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Senate
Pasay City

Journal

SESSION NO. 29
Monday, November 21, 2022

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

Prepared by the
LEGISLATIVE JOURNAL SERVICE
Senate of the Philippines

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CALL TO ORDER

At 3:00 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Juan Miguel “Migz” F. Zubiri, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Joel Villanueva led the prayer, to wit:

Heavenly Father, we come to You humbling ourselves, knowing that without You, we can do nothing. You said in Your word that if there are two or three gathering together in Your Name, You are in their midst. So, we honor You and praise You for this wonderful time and opportunity You have given us to gather in this august Chamber and serve our purpose as people’s representatives in government.

We pray for Your wisdom, divine strength, and favor to be upon all of us. Bless every member of this august Chamber, every staff, and the employees of the Senate. And into Your hands, we commend everything as we open our session today, in fulfilling our divine purpose in life to serve You and our countrymen fully.

We love You and praise You as we carefully give back to You all the glory, all the honor and praise.

In Jesus’ Name, we pray.

Amen.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Thereafter, the Body sang the national anthem.

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:

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

With 22 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senators Cayetano (P) arrived after the roll call.

Senator Cayetano (A) was absent.

DEFERMENT OF APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body deferred the consideration and approval of the Journal of Session No. 28 (November 8-10 and 14-17, 2022).

MANIFESTATION OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

Senate President Zubiri thanked the senators for their help and participation in the budget deliberations over the last two weeks. He noticed that in previous budget deliberations, the sessions were suspended before 12:00 midnight, with only six or seven senators remaining in the session hall. He stated, however, that during the recent budget deliberations, 16 to 17 senators were present even at past 2:00 a. m. He cited the Members' diligence, patience, perseverance, and hard work in helping pass the budget. He also thanked the Secretariat, led by Secretary Bantug and Deputy Secretary Bellen, and the senators' staffs for a job well done.

Senator Villanueva added that it was noteworthy to mention the 12 to 16 hours spent on budget deliberations every day for the last two weeks.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUEST

At this juncture, Senator Villanueva acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Emilio Ejercito, son of Senator Ejercito.

Senate President welcomed the guest to the Senate.

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. 1411, entitled

**AN ACT DECLARING BARANGAY TALA IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ORANI,
PROVINCE OF BATAAN AN ECOTOURISM ZONE AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR**

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill No. 1412, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING PILIS FALLS IN BARANGAY PALILI, MUNICIPALITY OF SAMAL, PROVINCE OF BATAAN AN ECOTOURISM SITE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill No. 1413, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill No. 1414, entitled

AN ACT DIVIDING BARANGAY ADAMS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ADAMS, PROVINCE OF ILOCOS NORTE INTO THREE (3) DISTINCT AND INDEPENDENT BARANGAYS TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY ADAN, BARANGAY BUCAROT, AND BARANGAY MALASIN

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill. No. 1415, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR ASSISTANCE FUND FOR OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

To the Committees on Migrant Workers; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1416, entitled

AN ACT SAFEGUARDING THE HEALTH OF FILIPINO MOTHERS AT THE TIME OF THEIR CHILDBIRTH, PROVIDING PROTECTIVE MECHANISM THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES



Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Local Government

Senate Bill No. 1417, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING ALL BARANGAYS TO CREATE A REGISTRY OF PROFESSIONALS AND SKILLED WORKERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1418, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE FIRST DAY OF FEBRUARY OF EVERY YEAR AS NATIONAL HIJAB DAY AND PROMOTING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MUSLIM TRADITION OF WEARING A HIJAB

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs; and Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality

Senate Bill No. 1419, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING PROTECTION TO FREELANCERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 1420, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE SIXTEENTH (16TH) DAY OF MAY OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY TO BE KNOWN AS NATIONAL EDUCATION SUPPORT PERSONNEL DAY

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1421, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE MILITARY AND UNIFORMED PERSONNEL PENSION SYSTEM, CREATING THE MILITARY AND UNIFORMED PERSONNEL INSURANCE FUND, AMENDING SECTIONS 3 AND 24 OF REPUBLIC ACT NUMBER 8291, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.



To the Committees on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; Government Corporations and Public Enterprises; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1422, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NEGROS ISLAND REGION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1423, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE TO DISASTERS, PANDEMIC AND PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES, CREATING A MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1424, entitled

AN ACT PROTECTING CONSUMERS AND MERCHANTS ENGAGED IN INTERNET TRANSACTIONS, CREATING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE ECOMMERCE BUREAU, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1425, entitled

AN ACT CONVERTING AND EXPANDING LEYTE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ESTATE INTO THE LEYTE ECOLOGICAL INDUSTRIAL ZONE, CREATING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE LEYTE ECOLOGICAL INDUSTRIAL ZONE AUTHORITY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1426, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE EASTERN VISAYAS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EVDA) DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Government Corporations and Public Enterprises; Economic Affairs; and Finance

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Senate Bill No. 1427, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE PHILIPPINE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1428, entitled

AN ACT RATIONALIZING THE ECONOMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION OF WATER UTILITIES, CREATING THE WATER REGULATORY COMMISSION, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1429, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING BENEFITS TO PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Health and Demography; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1430, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CAREGIVERS IN THE PRACTICE OF THEIR PROFESSION

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 1431, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR FREE FREIGHT SERVICES IN THE TRANSPORTATION OF RELIEF GOODS TO CALAMITY-STRICKEN AREAS

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Public Services

Senate Bill No. 1432, entitled

AN ACT REGULATING THE CATCHING, SALE, PURCHASE, POSSESSION, TRANSPORTATION, IMPORTATION, AND EXPORTATION OF ALL SHARKS, RAYS, AND CHIMAERAS AND ANY PART THEREOF IN THE COUNTRY

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; and Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change

Senate Bill No. 1433, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING ADDITIONAL PRIVILEGES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE MAGNA CARTA FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1434, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING ALL NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS TO ESTABLISH, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A DIALYSIS WARD OR UNIT IN THEIR RESPECTIVE HOSPITAL AND PROVIDING FREE DIALYSIS TREATMENT TO INDIGENT PATIENTS

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Health and Demography; Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1435, entitled

AN ACT EXEMPTING MICROINSURANCE POLICIES FROM VALUE-ADDED TAX, TAX ON LIFE INSURANCE PREMIUMS AND DOCUMENTARY STAMP TAX, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE SECTIONS 108, 109, 123, 183, 184, 185, 186, AND 187 OF THE 'NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 1436, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ONLINE DEATH VERIFICATION (ODV) SYSTEM UNDER THE PHILIPPINE STATISTICS AUTHORITY (PSA), THEREBY ENSURING GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AND FACILITATING THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE BY STRENGTHENING THE FRAUD DETECTION, PREVENTION AND ELIMINATION CAPABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Economic Affairs; Science and Technology; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1437, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A RESULTS-BASED NATIONAL EVALUATION POLICY



Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Economic Affairs; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1438, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING A FRAMEWORK TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE
RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1439, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL PUBLIC PARKS SYSTEM,
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Estrada

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

Senate Bill No. 1440, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF
CAREGIVERS IN THE PRACTICE OF THEIR PROFESSION

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 1441, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE POVERTY REDUCTION THROUGH
SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (PRESENT) PROGRAM AND PROMOTING
SOCIAL ENTERPRISES WITH THE POOR AS PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS

Introduced by Senator Estrada

**To the Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; Social Justice, Welfare
and Rural Development; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1442, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 8 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10699 OR THE
'NATIONAL ATHLETES AND COACHES BENEFITS AND INCENTIVES ACT'
THEREBY PROVIDING EQUAL CASH INCENTIVES TO NATIONAL
ATHLETES AND ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES WHO WIN MEDALS IN
INTERNATIONAL SPORTS COMPETITION

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Sports

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Senate Bill No. 1443, entitled

AN ACT INTEGRATING THE TEACHING OF THE 1987 PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION IN THE SECONDARY EDUCATION CURRICULUM OF ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Basic Education

Senate Bill No. 1444, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING OF SUBMISSION OF TREE PLANTING PLAN AS A REQUIREMENT IN THE APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMITS

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change; and Local Government

Senate Bill No. 1445, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Estrada

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

Senate Bill No. 1446, entitled

AN ACT MAKING AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINES ACCESSIBLE TO VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

To the Committees on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; and Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development

RESOLUTION

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 266, entitled

RESOLUTION URGING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED UPSURGE IN CHOLERA CASES IN THE COUNTRY, WITH THE END VIEW OF REVIEWING EXISTING POLICIES AND STRENGTHENING LAWS TO PREVENT AND MITIGATE THE OUTBREAK OF THE DISEASE

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Health and Demography



COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Report No. 11, prepared and submitted jointly by the Committees on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; and Finance, on Senate Bill No. 1480, with Senators Estrada and Angara as authors thereof, entitled

AN ACT RATIONALIZING THE DISABILITY PENSION OF VETERANS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6948, ENTITLED "AN ACT STANDARDIZING AND UPGRADING THE BENEFITS FOR MILITARY VETERANS AND THEIR BENEFICIARIES," AS AMENDED,

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill Nos. 683 and 911.

Sponsor: Senator Estrada

To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 267, entitled

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SINCERE CONDOLENCES OF THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES ON THE DEATH OF A FILIPINO MUSIC ICON, DANIEL 'DANNY' MORALES JAVIER

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 268, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING KIMBERLY ANNE CUSTODIO FOR WINNING GOLD IN THE 2022 JJIF JIU-JITSU WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 269, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING CARLOS YULO FOR HIS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AT THE 51ST FEDERATION INTERNATIONAL DE GYMNASTIQUE (FIG) ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 270, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING MEGGIE OCHOA AND KIMBERLY ANNE CUSTODIO FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

AT THE 2022 JIU-JITSU INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 271, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING FILIPINA JIU-JIUJITEIRA, MEGGIE OCHOA, FOR WINNING GOLD IN THE 2022 JJIF JIU-JITSU WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 272, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING FILIPINA BEAUTY QUEEN AND ACTRESS KYLIE VERSOZA FOR WINNING BEST ACTRESS AT THE 2022 DISTINCTIVE INTERNATIONAL ARAB FESTIVALS HELD IN DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 273, entitled

RESOLUTION HONORING AND COMMENDING FILIPINO GYMNAST CARLOS EDRIEL "CALOY" YULO FOR HIS TRIUMPHS IN THE 51ST FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE GYMNASTIQUE (FIG) ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN LIVERPOOL, UNITED KINGDOM

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 274, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE GENERAL SANTOS CITY JAIL MALE DORMITORY TEAM FOR COMPETING AND WINNING IN THE 2ND INTERCONTINENTAL ONLINE CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP FOR PRISONERS

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 275, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE MASUNGI GEO-RESERVE FOR WINNING THE 2022 BETT AWARD FOR SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE



Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 276, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING FILIPINO GYMNAST
CARLOS EDRIEL YULO FOR HIS SUCCESSFUL RUN AT THE 51ST FIG
ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 277, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING FILIPINO JIU-JITSU
ATHLETES KIMBERLY ANNE CUSTODIO, MEGGIE OCHOA AND THE
REST OF THE PHILIPPINE TEAM FOR THEIR SUCCESSFUL RUN AT THE
2022 JJIF JIU-JITSU WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 278, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING DAGUPAN'S BONUAN
BOQUIG NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL FOR WINNING THE 2022 WORLD'S
BEST SCHOOL PRIZE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 279, entitled

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO IMPROVING THE
STANDARDS OF MARITIME EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES FOR THE
PURPOSE OF PROMOTING SAFETY AT SEA AND COMPLYING WITH THE
PHILIPPINES' COMMITMENTS UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION ON STANDARDS OF TRAINING, CERTIFICATION AND
WATCHKEEPING FOR SEAFARERS

Introduced by Senator Hontiveros

To the Committee on Migrant Workers

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 280, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMMUNITIES
AND MUSLIM AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGIS-
LATION, ON WHETHER THE RIGHT TO STAY IN THE TERRITORIES

pk

UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8371, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S RIGHTS ACT (IPRA) OF 1997, WAS COMPLIED WITH IN THE RELOCATION OF THE TEDURAY TRIBE AND POSSIBLY AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8371

Introduced by Senator Padilla

To the Committee on Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 281, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING CARLOS EDRIEL P. YULO FOR WINNING ONE SILVER MEDAL AND ONE BRONZE MEDAL IN THE 51st FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE GYMNASTIQUE (FIG) ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND ON 6 NOVEMBER 2022

Introduced by Senator Villar (C)

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 282, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING KIMBERLY ANNE CUSTODIO FOR WINNING A GOLD MEDAL IN THE 2022 JIU-JITSU INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN DUBAI, UAE ON 2 NOVEMBER 2022

Introduced by Senator Villar (C)

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 283, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING THE OUTSTANDING WOMEN IN THE NATION'S SERVICE (TOWNS) 2022

Introduced by Senator Angara

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 284, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING FILIPINA JOURNALIST KARMINA CONSTANTINO FOR BEING NAMED THE 2022 MARSHALL MCLUHAN FELLOW FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 285, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING CHESS PRODIGY



BINCE RAFAEL OPERIANO FOR WINNING THE SIXTH EASTERN ASIA
YOUTH CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 286, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING ALEIA AIELLE
AGUILAR FOR HER OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AT THE ABU DHABI
WORLD JIU-JITSU CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 287, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING RAFAEL "PAENG"
NEPOMUCENO FOR HIS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AT THE ASIAN
SENIORS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 288, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING CARLO PAALAM FOR
HIS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AT THE 2022 ASIAN ELITE MEN &
WOMEN BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 289, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING CARLO PAALAM,
NESTHY PETECIO, AND HERGIE BACYADAN FOR HONORING THE
COUNTRY WITH A GOLD AND TWO BRONZE MEDALS AT THE 2022
ASIAN BOXING CONFEDERATION (ASBC) ELITE BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS
IN AMMAN, JORDAN HELD FROM OCTOBER 30 TO NOVEMBER 13, 2022

Introduced by Senator Zubiri

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 290, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING FILIPINO BOWLING
LEGEND RAFAEL "PAENG" VILLAREAL NEPUMUCENO FOR CAPTURING
THE GOLD MEDAL AT THE 16TH ASIAN SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS



Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 291, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING TEAM PHILIPPINES FOR THEIR SUCCESSFUL RUN AT THE 2022 ASBC ASIAN ELITE BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS AND CARLO PAALAM FOR WINNING THE GOLD MEDAL IN THE BANTAMWEIGHT DIVISION

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 292, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING CARLOS EDRIEL YULO FOR HONORING THE COUNTRY WITH SILVER AND BRONZE MEDALS AT THE 2022 WORLD GYMNASTICS CHAMPIONSHIPS AT THE M&S BANK ARENA IN LIVERPOOL, UNITED KINGDOM HELD FROM OCTOBER 29 TO NOVEMBER 6, 2022

Introduced by Senator Zubiri

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 293, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND RECOGNIZING FILIPINO CHESS PRODIGY, BINCE RAFAEL OPERIANO FOR BEING THE CHAMPION IN THE 6TH EASTERN ASIA YOUTH CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP HELD IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 294, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING THE PHILIPPINES' YOUNGEST JIU-JITSU CHAMPION, ALEIA AIELLE AGUILAR FOR WINNING IN THE 2022 WORLD YOUTH JIU-JITSU CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 295, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND RECOGNIZING WORLD BOWLING CHAMPION, RAFAEL "PAENG" VILLAREAL NEPOMUCENO FOR BEING THE CHAMPION IN THE MEN'S SINGLES 65+ DIVISION OF THE ASIAN SENIOR BOWLING CHAMPIONSHIP HELD IN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA



Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 296, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING FILIPINO OLYMPIAN AND BOXER, CARLO PAALAM FOR WINNING GOLD MEDAL IN THE MEN'S 54KG BANTAM-WEIGHT CLASS AT THE 2022 ASIAN BOXING CONFEDERATION ELITE MEN AND WOMEN BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN AMMAN, JORDAN

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 297, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING FILIPINA BOXER, HERGIE TAO-WAG BACYADAN FOR WINNING BRONZE MEDAL IN THE WOMEN'S 75KG MIDDLEWEIGHT CLASS AT THE 2022 ASIAN BOXING CONFEDERATION ELITE MEN AND WOMEN BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN AMMAN, JORDAN

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 298, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING FILIPINA OLYMPIAN AND BOXER, NESTHY ALCAYDE PETECIO FOR WINNING BRONZE MEDAL IN THE WOMEN'S 57KG FEATHERWEIGHT CLASS AT THE 2022 ASIAN BOXING CONFEDERATION ELITE MEN AND WOMEN BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN AMMAN, JORDAN

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 299, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING FILIPINO HOST AND DANCER BILLY JOE LEDESMA CRAWFORD FOR BEING THE GRAND WINNER OF THE 12TH SEASON OF THE "DANSE AVEC LES STARS"

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 300, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE REPORTED



LARGE-SCALE LAND RECLAMATION PROJECTS BEING UNDERTAKEN
ON A NATIONWIDE SCALE IN THE PHILIPPINES THAT THREATEN
COASTAL AND MARINE ECOSYSTEMS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Introduced by Senator Hontiveros

**To the Committees on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement; and Environ-
ment, Natural Resources and Climate Change**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 301, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE CAST AND CREW OF THE FILM, ANG
KONTRABIDA (THE VILLAIN), FOR WINNING THE NETWORK FOR THE
PROMOTION OF ASIA PACIFIC CINEMA (NETPAC) PRIZE FOR BEST
ASIAN FILM AT THE 6th HANOI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 302, entitled

RESOLUTION CREATING A SELECT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON INTEL-
LIGENCE AND CONFIDENTIAL FUNDS, PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Introduced by Senator Zubiri

To the Committee on Rules

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senate President Zubiri acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Commission on Audit Chairperson Gamaliel Cordova, Vice Mayor Ronaldo "Onal" Golez of Dumangas, Iloilo, and Marinduque Governor Presbitero J. Velasco Jr.

He then welcomed the guests to the Senate.

SPECIAL ORDER

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 8 on Senate Bill No. 1410 from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 8 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1410

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading, Senate Bill No. 1410 (Committee Report No. 8), entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE FIRST DAY OF FEBRUARY OF EVERY YEAR AS
NATIONAL HIJAB DAY.

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

The Chair recognized Senator Padilla for the sponsorship.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR PADILLA

Senator Padilla, as chairperson of the Committee on Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs, sponsored Senate Bill No. 1410 under Committee Report No. 8, otherwise known as the “National Hijab Day.”

Following is the full text of Senator Padilla’s sponsorship speech:

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh. Pagbati ng kapayapaan, awa, at pagpapala ng nag-iisang Diyos sa lahat.

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

Ako po ay tumitindig ngayong hapon sa Bulwagang ito upang iulat ang naging resulta ng pagdinig ng Committee on Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs patungkol po sa pinag-uusapan na World Hijab Day. Ito pong Senate Bill No. 1410 ay inihain bilang substitusyon sa mga sumusunod na Senate Bills—Senate Bill No. 805 ng ating mahal na Senador Jinggoy Estrada at Senate Bill No. 1272 ng inyong lingkod—na nagdedeklara sa unang araw ng Pebrero bilang Pambansang Araw ng Hijab.

Kasama rin natin sa ating mithiin ang tagapangulo ng Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality na si Senadora Risa Hontiveros, at ang ating kaibigan na si Senador Lito Lapid, at siyempre gayon din si Senador Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr. na nag-file ng Senate Bill No. 1418 noong Oktubre 27, 2022. Magkakasama po dito ang “Apat na Sikat.” Bagamat nauna nang nabuo at naisumite ang ulat ng Komite noong ika-20 ng Oktubre 2022, nagkaroon po tayo ng ugnayan sa ating mahal na Senador upang maitala siya bilang kapwa sponsor ng panukalang Pambansang Araw ng Hijab.

Sa pamamagitan ng pagdinig na ginanap ng ating komite noong ika-22 ng Setyembre, kasama ang ating mga pinagpipitaganang miyembro ng Muslim communities at iba pang sangay ng pamahalaan, hindi lamang nabigyang-linaw ang kahulugan ng panukalang batas na ito, ngunit lalo’t higit nitong pinag-alab ang ating damdamin sa mas malalim na implikasyon ng pagkasabatas ng komemorasyon ng Araw ng Hijab.

Ang pagsusuot ng hijab ng kababaihang Muslim batay sa kanilang paniniwala ay protektado ng ating Saligang Batas. Ang hijab ay isang belo na nakatakip sa buhok ng isang babae. Madali itong ilarawan sapagkat tulad kung paanong nakatakip ng belo ang Birheng Maria—sumakanya po ang kapayapaan—ganoon din po ang mga babae na naka-hijab.

Ito po ang itinataguyod ng panukalang batas—ang malayang pagganap ng karapatan ng mga hijabi na walang pangamba sa diskriminasyon at takot sa pamamagitan ng pagsulong ng awareness o pagkakaunawaan sa Pambansang Araw ng Hijab.

Para sa inyong lingkod, sampu ng ating mga kapatid na Muslim, ito ay sumasagisag sa paghilom, paglaya, at pagkakaisa.

Una, bilang isang Muslim, ang inyong lingkod ay buhay na saksi sa mga aktuwal at salaysay ng iba’t-ibang uri at porma ng diskriminasyon na nararanasan ng ating mga kapatid na kababaihang Muslim na nakasuot ng hijab.

Ang ilan sa ating mga naging panauhin sa ating isinagawang pagdinig ay nagbahagi rin ng kanilang mga personal na karanasan: mula sa pagpapaaalis ng kanilang suot na hijab dahil hindi daw ito “naaangkop” sa isang institusyon o maging sa mga pampublikong lugar; ang hindi pagtanggap sa isang propesyon dahil sa nakakasagabal daw po na “takip” sa ulo; hanggang sa pangha-harass at pag-atake sa mga mag-aaral ng kilala noon bilang isang “Boy Recto” sa mga naka-hijab noong ‘90s sa University Belt, Sampaloc, Maynila.

Ang mas nakalulungkot po, ang mga istoryang ito na sumusugat sa kanilang mga puso ay tila naging bahagi na ng pang-araw-araw na buhay ng ating mga kapatid.

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Ito ay salamin rin ng masalimuot na reyalidad na kinahaharap ng ating mga kapatid na Muslim sa pandaigdigang saklaw: 69 percent ng mga kababaihan na nagsusuot ng hijab ay nakaranas ng insidente ng diskriminasyon ayon sa pag-aaral ng American Civil Liberties Union; 61 percent na mga mag-aaral na Muslim ay nakaranas ng bullying base sa relihiyon; 17 percent ng mga Muslim na estudyante ang nakaranas ng pisikal na panliligalig tulad ng pagtanggag ng kanilang hijab; at 33 percent ng mga estudyanteng Muslim ang nag-ulat na binago nila ang kanilang hitsura, pangalan, at iba pa upang itago ang kanilang relihiyon base sa ulat ng Council on American-Islamic Relations sa Massachusetts.

Ayon sa resulta ng 2005 Pulse Asia Suvey na inilahad sa 2005 Philippine Human Development Report, 47 percent ng mga nakilahok sa survey ay naniniwala po na ang mga Muslim ay terorista at extremist; at 39 percent ay nagsasabi na mayroon silang diskriminasyon sa mga Muslim.

Kaya naman ako po ay naniniwala na ang pagtulak natin sa panukalang batas na ito para sa kampanya ng pampublikong kamalayan sa kahulugan ng pagsusuot ng hijab ay magiging daan upang sa wakas ay unti-unting maghilom na ang mga sugat na matagal nang iniinda ng ating mga kababaihang Muslim.

Ang panukalang batas na ito ay sumisimbulo rin po sa paglaya—sa paglaya ng ating mga kababaihan upang maipahayag ang tunay nilang pagkakakilanlan na walang bahid ng hiya, takot, at pangamba mula sa mga matang mapanghusga.

Sa pamamagitan ng ating malawakang kampanya, mas marami po ang mabibigyan ng kaalaman at mas makauunawa sa tunay na kahulugan ng hijab—na hindi po ito basta isang piraso lamang ng tela. Bagkus, ito po ay sumisimbulo sa respeto sa sarili at pagkapribado ng isang babaeng Muslim.

Napapanahon ang ating adbokasiya sa mga pandaigdigang isyu sa ngayon. Lahat tayo ay nagimbal sa pagkamatay ni Mahsa Amini ng Iran noong Setyembre 16, tatlong araw matapos siyang arestuhin ng morality police sa Tehran, na siya ring nag-udyok sa pagkalat ng malalaking protesta sa bansa. Habang tumitindi ang pag-aklas, kumalat ang mga videos ng kababaihang naggugupit ng kanilang buhok at nagsusunog ng kanilang mga hijab—mga pagkilos na nagsilbing pahayag ng galit na nakadirekta sa pulisya na responsable sa pagkamatay ni Mahsa Amini at maigting na pagtangga sa patakaran ng sapilitang pagsusuot ng hijab.

Ang panukalang batas ay nakatutok sa pagrespeto sa mga hijabi, at wala po itong kinalaman sa sapilitang pagsuot ng hijab. Muli't muli po, ito ay isang kampanya na magkaroon tayo ng isang araw sa kalendaryo para sa awareness at tamang kaalaman ukol sa mga hijabi upang maproteksyunan sila laban sa diskriminasyon at maging malaya sa pagganap sa kanilang paniniwala.

Sumiklab din ang mga protesta sa India patungkol sa opresyon sa malayang pagsusuot ng hijab. Masidhi ang damdamin ng mga hijabi sa isyu ng pagbabawal sa mga estudyanteng Muslim na pumasok na may suot ng hijab sa kanilang mga silid-aralan sa isang pampublikong kolehiyo sa distrito ng Udupi, Karnataka, India. Kasunod nito, mas maraming institusyong pang-edukasyon sa buong estado ang nagbawal sa mga babaeng Muslim na magsuot ng hijab. Nagpakawala ng mga protesta ang mga hijabi na humantong sa pagsasampa ng kaso na ngayon ay nakabinbin sa kanilang Korte Suprema.

Maswerte pa po tayo sapagkat malayong mangyari sa atin ang mga kaganapang tulad nito sa kadahilanan na ang ating Saligang Batas mismo ang nagmandato sa kalayaan ng lahat na ipahayag ang kanilang paniniwala sa relihiyon, kaakibat nito ay ang pananamit, katulad ng hijab.

Ayon sa Seksyon 5, Artikulo III ng Saligang Batas, “Dapat ipahintulot magpakailanman ang malayang pagsasagamit at pagtatamasa ng paghahayag ng relihiyon at pagsamba nang walang pagtatangi o pamimili.” Nararapat lamang po na bigyan natin ng laya ang bawat isa na ipahayag ang kanilang tradisyon, kultura, relihiyon, at paniniwala.

Atin din pong binibigyang-diin na ang deklarasyon sa unang araw ng Pebrero upang gunitain ang Araw ng Hijab ay sumasagisag rin po sa isang inklusibo at nagkakaisang lipunan.

Simula pa nang naitatag ang World Hijab Day noong 2013 ni Nazma Khan, isang imigrante sa United States of America mula sa Bangladesh, tinatayang 190 na bansa na po ang

nakikibahagi sa selebrasyon ng araw na ito. Ang World Hijab Day ay isang paraan upang pagyamanin ang pag-unawa sa pagsusuot ng hijab sa pamamagitan ng pag-imbata sa mga kababaihan, Muslim man o hindi, na maranasan ang pagsusuot ng hijab sa loob ng isang araw. Ang komemorasyong ito ay naglalayong puksain ang diskriminasyon laban sa mga babaeng Muslim na pinipiling magsuot ng hijab.

Noong 2014 po, nagbigay ng pribilehiyong talumpati si Representative Jim Hataman-Salliman tungkol sa pagdiriwang ng 2014 World Hijab Day. Sa sumunod na taon, naghain ng panukalang batas si Representative Sitti Djalia Turabin-Hataman sa Kongreso upang italaga ang Pebrero 1 kada taon bilang National Hijab Day.

Bago pa man po ang mahahalagang kaganapang ito, mayroon na tayong mga representante mula sa mga Muslim communities, kabilang na sina Sister Samira Gutoc, Atty. Maisara Latiph, at BTA Member Diamela Disimban-Ramos, at ng marami pa nating kasamahan na matagal nang nagsusulong ng pagtataguyod at pagpoprotekta sa karapatan ng ating mga kapatid na Muslim, kabilang na ang malayang pagsusuot ng hijab.

Ito rin pong panukalang batas na ito ay sinusuportahan ng Bangsamoro Women Commission. Ang Bangsamoro Parliament po ay nagpasa rin ng isang resolusyon sa pagdeklara sa February 1 bilang World Hijab Day.

Wika nga po ni Sister Maisara noong nakaraang pagdinig, ito ay 30 years in the making na. Nararapat lamang po na tayo ay magpasa ng batas na pangkalahatan na maghahatid ng mensahe ng pagkakaisa at inklusiyon para sa lahat ng miyembro ng lipunan ano man ang kaniyang relihiyon, kultura, at paniniwala.

Nararapat lamang po na tayo ay magpasa ng batas na pangkalahatan na maghahatid ng mensahe ng pagkakaisa at inklusiyon para sa lahat ng miyembro ng lipunan ano man ang kaniyang relihiyon, kultura, at paniniwala.

Nais ko pong ulit-ulitin, o wika nga ay bigyang diin, na ang layunin ng panukalang batas na aking inihahain ngayon sa ating Bulwagan ay ang pagdedeklara ng komemorasyon o paggunita sa Pambansang Araw ng Hijab. Batid ko pong ipaunawa sa lahat na hindi rin po natin sinasabing dapat ituring na isang holiday ang unang araw ng Pebrero sapagkat dalawa lamang ang okasyon na ipinagdiriwang ng kamusliman—ang Eid al-Fitr at ang Eid al-Adha. Nilalayon din po nating himukin ang mga ahensiya ng gobyerno, mga paaralan, at ang pribadong sektor upang gunitain ang Pambansang Araw ng Hijab upang ipalaganap ang kaalaman patungkol sa sagisag ng takdang araw na ito. Ang atin pong isinusulong ay inihahalintulad natin sa isang pambansang kampanya upang itaas ang antas ng pampublikong kamalayan sa simbolo ng hijab, kaalinsabay ng pagsisikap nating lumikha ng isang mahabagin, payapa, at inklusibong lipunan.

Sa puntong ito, akin pong iminumungkahi na ang Miyembrong naririto sa Bulwagan ito ay maging kapuwa may-akda sa Senate Bill No. 1410 bilang pakikiisa sa ating mabuting layunin.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR MARCOS

Senator Marcos thanked Senator Padilla for sponsoring Senate Bill No. 1410, recalling that in the 18th Congress, as chairperson of the Committee on Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs, she reported out the National Hijab Day Bill, or Senate Bill No. 2081, under Committee Report No 370, which she authored and was filed on December 6, 2021.

COSPONSORSHIP OF SENATOR LEGARDA

At the outset, Senator Legarda expressed her support and congratulated Senator Padilla for proposing Senate Bill No. 1410, or the National Hijab Day Bill. She stated that if enacted into law, the legislation would complement the Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha Laws. She stated that the measure would benefit Muslim Filipinos and would foster closer ties with other Muslims worldwide.

She then moved that her cosponsorship speech on Senate Bill No. 1410 be deemed read and inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*.

Following is the full text of Senator Legarda's cosponsorship speech:

It is my honor to cosponsor Senate Bill No. 1410, also known as "An Act Declaring the First Day of February of Every Year as National Hijab Day."

The Philippines is home to numerous religious affiliations. However, because of this kind of diversity, religious discrimination has become widespread, especially among those who remain ignorant about the core beliefs of people belonging to other religions.

As an Honorary Muslim Princess, or Bai A Labi, it is my duty to help lobby the cause of this proposed legislation: to spread awareness to the public about the wearing of the hijab, to encourage inclusion and respect for the hijabis, to put a stop to discrimination, and to create a safe space for Muslim women to freely express their religious beliefs.

Let us not wait for misconceptions and misunderstandings to fester into hatred brought about by different religious beliefs.

The freedom of religion for every Filipino is expressly guaranteed by the Constitution. Everyone must be treated with fairness and equality. With the help of this proposed policy, we should be able to lessen the prejudice that fuels a certain kind of terrorism—the kind that breeds hatred and sows discord in our nation.

These are the reasons why I want to associate myself with the proposed measure. With Senator Padilla's assent, I wish to be a cosponsor of this measure.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR ESTRADA

In cosponsoring Senate Bill No. 1410 on the National Hijab Day, Senator Estrada delivered the following speech:

It is my honor to cosponsor Senate Bill No. 1410 under Committee Report No. 8, entitled "An Act Declaring the First Day of February of Every Year as National Hijab Day." It is my intent as principal author of this measure, having filed Senate Bill No. 805, to institutionalize the declaration of the National Hijab Day in harmony with the annual February 1 World Hijab Day celebration.

Through the National Hijab Day, we are encouraging present and future generations to imbibe the culture and the spirit behind the practice of wearing hijab as a profession of faith, modesty, and dignity.

The World Hijab Day celebration fosters religious tolerance and dismantles bigotry and discrimination against Muslim women. It also envisions a world where we are all united through our diversity, despite race, color, creed or religion. Indeed, this is another important step that we are taking toward Christian-Muslim Filipino understanding and solidarity.

My congratulations to the sponsor, Sen. Robinhood Padilla, for prioritizing this simple yet meaningful piece of legislation. *Batid naman po ni Senator Robin na lagi akong nakasuporta sa kanyang mga ipinaglalaman, lalo na't ito ay para sa interes at kapakanan ng ating mga mahal na kapatid na Muslim, na malapit na malapit rin po sa aking puso at sa puso ng aking ama na si Pangulong Joseph Estrada.* And with that, I am in full support of Senate Bill No.1410 under Committee Report No. 8.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR REVILLA

In cosponsoring Senate Bill No. 1410 on the National Hijab Day, Senator Revilla delivered the following cosponsorship speech:

I rise today to express my full support for this measure that aims to recognize the significance of hijab to the Muslim faith.

This measure will allow one day every year to pay respect to this symbolic fixture in the Muslim faith – not as a mere courtesy or accommodation, but as a meaningful representation of our genuine appreciation to the richness of their culture, and of a deeply rooted awareness of their faith.

Our Muslim brothers and sisters have been subjected to discrimination and prejudice because of religion. As narrated by the senator from Bicol, there has been many instances that we see our Muslim brothers and sisters denied services and goods because of their faith.

Sabi nga nila na takot tayo sa mga bagay na hindi natin maintindihan. I think that this is true. The Muslim faith has been maligned especially in popular media *bilang mga kidnapper o terorista. Hindi po ito totoo at lalong hindi po ito tamang gawain.* That is why I've been filing time and again measures that would not only promote their rights but protect them, such as Senate Bill No. 1418 on National Hijab Day, and Senate Bill No. 1502 which prohibits the use of words that would denote religious, regional, or ethnic affiliation in print, radio, and television, including cable television and other forms of broadcast media, to refer to or describe any person suspected or convicted of a crime or unlawful act and providing penalties therefor.

I laud the efforts of Sen. Robinhood Padilla in spreading awareness with regard to our Muslim brothers and sisters, especially to our sisters who wear the hijab. Ignorance breeds fear and the best way to combat this is through awareness.

With your permission, may this Representation be made coauthor of this measure.

COSPONSORSHIP OF SENATOR DELA ROSA

In cosponsoring Senate Bill No. 1410, Senator Dela Rosa delivered the following cosponsorship speech:

It is my honor to cosponsor Senate Bill No. 1410, or the "National Hijab Day," under Committee Report No. 8. I would like to commend the chairperson of the Senate Committee on Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs, *ang aking idolo, mapa-pelikula man o debate, sa TV screen man o dito sa Senate Floor, kampiyon ng mga kapatid nating Muslim – Sen. Robinhood Padilla.*

Allow me to begin by quoting Robert Allen: "Cultural differences should not separate us from each other, but rather cultural diversity brings a collective strength that can benefit all of humanity." *Noon, ang akala ng nakararami, lalo na ng mga nasa posisyon, na ang lakas ay nasa pagkakatapareho. Akala nila, unity is secured by uniformity.*

Ngunit tayong mga Pilipino ang unang unang magsasabi na may mali sa paniniwalang ito. We who are born into various islands separated by large bodies of water, we who learn to speak multiple languages and dialects, we who find ourselves inheriting vastly different cultures – we still come together as one Filipino nation. *Tayo ay nagmula sa Mindanao, at ang tawag natin sa ating demographic doon ay 'tri-people.' Mayroong Muslim, mayroong Lumad, at may mga Kristiyano. Pero lahat Pilipino.* It is our diversity that grants us our unity.

Ang ating pagtatag ng National Hijab Day sa bawat unang araw ng Pebrero kada taon, ito ang magsisilbing patunay na sinusupportahan ng inyong Senado ang ating pagkakaiba bilang mga Pilipino; that we reject discrimination in all its forms, especially toward women who are committed to their religion and way of life; that we uphold the value of diversity in the name of defending our unity.

COAUTHORS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, all senators were made coauthors of Senate Bill No. 1410.

REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Senate President Zubiri thanked Senator Padilla for the measure. He stated that some countries have decided to be more liberal, asking Muslim women to remove their hijab in schools and in other public places, which is antithetical to Muslim beliefs. Regarding religion, he maintained that tolerance and lack of prejudice are required, citing, for instance, the Sikh Indians in the Philippines who are respected for wearing turbans.

Senate President Zubiri emphasized that the bill is a generous gift to Filipino Muslims.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1410

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended,

It was 3:56 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:57 p.m., the session was resumed with Senator Gatchalian presiding.

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 302

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 302, entitled

RESOLUTION CREATING A SELECT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE AND CONFIDENTIAL FUNDS, PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.

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*.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senate President Zubiri for the sponsorship.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

In sponsoring Proposed Resolution Bill No. 302, Senate President Zubiri delivered the following speech:

I stand here today to sponsor Proposed Senate Resolution No. 302, creating a select oversight committee to keep a close eye on our government agencies' utilization of their allocated confidential and intelligence funds.

I would like to put on record that we have been doing this since the Tenth Congress, and each Congress has had an oversight committee. It has been the tradition of the Senate to constitute a select oversight committee for these funds and we must, in the Nineteenth Congress, continue this tradition, especially as we are dealing with confidential intelligence funds amounting to P9.28 billion for 2023.

These funds are essential and we need to empower our agencies to conduct necessary programs, operations, and activities for the safety and security of our people. This is especially true now as we are facing strange new challenges in these strange new times. Crime looks and moves differently than we are used to. Sometimes it creeps into vulnerable spaces like schools where illegal drugs or child pornography can find route in.

So, in these times, we need to be more trusting of our government agencies as agencies at the forefront of these problems, like child sexual abuse, illegal drugs, terrorism, and the like, would know what appropriate programs, activities, and projects to undertake. We have to have faith that they would use every inch of diligence and discretion in undertaking surveillance and intelligence gathering in the discharge of their sacred mandates and in keeping with their oaths.

That said, it is also our responsibility to be vigilant over how these funds are used, as they are not subject to the usual or regular auditing rules and procedures of the Commission on Audit

as compared to other expense items in the budget. So, it falls on us, on this proudly democratic independent Senate, to reactivate the select oversight committee, where we can subject this confidential intelligence funds to checks and balances. We are cognizant of our own primordial rule, power, and responsibility as holders of the power of the purse. We, the elected representatives of the people, must ensure that these funds are judiciously and rightly used.

Please trust that we will do our jobs. The Senate will exercise the full extent of our oversight function and we will monitor the use of these funds, and we will go over the reports relevant to each agency's use of the funds. We will conduct hearings if necessary. *Magbabantay tayo sa pondong ito. Pera ito ng bayan, kaya bilang Senado ng bayan, sisiguraduhin natin na taong-bayan din ang makikinabang nito.*

With that, I hope to have the support of my colleagues in constituting this committee for this Nineteenth Congress.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Senator Pimentel welcomed the proposed measure sponsored by Senate President Zubiri. However, he believed that another good practice to be established would be to discourage the allocation of lump sums in the national budget, particularly in the form of confidential and intelligence funds. He stated that if the Body would decide to constitute the select committee, it should have jurisdiction over the agencies and government officials in charge of confidential and intelligence funds.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR PADILLA

Senator Padilla expressed appreciation that the issue on intelligence and confidential funds was raised in plenary. He admitted that, as a former rebel, he could attest to the government's success in ridding far-flung places of terrorists using intelligence and confidential funds. He cited a documentary he made, entitled "Memoirs of a Teenage Rebel," which depicted how terrorists recruited students and then transported them to the mountains. He claimed that his group was also able to verify that billions of pesos were flowing from abroad to fund the terrorists.

He reiterated his gratitude to the Body for pushing for the creation of the oversight committee. He also agreed with Senator Dela Rosa that the country cannot prosper as long as there is an insurgency problem. He clarified that he was not opposed to the Leftist movement as long as it does not advocate violence.

COAUTHORS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, all senators were made coauthors of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 302.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 302

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 302 was adopted by the Body, subject to style.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the following senators were elected to the Select Oversight Committee on Intelligence and Confidential Funds, Programs, and Activities: as chairperson, Senate President Zubiri; and as members, Senators Angara, Dela Rosa, and Villanueva on the part of the Majority, and Senator Pimentel on the part of the Minority.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 4:07 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:13 p.m., the session was resumed.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR HONTIVEROS

Availing herself of the privilege hour, Senator Hontiveros delivered the following speech about OFWs being recruited for scamming operations in Myanmar:

Mayroon po akong good news at bad news para sa atin at sa ating mga kababayang nakikinig ngayong hapon.

Ang good news: Kasama na ng kinatawan ng DFA-OMWA ang labing-dalawang Pilipinong OFWs na biktima ng isang large-scale human trafficking operation ng isang sindikatong Chinese based in Myanmar. Na-rescue po ang labindalawa nating kababayan sa tulong ng ating local NGO community at ng kanilang solidarity networks. It was quite an extraction operation indeed, in a country struggling with military rule and civil war at that.

After they made the successful crossing at the border of Myanmar and Thailand, the Department of Foreign Affairs officials met them on the Thailand side to facilitate their safe trip back home via Bangkok.

Let me thank all our partner organizations and even our 12 OFWs for their patience, collaboration, and bravery to pull off this high-stakes mission successfully. Malaking pasasalamat sa DFA for coming to the border after they managed to cross, lalo na sa Philippine Embassy in Thailand, na alam ko ay aligaga din dahil sa APEC Summit.

Salamat sa Diyos. Salamat sa inyong lahat dahil buong-buo silang mayayakap ng kanilang pamilya pagdating dito sa Pilipinas. Sabay-sabay silang magpapasko.

At ngayon, dumako na tayo sa bad news. Ayon sa labindalawang OFWs na ito, sila ay napangakuan ng trabaho sa isang call center bilang CSR, o customer service representative, o di kaya ay data encoder. Iyan kasi ang original na job listing—call center agent. Ngunit pagdating nila sa Thailand, kung saan inakala nilang magtrabaho sila, hinila sila ng mga alagad ng Chinese Mafia na ito sa Myanmar upang gawing mga scammer na gumagamit ng cryptocurrency. At kapag wala silang na-scam o nahuthutan sa pamamagitan ng crypto, hindi sila pinapakain, hindi sila pinapasweldo, ibinebenta sila sa ibang kumpanya, at higit sa lahat, pinagbabantaan ang kanilang buhay. Ang pinakamalalang naibahagi sa atin ng isa sa mga na-rescue, at warning na rin ito sa ating mga ahensiya at sa ating mga kababayan dito sa Pilipinas—may namumuong masamang plano ang Chinese Mafia na ito na gawing all-Filipino team ang mga scammer nila sa Myanmar at iba pang lugar dahil sa ating English proficiency.

This is why I stand before you today, because this is of extreme importance and urgency. These Chinese Mafias are making the Philippines an incubator of scammers. I hope and know that you are one with me in saying that we are not and will never be known as a nation of scammers.

As the author and sponsor of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law of 2022, hindi lingid sa kaalaman ninyo ang aking laban noon pa man dito sa human trafficking.

During the Eighteenth Congress, ibinunyag natin ang kalakaran sa “pastillas” scam na nagpahina sa ating immigration borders at illegal na nagpapasok sa bansa ng mga kababaihan at mga menor de edad upang gawing prostituted women and children sa mga POGO facilities ng mga Chinese. Also, because of this investigation, we rescued victim survivors who were trafficked to Syria, some even trafficked and abused as minors, still, because of our porous borders, but this time, outbound.

As we know, *matagal nang minamanmanan ng aking opisina ang outbound racket na ito kung saan ang ating mga kababayan ay nakakapunta sa mga bansang may travel ban na nga, may digmaan pa. At sa rescue operation nga na ito ng ating labindalawang kababayan nalantad na ang isang patunay na hanggang ngayon kahit nabisto na, na-reshuffle na, at napanagot sa batas ang mga sangkot sa notorious na pastillas scam noon, nagpapatuloy pa rin ang nakapanlulumong modus na ito ngunit sa ibang porma, at maaaring pinapatakbo ng ibang sindikato na hiwalay pa sa pastillas scam.*

Hayaan ninyong ipakilala ko sa inyo ngayong hapon si Rita—hindi niya tunay na pangalan—isa sa mga OFWs na na-rescue ng mga NGOs mula sa Myanmar. Dahil na rin sa lumalalang parusa sa mga Pilipino at patuloy na pangpe-pressure ng mga Chinese, nag-email na rin si Rita sa DFA, sa OWWA, at sa iba't-ibang NGOs. Matinding pagmamakaawa at paghihintay ang pinagdaanan ng mga OFWs na ito dahil na rin sa gulo sa Myanmar at sa hirap na makipag-ugnayan sa labas ng compound ng mga mafia.

Isinalaysay ni Rita sa amin kung paano siya na-recruit; sino ang nag-recruit sa kanya; at kung paano tinuturuan ang ating mga kababayang biktima na makalusot sa Immigration Officers sa airport. Nabanggit niya rin kung paano sila nakatawid mula Thailand patungong Myanmar, at kung ano ang sinapit nila sa paglalakbay na iyon. At ang malala pa, alam ni Rita ang mga detalye ng kalakarang ito dahil ginu-groom siya ng mafia na maging recruiter ng kapwa Pinoy. Talagang walang katapusang pang-aabuso.

Ito po ang Facebook account ng sinasabi ni Rita na recruiter niya—si Len. At dito nakalagay na, true enough, naghahanap siya ng encoder na taga-Thailand. Active pa rin ang profile na ito sa FB.

Ang mga post na nagre-recruit tulad nito, nagkalat sa iba't ibang mga Facebook pages, private man o public, na tina-target ang ating mga kababayan na naghahanap ng trabaho sa ibang bansa. Hanggang ngayon, nakikita ang mga ganitong mga umano'y vacancy sa mga FB page na maraming Pilipinong taga- Middle East, at sa Filipinos in Thailand Group.

But one of the most sinister of the FB pages, and probably there are more like it, is called POGO SECRET FILES. Private page po ito, ibig sabihin, may admin na sumasala sa mga members. Ibig sabihin rin, extra layer ito para sa ating mga otoridad na nais basagin ang modus na ito.

Ilan pang mga nagbabagang tanong ngayon:

- *Sino ang pasimuno sa patuloy na pananamantala ng ating mga kababayang nag-iisip sumugal sa ibang bansa?*
- *Paano sila nagka-work visa? Sino ang nagtatatak ng kanilang immigration papers?*
- *At matapos ang sinabi nilang malawakang paglilinis sa Bureau of Immigration, sino ang natiitirang nagbibigay ng go-signal na palusutin ang mga Pilipino kahit ang end destination ay mapanganib at mahigpit na ipinagbabawal na lugar?*

Sa susunod na video ng salaysay ni Rita, idinetalye niya sa amin kung paano sila tinuruan at pinilit ng Chinese mafia na manloko ng mga foreigners para mag-invest sa cryptocurrency. Narito naman ang kwento na yan:

At this juncture, a video presentation was shown on the screen.

Ibinahagi sa amin ni Rita ang isang pakete ng mga dokumento na ginagamit nilang blueprint sa pangi-scam. Kumbaga, para ring isang regular na call center agent na humahawak ng account. Mula sa workflow table:

“Insert investment topics and end chatting with unqualified customers as soon as possible. Don’t waste too much time on unqualified and worthless customers and cut directly to the investment topic.”

“Know what time he goes to bed; you need to know if he is asleep when you chat; and arrange the time in advance when you open an account and recharge later. Most people spend the night in emptiness and loneliness, and you accompany him at this time. Just give him enough love (night is the best time to touch people’s hearts). Purpose: to make him like you; trust you; depend on you; and want to get you right away.”

q/b

Binigyan sila ng istriktong profile ng personality ng taong ipinipresenta nila. Kung ano ang mga dapat isaisip, ano ang priorities bilang agent, at kung ano mismo ang sasabihin sa mga kausap nila. Mula sa word file na "Matters Needing Attention":

"First of all, we must clearly know which country our characters will be packaged to. Our current customer groups are mainly Canada and the United States, so we need to package our character work to the United States or Canada, but the nationality of our characters must be Asian."

"Secondly[...] Our characters are packaged as female elites in the workplace over 32 years old. We have very rich workplace experience. The position must be packaged as a manager or above, and it is forbidden to be packaged as a general employee."

Tulad ng isang call center agent, meron silang call flow. Meron din silang spiels, may mga nararapat na topics lang na pwedeng pag-usapan, at kasama nito ang mga nakahandang sagot sa pinaka-random questions na maaaring sabihin ng customer. Mula pagkain, binabasang libro, sports tulad ng basketball, hiking, and even skiing. May mga linyang nakahanda tulad ng mga sumusunod, mula sa "Chat Topic" document:

"I am a New Yorker in the United States. I am motivated to travel."

"I listen to less pop music except for Taylor Alison Swift."

"I like playing basketball, and I am a fan of the Lakers. But since Kobe left, I have not dared to watch the Lakers game again."

"After dinner, I usually watch the news and research cryptocurrencies."

Higit sa lahat, hanapan sila ng extensive resume, handa rin ito, at may mga pekeng detalye at links. Kunwari ang agent ay nagpakilala bilang Claudine Wong, Marketing Manager at Accenture. Graduate ng Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, at USC Marshall School of Business. Dagdag pa ng profile, "Over 10 years of career in business management, team leadership, and customer service with Fortune 500 companies."

Kaya, mga kababayan, maging mapagmatyag po tayo kapag may nagme-message sa atin na hindi natin kilala, kahit sa LinkedIn.

Ngayon naman, idinetalye ni Rita ang pang-aabuso ng mga employer kapag hindi sila nakahanap ng mga taong maii-scam. At muli, ang mistulang pagte-training ng mga mafia kay Rita bilang future recruiter ng mga Pilipinong scammers sa Myanmar.

At this point, I want to highlight that this modus has two sets of victims – the trafficked and the scammed.

Additionally, the heavy impact on the victims' mental health, not just of the scamming, but also of having to sustain sexual and romantic "relationships" online; and somehow feign sexual desire para lang may mag-invest sa crypto nilang ito at huwag mapagbuhatan ng kamay.

Hindi biro ang mga nakukuhang text ng mga OFWs kapag hindi sila nakakakuha ng kliyente.

Bukod sa overtime, pinagbabantaan silang pagagawin ng 1,000 squats; pagbubuhatin ng balde-baldeng tubig; hahatawin ng electric baton; babatuhin; at sasaksakin hanggang mamatay.

Sa mga panahong pinaparusahan at inaabuso sila ng mga Chinese, sinikap ni Rita at ng kanyang mga kasamahan na makipag-ugnayan sa aking opisina. Awa ng Diyos, dahil sa pagtutulungan ng lahat, sa lalong madaling panahon, makakauwi na sila.

Ngunit hindi dito natatapos ang lahat. Ang huling mensahe ni Rita, na nananawagang maging mapagmatyag ang ating mga kababayang naghahanap ng trabaho abroad. Nais din niyang makamit ang hustisya para sa kanilang mga nabiktima ng modus na ito.

And lastly, in a disturbing development, we also found out that the exact area where they were, Shwe Kokko Special Economic Zone (or Yatai New City, owned by Yatai International Holdings Group)—a hub described as a "safe haven for online gambling and fraud operators"—may possibly have a connection to the Pharmally players.

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Yatai International Holdings Group's owner, She Zhijang, who was arrested just last month by Thai authorities, has multiple business interests in the Philippines.

A company named Yatai International Corporation is associated with Linconn Ong. *Pareho lang kaya ang Yatai International Corporation and Yatai International Holdings Group? Para kaya itong iyong Pharmally International Holdings, Pharmally Biological Company, at Pharmally Pharmaceutical Company?*

These links must be brought to light and further investigated.

Bago ako magtapos, na-rescue man ang labindalawa nating mga kababayan, ating alalahanin na hindi pa rin tumitigil ang pananamantala ng mga masasamang loob. Marami pang Pilipino sa Myanmar ang nangangailangan ng ating tulong. Tulad ng mga na-rescue, napilitan silang kumapit sa mga pangako ng sindikato dahil sa hirap ng buhay. Sana ay maibalik na rin sila dahil katakot-takot na paghihirap na rin siguro ang sinasapit nila ngayon.

I am calling on the Department of Justice and the Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking to investigate these syndicates and their accomplices for jeopardizing the future of many Filipino women and families. And who gave the green light that allowed such procedure to thrive?

I am calling on the Department of Migrant Workers to facilitate a national information drive against scam job offers on the internet; guarding against unscrupulous recruiters, even when the recruiter is a fellow Filipino. *Palala po nang palala ang mga istorya ng human trafficking na ating tinatalakay taon-taon. Tulad ng dati, handa pong makipagtulungan ang aking opisina para mapatigil na natin ang mga ganitong pangyayari.*

Hinihingi ko din sa DMW, OWWA, at DSWD na magbigay ng karampatang tulong o aftercare gaya ng counseling, legal assistance, at livelihood assistance sa mga trafficked victims natin para makatulong sa kanilang healing at mabilisang reintegrasyon.

And to the NBI and PNP Cybercrime Divisions, investigate and track down the admin of the Facebook pages and Telegram groups that are part of these operations. *Ayon kay Rita, buo ang kanyang loob at handa siyang makipagtulungan sa abot ng kanyang makakaya, upang matuldukan ang scam na ito.*

I appeal to you all, and to all the government agencies who are able to help us: If we do not plug this hole, more and more of our *kababayan* will be duped, and more and more people all over the world will be scammed.

This issue involves investment scams and human trafficking in multiple dimensions – labor trafficking, technology-facilitated trafficking, and even sexual trafficking.

The welfare of our people and our national identity are at stake.

Let me reiterate: Filipinos are not and will never be known as a nation of scammers.

REMARKS OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

Senator Zubiri thanked Senator Hontiveros for her timely speech and for bringing the issue to the attention of the Body.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR TULFO

Senator Tulfo expressed his appreciation to Senator Hontiveros for exposing the issue for the information of the senators, which further confirmed that human trafficking was rampant. He lamented that most of the victims were OFWs who went abroad for greener pastures but fell victims to situations designed by unscrupulous individuals. He then encouraged Senator Hontiveros to file the proper resolution so that it gets referred to his committee. He added that he would be more than willing to work with her to ensure that the problem would be solved.

He recalled that in the recently concluded budget hearings involving the Department of Information and Communications Technology, the department was given zero budget relative to its

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request for intelligence funds. He noted that other government agencies were given confidential funds even if they did not need the funds in the first place. He believed that funds are crucial in solving the problem of human trafficking. He then informed the Body that social media was being utilized in human trafficking activities—wherein most of the victims get fooled by scammers who make use of different sites, aliases, and covers, in order to mask their true identities.

Senator Tulfo therefore stated that if the DICT would be well-funded, and would have intelligence funds to work with, the scammers who victimize the OFWs would easily be apprehended.

He then commended the non-governmental organizations that have been helping the Office of Senator Hontiveros and expressed willingness to also extend assistance in his capacity as chairperson of the Committee on Migrant Workers. However, he believed that because the problem has been going on for a long time, it would require the collective effort of all the Members to address it. He noted that the *pastillas* bribery controversy had been in the news several times and wondered if it was still going on, despite being exposed.

Senator Tulfo urged the senators to act on the issue immediately.

MOTION OF SENATOR EJERCITO

Senator Ejercito moved that the privilege speech of Senator Hontiveros be referred to the Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality as the primary committee, and to the Committee on Migrant Workers as the secondary committee.

Noting the criminal aspect of possible Chinese mafia involvement, Senate President Zubiri suggested that it be referred also to a third committee, specifically the committee chaired by Senator Dela Rosa.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

With the permission of the Body, the session was suspended.

It was 4:41 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:45 p.m., the session was resumed.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Hontiveros to the Committee on Rules.

REMARKS OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

Senate President Zubiri stated that under the *Rules of the Senate*, referrals of speeches are limited to only two committees. However, he noted that in recent Congresses, the same could be referred to three committees.

Nonetheless, he adverted to Section 15 of the *Rules*, which states that “the motion for a third committee shall be referred to the Committee on Rules.” He therefore stated that the matter should first be referred to the Committee on Rules, which could later dispense it after other items are taken up.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR TULFO

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

Today, as part of my advocacy for the youth, I visited the National Children's Hospital and the Philippine Children's Medical Center. November is National Children's Month, and yesterday, November 20, was National Children's Day. Actually, even before I became senator, I visited these hospitals because, more than anyone, the children in these hospitals need all the help they can get. They are the most helpless sector in our society, and today, I clearly saw the sadness and sorrow in the faces of these innocent angels, reflecting the pain and suffering they are going through in the first few moments of their lives.

Ang bigat po sa dibdib makita itong mga bata na may malulubhang sakit—leukemia, stomach cancer, pancreatic cancer. Napalabas ako ng kuwarta dahil hindi ko na ma-take ang kalagayan ng isang bata roon. He is a six-year old boy suffering from stage four liver cancer. He was having a hard time breathing even if he already had the oxygen tank assisting him. I was told that he was just waiting for his time to go; meaning, he is already sentenced to death and his parents were there to helplessly witness it all. As a father, I could just imagine what they were going through knowing that their child is already considered dead.

The National Children's Hospital is a health facility for the poorest and weakest, and is in dire need of our help. *Kung paano naghihingalo ang mga pasyente doon, gayon din ang paghihingalo ng pasilidad at sitwasyon ng National Children's Hospital.*

Una, kulang na kulang sila sa manpower. They could not handle the amount of patients that comes to them. In fact, listen to this, there is a three-year waiting time. *Uulitin ko po,* three-year waiting time for some of the therapies being offered to the patients—PT, OT, at speech therapy. Three years! *Tatlong taon o isang buong cycle po iyan ng Kongreso. Tatlong taong maghihintay ang isang pasyente bago siya makatikim ng therapy dito sa National Children's Hospital.*

Lubos akong humahanga sa mga doctor ng National Children's Hospital, maging sa mga nurses doon dahil sila ay maituturing na tunay na mga bayani. They give more than what they are paid for, and their salaries are way below industry level. *Ang dalawang buwan na sweldo ng mga PT ng pampublikong hospital ay kinikita lamang nila sa dalawang linggo sa private practice.* Nobody wants to work in the National Children's Hospital because, of course, there are better opportunities out there. *Pero dahil sa pagmamahal at malasakit sa mga bata at pamilya roon, ang mga frontliners ng NCH ay nagtititiis.* It is true, patriotism is at work.

Second, the facilities are also below standard. The building is dilapidated. *Ang mga pangtakip nila sa bintana ay plywood. Basag-basag ang mga bintana, at plywood ang pantakip. Puwedeng pasukin ng alikabok, usok at lamok, at napakainit ng mga kuwarta. Walang tamang ventilation. Imbes na gumaling iyong mga bata, mas lalo pa silang magkakasakit.*

The equipment that they have are outdated and lacking. What kind of parents are we to these children? Their therapy rooms are very small. Just imagine *po kung nakikita ninyo iyan, halos kalahati lamang iyan ng public CR natin dito sa Senado.* How can several children have adequate therapy if they are cramped? According to the doctors there, ideally, the entire floor should be for therapy, but they are reduced to that one room for all patients. So, instead of getting therapy two to three times a week at the hospital, the parents are just instructed to continue therapy at home. *Ang nangyayari, do it yourself ang medical attention na naibibigay sa mga bata.*

The situation of the National Children's Hospital when I visited them before I became a senator has not improved. *Lalong lumala pa po.* I am wondering what has happened to their budget. Their budget has increased, but is it being spent well? Will it be spent well? I want to know that we are watching what they will do with the budget of the National Children's Hospital.

Actually, *hindi naman po talaga nag-increase ang budget ng National Children's Hospital.*

On the other hand, I would like to commend the Philippine Children's Medical Center for the service that they are giving the children. There is even an ongoing construction to expand the facilities. I salute the management of PCMC. They are on the right track. And so, I would like to highlight the stark contrast between the two hospitals. The fact that PCMC is doing a good job, there is something wrong with the system of the National Children's Hospital.

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Actually, there is nothing wrong with the system of the National Children's Hospital. What is wrong is the way the government handles this hospital. The way that the kind of help this hospital is being treated; the way the kind of help that they must receive from the government. I think that is what the problem is.

I would like to call on the DOH to strengthen the education of parents, particularly mothers, when it comes to parental and pregnancy health care. *Bilang kulang po tayo sa resources upang maalagaan ang mga batang may sakit, ang top priority would be prevention.* We should double the information campaign for mothers regarding the lifestyle and diet when pregnant to prevent ailments caused by poor health during pregnancy. *Ang laking pera po ang matitipid ng mga Pilipino kung ang sakit ng mga kabataan ay mapipigilan.*

And I would like to echo the advocacy of our dear senator, Sen. Pia Cayetano, for breastfeeding. This is the number one defense of our children against sickness because it is the best source of immunization for newborns. While we have programs already for breastfeeding education, we must make sure that these are implemented in the barangay level, *para makarating talaga sa atin ang mga nanay pati sa mga tatay na nag-aalalay sa ating mga breastfeeding mothers.*

At bago po ako magtapos ng aking talumpati, pagdating po sa period of amendments, I will request na bawasan po ang budget ng DENR na mayroon pong P12 billion ang Office of the Secretary; at P2 billion doon ay akin pong ilalakad at ilalaban na mai-transfer sa Philippine National Children's Hospital na mas nangangailangan ng tulong.

Sana po ang ating mga taga-DOH, ang ating mga taga-DBM, at maging ang ating mga otoridad—I invite you to visit this hospital dahil nang makausap ko po sila, wala raw pong bumibisita sa kanila na mga opisyal ng gobyerno. Marami na po ang bumibisita sa Philippine Children's Medical Center. Marami po ang sumusuporta doon. As a matter of fact, I was told na recently they received P100 million assistance fund from the government. *Mayroon silang Malasakit Center.* In fact, my brother, Sec. Erwin Tulfo, before he became a secretary, *nag-donate ng P4 million.*

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

Marami pong mga donor ang PCMC, which I really appreciate, pero sa National Children's Hospital, wala. Ilang secretary na po ang nagpalit-palit sa ating gobyerno, ni isang DOH Secretary wala raw pong pumunta roon para bumisita, para makita sana nila ang tunay na kalagayan ng mga pasyento doon. Wala raw pong bumibisitang mga taga gobyerno. Dahil ba ito ay isang maliit lamang na ospital? Dahil ba ang pumupunta rito mga anak ng mga pinakamahirap na tao sa Pilipinas, the poorest of the poor?

I challenge the DOH, the DBM, and all my esteemed colleagues, *sana po kung mayroon kayong panahon, bisitahin po ninyo para makita naman ninyo kung gaano kalunos-lunos ang kalagayan ng mga pasyente roon.* Like I already said *sa speech ko kanina, hindi ko po kinaya at halos mapaiyak po ako noong pumasok po ako sa isang ward and I saw this kid—six years old—dying and already sentenced to death with stage four cancer. Kaawa-awa po.*

At makikita ko po iyong dingding nila, butas-butas at tumutulo. Ang bintana—basag ang bintana at ang ipinagpalit—sa halip na palitan ng salamin—plywood po ang ipinalit. At iyong ibang bintana na talagang hindi na maremedyohan, nilagyan po ng kurtina na pinaglipasan na ng panahon, na hindi pa napalabhan. Ganoon po kaawa-awa iyong National Children's Hospital.

That is why, *inuulit ko po, ipaglalaban ko po na bawasan ang budget ng DENR na para sa akin ay maraming pagkukulang; P10 billion para sa Office of the Secretary and P2 billion support for the operation—another P2 billion, which is P12 billion.* So, P2 billion *po ang dapat mabawas sa DENR at iyan po ay mai-transfer sa National Children's Hospital na mas nangangailangan po ng tulong dahil dito po iyong mga inosenteng anghel ang dapat nating matulungan sa perang iyan.*

And I call upon my colleagues here in the Senate to please support me with this advocacy that I have now *na para ma-budget-an po itong National Children's Hospital.*

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

With the permission of the Body, the session was suspended.

It was 4:58 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:02 p.m., the session was resumed with Senate President Zubiri presiding.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEES

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Tulfo primarily to the Committee on Health and Demography, and to the Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality as the secondary committee.

CHANGE OF REFERRAL

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body approved the change of referral of the privilege speech of Senator Hontiveros from the Committee on Rules to the Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality as the primary committee, to the Committee on Migrant Workers as the secondary committee, and to Committee on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs as the tertiary committee.

CREATION OF SUBCOMMITTEE

On behalf of Senator Go, Chairperson of the Committee on Health and Demography, Senator Villanueva manifested that the committee had created a subcommittee to hear Senate Bill No. 230 (*Medical Cannabis Compassion Access Act of the Philippines*) and all other bills of the same nature referred to the Committee on Health and Demography, with Senator Padilla as the designated chairperson.

CHANGE OF REFERRALS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body approved the change of referrals of the following:

- Senate Bill No. 236 (*Mandatory Reserve Officers' Training Corps Act*) – from the Committee on Basic Education to the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education as the primary committee (while retaining its secondary referral to the Committee on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation) ; and
- Senate Bill No. 230 (*Medical Cannabis Compassion Access Act of the Philippines*) – from the Committee on Finance to the Committee on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs as the secondary committee, along with a tertiary referral to the Committee on Finance (while retaining its primary referral the Committee on Health and Demography).

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 5:05 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:07 p.m. the session was resumed.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Senator Cayetano (P) announced that she was postponing her privilege speech to the next day. She disclosed that her speech concerns an e-card which was supposedly required of travelers prior to entering the Philippines and which had been mentioned during a hearing with the Department of Tourism.

She stated that her daughter was prompted to fill out an e-card online before travelling back to the country from the United States. However, she narrated that after her daughter had filled out the online forms, the website opened to a page asking her to pay \$70 for the e-card registration. She warned that the site was a fake website and has not been sanctioned by the Philippine government. She surmised that several travelers who were worried that they might not be allowed entry into the Philippines had been scammed into paying the fee.

Senator Cayetano (P) then called on the media to expose the website and the scam because it could negatively affect tourism and hurt the country's image. She also urged concerned authorities to take down the website.

At this juncture, Senate President Zubiri said that another matter which government had to fix was the Bureau of Customs' declaration card, which indicated that a maximum amount of P10,000 can be brought in or out of the country, even though it was pegged at \$10,000. Senator Dela Rosa agreed, stating that he was also held by immigration authorities when leaving for Taiwan because he had P11,000 with him at the time.

Senator Villanueva also recounted an incident in Dubai where he met Overseas Filipino Workers who were crying at the airport because the airline company asked them for additional submissions which they said were required to be allowed entry into the Philippines. He stated that the numerous requirements being demanded by the government on travelers entering the country would be detrimental to the tourism industry.

Senate President Zubiri stated that it was the proper time to revive the convergence clustering of the Department of Transportation, the Department of Health, the Department of Public Works and Highways, and the DOT, which had been organized by the previous administration to help the tourism industry. He also called for the streamlining of government processes for travel in and out of the country.

For his part, Senator Pimentel stated that it was time to review the travel tax and consider its abolition. He pointed out that travel is a constitutional right, and that the Philippines was probably the only country in the world which taxes the exercise of a constitutional right.

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 Tuesday, November 22, 2022.

It was 5:19 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

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

Approved on November 22, 2022

