, titled "Why are 1000-Piso Polymer Banknotes Smarter, Cleaner, and Stronger? #PisowithBenefits #SmarterCleanerStronger." She stated that she had been studying the document in preparation for her resolution, and that she was struck by the BSP's claim that polymer banknotes are more sustainable and environmentally friendly than the old banknotes. She hoped to validate the claim, as well as the other claims in the document, that polymer banknotes have a smaller carbon footprint because they require less water and energy to produce, and cause less environmental toxicity.

Senator Pimentel agreed, saying the BSP could be confronted with questions about their decision to switch from biodegradable to non-biodegradable polymer for banknotes.

Senator Cayetano (P) recalled that when she was a new senator, the discussion about using less or no plastic had just begun because it was not a very popular issue at the time. Nonetheless, she stated that, in addition to banning the use of plastic, the Body went further by passing the Extended Producer Responsibility Bill in the previous Congress, which lapsed into law.

She stated that because there was little awareness and information about the environmental damage caused by plastic to the environment, she watched as cities began to pass their own ordinances banning the use of plastic after realizing the environmental damage it could cause. For example, she described how a popular bakery in a mall was forced to close due to a violation of Muntinlupa's ordinance prohibiting the use of single-ply plastic. She also mentioned the different ploys used by malls and department stores to promote the use of reusable bags. She however stated that because many people would still not bring their own *bayong* or reusable bags when shopping, sellers were forced to provide brown paper bags to carry take outs and items purchased from their stores. As a result, she admitted that she could not help but comment on the environmental impact of the widespread use of paper bags, noting that more trees are being cut down in order to eliminate plastic. Similarly, she stated that she would like to weigh in on the benefits and costs of using polymer instead of abaca in the production of banknotes.

She surmised that one reason the BSP considers polymer banknotes to be more sustainable is that, as previously stated, less water and energy are used in the production of polymer bills compared to paper bills. She then described her experience at a papermaking class in which they used a lot of water to produce paper. Nonetheless, she stated that she would like to understand the reason behind the decision of BSP in changing the material used in producing banknotes from abaca to polymer, saying that the end result is still a plastic product despite the fact that less water and energy were used.



Senator Pimentel believed that, in addition to the issue of sustainability, the Body should also investigate the security of the new banknotes, fearing that their texture makes them easier to counterfeit.

Senator Cayetano (P) referred back to the BSP digital document, stating that “A bank of England study estimated a reduction of up to 53 percent in greenhouse gas emissions upon their shift to polymer banknotes from paper banknotes.” Furthermore, she said that the document likewise stated that polymer banknotes last two to five times longer than abaca paper notes. However, when it comes to the environmental impact of polymer banknotes, she believed that abaca banknotes are still preferable because abaca is a natural product that is biodegradable and thus easier to dispose of. On the other hand, she expressed concern that old and damaged polymer banknotes would simply pile up because there would be no place to dispose of them once they are no longer used.

Senator Pimentel surmised that there would only be two options for disposing of polymer banknotes: removing all markings and dumping them in landfills, or incineration.

Senator Cayetano (P) expressed hope that the matter would also be referred to the Committee on Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking as she would also like to examine it from a sustainability standpoint.

At this point, Senate President Zubiri expressed support for Senator Pimentel’s call to keep abaca as the country’s banknote material, averring that producing polymer banknotes is a waste of resources. He proposed that, in addition to conducting an investigation held by the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies and the Committee on Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking, the Body come up with a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate urging the Central Bank to resume its use of abaca, an indigenous and natural material, in the production of banknotes in order to support the industry.


Senator Cayetano (P) believed that it is her responsibility to bring to the attention to the Body all the sustainability issues mentioned and to weigh one issue against another, given that the BSP’s shift in the use of materials for banknotes also encompasses SDG 8 (Decent Work), because abaca farmers would be affected. Above all, she stated that the use of abaca products is so inextricably linked to Filipino identity that it should not be easy to abandon its use as a material to produce the country’s banknotes.

Senate President Zubiri confirmed the statement of Senator Cayetano (P), adding that Filipinos are not Europeans for the BSP to make the country’s banknotes’ design similar to the design of euro banknotes, especially since the Philippines is not an oil-producing country; thus, all the polymer used in producing the new banknotes is imported.

Senator Pimentel cautioned that if BSP produces new polymer banknotes for denominations other than P1,000, a greater percentage of abaca production would be affected.

Unlike abaca banknotes, Senate President Zubiri believed that the new polymer banknotes would be difficult to keep because they could not be folded the way the old banknotes could due to their sensitive features.

Senator Pimentel, agreeing that the use of polymer banknotes was impractical, supported Senate President Zubiri’s recommendation to come up with a sense of the Senate through a resolution. He expressed support for the suggestions, stating that the Body would work on them in a bipartisan manner.



Senate President Zubiri associated himself with the privilege speech of Senator Pimentel, and expressed his full support for the local abaca farmers as well. He reminded the Body of two important considerations in the design process of the Philippine currency: practicality and security. He stated that the banknote under consideration should be easily usable in any transaction, with adequate safeguards against counterfeiting.

He agreed with Senator Pimentel on the importance of the abaca industry, saying that the endemic abaca, internationally known as Manila hemp, has put the Philippines on the map, with the country supplying approximately 86.1% of the world's abaca fiber requirements. He also informed the Body that aside from the Philippines, only Ecuador and Costa Rica commercially produce abaca fiber, and it was the Philippines' leading agricultural export product in 2020, with exports totaling US\$1.64 billion.

Asked if the decision to use polymer was influenced by the country's limited abaca supply, Senator Pimentel stated that it was not the case, and that the country was not running out of abaca.

When asked how the switch to polymer would affect the abaca industry, he echoed the response of some of the stakeholders he spoke with, saying that because the P1,000-polymer bill is still in the experimental stage and most banknotes are still made from abaca, it was too early to make an assessment. He then reiterated that supply is not an issue, and that the Philippine abaca industry is capable of supplying the abaca required for incorporation into the country's banknotes to the BSP, its suppliers, and contractors.

Senator Villanueva agreed, stating that Senators Padilla from Bicol, Dela Rosa from Mindanao, and Tolentino and Revilla from Cavite could attest to the abundance of abaca plantations in the aforementioned areas. Furthermore, he stated that he was able to travel to Catanduanes several times and witness firsthand the magnitude of abaca production in the province. He stated that Catanduanes supplies one third of the country's total annual production, with Northern Samar and Davao Oriental producing the most abaca by province.

He also informed the Body that abaca is known for its tenacity and strength, being three times stronger than cotton and two times stronger than sisal, a type of agave plant native to Mexico. He also stated that in the 1820s, when abaca fiber samples were brought to the United States (U.S.) by a U.S. Navy Lieutenant, it quickly gained a reputation as one of the strongest materials for marine cordage, owing to its superior tensile strength and proven durability under water. He stated that the aforementioned data was obtained from The Philippine Abaca Industry Roadmap 2021-2025. He wondered if the claim that polymer is two to five times stronger than abaca is true.

Senator Pimentel opined that the adjectives "strong" and "stronger" are inappropriate. He surmised that the polymer banknote would last two to three times longer than abaca, although he said his opinion was more of a theoretical prediction. He also stated that real-life transactions involving the use of the bank note should be considered, and that unrealistic conditions prescribed for handling it, such as sufficient length of the wallet and prohibitions on folding, should be ignored. He then reasoned that if such prescriptions were followed, the strength attribution mentioned by Senator Villanueva would be true. However, he believed that actual situations demonstrating how Filipinos handle paper currency should be considered.

Senator Villanueva emphasized that when it comes to banknotes, practicality and security should always be considered. He stated that he had lost track of the most recent prescription for handling banknotes, as well as what the BSP had done in that regard.

When asked if counterfeiting activities could be prevented by improving the embedded security features of the bill—features that, according to reports, the polymer bill carried, Senator Pimentel responded that some chemically-embedded security features are only possible for paper and not for

gh

polymer banknotes. However, he stated that security features could be added through the printing process. He believed that paper banknotes are more flexible because both strategies could be used to add security features in the printing process or during paper preparation itself. Senator Villanueva surmised that using common sense might help in deciding what material would be best for the country's bank notes.

He believed that abaca should be protected, preserved, and promoted as part of the country's heritage, and that government should invest in more research and development activities, improve and broaden abaca farming-related training courses offered by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), introduce new technologies in production and processing, as well as in the treatment of plant diseases, and provide more support to abaca farmers in general. He urged the senators to prioritize the abaca farmers' needs because of their economic contribution and because millions of Filipinos rely on abaca for a living.

Finally, he stated that he would be fully supportive of a resolution that would ensure the protection of the abaca industry, while also being aware of the challenges that the government faces in producing the nation's banknotes. He then thanked Senator Pimentel and stated that he was looking forward to participating in the hearings to be conducted by the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies, as well as the Committee on Sustainable Development Goals, Innovations and Futures Thinking.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR TOLENTINO

At this juncture, Senator Tolentino shared Senator Pimentel's concern about the BSP's recent actuations: 1) changing its logo; 2) changing the material used in the country's currency; and 3) previous statements that do not appear to be reflective of the current Philippine peso fluctuation. He added that the BSP had previously stated had that it would not raise interest rates; however, it eventually followed the U.S. Federal Reserve.

Furthermore, he drew the Body's attention to a piece of information provided to him about the BSP, that it is one of only two central banks in the world to withdraw from an agreement promoting digital currency. In that regard, he believed that if an investigation were to be launched, it should be broadened to include the aforementioned actions of the BSP, which are bound to have an impact on the lives of ordinary Filipinos.

While he believed the abaca issue is important, he also believed, as his previous conversation with Senator Padilla would show, that money is a major concern for Filipinos. As a result, he opined that fiscal management would be dependent on the BSP's processes.

He then joined Senator Pimentel's call for an investigation into the BSP's actions regarding the polymer issue, its decision relative to interest rates, and its abrupt withdrawal from a digital currency agreement.

Senator Pimentel responded by thanking Senators Cayetano (P), Villanueva, and Tolentino, as well as Senate President Zubiri and those who made some interventions after his privilege speech.

As to the investigation proposed by Senator Tolentino, Senator Pimentel believed that it could be accommodated because privilege speeches, interpellations, and manifestations on the subject would be subsequently referred to the appropriate committee. He added that even if the topic was not covered by the privilege speech, intervention topics would be included in the committee referral. Senator Pimentel sought confirmation from the Senate Secretary on the matter. Secretary Bantug confirmed the matter by nodding.

At this juncture, Senate President Zubiri relinquished the Chair to Senator Ejercito.



REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEES

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Pimentel to the Committees on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; and Sustainable Development Goals, Innovations and Futures Thinking.

ADDITIONAL 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 26 September 2022, the House of Representatives passed the following House bills, in which it requested the concurrence of the Senate:

House Bill No. 4125, entitled

AN ACT INTRODUCING ADMINISTRATIVE TAX REFORMS, AMENDING SECTIONS 21, 22, 51, 56, 57, 58, 77, 81, 90, 91, 103, 106, 108, 109, 110, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 128, 200, 235, 236, 237, 245, AND 248, AND ADDING SECTIONS 312, 313 AND 314 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997," AS AMENDED

To the Committee on Ways and Means

House Bill No. 4896, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE SIXTEENTH DAY OF MAY OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY TO BE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SUPPORT PERSONNEL DAY

To the Committees on Basic Education; and Higher, Technical and Vocational Education

House Bill No. 5001, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO WAIVE THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FEES TO UNDER-PRIVILEGED GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES BELONGING TO THE TOP TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THEIR GRADUATING CLASS

To the Committees on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education; and Basic Education

House Bill No. 4838, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING JUNE 15 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA TO BE KNOWN AS "MT. PINATUBO MEMORIAL DAY";

House Bill No. 4839, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING JUNE 17 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-WORKING



HOLIDAY IN THE CITY OF LAPU-LAPU, PROVINCE OF CEBU, IN
COMMEMORATION OF ITS CHARTER ANNIVERSARY;

and House Bill No. 4840, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING JANUARY 16 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-
WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF DAPA, PROVINCE OF
SURIGAO DEL NORTE, IN CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF ITS PATRON
SAINT, THE HOLY SANTO NIÑO

To the Committee on Local Government

House Bill No. 4841, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY IN THE CITY OF TAGUIG TO BE KNOWN
AS BARANGAY TANYAG;

House Bill No. 4842, entitled

AN ACT SEPARATING THE SITIOS OF ILEB, NEW COLAYO VILLAGE, KINAMA,
AND NAMBARAN DAYA FROM BARANGAY NAMBARAN IN THE CITY
OF TABUK, PROVINCE OF KALINGA, AND CONSTITUTING THEM INTO A
DISTINCT AND INDEPENDENT BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY
NAMBARAN EAST;

House Bill No. 4843, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CARMEN,
PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY
HINAPOYAN;

House Bill No. 4844, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BAROBO,
PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY
GUINHALINAN;

and House Bill No. 4845, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF NABUNTURAN,
PROVINCE OF DAVAO DE ORO, TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY BUKAL.

**To the Committees on Local Government; and Electoral Reforms and People's
Participation**

Letter from the House of Representatives, informing the Senate that on 26 September 2022, the
House of Representatives designated Representatives Tiangco, Marcos, Acidre, Gatchalian,
Romulo, Almario, and Enciso VIII as conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on
the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 14, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING THE REGISTRATION OF SUBSCRIBER IDENTITY MODULE
CARDS,

and in anticipation of the approval of the Senate of its counterpart Senate Bill No. 1310,
entitled



AN ACT ERADICATING MOBILE PHONE OR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION-AIDED CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES, REGULATING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE REGISTRATION AND USE OF ALL SUBSCRIBER IDENTITY MODULE (SIM) FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES

To the Committee on Rules

Letter from the House of Representatives, informing the Senate that on 26 September 2022, the House of Representatives designated Representatives Dalog, Jr. Barzaga, Jr. Ferrer, Olivarez, and Abalos as conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee, on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 4673, entitled

AN ACT POSTPONING THE DECEMBER 2022 BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9340, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10632, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10656, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10923, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10952 AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11462, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR,

and in anticipation of the approval of the Senate of its counterpart Senate Bill No. 1306, entitled

AN ACT POSTPONING THE DECEMBER 2022 BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9340, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10632, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10656, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10923, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10952, AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11462, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

To the Committee on Rules

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1346, entitled

AN ACT INTRODUCING ADMINISTRATIVE TAX REFORMS, AMENDING SECTIONS 22, 51, 56, 57, 58, 77, 81, 90, 91, 103, 106, 108, 109, 110, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 128, 200, 236, 237, 245, and 248 OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 1347, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 32, 34, 37, 38, 39, 42, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 73, 108, 121, 122, 123, 174, 176, 179, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 195, 198, AND 199; AND REPEALING SECTIONS 127, 175, 177, 178, 180, 188, 192, AND 193; ALL UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Ways and Means

94

Senate Bill No. 1348, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 48, 77, 176, 181, 194 AND 238 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 612, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE INSURANCE CODE," AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies

Senate Bill No. 1349, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE CITIZEN ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES, MANDATING THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS (ROTC) PROGRAM IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TERTIARY-LEVEL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS INCLUDING TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

To the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education; National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1350, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING AN EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEM (EMSS), CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE THE NATIONAL EMSS COUNCIL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Hontiveros

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

Senate Bill No. 1351, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE ENTREPRENEURS' ACADEMY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committees on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education; Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1352, entitled

AN ACT MAINTAINING AND PRESERVING FILIPINO FILMS, CREATING THE NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE OF THE PHILIPPINES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committees on Public Information and Mass Media; Culture and the Arts; and Finance

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 236, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE FILIPINO
ATHLETES WHO REPRESENTED US IN THE 2022 SOUTHEAST ASIAN
TRIATHLON ASSOCIATION RACE HELD IN DESARU, MALAYSIA

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 237, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE
NATIONAL BADMINTON TEAM FOR WINNING THE SILVER MEDAL AT
THE 2022 ASIA JUNIOR SPORTS EXCHANGE GAMES HELD IN TOKYO,
JAPAN

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 242, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
FOOD AND AGRARIAN REFORM TO INVESTIGATE ON THE PROLIFERA-
TION OF "FAKE FERTILIZERS," AND CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, ON THE CONCRETE SOLUTIONS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY
THE FERTILIZER AND PESTICIDE AUTHORITY UNDER THE DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Introduced by Senator Villar (C)

To the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 243, entitled

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ALL REGULAR STANDING COMMITTEES,
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEES AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE
TO CONDUCT HEARINGS, MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS DURING
EVERY RECESS OF THE SENATE TO HAVE CONTINUITY IN THE PROCESS
OF PASSING PENDING PROPOSED LEGISLATION AND TO CONDUCT
INVESTIGATIONS ON ISSUES OF NATIONAL INTERESTS TO AID IN
CRAFTING RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 244 entitled

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND

MEANS, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE IMPOSITION OF VALUE-ADDED TAX ON IMPORTATIONS AND LOCAL PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES DIRECTLY AND EXCLUSIVELY USED IN THE REGISTERED PROJECT OR ACTIVITY OF DOMESTIC MARKET ENTERPRISES IN SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

Introduced by Senator Pimentel III

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 245, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING FILIPINO SCIENTISTS DR. LOURDES "LULY" CRUZ AND DR. BALDOMERO "TOTO" OLIVERA, RECIPIENTS OF THE 2022 GOLDEN GOOSE AWARDS

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 246, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE POWERLIFTING ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES FOR THEIR SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN REPRESENTING OUR COUNTRY IN THE 2022 SOUTHEAST ASIAN CUP

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 247, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE SEVEN RECIPIENTS OF THE 2022 ULIRANG GURO SA FILIPINO AWARD

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 248, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING GYMNAST CARLOS EDRIEL YULO FOR WINNING THE GOLD, SILVER AND BRONZE MEDAL IN DIFFERENT CATEGORIES AT THE 55TH ANNUAL ALL-JAPAN SENIORS CHAMPIONSHIP

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 249, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING ACTRESS BELINDA

gh

**“BELLE” MARIANO FOR BEING THE FIRST-EVER FILIPINA RECIPIENT OF
THE OUTSTANDING ASIAN STAR AWARD IN THE 2022 SEOUL
INTERNATIONAL DRAMA AWARDS, HELD IN SOUTH KOREA**

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

CREATION OF SUBCOMMITTEE

Senator Villanueva informed the Body that pursuant to Section 18, Rule X of the *Rules of the Senate*, Senator Go, chairperson of the Committee on Health and Demography, had created the Subcommittee on Amendments to Republic Act No. 11223 or the Universal Healthcare Act, with Senator Ejercito as the chairperson, in order to take up Senate Bill Nos. 160, 335, 644, 723, 770 and other bills.

ADDITIONAL REFERRAL

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Senate Bill Nos. 1281 and 63 (Anti-Online Gambling Act) were referred to the Committee on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs as the secondary committee.

CHANGE OF REFERRAL

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body approved the change of the secondary referral of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 225 (rising number of criminal activities in the country) and Proposed Senate Resolution No. 227 (Philippine Offshore Gaming Operations Industry) from the Committee on Games and Amusement to the Committee on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs.

Likewise, upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body approved the change of referral of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 229 (Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators) from the Committee on Rules to the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Pursuant to Section 13, Rule X of the *Rules of the Senate*, upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Senator Padilla was elected as additional member of the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies, while Senator Marcos was elected as additional member of the Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 3

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of Committee Report No. 3 Re: PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATE PRESIDENT JUAN MIGUEL “MIGZ” ZUBIRI, ENTITLED “FIASCO SUGAR ORDER NO. 4,” delivered on August 15, 2022.

Senator Villanueva stated that the parliamentary status was still the period of interpellations.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Tolentino, sponsor of the measure, and Senator Pimentel for his interpellation.



INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Senator Pimentel commended Senator Tolentino for holding a well-organized committee hearing on the sugar importation fiasco. He likewise expressed his appreciation to the senator for giving him and Senator Hontiveros enough time during the hearing to ask questions, cross-examine, and make manifestations. He stated that, while he agreed with the several findings of the well written 75-page committee report, he could not agree with all of its findings and recommendations.

Noting that the Blue Ribbon Committee hearings had two objectives, one was to aid legislation and the other was to pinpoint accountability, Senator Pimentel said that his interpellation would focus on how the investigation would help craft necessary laws. He clarified that the Minority had no objections to the committee report's five remedial measures and policy proposals, as follows: 1) the need for greater transparency and accountability; 2) the expansion of the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) by adding members to represent key sectors; 3) an amendment to the SRA's reclassification power under Section 11 of RA 10659; 4) a review of the country's importation policy; and 5) full funding of the SIDA (Sugar Industry Development Act).

Senator Tolentino expressed appreciation for the no-issue statement of Senator Pimentel regarding the committee's recommendations, and stated that during the period of amendments, he might recommend adding a provision to limit the tenure of officers-in-charge to just two months, or 60 days, which would apply to all OIC positions except those in the uniformed service commands.


Senator Pimentel hoped that Senator Tolentino had also read the Minority report, particularly their four policy recommendations on pages 16 and 17, as follows: 1) for the President to appoint a full-time Secretary of Agriculture; 2) to amend EO 18 in order to strengthen the independence of the Board, expand the composition of the board, and make the SRA perform better in its developmental role; 3) to advance the development of the sugar industry by strengthening its institutional support mechanisms; and 4) for the SRA to immediately resolve the internal conflicts and disagreements afflicting the agency.

Asked if the committee was willing to accommodate the recommendations of the Minority, Senator Tolentino responded in the affirmative, saying that they were nearly identical to his remedial measures, with the exception of the first recommendation, which would probably involve a presidential prerogative given that the concurrent DA Secretary was the President himself. He stated that it had a precedent in the early years of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's administration and during the administration of President Marcos Sr. when then-Vice President Fernando Lopez was also the concurrent Agriculture Secretary.

Senator Pimentel clarified that the Minority's proposal was to "call on" the President to appoint a full-time Secretary of Agriculture. He explained that he was simply looking for a provision on which he and Senator Tolentino could agree so that during the period of amendments, the latter would be open to amending the committee report to accommodate the four policy recommendations of the Minority.

Senator Tolentino reiterated that the policy recommendations were in line with the Majority report, except for the first proposal, which he believed might conflict with the need to respect the decision of a coequal branch of government. He believed that the Chief Executive would prefer to hold any position within the Executive branch because it was more convenient for him given his knowledge of the agricultural situation. He wondered if such recommendation of the Minority would be encroaching into the Executive branch's prerogative.

Senator Pimentel further explained that the Minority used the phrase "to call on" so that the recommendation would be taken as the sense of the Senate. He asked if Senator Tolentino's



upcoming amendment requiring an OIC to serve only for 60 days would imply that the President should already appoint a regular Secretary when the said term expires. Senator Tolentino responded that the President was not an OIC and would only be acting concurrently. He emphasized that as an ad hoc position, an OIC without an appointment has no direct administrative and oversight supervision over the office he holds. He went on to explain that the OIC would assume such a position as a placeholder while an official is being vetted upon and that it is still unknown when the permanent position will be assumed; thus, there is a distinction between someone who is acting, someone who is concurrent acting, and someone who is an officer-in-charge.

Senator Pimentel however point out that they were still trying to figure out how and why the sugar fiasco occurred, given that the President wanted to be the DA's Acting Secretary. He stated that because the President had several concerns, he would have to appoint an OIC for the department; however, doing so might result in a repeat of the same cycle of difficulties and challenges, or even the same fiascos in the future. He stated that the Minority was requesting that the President appoint an agriculture secretary in anticipation of such a situation.

He then asked if there was a more expeditious way by which the point of view of the Minority, as embodied in the Minority report, could be accommodated in the committee report, without having to amend the latter in such a way that it might counter some of its own findings. In that light, he suggested that the Minority report be included as an integral part of the committee report following the signature page.

Senator Tolentino responded by pointing out that according to *Riddick's Senate Procedure: Precedents and Practices*, a supplement to the *Rules of the Senate*, "A so-called minority report of a committee is not in fact a report, but is the views of certain minority Members of the committee." He stated that in such cases, the term "minority report" is simply a reflection of the view of the Minority members.

Rephrasing Senator Pimentel's question, he stated that the suggestion was analogous to a dissenting opinion in a Supreme Court decision in that the Minority report is incorporated into the committee report without changing its contents. Senator Pimentel stated that Senator Tolentino had captured the essence of his intention. However, he expressed hesitance in comparing it to a Supreme Court decision due to his lack of familiarity with the Supreme Court's process of issuing a decision, as well as in dissenting and concurring opinions. To emphasize his point, he stated that he would like the minority report to be automatically included as an integral part of the committee report whenever the committee distributes copies to government entities and the media.

Senator Tolentino stated that he would immediately acquiesce to such an arrangement if it had been done before; otherwise, he might agree to the suggestion only if it does not violate any provision of the *Rules of the Senate*.

Acknowledging what he had previously learned that "a dissent in a court of last resort is an...appeal to the intelligence of a future day..." he explained his position by referring to the nature of dissenting opinions in court decisions, which are aimed at future historians, law students, senators, and legislators, among other people. He believed that in future legislative engagements, when the current legislators are long gone, the Majority report and the dissenting opinions in the Minority report are left for posterity and for the intelligence of future legislators who might then realize, in hindsight, which opinion that was embodied in the committee report was correct. He also pointed out that there would come a day when the committee report would be the only record left for future legislators to learn from.

Senator Pimentel responded that he had no recollection of the attachment of a minority report occurring during his term as Senate President, but that as he understood it, accommodating the

gn

Minority's request does not violate the *Rules*. He emphasized that the main goal of the Minority's request was to allow current readers of the committee report to digest and analyze two points of view. He believed that incorporating the Minority report into the committee report would set a fair precedent and virtuous practice for future proceedings.

Senator Tolentino stated that he had just discovered a 2011 Supreme Court decision on a sugar importation case involving the same figures as the ones addressed in the committee report. He then stated his support for attaching the minority report to the committee report, which would be deemed an integral part of the latter.

Senator Pimentel thanked Senator Tolentino and described the situation as a "happy compromise" that would end the Floor debates despite the Minority's position that the four key personalities involved in the case had no criminal intent and should not be investigated for any criminal infraction or liability. Senator Tolentino responded that he found merit in the Minority's counterargument that the compromise would not set a dangerous precedent.

INFORMATION FROM THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair (Senator Ejercito) stated that the Senate Secretary had just informed him that during the Dengvaxia investigations, there was a precedent of attaching the minority report as an integral part of the committee report.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DELA ROSA

Senator Dela Rosa stated his position that the minority report should remain as an attachment to the committee report. He declared and made clear that he affixed his signature on the committee report, and not on the minority report.

Senator Ejercito stated that the *Rules of the Senate* provides that the report, together with any concurring and/or dissenting opinion, shall be filed with the Secretary of the Senate who shall include the same in the next Order of Business.


Senator Tolentino added that the *Rules* of the Blue Ribbon Committee provides that "any dissenting members may signify his dissent in writing," which embraces the existence of possible dissent and provides for an avenue of its expression. He also introduced the concept of "seriatim," or the separate opinion of various members but with the majority prevailing. He then reiterated his agreement with the view that the minority report could be an integral part of the committee report.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

(Continuation)

Senator Pimentel expressed his appreciation for the citation of the two provisions in the Senate and Blue Ribbon Committee *Rules*. Moreover, while he expressed reservations about their applicability to the case at hand, he stated that he was satisfied with the agreement he and Senator Tolentino had reached. He then stated that at the proper time, he would like to introduce some amendments to the report regarding incorrect legal citations. Senator Tolentino responded that he would anticipate the amendment to be about a citation that omitted the "xxx" in the text, resulting in a different interpretation of what the report intended.

Senator Pimentel stated that he would submit his observations in writing, including a citation to Section 4(b) of the Anti-Agricultural Smuggling Law, which could be brought up during the period of amendments after the congressional break. Finally, he stated that the agreement reached by the Majority and the Minority despite the disagreements over crucial portions of the committee report showed that different points of view expressed in the Chamber would always be respected.



Senator Tolentino reinforced the statement by saying that such divergent viewpoints are not only recognized and reflective as sentiments of the Minority, but may also serve as a source of wisdom for future generations.

At this juncture, Senator Ejercito relinquished the Chair to Senate President Zubiri.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR HONTIVEROS

Senator Hontiveros clarified that she signed the committee report with an annotation of her dissent in order for it to be sponsored and debated on the Floor. She expressed her appreciation for the agreement reached by the Majority and the Minority, describing it as the start of a virtuous process or tradition in the Senate. She also thanked Senator Tolentino for the beautiful reference to the “intelligence of a future day.”

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR TOLENTINO

Senator Tolentino reminded the Members that a Blue Ribbon Committee hearing on the Laptop Bill was scheduled for 9:00 a.m. the following day. He also thanked Senator Pimentel for his considerate stance during the period of interpellations.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 3

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the report.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR PADILLA

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Padilla delivered the following speech:

A'oodhu billahi min ash-shaytaan-ir-rajeem. Bismillah r rahman er rahim alham dulillahi rabbil alamin. Bismillahi wassalatu wassalamu 'Ala rasulillah.

Aking mga kasama sa Lupon na ito, at siyempre po sa ating pong mga kasama din sa Senado de Republika ng Pilipinas, As-Salaam-Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

Dalawang linggo na po ang nakaraan nang tumayo ako sa pulpitong ito para maglahad ng isang pribilehiyong talumpati ukol sa isang panukalang batas na malapit po sa aking puso.

Batid ko po na isang kapabayaang kung hindi ko po maibabahagi sa inyo ang kabuuan ng aking mensahe. Lalo na pong hindi natin gustong malingat sa tunay na layunin ng ating panukalang batas na isa-ligal ang compassionate use ng medical cannabis para sa karapat-dapat na makatanggap po nito. Kaya naman po, tulad ng pumukaw at gumising sa aking isip, nais ko pong ikintal sa inyong kamalayan ang salaysay nina Julia Dominique, Julia, at Jay-Jay—ilan lamang po sa libo-libong umaasa sa ating panukala.

Si Julia Dominique Cunanan po ay na-diagnose na may seizure disorder noong siya ay isang taong gulang pa lamang. Sampung taon na po siyang labas-pasok sa ospital. Araw-araw, aabot sa animnapu—uulitin ko po, 60 times—ang kaniyang seizures. Umabot na po ng anim na klase ng gamot ang kanilang sinubukan, ngunit hindi pa rin tuluyang ma-control ang kaniyang seizures. Grabe din po ang side effects ng mga gamot na ito, tulad ng allergies at pancreatitis na mas nakadaragdag pa ng pasakit ni Julia Dominique.

Kilalanin din po natin ang walong taong gulang na si Julia Mapa Cleofas—ipinanganak po na mayroong problema sa brain development. Siya po ay may focal cortical dysplasia—isang brain malformation na nagdudulot ng intractable severe seizures. Umaatake po ito kada oras o minsan kada minuto. Higit sa isang daan kada araw po ang dinaranas na seizure attacks ni Baby Julia. Nasubukan na po ni Julia ang hindi bababa sa labing-isang anti-epileptic drugs,

ad

ngunit sa kasamaang-palad, walang nagawa ang mga gamot na ito. Kahit anumang klaseng kombinasyon ang gamitin para makontrol ang kaniyang seizures, bagkus mas lumala pa po ito. Dumaranas pa po ng ibat-ibang klase ng mga atake ng seizures si Baby Julia.

Sanggol pa lamang po si Butch "JJ" Moper Algas-Vargas ay ilang synthetic anti-seizure medications na po ang kaniyang nasubukan. Na-diagnose na po siya na may autism at epilepsy. At hanggang sa kasalukuyan, sa edad na tatlumpo, araw-araw pa rin ang kaniyang seizure attacks na umaabot sa tatlo hanggang lima kada araw.

Si Julia Dominique, Julia, at JJ, kasama ang kanilang mga magulang, ang ilan lamang sa bumubuo ng Philippine Cannabis Compassionate Society, isang institusyon na nagsusulong ng institusyonal na access at paggamit ng medical cannabis para sa kapakanan ng lihitimong pasyente. Araw-araw po silang dumaranas ng pasakit ng kundisyong medikal; araw-araw ay nangangamba para sa kanilang buhay; araw-araw, ang nais lamang po nila ay maibsan ang pasakit na kanilang nararamdaman—ang pasakit na dala nito sa kanilang pamilya. Ang tanging hiling po nila ay pagkakataon at panahon para lumaban para sa kanilang buhay. Ang hiling po nila ay abot-kaya at abot-kamay na medical cannabis.

Hindi po tayo magsasawang bigyang linaw at ulit-ulitin ang benepisyong medikal ng cannabis. Bilang halimbawa po, sa ilan lamang mula sa libo-libong sayantipikong pag-aaral, hayaan ninyong ibahagi ko po sa inyo ang ilan sa mga ito.

Sa medikal na kondisyon na pinapayagan ng Thailand Ministry of Public Health, ang medical cannabis ay may strong evidence o malakas na medikal na patunay na malaki ang benepisyo nito sa intractable epilepsy, neuropathic pain, hilo, at pagsusuka dulot ng chemotherapy at multiple sclerosis.

Samantala, ang medical cannabis ay sinasabing mas mabuti kumpara sa mga pharmaceutical drugs sa usaping effectiveness, side effects, safety, addictiveness, availability at presyo. Maaaring mas cost-effective o abot-kaya rin ang medical cannabis bilang alternatibong gamot sa multiple sclerosis, spasticity, Dravet syndrome, at neuropathic pain.

Bilang patotoo po sa sayantipikong benepisyo ng medical cannabis para mapawi o maibsan ang chronic at neuropathic pain ng mga pasyente, pakinggan po natin ang paliwanag ni Dr. Zeid Mohamedali mula sa Myeloma, Canada:

[Video Presentation]

Mas lumalawak rin po ang mga pag-aaral sa gamit ng medical cannabis kabilang na ang dementia, isang kalagayang medikal na walang lunas. Ang dementia po ay tumutukoy sa isang hanay na mga sintomas at senyales na nauugnay sa progresibong pagkasira ng takbo ng ating pag-iisip na nakakaapekto sa pang araw-araw na gawain. Isang uri ng dementia ang Alzheimer's disease. Kaugnay po nito ang neuropsychiatric symptoms na karaniwan sa lahat ng uri ng dementia kabilang na po ang agitation, aggression, paggala ng isip, kawalang interes, problema sa pagtulog, depression, pagkabalisa, psychosis, at eating disorders.

Pakinggan po natin ang epekto ng medical cannabis sa isang may karamdaman at ilang eksperto sa video na ito.

[Video Presentation]

Marami sa atin, hindi man sa kasalukuyan, ay magkaka-edad na rin. At kasabay nito ay siguradong tatamaan ng mga sakit sa kasu-kasuhan - ang pamamaga, paninigas, at pananakit ng mga buto ay ilan lamang sa 100 uri ng arthritis. Ano po ang masasabi ng mga siyentipiko sa benepisyo ng cannabis sa arthritis. Panoorin po natin:

[Video Presentation]

Alam natin na ang sakit sa kalingkingan ay ramdam ng buong katawan. Tulad po sa ating bansa, damang-dama natin ang hirap at pasakit ng ilan sa ating mga kababayan. Ngunit kung gaano tayo hirap na hirap na magbukas ng ating pinto sa paghahanap ng lunas, tila ganoon naman kadali sa atin yakapin ang mga produktong nagdudulot ng mas kapahamakan sa taong-bayan. Ang masama pa, ang mga produktong ito na talamak sa ating merkado ang siyang nagdudulot ng sakit ng lipunan.

gn

Kung ikukumpara natin ang epekto ng cannabis sa ibang uri ng substances na mas accessible, hindi hamak na lampas-lampasan ang panganib na dulot ng mga alcoholic drinks na sa kasalukuyan ay ligal na nabibili at makukunsumo ng sinumang may edad 18 pataas sa ating bansa.

Sa katunayan pa, sa isang pag-aaral ng Independent Scientific Committee on Drugs mula sa United Kingdom, lumalabas na ang alcohol ay nakakuha ng 72 na score—ang pinakamataas pagdating sa panganib nito sa katawan nang gumagamit at panganib sa ibang mga nakapaligid ng isang user; samantalang ang cannabis ay may score lamang na 20.

Bagamat napakaraming pag-aaral na nagpapatunay sa mga karamdaman at kondisyong maaaring magiging epekto ng palagiang pag-inom at pag-abuso sa alak tulad ng brain damage, sakit sa puso, tiyan, at atay, diabetes, hemorrhaging, panganib sa pagbubuntis, at mataas na tsansa sa pagkakaroon ng carcer, batid nating lahat na napakaluwag ng regulasyon dito.

Pagdating naman po sa datos sa lebel ng fatality ng alcohol at cannabis, panoorin natin ito:

[Video Presentation]

Tulad po ng mga nabanggit sa video, 88,000 ang naitalang bilang ng mga namatay na may kaugnayan sa consumption ng alcohol noong 2010. Samantala, wala pa pong naitalang namatay dahil sa overdose sa marijuana. Bagamat ang alcohol ay tinuturing na isang public health problem, 40% pa rin po ng ating mga kababayang Pilipino ang umiinom ng alak sa bansa. Ang ating pang araw-araw na karanasan ang magpapatunay ng mga masamang dulot ng sobra-sobrang alak sa katawan ng isang tao.

Sabi nga po ng National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Incorporated, malaki rin ang papel na ginagampanan ng alcohol sa komisyon ng mga krimen at iba pang mga problema ng lipunan.

Kaya naman po ang aking panawagan, kung nagawa nating buksan ang ating mga isipan sa mga produktong ang layunin lamang ay panglibangan, bakit hindi po natin gawin sa mga produktong may benepisyong medisinal? Hindi ko po nais na magtonong sirang plaka pero hindi rin po tayo magsasawang ulit-ulitin at bigyang-diin ang benepisyo sa ekonomiya na ating maaani kasabay ng pagbubukas ng pinto sa medical cannabis. Hindi po natin isasantabi ang potensiyal na economic benefits ng mga produktong gawa mula sa mga species na kapamilya ng cannabis para sa industrial use.

Panoorin po natin.

[Video Presentation]

Sa katunayan, ang paglilinang ng cannabis para sa industrial na gamit ay nagsimula pa noong 4,000 BC nang madiskubre na maaaring gamitin ang non-psycho active na parte ng halaman sa paggawa ng mga halos 25,000 na iba't ibang produkto tulad ng papel, pera, lubid, tela, at iba pa. At sa mga pinakakilala ay ang hemp o cannabis sativa, isang halaman na kabilang sa pamilya ng mga cannabaceae—cannabisian cousins, kung ituring ang hemp at marijuana, pero hindi po sila iisa.

Sa loob ng napakahabang panahon, ang hemp ay pinaniniwalaang bahagi na ng buhay ng mga sinaunang tao bago pa man umusad ang sibilisasyon. Ang kultibasyon ng hemp upang gamiting sangkap sa paggawa ng tela ay sinasabing nagsimula pa noong Iron Age sa pagitan ng 12,000 BC and 600 BC na kumalat pa sa Mediterranean na bansa sa Europa noong Christian era at sa iba pang bahagi ng kontinente noong middle ages.

Ang mga unang naging pangulo ng Estados Unidos na sina George Washington at Thomas Jefferson po ay nagpatanim din ng hemp. Naudlot lamang po ang malawakang gamit nito noon sa lupain ng Amerika dahilan sa mga kakulangan ng sapat na teknolohiya, kompetisyon, at siyempre, propaganda. Sa loob ng milenya, ang halaman na ito ay kinilala bilang pinagmumulan ng matibay na mga hibla ng tela, ngunit ang mga psychoactive na katangian ng cannabis sativa ay nagpahirap sa mga magsasaka na maka-access sa kapaki-pakinabang na pananim na ito.

Sa katunayan pa nga po, napakarami pang produktong gawa sa hemp ang umuusong bunsod ng makabagong teknolohiya tulad ng biofuel, laundry detergent, automobile construction

AM

parts, beauty products, hemp protein powder, hemp milk, hemp coffee and milk, particle board, biodegradable plastic, paint, at insulation.

Sa kasamaang palad, hindi natin mapalawak ang paggamit ng hemp dahil sa stigma—dahil lamang kasama ito sa pamilya o species ng marijuana.

Ngunit sa pag-usad ng panahon at ebolusyon ng teknolohiya, nagkakaroon na po ng mga pagbabago sa pagtrato sa hemp sa ibang rehiyon na may bukas na kaisipan tungkol sa napakaraming benepisyo nito.

Sa kasamaang palad, hindi natin mapalawak ang paggamit ng hemp dahil sa “stigma”—dahil lamang kasama ito sa pamilya o species ng marijuana.

Ngunit sa pag-usad ng panahon at ebolusyon ng teknolohiya, nagkakaroon na po ng mga pagbabago sa pagtrato sa hemp sa ibang rehiyon na may bukas na kaisipan tungkol sa napakaraming benepisyo nito.

Isa po sa mga “promising” na teknolohiya ay ang tinatawag na “Carbotura.” Ito ay isang carbon and plastic waste capture project na base sa vertical farming at pagproseso ng hemp plants. Ito ay pinangungunahan ng kompanyang Gravitas Carbotura.

Panoorin po natin.

[Video Presentation]

Sa tampok na video, idinatalay kung paano magiging posible ang pag-convert ng hemp upang maging graphene at diamond. Ang graphene po ay isa sa mga material na ginagamit sa iba’t ibang industriya, tulad ng electronics, bioengineering, at energy.

Bukod sa ekonomikal na benepisyo ng carbotura, itinuturing din ito bilang isang climate resilience innovation sapagkat nakababawas po ang bagong prosesong ito ng carbon emissions. Samakatuwid, kung magkakaroon lamang ng pagkakataon ang mga ganitong uri ng teknolohiya, nasisiguro kong malaki ang magiging tulong nito sa pag-unlad bilang isang bansa.

Noong nakaraang linggo po ay nadaanan at nabasa ko sa isang liham na inilathala sa Philippine Daily Inquirer patungkol sa legalisasyon ng medical cannabis mula sa perspektibo ng isang lisensiyadong pharmacist na nagngangalang Ms. Teresa Bandiola mula sa Quezon City.

Ang totoo po, ako ay nagagalak na malamang nagiging daan ang adbokasiya ng inyong lingkod upang mabuksan ang talakayan, palitan ng kuro-kuro, at debate patungkol sa legalisasyon ng cannabis para sa compassionate use.

Siksik din sa mga kasaysayan at mga pag-aaral ang artikulo, at kaisa tayo sa punto ni Ms. Bandiola na kinakailangang siguraduhin na magiging patient-oriented at research-oriented ang magiging implementasyon sakaling maipasa ito bilang isang batas, gayundin ang pagsisigurong magiging maigting ang regulasyon at pagbubuwis sa medical cannabis.

Kung susumihin po, wala tayong talo rito. Bagkus, napakadami nating makukuhang benepisyo.

Sampu ng ating mga kababayang higit na nangangailangan ng access sa medical cannabis, sana po ay naipahatid ko sa inyo ang mensahe ng ating panukala. Nais ko pong iwan sa lahat ang ilang palaisipan: Gaano pa karaming pagkakataon ang ating palilipasin? Hanggang kailan pa natin isasara ang ating pinto para sa medical cannabis samantalang bukas tayo sa iba pang nakamiminsalang produktong panlibangan lamang? Gaano pa katagal magtitiis ng pasakit sina Julia Dominique, Julia, JJ, at ang libo-libong Pilipino na umaasa sa atin para sa accessible at abot-kayang medical cannabis?

Ashadu alla ilaha illallah ashhadu anna muhammadarrasulullah.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva manifested that several Members have informed him of their interest to interpellate on Senator Padilla’s privilege speech but that the Body would have to suspend consideration of the measure due to the lateness of the hour.

97

At this point, Senate President Zubiri congratulated Senator Padilla, saying that he believes in the medical uses of marijuana. He suggested that the Members keep an open mind and discuss the issue when session resumes on November 7, 2022.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR PADILLA

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the privilege speech of Senator Padilla.

CREATION OF SUBCOMMITTEES

Pursuant to Section 18, Rule X of the *Rules of the Senate*, upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the following subcommittees were created upon the instruction of Senator Go, chairperson of the Committee on Health and Demography:

1. Subcommittee on Center for Disease Control and Prevention in relation to Senate Bill Nos. 12, 195, 544, 600, 679, 825, 1039, 1113, 1163, and all other bills which may be referred to Committee on Health and Demography covering the same topic, to be chaired by Senator Cayetano (P); and
2. Subcommittee on Medical Reserve Corps in relation to Senate Bill Nos. 88, 255, 892, 1017, 1120, 1131, 1180, and all other bills which may be referred to the Committee on Health and Demography covering the same topic, to be chaired by Senator Cayetano (P).

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva expressed his gratitude to all employees and staff of the Senate and also thanked Senate President Zubiri for ensuring that the institution would live up to its promises.

REQUEST OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

At this point, Senate President Zubiri requested a photo with the Members in the Session Hall in view of the first recess of the 19th Congress following the adjournment of session that day. He then thanked his colleagues and the Secretariat for their hard work.

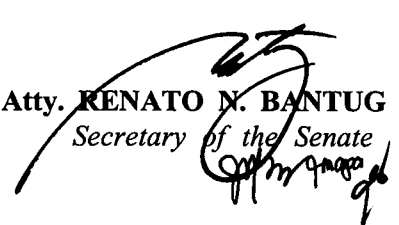
ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of Monday, November 7, 2022.

It was 8:59 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

Atty. **RENATO N. BANTUG Jr.**
Secretary of the Senate



Approved on November 7, 2022

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**)
First Regular Session)



Senate
Office of the Secretary

'22 SEP 28 P2:39

**JOINT EXPLANATION
OF THE BICAMERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON THE DISAGREEING
PROVISIONS OF SENATE BILL NO. 1310 AND HOUSE BILL NO. 14**

The Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of **Senate Bill No. 1310** and **House Bill No. 14**, after having met and fully discussed the subject matter in a conference, hereby submits the following joint explanation to both Houses of Congress on the provisions and amendments agreed upon by the conferees in the accompanying Conference Committee Report.

1. The Conferees agreed to adopt the Senate version as the working draft;
2. Section 1 of the Senate version was adopted as Section 1 of the reconciled bill, and the same reads as follows:

"Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) Registration Act"."

3. Section 2 of the House version was adopted, with amendments, as Section 2 of the reconciled bill, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State recognizes the vital role of information and communications technology in nation building and encourages its growth and development.

It is equally cognizant that beneficial as modern technology is, its illegal or malicious use endangers people's lives, damages property, poses hazards to public order, and even threatens the security of nations.

The State shall promote responsibility in the use of Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) and provide law enforcement agencies the tools to resolve crimes which involve its utilization and platform to deter the commission of wrongdoings.

Towards this end, the State shall require the registration of SIM for electronic devices by all users.

4. Section 3 of the House version was merged and harmonized with Section 3 of the Senate version to form a reconciled Section 3, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 3. Definition of Terms. – As used in this Act:

- a) End-user – refers to any existing subscriber or any individual or juridical entity which purchases a SIM from the PTEs, its agents, resellers or any entity;
 - b) Postpaid subscription – refers to the subscription wherein service is provided by virtue of a prior arrangement with a public telecommunications entity, and the end user thereof is billed at the end of the monthly billing cycle according to the use of mobile service;
 - c) Prepaid subscription – refers to the subscription wherein credit is purchased in advance of service use. The purchased credit is used to pay for mobile phone services at the point the service is accessed or consumed. If there is no available credit, then access to the requested service is denied;
 - d) Public Telecommunications Entity or PTE – refers to any person, natural or juridical, government or private, engaged in the provision of telecommunications services to the public for compensation, as defined under Republic Act No. 7925, as amended or the Public Telecommunications Policy Act of the Philippines;
 - e) Reseller – refers to a person, natural or juridical, who dispenses or sells a SIM to an end-user;
 - f) SIM – refers to the Subscriber Identity Module which is an embedded circuit that securely stores the International Mobile Subscriber Identity (IMSI) and related keys or an electronic equivalent thereof, used to identify and authenticate subscribers on mobile devices, such as mobile phones and computers, and other electronic devices. For purposes of this Act, this shall include e-SIMs and other variations thereof; and
 - g) Spoofing – refers to the act of transmitting misleading or inaccurate information about the source of the phone call or text message, with the intent to defraud, cause harm, or wrongfully obtain anything of value.
5. Section 4 of the Senate version was adopted, with amendments, as Section 4 of the reconciled bill, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 4. *SIM Registration.* – In order to regulate the registration and use of SIMs, all end-users shall be required to register their SIMs with PTEs as a pre-requisite to the activation thereof, in accordance with the guidelines set forth under this Act.

For purposes of this Act, all the SIMs to be sold by the PTEs, its agents, resellers, or any entity shall be in a deactivated state. It shall only be activated after the end-user completes the process of registration.

All existing SIM subscribers shall register the same with their respective PTEs within one hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act. The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) may extend registration for a period not exceeding one hundred twenty (120) days.

Failure to register the existing SIM within the periods prescribed herein shall result in the automatic deactivation of the SIM. The deactivated SIM may only be reactivated after registration in accordance with this Act.

PTEs shall include the data of existing postpaid subscribers in the SIM Register to align with the registration requirement of this Act.

6. Section 5 of the Senate version was merged and harmonized with Sections 4 and 5 of the House version to form a reconciled Section 5, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 5. *Registration Guidelines.* – The SIM registration process shall be guided by the following parameters:

- (a) Submission of duly accomplished control-numbered owner's registration form with full name, date of birth, sex, and address. The registration form shall be accomplished electronically through a platform or website to be provided by the PTEs. The same shall include a declaration by the end-user that the identification documents presented are true and correct, and that said person is the one who accomplished the registration form;
- (b) Presentation of valid government-issued identification cards or other similar forms of documents with photo that will verify the identity of the end-user such as, but not limited to the following:

- i. Passport;
- ii. Philippine Identification;
- iii. Social Security Service ID;
- iv. Government Service Insurance System e-Card;
- v. Driver's license;
- vi. National Bureau of Investigation clearance;
- vii. Police clearance;
- viii. Firearms' License to Own and Possess ID;
- ix. Professional Regulation Commission ID;
- x. Integrated Bar of the Philippines ID;
- xi. Overseas Workers Welfare Administration ID;
- xii. Bureau of Internal Revenue ID;
- xiii. Voter's ID;
- xiv. Senior Citizen's card;
- xv. Unified Multi-purpose Identification Card
- xvi. Person with Disabilities card; or
- xvii. Other valid government-issued ID with photo.

For juridical entities, the certificate of registration, as well as the duly-adopted resolution designating the authorized representative, in case of corporations, and a special power of attorney, in case of other entities, shall be presented;

- (c) The registration process shall require the input of the assigned mobile number of the SIM with its serial number;
- (d) The registration of a SIM by a minor shall be under the name of the minor's parent or guardian: *Provided*, That the minor's parent or guardian shall give their consent and register the SIM;
- (e) In the case of end-users who are foreign nationals, they shall register their full name, nationality, passport number, and address in the Philippines and present the following:
 - i. For foreign nationals visiting as tourists under Section 9(a) of Commonwealth Act No. 613, as amended:
 - 1) Passport;
 - 2) Proof of address in the Philippines; and
 - 3) Return ticket to own country of the tourist or any other ticket showing the date and time of departure from the Philippines.

- ii. For foreign nationals with other types of visas:
 - 1) Passport;
 - 2) Proof of address in the Philippines;
 - 3) Alien Employment Permit issued by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
 - 4) Alien Certificate of Registration Identification Card or ACRI-Card issued by the Bureau of Immigration (BI);
 - 5) School registration and ID for students; or
 - 6) Other pertinent documents, whichever is applicable.

The SIMs that are registered under Subsection e(i) shall only be valid temporarily for thirty (30) days, and shall automatically be deactivated upon expiration of the validity of the SIM.

The relevant government agencies and concerned PTEs shall facilitate all SIM registrations in remote areas with limited telecommunication or internet access: *Provided*, That said registration facilities in remote areas shall be established within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

A buyer who fails to comply with the requirements for registration shall result in their SIM not being activated.

- 7. Section 6 of the Senate version was merged and harmonized with Section 10 of the House version to form a reconciled Section 6, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 6. SIM Register. – All PTEs shall maintain their own database containing information required under this Act. The database shall strictly serve as a SIM Register to be used by PTEs to process, activate or deactivate a SIM or subscription and shall not be used for any other purpose, unless otherwise provided under this Act. The successful submission and acceptance of the required registration form shall serve as the certification of registration by the end-user.

The registration required under this Act shall be implemented at no cost to the end-users.

In the recordkeeping of information, PTEs shall ensure that the end-users' data are secured and protected at all times. The PTEs shall comply with the minimum information security standards prescribed by the DICT consistent with internationally accepted cybersecurity standards and relevant laws, rules and regulations.

The DICT shall establish and perform an annual audit on PTEs' compliance with information security standards.

In case of any change in the information of the end-user, or the loss of the SIM, death of the end-user, or any request for deactivation, the end-user shall immediately inform the PTE through its facility established for such purpose: *Provided*, That in the case of death of an end-user, such fact shall be reported to the concerned PTE by the immediate family, relatives, or guardian.

In case of any change in the information of the end-user, the concerned PTE shall clearly note such change in its database.

In case of loss of the SIM, death of the end-user, or request for deactivation, the concerned PTE shall deactivate said SIM within twenty-four (24) hours from the report of the end-user, immediate family, relatives or guardian.

Provided, That regardless of any deactivation, the relevant data and information shall be retained by the PTE pursuant to the pertinent provisions of this Act, which is ten (10) years.

In case of a cyber-attack on the SIM Register, the incident shall be reported to the DICT within twenty-four (24) hours of detection.

PTEs shall provide user-friendly reporting mechanisms for their respective end-users upon the latter's receipt of any potentially fraudulent text or call, and shall, upon due investigation, deactivate, either temporarily or permanently, the SIM used for the fraudulent text or call.

8. Section 7 of the Senate version was adopted as Section 7 of the reconciled bill, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 7. Subsequent Sale of a Registered SIM. – A registered SIM shall not be sold or transferred without complying with the registration requirements under Section 6 of this Act.

9. Section 8 of the Senate version was adopted, with amendments, as Section 8 of the reconciled bill, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 8. *Sale of a Stolen SIM.* – Any PTE, its agents, resellers, or entity that shall engage in the sale of stolen SIMs shall be criminally liable under this Act.

10. Section 9 of the Senate version was merged and harmonized with Section 8 of the House version to form a reconciled Section 9, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 9. *Confidentiality Clause.* – Any information and data obtained in the registration process described under this Act shall be treated as absolutely confidential and shall not be disclosed to any person.

Notwithstanding this provision, disclosure of the full name and address shall be made:

- i. In compliance with any law obligating the PTE to disclose such information in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012;
- ii. In compliance with a court order or legal process upon finding of probable cause;
- iii. In compliance with Section 10 hereof; or
- iv. With the written consent of the subscriber: *Provided, That, the waiver of absolute confidentiality shall not be made as a condition for the approval of subscription agreements with the PTEs.*

The confidentiality clause in the SIM registration shall take effect at the point of activation.

11. Section 10 of the Senate version was adopted as Section 10 of the reconciled bill, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 10. *Disclosure of Information.* – Notwithstanding the provisions on confidentiality, the PTEs shall be required to provide information obtained in the registration process only upon the issuance of a subpoena by a competent authority pursuant to an investigation based on a sworn complaint that a specific mobile number was or is being used in the commission of a crime or that it was utilized as a means to commit a malicious, fraudulent or unlawful act, and that the complainant is unable to ascertain the identity of the perpetrator.

Provided, however, That no PTE shall be held administratively, civilly, or criminally liable on account of any disclosure done in compliance with this Act.

For this purpose, the relevant data and information shall be kept by the PTEs for ten (10) years from the time the end-user deactivates his or her mobile number.

12. Section 11 of the Senate version was adopted, with amendments, as Section 11 of the reconciled bill, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 11. *Penalties.* – The following penalties shall be imposed for violation of any provision of this Act:

(a) *For failure or refusal to register a SIM.* – The following fines shall be imposed upon the PTEs who shall fail or refuse to register a SIM, without a valid reason, despite compliance by the end-user with the requirements for SIM registration under this Act:

- 1) First offense: a fine of not less than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than Three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00);
- 2) Second offense: a fine of not less than Three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00); and
- 3) Third and subsequent offenses: a fine of not less than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) but not more than One million pesos (P1,000,000.00) for every offense thereof.

(b) *For breach of confidentiality.* – The penalty of a fine of not less than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) but not more than Four million pesos (P4,000,000.00) shall be imposed upon PTEs, its agents or its employees who shall directly or indirectly reveal or disclose any information or data of an end-user obtained during the registration requirement under this Act, unless otherwise permitted by this Act, or other laws;

(c) *For breach of confidentiality due to negligence.* – The penalty of a fine of not less than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) but not more than Four million pesos (P4,000,000.00) shall be imposed upon PTEs, its agents or its employees who, due to negligence, shall reveal or disclose any information or data of an end-user obtained during the registration requirement under this Act;

(d) *For providing false or fictitious information or for using fictitious identities or fraudulent identification documents to register a SIM.* – The penalty

of imprisonment ranging from six (6) months to two (2) years, or a fine of not less than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than Three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00), or both, shall be imposed upon anyone who provides false or fictitious information or who uses a fictitious identity or fraudulent identification documents to register a SIM;

- (e) *For spoofing a registered SIM.* – The penalty of imprisonment of no less than six (6) years, or a fine of Two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000.00), or both, shall be imposed upon anyone who causes to transmit misleading or inaccurate information about the source of the phone call or text message, with the intent to defraud, cause harm, or wrongfully obtain anything of value, unless such transmission is exempted in connection with: (1) authorized activities of law enforcement agencies; or (2) a court order specifically authorizing the use of caller ID manipulation;
- (f) *For sale of a stolen SIM.* – The penalty of imprisonment ranging from six (6) months to two (2) years, or a fine of not less than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than Three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00), or both, shall be imposed upon the PTEs, its agents, resellers, or any entity that will engage in the sale of stolen SIM as provided under this Act.

If the offender is a corporation, partnership or any juridical person, the penalty shall be imposed upon the responsible officers, as the case may be, who participated in, or by their gross negligence, allowed the commission of the crime; and

- (g) *For sale or transfer of a registered SIM without complying with the required registration.* – The penalty of imprisonment ranging from six (6) months to six (6) years or a fine of one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) to three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00), or both shall be imposed upon anyone who sells or transfers a registered SIM without complying with the required registration under this Act.

Any person who abets or aids in the commission of any of the offenses enumerated in this Act shall be held liable as a co-principal.

A prosecution under this Act shall be without prejudice to any liability or violation of any provision of the Revised Penal Code, as amended, or special laws.

13. Section 13 of the House version was merged and harmonized with Section 12 of the Senate version to form a reconciled Section 12, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), in coordination with other concerned agencies such as, but not limited to, DICT, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), National Privacy Commission (NPC), as well as PTEs and major consumer groups, shall set the guidelines for the monitoring and proper implementation of this act and shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations as may be necessary to ensure the effective implementation of this Act.

All PTEs are required to submit to the NTC, DICT, and to both Houses of Congress an annual report on the implementation of the provisions of this Act.

14. Section 14 of the House version was adopted, with amendments, as Section 13 of the reconciled bill, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 13. *Transitory Provision.* – Upon the effectivity of this Act, all PTEs are mandated to deactivate all prepaid SIMs for sale to the public. Otherwise, they shall be liable for the penalties prescribed in this Act.

15. Section 13 of the Senate version was adopted as Section 14 of the reconciled bill, and the same reads as follows:

Sec. 14. *Interpretation.* – Any doubt in the interpretation of any provision of this Act and its implementing rules and regulations shall be construed in a manner that accords the highest respect for privacy, and liberally interpreted in a manner mindful of the rights and interests of SIM subscribers.

16. The title of the House version was adopted, with amendments, as the title of the reconciled bill, and the same reads as follows:

**"AN ACT
REQUIRING THE REGISTRATION OF SUBSCRIBER IDENTITY
MODULE"**

In case of a conflict between the statements/amendments stated in this Joint Explanation and the provisions of the consolidated bill in the accompanying Conference Committee Report, the latter shall prevail.



Digitally signed by
Tiangco Tobias
Reynald Marcelo
Date: 2022.09.28
09:33:27 +08'00'

REP. TOBIAS REYNALD M. TIANGCO

Chairperson
House Panel



SEN. GRACE POE

Chairperson
Senate Panel

Republic of the Philippines
CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES

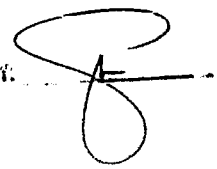
NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT



Senate
Office of the Secretary

22 SEP 28 P2:39

RECEIVED BY: 

The Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of **Senate Bill No. 1310**, entitled:

**"AN ACT
MANDATING THE REGISTRATION OF SUBSCRIBER IDENTITY
MODULE (SIM) FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES, REGULATING FOR THIS
PURPOSE ITS REGISTRATION AND USE"**

and **House Bill No. 14**, entitled:

**"AN ACT
REQUIRING THE REGISTRATION OF SUBSCRIBER IDENTITY
MODULE CARDS"**

after having met and discussed the subject matter in full and free conference, has agreed and does hereby recommend to their respective Houses that **Senate Bill No. 1310**, in consolidation with **House Bill No. 14**, be approved in accordance with the attached copy of the bill as reconciled and approved by the conferees.

Approved,

CONFEREES ON THE PART OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES




REP. TOBIAS REYNALD M. TIANGCO
Chairperson

**REP. FERDINAND ALEXANDER
MARCOS**



REP. JUDE A. ACIDRE



REP. REX GATCHALIAN

REP. ROMAN ROMULO



REP. CHEENO MIGUEL ALMARIO



REP. NICOLAS C. ENCISO VIII


CONFEREES ON THE PART OF THE
SENATE



SEN. GRACE POE
Chairperson



SEN. JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO



**SEN. MARIA LOURDES "NANCY" S.
BINAY**



SEN. WIN GATCHALIAN



SEN. AQUILINO PIMENTEL III



Senate
Office of the Secretary

Republic of the Philippines
CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES
NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

22 SEP 28 P2:40

Republic Act No. _____

RECEIVED BY

[Signature]

"AN ACT
REQUIRING THE REGISTRATION OF SUBSCRIBER IDENTITY MODULE"

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

Section 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) Registration Act."

Sec. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – The State recognizes the vital role of information and communications technology in nation building and encourages its growth and development.

It is equally cognizant that beneficial as modern technology is, its illegal or malicious use endangers people's lives, damages property, poses hazards to public order, and even threatens the security of nations.

The State shall promote responsibility in the use of Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) and provide law enforcement agencies the tools to resolve crimes which involve its utilization and platform to deter the commission of wrongdoings.

Towards this end, the State shall require the registration of SIM for electronic devices by all users.

Sec. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

- (a) End-user – refers to any existing subscriber or any individual or juridical entity which purchases a SIM from the PTEs, its agents, resellers or any entity;
- (b) Postpaid subscription – refers to the subscription wherein service is provided by virtue of a prior arrangement with a public telecommunications entity, and the end-user thereof is billed at the end of the monthly billing cycle according to the use of mobile service;

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

Digitally signed
by Tiangco
Tobias Reynald
Marcelo
Date: 2022.09.28
09:34:45 +08'00'

[Signature]

A. Pimentel

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten mark]

- (c) Prepaid subscription – refers to the subscription wherein credit is purchased in advance of service use. The purchased credit is used to pay for mobile phone services at the point the service is accessed or consumed. If there is no available credit, then access to the requested service is denied;
- (d) Public Telecommunications Entity or PTE – refers to any person, natural or juridical, government or private, engaged in the provision of telecommunications services to the public for compensation, as defined under Republic Act No. 7925, as amended or the Public Telecommunications Policy Act of the Philippines;
- (e) Reseller – refers to a person, natural or juridical, who dispenses or sells a SIM to an end-user;
- (f) SIM – refers to the Subscriber Identity Module which is an embedded circuit that securely stores International Mobile Subscriber Identity (IMSI) and related keys or an electronic equivalent thereof, used to identify and authenticate subscribers on mobile devices, such as mobile phones and computers, and other electronic devices. For purposes of this Act, this shall include e-SIMs and other variations thereof; and
- (g) Spoofing – refers to the act of transmitting misleading or inaccurate information about the source of the phone call or text message, with the intent to defraud, cause harm, or wrongfully obtain anything of value.

Sec. 4. SIM Registration. – In order to regulate the registration and use of SIMs, all end-users shall be required to register their SIMs with PTEs as a prerequisite to the activation thereof, in accordance with the guidelines set forth under this Act.

For purposes of this Act, all the SIMs to be sold by the PTEs, its agents, resellers, or any entity shall be in a deactivated state. It shall only be activated after the end-user completes the process of registration.

All existing SIM subscribers shall register the same with their respective PTEs within one hundred eighty (180) days from the effectivity of this Act. The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) may extend registration for a period not exceeding one hundred twenty (120) days.

Digitally signed
by Tiangco
Tobias Reynald
Marcelo
Date: 2022.09.28
09:35:00 +08'00'

Failure to register the existing SIM within the periods prescribed herein shall result in the automatic deactivation of the SIM. The deactivated SIM may only be reactivated after registration in accordance with this Act.

PTEs shall include the data of existing postpaid subscribers in the SIM Register to align with the registration requirement of this Act.

Sec. 5. Registration Guidelines. – The SIM registration process shall be guided by the following parameters:

- (a) Submission of duly accomplished control-numbered owner's registration form with full name, date of birth, sex, and address. The registration form shall be accomplished electronically through a platform or website to be provided by the PTEs. The same shall include a declaration by the end-user that the identification documents presented are true and correct, and that said person is the one who accomplished the registration form;
- (b) Presentation of valid government-issued identification cards or other similar forms of documents with photo that will verify the identity of the end-user such as, but not limited to the following:
 - i. Passport;
 - ii. Philippine Identification;
 - iii. Social Security Service ID;
 - iv. Government Service Insurance System e-Card;
 - v. Driver's license;
 - vi. National Bureau of Investigation clearance;
 - vii. Police clearance;
 - viii. Firearms' License to Own and Possess ID;
 - ix. Professional Regulation Commission ID;
 - x. Integrated Bar of the Philippines ID;
 - xi. Overseas Workers Welfare Administration ID;
 - xii. Bureau of Internal Revenue ID;
 - xiii. Voter's ID;
 - xiv. Senior Citizen's card;
 - xv. Unified Multi-purpose Identification Card
 - xvi. Person with Disabilities card; or

Digitally signed
by Tiangco
Tobias Reynald
Marcelo
Date: 2022.09.28
09:35:12 +08'00'

Tobias Reynald
Marcelo

Grace Poe

Edelma

Alvin

A. Pimental

2

xvii. Other valid government-issued ID with photo.

For juridical entities, the certificate of registration, as well as the duly-adopted resolution designating the authorized representative, in case of corporations, and a special power of attorney, in case of other entities, shall be presented;

- (c) The registration process shall require the input of the assigned mobile number of the SIM with its serial number;
- (d) The registration of a SIM by a minor shall be under the name of the minor's parent or guardian: *Provided*, That the minor's parent or guardian shall give their consent and register the SIM;
- (e) In the case of end-users who are foreign nationals, they shall register their full name, nationality, passport number, and address in the Philippines and present the following:
 - i. For foreign nationals visiting as tourists under Section 9(a) of Commonwealth Act No. 613, as amended:
 - (1) Passport;
 - (2) Proof of address in the Philippines; and
 - (3) Return ticket to own country of the tourist or any other ticket showing the date and time of departure from the Philippines;
 - ii. For foreign nationals with other types of visas:
 - (1) Passport;
 - (2) Proof of address in the Philippines;
 - (3) Alien Employment Permit issued by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
 - (4) Alien Certificate of Registration Identification Card or ACRI-Card issued by the Bureau of Immigration (BI);
 - (5) School registration and ID for students; or
 - (6) Other pertinent documents, whichever is applicable.

The SIMs that are registered under Subsection e(i) shall only be valid temporarily for thirty (30) days, and shall automatically be deactivated upon expiration of the validity of the SIM.

Digitally signed
by Tiangco Tobias
Reynald Marcelo
Date: 2022.09.28
09:35:25 +08'00'

Grace Poe

Edelaine

Alvin

A. Pimental

The relevant government agencies and concerned PTEs shall facilitate all SIM registrations in remote areas with limited telecommunication or internet access: *Provided*, That said registration facilities in remote areas shall be established within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

A buyer who fails to comply with the requirements for registration shall result in their SIM not being activated.

Sec. 6. *SIM Register*. – All PTEs shall maintain their own database containing information required under this Act. The database shall strictly serve as a SIM Register to be used by PTEs to process, activate or deactivate a SIM or subscription and shall not be used for any other purpose, unless otherwise provided under this Act. The successful submission and acceptance of the required registration form shall serve as the certification of registration by the end-user.

The registration required under this Act shall be implemented at no cost to the end-users.

In the recordkeeping of information, PTEs shall ensure that the end-users' data are secured and protected at all times. The PTEs shall comply with the minimum information security standards prescribed by the DICT consistent with internationally accepted cybersecurity standards and relevant laws, rules and regulations.

The DICT shall establish and perform an annual audit on PTEs' compliance with information security standards.

In case of any change in the information of the end-user, or the loss of the SIM, death of the end-user, or any request for deactivation, the end-user shall immediately inform the PTE through its facility established for such purpose: *Provided*, That in the case of death of an end-user, such fact shall be reported to the concerned PTE by the immediate family, relatives, or guardian.

In case of any change in the information of the end user, the concerned PTE shall clearly note such change in its database.

In case of loss of the SIM, death of the end-user, or request for deactivation, the concerned PTE shall deactivate said SIM within twenty-four (24) hours from the report of the end-user, immediate family, relatives or guardian.

Digitally signed by
Tiangco Tobias
Reynald Marcelo
Date: 2022.09.28
09:35:39 +08'00'

Reynald Marcelo

A. Pimentel

Grace Poe

Salalamin

Alfonso

Provided, That regardless of any deactivation, the relevant data and information shall be retained by the PTE pursuant to the pertinent provisions of this Act, which is ten (10) years.

In case of a cyber-attack on the SIM Register, the incident shall be reported to the DICT within twenty-four (24) hours of detection.

PTEs shall provide user-friendly reporting mechanisms for their respective end-users upon the latter's receipt of any potentially fraudulent text or call, and shall, upon due investigation, deactivate, either temporarily or permanently, the SIM used for the fraudulent text or call.

Sec. 7. Subsequent Sale of a Registered SIM. – A registered SIM shall not be sold or transferred without complying with the registration requirements under Section 6 of this Act.

Sec. 8. Sale of a Stolen SIM. – Any PTE, its agents, resellers, or entity that shall engage in the sale of stolen SIMs shall be criminally liable under this Act.

Sec. 9. Confidentiality Clause. – Any information and data obtained in the registration process described under this Act shall be treated as absolutely confidential and shall not be disclosed to any person.

Notwithstanding this provision, disclosure of the full name and address shall be made:

- i. In compliance with any law obligating the PTE to disclose such information in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012;
- ii. In compliance with a court order or legal process upon finding of probable cause;
- iii. In compliance with Section 10 hereof; or
- iv. With the written consent of the subscriber: *Provided*, That, the waiver of absolute confidentiality shall not be made as a condition for the approval of subscription agreements with the PTEs.

The confidentiality clause in the SIM registration shall take effect at the point of activation.

Sec. 10. Disclosure of Information. – Notwithstanding the provisions on confidentiality, the PTEs shall be required to provide information obtained in the

Digitally signed
by Tiangco
Tobias Reynald
Marcelo
Date: 2022.09.28
09:35:54 +08'00'

registration process only upon the issuance of a subpoena by a competent authority pursuant to an investigation based on a sworn complaint that a specific mobile number was or is being used in the commission of a crime or that it was utilized as a means to commit a malicious, fraudulent or unlawful act, and that the complainant is unable to ascertain the identity of the perpetrator.

Provided, however, That no PTE shall be held administratively, civilly, or criminally liable on account of any disclosure done in compliance with this Act.

For this purpose, the relevant data and information shall be kept by the PTEs for ten (10) years from the time the end-user deactivates his or her mobile number.

Sec. 11. Penalties. – The following penalties shall be imposed for violation of any provision of this Act:

(a) *For failure or refusal to register a SIM.* – The following fines shall be imposed upon the PTEs who shall fail or refuse to register a SIM, without a valid reason, despite compliance by the end-user with the requirements for SIM registration under this Act:

- (1) First offense: a fine of not less than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than Three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00);
- (2) Second offense: a fine of not less than Three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00) but not more than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00); and
- (3) Third and subsequent offenses: a fine of not less than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) but not more than One million pesos (P1,000,000.00) for every offense thereof;

(b) *For breach of confidentiality.* – The penalty of a fine of not less than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) but not more than Four million pesos (P4,000,000.00) shall be imposed upon PTEs, its agents or its employees who shall directly or indirectly reveal or disclose any information or data of an end-user obtained during the registration requirement under this Act, unless otherwise permitted by this Act, or other laws;

Digitally signed
by Tiangco
Tobias Reynald
Marcelo
Date:
2022.09.28
09:36:09 +08'00'

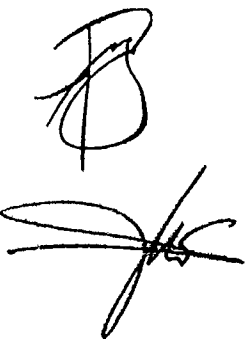
(c) *For breach of confidentiality due to negligence.* – The penalty of a fine of not less than Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00) but not more than Four million pesos (P4,000,000.00) shall be imposed upon PTEs, its agents or its employees who, due to negligence, shall reveal or disclose any information or data of an end-user obtained during the registration requirement under this Act;

(d) *For providing false or fictitious information or for using fictitious identities or fraudulent identification documents to register a SIM.* – The penalty of imprisonment ranging from six (6) months to two (2) years, or a fine of not less than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than Three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00), or both, shall be imposed upon anyone who provides false or fictitious information or who uses a fictitious identity or fraudulent identification documents to register a SIM;

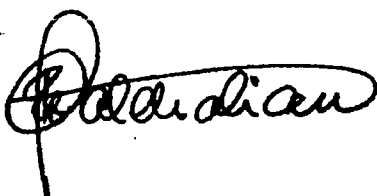
(e) *For spoofing a registered SIM.* – The penalty of imprisonment of no less than six (6) years, or a fine of Two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000.00), or both, shall be imposed upon anyone who causes to transmit misleading or inaccurate information about the source of the phone call or text message, with the intent to defraud, cause harm, or wrongfully obtain anything of value, unless such transmission is exempted in connection with: (1) authorized activities of law enforcement agencies; or (2) a court order specifically authorizing the use of caller ID manipulation;

(f) *For sale of a stolen SIM.* – The penalty of imprisonment ranging from six (6) months to two (2) years, or a fine of not less than One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) but not more than Three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00), or both, shall be imposed upon the PTEs, its agents, resellers, or any entity that will engage in the sale of stolen SIM as provided under this Act.

If the offender is a corporation, partnership or any juridical person, the penalty shall be imposed upon the responsible officers, as the case may



Digitally signed
by Tobias Reynald
Marcelo
Date: 2022.09.28
09:36:23 +08'00'



A. Pimental

Grace Poe

Edel Laguarda

Alvin Pang

be, who participated in, or by their gross negligence, allowed the commission of the crime; and

(g) *For sale or transfer of a registered SIM without complying with the required registration.* – The penalty of imprisonment ranging from six (6) months to six (6) years or a fine of one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) to three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00), or both shall be imposed upon anyone who sells or transfers a registered SIM without complying with the required registration under this Act.

Any person who abets or aids in the commission of any of the offenses enumerated in this Act shall be held liable as a co-principal.

A prosecution under this Act shall be without prejudice to any liability or violation of any provision of the Revised Penal Code, as amended, or special laws.

Sec. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), in coordination with other concerned agencies such as, but not limited to, DICT, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), National Privacy Commission (NPC), as well as PTEs and major consumer groups, shall set the guidelines for the monitoring and proper implementation of this act and shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations as may be necessary to ensure the effective implementation of this Act.

All PTEs are required to submit to the NTC, DICT, and to both Houses of Congress an annual report on the implementation of the provisions of this Act.

Sec. 13. *Transitory Provision.* – Upon the effectivity of this Act, all PTEs are mandated to deactivate all prepaid SIMs for sale to the public. Otherwise, they shall be liable for the penalties prescribed in this Act.

Sec. 14. *Interpretation.* – Any doubt in the interpretation of any provision of this Act and its implementing rules and regulations shall be construed in a manner that accords the highest respect for privacy, and liberally interpreted in a manner mindful of the rights and interests of SIM subscribers.

Sec. 15. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations, and issuances, or parts thereof which are

Grace Poe

Edelstein

Alfonso

9 A. Pimentel

inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

Sec. 16. *Separability Clause.* – Should any part of this Act be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions hereof that are not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

Sec. 17. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

Jose Poe

Edelstein

Alfonso

A. Pimentel

Edelstein

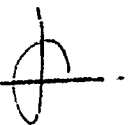
Digitally signed
by Tiangco
Tobias Reynald
Marcelo
Date: 2022.09.28
09:36:52 +08'00'



NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

'22 SEP 28 P3:19

JOINT EXPLANATION OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
ON THE DISAGREEING PROVISIONS OF
H. No. 4673 and S. No. 1306

RECEIVED BY: 

The Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of **House Bill No. 4673** and **Senate Bill No. 1306**, after having met and fully discussed the subject matter in a conference, hereby report to their respective Houses the following that:

1. The conferees agreed to use the Senate version as the working draft;
2. The conferees agreed to amend Section 1, which now reads as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 1 of Republic Act No. 9164, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SECTION 1. *Date of Election.* – There shall be synchronized barangay and sangguniang kabataan elections, which shall be held on the last Monday of October 2023 and every three (3) years thereafter."

3. The conferees agreed to amend Section 2, which now reads as follows:

SEC. 2. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 9164, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 4. *Assumption of Office.* – The term of office of the barangay and sangguniang kabataan officials elected under this Act shall commence at noon of November 30 next following their election."

4. Section 3 of the Senate version on "*Hold-over*" was adopted with the following amendment:

- 4.1 On page 4, line 10, after the word "elections" insert the phrase "unless removed in accordance with their existing rules or for cause"

Thus, Section 3 now reads as follows:

SEC. 3. *Hold-over.* – Until their successors shall have been duly elected and qualified, all incumbent barangay and sangguniang kabataan officials shall remain in office, unless sooner removed or suspended for cause: *Provided,* That barangay and sangguniang kabataan officials who are *ex officio* members of the sangguniang bayan, sangguniang panlungsod, or sangguniang panlalawigan, as the case may be, shall continue to serve as such members in the sanggunian concerned until the next barangay and sangguniang kabataan elections unless removed in accordance with their existing rules or for cause.

5. Section 4 of the House version on "*Appropriations*" was adopted.
6. Section 5 of the Senate version on "*Audit Report*" was deleted;
7. Section 7 of the Senate version on "*Separability Clause*" was adopted and renumbered as Section 5;
8. Section 6 of the Senate version on "*Repealing Clause*" was adopted;
9. Section 8 of the Senate version on "*Effectivity*" was adopted and renumbered as Section 7; and

10. The conferees agreed that the new title of the reconciled bill shall read as follows:

"AN ACT
POSTPONING THE DECEMBER 2022 BARANGAY AND
SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE
PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES"

In case of conflict between the statements/amendments stated in this Joint Explanation and that of the provisions of the consolidated bill in the accompanying Conference Committee Report, the provisions of the latter shall prevail.



HON. MAXIMO Y. DALOG, JR.

Chairperson
House of Representatives Panel



HON. JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO

Chairperson
Senate Panel

**REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES**

Nineteenth Congress
First Regular Session



Senate
Office of the Secretary

22 SEP 28 P 3:19

RECEIVED BY:

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 4673, entitled:

"AN ACT

**POSTPONING THE DECEMBER 2022 BARANGAY AND
SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE
PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED BY
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9340, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10632,
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10656, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10923,
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10952 AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11462,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR"**

and Senate Bill No. 1306, entitled:

"AN ACT

**POSTPONING THE DECEMBER 2022 BARANGAY AND
SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE
PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED BY
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9340, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10632,
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10656, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10923,
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10952, AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11462,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"**

after having met and discussed the subject matter in full and free conference, have agreed and do hereby recommend to their respective Houses that S. No. 1306, in consolidation with H. No. 4673, be approved in accordance with the attached copy of the bill as reconciled and approved by the conferees.

Approved,

**CONFEREES ON THE PART OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**



HON. MAXIMO Y. DALOG, JR.

Chairperson



HON. ELPIDIO F. BARZAGA, JR.



**HON. JULIET MARIE DE LEON
FERRER**



HON. EDWIN L. OLIVAREZ



HON. JC ABALOS

**CONFEREES ON THE PART OF
THE SENATE**



HON. JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO

Chairperson



HON. WIN GATCHALIAN



**HON. MARIA LOURDES NANCY S.
BINAY**



HON. FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO

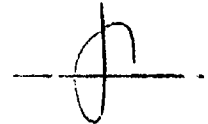
HON. RISA HONTIVEROS



22 SEP 28 P3:19

AN ACT POSTPONING THE DECEMBER 2022
BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN
ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

RECEIVED BY



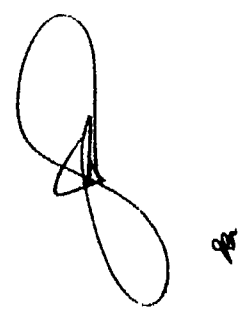
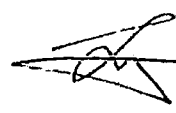
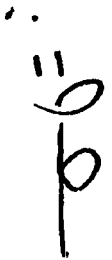
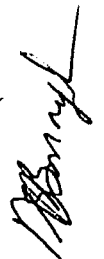
*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of
the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 1 of Republic Act No. 9164, as
2 amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows:

3 "SECTION 1. *Date of Election.* – There shall
4 be synchronized barangay and sangguniang
5 kabataan elections, which shall be held on the last
6 Monday of October 2023 and every three (3) years
7 thereafter."

8 SEC. 2. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 9164, as amended,
9 is hereby further amended to read as follows:

10 "SEC. 4. *Assumption of Office.* – The term of
11 office of the barangay and sangguniang kabataan



1 officials elected under this Act shall commence at
2 noon of November 30 next following their election."

3 SEC. 3. *Hold-Over.* – Until their successors shall have
4 been duly elected and qualified, all incumbent barangay and
5 sangguniang kabataan officials shall remain in office,
6 unless sooner removed or suspended for cause: *Provided,*
7 That barangay and sangguniang kabataan officials who are
8 *ex officio* members of the sangguniang bayan, sangguniang
9 panlungsod, or sangguniang panlalawigan, as the case may
10 be, shall continue to serve as such members in the
11 sanggunian concerned until the next barangay and
12 sangguniang kabataan elections unless removed in
13 accordance with their existing rules or for cause.

14 SEC. 4. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the
15 implementation of this Act shall be taken from the
16 appropriations of the Commission on Elections (COMELEC)
17 under the General Appropriations Act and/or
18 supplementary appropriations thereafter.

19 SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision
20 of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder of

1891
Bong

1 this Act or any provision not affected thereby shall remain
2 in force and effect.

3 SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* - All other laws, acts,
4 presidential decrees, executive orders, issuances,
5 presidential proclamations, rules and regulations or parts
6 thereof, which are contrary to and inconsistent with any
7 provision of this Act, are hereby repealed, amended, or
8 modified accordingly.

9 SEC. 7. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect
10 immediately following the completion of its publication
11 either in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of
12 general circulation.

Approved,

Handwritten signature on the left margin.

Handwritten mark or signature at the bottom center.

Handwritten signature on the right margin.

Handwritten signature at the bottom right.