



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
**Senate**  
Pasay City

# Journal

**SESSION NO. 30**  
Tuesday, November 22, 2022

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS**  
**FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

Prepared by the  
LEGISLATIVE JOURNAL SERVICE  
Senate of the Philippines

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**SESSION NO. 30**  
Tuesday, November 22, 2022

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 3:18 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Juan “Migz” Miguel F. Zubiri, called the session to order.

**PRAYER**

Sen. Ronald “Bato” M. Dela Rosa led the prayer, to wit:

Almighty and eternal God, we come before You today, praising You for all the good things that You have brought into our lives. We know that it is only by the abundance of Your love that any individual can hope for a brighter future. Only by Your grace that any institution such as ours can aspire to work for the common good. Only by Your mercy that any nation can look forward to the attainment of just and lasting peace.

We ask, therefore, O God, that You continue to sustain us with your love, grace, and mercy. Indeed, without You we are nothing, and yet by Your strength we can do all things. You promised in Jeremiah Chapter 33: 3: “I will show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.”.

We humbly offer ourselves as instruments for the fulfillment of this promise. May we be used greatly and mightily in every bill we propose, in discussing and deciding on the Philippine national budget for fiscal year 2023 and every hearing we conduct, and in all our attempts, individual and collective, to help establish a just and peaceful Filipino society.

We ask not only that we be continually moved by Your love, grace, and mercy, but that we may also be vessels of all three to all those whom we serve.

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.	Marcos, I. R.
Cayetano, P. 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.	Villanueva, J.
Go, C. L. T.	Villar, C. A.
Hontiveros, R.	Villar, M. A.
Lapid, M. L. M.	Zubiri, J. M. F.

96

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

Senators Cayetano (A) and Tulfo arrived after the roll call.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS**

At this juncture, Senator Villanueva acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Philippine Veteran Affairs Office Assistant Secretary Restituto Aguilar and his contingent.

Senate President Zubiri welcomed the guests to the Senate.

#### **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. 29 (November 21, 2022) and considered it approved.

#### **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. 1447, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE NURSING LAW TOWARDS A QUALITY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9173, "PHILIPPINE NURSING ACT OF 2002"

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

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

Senate Bill No. 1448, entitled

AN ACT EXPANDING THE USE OF THE LEGAL ASSISTANCE FUND, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 26 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8042, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "MIGRANT WORKERS AND OVERSEAS FILIPINOS ACT OF 1995"

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

**To the Committee on Migrant Workers**

Senate Bill No. 1449, entitled

AN ACT IMPOSING EXCISE TAX ON PLASTIC BAGS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 288 AND ADDING A NEW SECTION 150-C IN THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

**To the Committee on Ways and Means**

Senate Bill No. 1450, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING AND REVITALIZING THE SALT INDUSTRY OF THE PHILIPPINES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8172, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT FOR SALT IODIZATION NATIONWIDE (ASIN)," PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

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

Senate Bill No. 1451, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6975 AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9263 INTEGRATING ALL THE PROVINCIAL AND SUB-PROVINCIAL JAILS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; and Local Government**

Senate Bill No. 1452, entitled

AN ACT TO PROFESSIONALIZE THE PRACTICE OF PRISON MANAGEMENT AND SET FOR THAT PURPOSE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUPERINTENDENTS OF THE NATIONAL PRISON SYSTEM AND WARDENS OF PROVINCIAL, CITY OR MUNICIPAL JAILS

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation**

Senate Bill No. 1453, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE REPORTING OF DEATHS AND ILLNESSES OF PERSONS DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY AND DETAINED CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW, PENALIZING NON-REPORTING AND FALSE REPORTING OF DEATHS THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and Local Government**

Senate Bill No. 1454, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING ANTI-DRUG ABUSE COUNCILS IN EVERY LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; Local Government; and Finance**

9

Senate Bill No. 1455, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE RANK CLASSIFICATION AND ORGANIZATION OF KEY POSITIONS IN THE BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION (BFP) AND BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY (BJMP), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9263, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION AND BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY PROFESSIONALIZATION ACT OF 2004," AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9592, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1456, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A FORENSIC DNA DATABASE IN THE PHILIPPINES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; Justice and Human Rights; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1457, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE POSITION OF BARANGAY NUTRITION WORKER IN EVERY BARANGAY PROVIDING INCENTIVES THERETO, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1569

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Health and Demography; Local Government; Ways and Means; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1458, entitled

AN ACT ADDRESSING FOOD SECURITY CONCERNS THROUGH INTEGRATING INSTRUCTIONAL GARDENS IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULA AND PROMOTING THE USE OF URBAN AGRICULTURE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; Basic Education; Ways and Means; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1459, entitled

AN ACT DEFINING ELECTRONIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN, PROVIDING PROTECTIVE MEASURES, AND PRESCRIBING

PENALTIES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9262,  
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "ANTI-VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND  
THEIR CHILDREN ACT OF 2004"

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality; and  
Science and Technology**

Senate Bill No. 1460, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE COMPLIANCE OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND  
ITS INSTRUMENTALITIES AND GOVERNMENT-OWNED AND/OR  
CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS TO OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND  
HEALTH STANDARDS, PROMOTING AND PRESERVING THE WELFARE  
OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional  
Regulation**

Senate Bill No. 1461, entitled

AN ACT EXPANDING CERTAIN LEAVE BENEFITS OF GOVERNMENT  
OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional  
Regulation**

Senate Bill No. 1462, entitled

AN ACT IMPOSING STIFFER PENALTIES FOR THE OFFENSES OF STEALING  
OR VANDALIZING OF GOVERNMENT ROAD AND TRAFFIC SIGNS,  
WARNING DEVICES, ACCESSORIES AND OTHER FACILITIES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and Public Works**

Senate Bill No. 1463, entitled

AN ACT REGULATING THE IMPOSITION OF FEES FOR THE USE OF PARKING  
SPACES LOCATED WITHIN COMMERCIAL AND BUSINESS ESTABLISH-  
MENTS, INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER PARKING FACILITIES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship**

Senate Bill No. 1464, entitled

AN ACT UPHOLDING AND PROMOTING CAMPUS JOURNALISM AND CAMPUS PRESS FREEDOM, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7079, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF CAMPUS JOURNALISM," PENALIZING VIOLATIONS AGAINST CAMPUS PRESS FREEDOM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education; and Public Information and Mass Media**

Senate Bill No. 1465, entitled

AN ACT ALLOWING AND REGULATING THE USE OF MOTORCYCLES AS PUBLIC UTILITY VEHICLES, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4136, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LAND TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC CODE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Public Services**

Senate Bill No. 1466, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE RECRUITMENT QUOTA REQUIREMENT OF FEMALE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) OFFICERS, AMENDING SECTION 58 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8551, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE REFORM AND REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1998," APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; and Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality**

Senate Bill No. 1467, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE BUILDING ACT OF 2022, THEREBY REPEALING PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1096, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "ADOPTING A NATIONAL BUILDING CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES (NBCP) THEREBY REVISING REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED SIXTY-FIVE HUNDRED FORTY-ONE (R.A. NO. 6541)"

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1468, entitled

AN ACT EXPANDING AND MODERNIZING THE KATARUNGANG





PAMBARANGAY AND STRENGTHENING SUPPORT FOR THE BARANGAY JUSTICE SYSTEM AND ITS WORKERS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Local Government; Justice and Human Rights; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1469, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NEGROS ISLAND REGION TO BE KNOWN AS REGION XVIII AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

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

Senate Bill No. 1471, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING QUIAPO DISTRICT IN THE CITY OF MANILA A NATIONAL HISTORICAL – CULTURAL HERITAGE ZONE, APPROPRIATE FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

**To the Committees on Culture and the Arts; Tourism; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1472, entitled

AN ACT DESIGNATING THE SIXTEENTH DAY OF MAY OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY TO BE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SUPPORT PERSONNEL DAY, MANDATING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONDUCT EVENTS DURING ITS OBSERVANCE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

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

Senate Bill No. 1473, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING REFORMS IN REAL PROPERTY VALUATION AND ASSESSMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES, REORGANIZING THE BUREAU OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

**To the Committees on Ways and Means; Local Government; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1474, entitled

AN ACT RIGHTSIZING THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES



Introduced by Senator Villanueva

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

Senate Bill No. 1475, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

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

Senate Bill No. 1476, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONDONATION OF ALL UNPAID PRINCIPAL INTERESTS, PENALTIES, OR SURCHARGES ON LOANS SECURED BY AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES UNDER THE COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

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

Senate Bill No. 1477, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

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

Senate Bill No. 1478, entitled

AN ACT PROTECTING 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 Villanueva

**To the Committees on Trade and Entrepreneurship; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1479, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING A NATIONAL LAND USE POLICY, PROVIDING THE IMPLEMENTING MECHANISMS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

**To the Committees on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change; Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement; and Finance**



Senate Bill No. 1481, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING THE RIGHT TO REPAIR DIGITAL ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1482, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING AND INSTITUTIONALIZING ROLL-OVER DATA ALLOCATION SCHEME AND PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Public Services**

Senate Bill No. 1483, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLE 2206 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 386, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CIVIL CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1484, entitled

AN ACT EXEMPTING FROM TAX ALL DONATIONS, GRANTS, ENDOWMENTS, OR CONTRIBUTIONS USED ACTUALLY, DIRECTLY, AND EXCLUSIVELY FOR GOVERNMENT'S YOUTH AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND SPORTS COMPETITIONS

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Sports; Ways and Means; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1485, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE COUNCIL FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1486, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE MANDATORY ESTABLISHMENT OF A POPULATION OFFICE IN ALL PROVINCES, CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 488 (A) OF REPUBLIC ACT

95

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

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Local Government**

Senate Bill No. 1487, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TOTAL BAN ON THE IMPORTATION OF WASTES, PROVIDING MEANS FOR ITS ENFORCEMENT, APPROPRIATIONS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1488, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROGRAM FOR ALL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1489, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE ALLOCATION OF FARM-TO-MARKET ROADS PROJECTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Agriculture Reform, Public Works; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1490, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE ARCHIPELAGIC SEA LANES IN THE PHILIPPINE ARCHIPELAGIC WATERS, PRESCRIBING THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF FOREIGN SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT EXERCISING THE RIGHT OF ARCHIPELAGIC SEA LANES PASSAGE THROUGH THE ESTABLISHED ARCHIPELAGIC SEA LANES AND PROVIDING FOR THE ASSOCIATED PROTECTED MEASURES THEREIN

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Foreign Relations; and Finance**

98

Senate Bill No. 1491, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE ATOMIC REGULATORY FRAMEWORK, CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE THE PHILIPPINE ATOMIC REGULATORY COMMISSION, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1492, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7880 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE ALLOCATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BUDGET FOR CAPITAL OUTLAY"

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Basic Education; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1493, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING HAZARD PAY TO COVERED EMPLOYEES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1494, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING INCENTIVES AND OTHER BENEFITS TO RURAL HEALTH UNIT DOCTORS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1495, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GRANT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE EYE EXAMINATIONS TO CHILDREN

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1496, entitled

AN ACT SEPARATING THE BACOR NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL-TABING

DAGAT ANNEX IN BARANGAY TABING DAGAT, BACOR CITY, CAVITE FROM THE BACOR NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL-MOLINO MAIN CAMPUS, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT HIGH SCHOOL WITH FISCAL AUTONOMY (IMPLEMENTING UNIT) AND RENAMING IT TO PADRE MARIANO GOMES NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Rules**

Senate Bill No. 1497, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE GOVERNMENT VACCINE INDEMNIFICATION PROGRAM, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

### **RESOLUTION**

Proposed Resolution No. 303, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF ITS PRESIDENT, HIS EXCELLENCY VŨƠNG ĐÌNH HUỆ, FOR STRENGTHENING PHILIPPINES-VIETNAM INTER-PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

**To the Committee on Rules**

### **ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

#### **MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES**

Letter of President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos Jr., dated 21 November 2022, certifying to the necessity of the immediate enactment of House Bill No. 4488, entitled

AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY ONE TO DECEMBER THIRTY-ONE, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-THREE,

in order to address the need to maintain continuous government operations following the end of the current fiscal year (FY), to expedite the funding of various programs, projects, and activities for FY 2023, and to ensure budgetary preparedness that will enable the government to effectively perform its constitutional mandate.

**To the Committee on Rules**

#### **MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Letter from the House of Representatives, informing the Senate that on 7 November 2022, the

House of Representatives passed the following House bills in which it requested the concurrence of the Senate:

House Bill No. 3622, entitled

AN ACT EXTENDING THE LIFE OF THE PHILIPPINE AEROSPACE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (PADC) BY ANOTHER FIFTY (50) YEARS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 286, AS AMENDED, ENTITLED "AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF A PHILIPPINE AEROSPACE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFORE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

**To the Committee on Government Corporations and Public Enterprises**

House Bill No. 5087, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE INTEGRATION OF THE NATIONAL BUILDING CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6541 ENTITLED "AN ACT TO ORDAIN AND INSTITUTE A NATIONAL BUILDING CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES" AS A MAJOR SUBJECT IN THE CURRICULUM OF THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAMS IN CIVIL ENGINEERING, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING, ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING, SANITARY ENGINEERING, ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING, AND ARCHITECTURE, AND ITS INCLUSION AS A TOPIC IN THE LICENSURE EXAMINATIONS FOR THESE PROFESSIONS

**To the Committees on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education; and Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation**

House Bill No. 5110, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF PHILIPPINE CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH CULTURAL MAPPING AND AN ENHANCED CULTURAL HERITAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10066, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL CULTURAL HERITAGE ACT OF 2009"

**To the Committees on Culture and the Arts; and Local Government**

House Bill No. 5167, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE TUGONAN WATERFALLS LOCATED IN BARANGAY SAN LORENZO, MUNICIPALITY OF PROSPERIDAD, PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL SUR, AN ECOTOURISM SITE

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

House Bill No. 5168, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF THE NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP, POPULARLY KNOWN AS THE BACLARAN CHURCH, LOCATED ALONG ROXAS BOULEVARD, PARANAQUE CITY, A HERITAGE SITE AND TOURIST DESTINATION

**To the Committees on Culture and the Arts; Tourism; and Finance**



House Bill No. 5169, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING MOUNT ARAYAT LOCATED ALONG THE BORDERS OF THE MUNICIPALITIES OF ARAYAT AND MAGALANG, PROVINCE OF PAMPANGA, AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION

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

House Bill No. 5170, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE LUZON DATUM LOCATED IN BARANGAY HINANGGAYON, MUNICIPALITY OF MOGPOG, PROVINCE OF MARINDUQUE, A TOURIST SPOT

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

House Bill No. 5171, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE CEBU SAFARI AND ADVENTURE PARK LOCATED IN BARANGAY CORTE, MUNICIPALITY OF CARMEN, PROVINCE OF CEBU, A TOURISM DESTINATION

**To the Committee on Tourism**

House Bill No. 5172, entitled

AN ACT DISTINGUISHING THE DAO TREE LOCATED WITHIN A SECONDARY FOREST IN THE INTEGRATED FOREST MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT (IFMA) AREA OF THE E. PELAEZ RANCH IN BAYOMBONG, BARANGAY CUGMAN, CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY, AS THE CAGAYAN DE ORO HERITAGE TREE, AND DECLARING IT A TOURIST ATTRACTION

**To the Committees on Tourism; Culture and the Arts; and Finance**

House Bill No. 5173, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE GUINSAUGON ECO-ADVENTURE PARK LOCATED IN BARANGAY GUINSAUGON, MUNICIPALITY OF ST. BERNARD, PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN LEYTE, A TOURISM DESTINATION

**To the Committee on Tourism**

and House Bill No. 5174, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE PASSIG ISLET LOCATED IN BARANGAY BATO, MUNICIPALITY OF STA. CRUZ, PROVINCE OF DAVAO DEL SUR, AN ECOTOURISM SITE.

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





**BILLS ON FIRST READING**

Senate Bill No. 1498, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A DRUG OVERDOSE REPORTING AND AWARENESS SYSTEM TO PREVENT DRUG OVERDOSE-RELATED DEATHS

Introduced by Senator Lapid

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Public Order and Dangerous Drugs**

Senate Bill No. 1499, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING SUPPORT SERVICES FOR MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMEs) IN ONLINE SPACES, PROVIDING MECHANISMS FOR THEIR INTEGRATION INTO THE FORMAL ECONOMY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

**To the Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; Economic Affairs; Ways and Means; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1500, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO KYLE DOUGLAS JENNERMANN

Introduced by Senator Zubiri

**To the Committee on Rules**

Senate Bill No. 1501, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10366, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS TO DESIGNATE PRECINCTS ASSIGNED TO ACCESSIBLE POLLING PLACES EXCLUSIVELY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND SENIOR CITIZENS"

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Electoral Reforms and People's Participation**

Senate Bill No. 1502, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Public Information and Mass Media**

9<sup>th</sup>

Senate Bill No. 1503, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE OF THE PRESCRIBED INCREASES AND ADJUSTMENTS IN THE WAGE RATES OF WORKERS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6727, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "WAGE RATIONALIZATION ACT" AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1504, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A PRE-HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CARE SYSTEM, PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT, SUPERVISION AND REGULATION OF THE PRE-HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CARE PROFESSION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1505, entitled

AN ACT RESTRUCTURING AND STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE, AND CREATING ADDITIONAL POLICE OFFICES, AMENDING SECTIONS 25, 26, 28, 29, 31, 35, AND 36 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6975, OR THE "DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1990," AND SECTION 13 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8551, OR THE "PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE REFORM AND REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1998," APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; Local Government; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1506, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING THAT ALL CONTRACTUAL AND CASUAL EMPLOYEES IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE BE PAID CORRESPONDING WAGES DURING SPECIAL PUBLIC AND LOCAL HOLIDAYS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1507, entitled

AN ACT REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF MICROBIOLOGY IN THE PHILIPPINES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Estrada

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

Senate Bill No. 1508, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES OF STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Estrada

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

Senate Bill No. 1509, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING FILIPINO CITIZENSHIP TO KYLE JENNERMANN, WITH ALL THE RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES AND PREROGATIVES APPURTENANT THERETO

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

**To the Committee on Rules**

## **SECOND ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

### **MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Letter from the House of Representatives, informing the Senate that on 14 November 2022, the House of Representatives passed the following House bills in which it requested the concurrence of the Senate:

House Bill No. 5, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ON-SITE, IN-CITY, NEAR-CITY, OR OFFCITY LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM FOR INFORMAL SETTLER FAMILIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH A PEOPLE'S PLAN AND MANDATING THE IMPLEMENTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT, JOINTLY WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, IN CASES OF NEAR-CITY OR OFF-CITY RESETTLEMENT, TO PROVIDE OTHER BASIC SERVICES AND LIVELIHOOD COMPONENTS IN FAVOR OF THE RECIPIENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7279, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING ACT OF 1992"

**To the Committees on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement; Local Government; and Finance**

House Bill No. 4102, entitled

AN ACT IMPOSING EXCISE TAX ON SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 288 AND ADDING A NEW SECTION 150-C IN THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED

House Bill No. 4122, entitled

AN ACT IMPOSING VALUE-ADDED TAX ON DIGITAL TRANSACTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 105, 108, 109, 110, 113, 114, 115, 236, AND 288 AND ADDING A NEW SECTION 105-A OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED,

and House Bill No. 4339, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTIONS 6, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 32, 34, 37, 38, 39, 42, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 73, 108, 109, 112, 121, 122, 123, 127, 149, 174, 176, 179, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 190, 195, 198, 199, 204, 222, 237, 237-A, 255, 256, 257, 258, 261, 263, 264, 266, 275; INSERTING NEW SECTION 270-A; AND REPEALING SECTIONS 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.

**To the Committee on Ways and Means**

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

## **SECOND ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

*(Continuation)*

The Deputy Secretary for Legislation, Atty. Edwin B. Bellen, 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 15 November 2022, the House of Representatives passed the following House bills in which it requested the concurrence of the Senate:

House Bill No. 227, entitled

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

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

House Bill No. 924, entitled

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

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

House Bill No. 988, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE SERVICE INCENTIVE LEAVE OF EMPLOYEES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 95 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE

NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES

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

House Bill No. 1509, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE CITY OF SAN JOSE DEL MONTE IN THE PROVINCE OF BULACAN A HUMAN RESOURCE CAPITAL

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

House Bill No. 5693, 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

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

House Bill No. 5719, entitled

AN ACT INTEGRATING A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF PHILIPPINE HISTORY DURING WORLD WAR II INTO THE HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

**To the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education**

House Bill No. 5555, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF NORZAGARAY, PROVINCE OF BULACAN TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY FRIENDSHIP VILLAGE RESOURCES OR BARANGAY FVR

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

House Bill No. 5556, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING JULY 22 OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KAWIT, PROVINCE OF CAVITE, IN COMMEMORATION ITS FOUNDATION DAY

**To the Committee on Local Government**

House Bill No. 5596, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF THE SAN PABLO CHURCH LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAN PABLO, PROVINCE OF ISABELA, A TOURISM DESTINATION

**To the Committees on Tourism; and Finance**

House Bill No. 5597, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE BAKHAWAN ECO-PARK IN BARANGAY NEW BUSWANG, MUNICIPALITY OF KALIBO, PROVINCE OF AKLAN, AN ECOTOURISM ZONE

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

House Bill No. 5598, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN LEYTE A TOURISM ZONE

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

House Bill No. 5599, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING WAWA DAM IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF RODRIGUEZ, PROVINCE OF RIZAL, AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION

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

House Bill No. 5603, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE PINANDAGATAN FALLS LOCATED IN BARANGAY NEW TUBIGON, MUNICIPALITY OF SIBAGAT, PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL SUR, AN ECOTOURISM SITE

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

House Bill No. 5604, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE MANAGONG WATERFALLS LOCATED IN BARANGAY PADIAY, MUNICIPALITY OF SIBAGAT, PROVINCE OF AGUSAN DEL SUR, AN ECOTOURISM SITE

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

House Bill No. 5605, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE INCLUSION OF THE AREVALO PLAZA IN THE ILOILO CITY CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM ZONE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10555, ENTITLED, "AN ACT DECLARING THE JARO CATHEDRAL, MOLO CHURCH, THE ILOILO CITY CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT, FORT SAN PEDRO, JARO PLAZA COMPLEX, MOLO PLAZA COMPLEX AND PLAZA LIBERTAD COMPLEX, ALL LOCATED IN THE CITY OF ILOILO, AS CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM ZONE"

**To the Committees on Tourism; and Culture and the Arts**

House Bill No. 5609, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING ULOT RIVER IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PARANAS, PROVINCE OF SAMAR, AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION



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

House Bill No. 5611, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING SOHOTON CAVES AND NATURAL BRIDGE LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BASEY, PROVINCE OF SAMAR, AN ECOTOURISM SITE

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

and House Bill No. 5653, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF THE DIOCESAN SHRINE OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, ALSO KNOWN AS "TAONG PUTIK DAMBANA NI SAN JUAN BAUTISTA," LOCATED IN BARANGAY BIBICLAT, MUNICIPALITY OF ALIAGA, PROVINCE OF NUEVA ECIJA, AS A TOURISM DESTINATION.

**To the Committees on Tourism; Culture and the Arts; and Finance**

**BILLS ON FIRST READING**

Senate Bill No. 1510, entitled

AN ACT ADJUSTING THE MONTHLY PENSION AND DISABILITY BENEFITS OF RETIREES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Introduced by Senator Hontiveros

**To the Committees on Government Corporations and Public Enterprises; Foreign Relations; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1511, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Lapid

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

Senate Bill No. 1512, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKER (OFW) WARD TO BE KNOWN AS THE "BAGONG BAYANI WARD" IN EVERY GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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



Senate Bill No. 1513, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A REVISED NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE CHAPTERS I AND II OF TITLE II, BOOK II OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES"

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Ways and Means**

Senate Bill No. 1514, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING THE TEACHING OF BASIC ROAD SAFETY AND COMPREHENSIVE DRIVERS' EDUCATION AS PART OF THE CURRICULUM OF THE K-12 PROGRAM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Basic Education; Public Services; Ways and Means; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1515, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF BPA AND PFAS IN BABY FOOD PACKAGING AND CONTAINERS, AND OTHER CHILD CARE ARTICLES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; and Health and Demography**

Senate Bill No. 1516, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO JUSTIN DONTA BROWNLEE

Introduced by Senator Angara

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

Senate Bill No. 1517, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN THE CITY OF BACOR, PROVINCE OF CAVITE, TO BE KNOWN AS THE "BACOR CITY NATIONAL SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL," AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Rules**

Senate Bill No. 1518, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MAGNA CARTA FOR PUBLIC DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT

96



Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1519, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO JUSTIN DONTA BROWNLEE

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

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

### RESOLUTION

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 304, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE ENTIRE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION ON THEIR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN THE 2022 EASTERN ASIA YOUTH CHESS CHAMPIONSHIPS IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

Introduced by Senator Lapid

**To the Committee on Rules**

### SPECIAL ORDER

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 11 on Senate Bill No. 1480 from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders.

### COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 11 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1480

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading, Senate Bill No. 1480 (Committee Report No. 11), 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.

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 Estrada for the sponsorship.

### SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR ESTRADA

In presenting Senate Bill No. 1480 for plenary consideration of the Body, Senator Estrada delivered the following speech:

As your chairperson of the Committee on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation, it is my distinct honor to sponsor Senate Bill No. 1480 under Committee Report



No. 11, 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."

This committee report is a consolidation of Senate Bill 683 authored by this Representation and Senate Bill No. 911 filed by our esteemed finance committee chairperson Sen. Sonny Angara.

Article 16, Section 7 of our Constitution provides that "The State shall provide immediate and adequate care, benefits, and other forms of assistance to war veterans and veterans of military campaigns, their surviving spouses and orphans."

Toward this end, Republic Act No. 6948, otherwise known as an "An Act Standardizing and Upgrading the Benefits for Military Veterans and their Dependents," was signed into law by President Cory Aquino, *sa mismong Araw ng Kagitingan*, April 9, 1990.

It declared as State policy "to help foster the socioeconomic security and general well-being of the country's veterans in recognition of their patriotic services in times of war and peace for the cause of freedom and democracy, for the attainment of national unity, independence and socioeconomic development."

*Ang aking ama na si dating Pangulong Joseph Estrada, na naging bahagi ng Kapulungan ng Senado noong Ika-walong Kongreso, ay isa sa may-akda at timon o sponsor ng panukala, na nang kalaunan ay naging ganap na batas. Samantala, ang ama ng ating katuwang na may-akda ng panukalang ito, ang ama ni Sen. Sonny Angara na si dating Sen. Edgardo Angara, ay naging cosponsor rin nito.*

The said law contains a special chapter detailing a range of benefits for our veterans, to wit: educational benefits; pension for the veterans of the revolution; old-age pension; death pension; hospitalization, medical care, and treatment; burial benefits; and disability pension.

Disability pension was given to veterans who were disabled owing to sickness, disease, wounds, or injuries sustained in line of duty. The intent and spirit of the disability pension is to support the disabled veterans in view of their loss of capacity to be gainfully employed by reason of sickness or injuries they have sustained in the course of accomplishing their noble mission. Under this law and according to their disability rating, the monthly disability pension ranged from P600 to P1,125. For those with total disability, P150 was also given for the spouse and each unmarried minor child.

Exactly four years later, on April 9, 1994, Pres. Fidel Ramos approved Republic Act No. 7696, which provided an increase in the disability pension of our veterans. The law was signed during the Senate presidency of Sen. Edgardo Angara, whose signature appears on RA 7696.

Those with lowest disability rating of 10% to 30%, which originally received P600 pesos monthly, is now receiving P1,000. The monthly pension increases as the disability rating goes higher. Those with 91%-100% disability rating who were previously receiving P1,125 are now receiving P1,700 plus another P500 for the spouse and each unmarried minor child.

That was the last upward adjustment for the disability pension for our veterans. That was in the year 1994.

Twenty-eight years later, the same rates apply to our disabled veterans. Almost three decades since that last legislative amendment, the amount remained stagnant and is simply not enough to sustain the needs of our veterans.

The only increase was by virtue of Republic Act No. 11164, enacted under the administration of former Pres. Rodrigo Duterte, which only covers the old-age pension of living World War II veterans and living veterans of the Korean and Vietnam wars who are not receiving pension from the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Needless to say, the amount is already grossly inadequate to provide for their needs, considering the high cost of living today and the state of health they are in. By all metrics, the value of P1,000 in 1994 is undoubtedly much, much lower in 2022, with almost 250% price increase since. *Ang halaga ng isang libo noon ay dalawang daan at walumpo't pitong piso (P287) na lamang ngayon. Hindi na po sapat ang benepisyong tinatanggap ng ating mga beterano lalo na sa harap ng pagtaas ng presyo ng mga bilihan at pangunahing pangangailangan.*

It is therefore imperative that the legislature corrects this grave injustice and accord our disabled veterans the dignity, respect, and care that they truly deserve. Our committee report proposes to provide our veterans with a minimum of P4,500 monthly disability pension, and a maximum of P10,000 and another P1,000 for the spouse and each unmarried minor child.

This Senate bill intends to seek the support of this Chamber for a timely and reasonable increase in the monthly disability pension for our 4,386 veteran pensioners, as well as doubled benefits for some 2,276 spouses and 795 minors, as per information provided by the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO).

If I may also share some information from the PVAO about the number of our veterans as relayed before your Committee on National Defense:

1. PVAO says they have 204 centenarians as of September 2022;
2. The oldest among them is a World War II veteran who is 112 years old;
3. For the 90-99 age bracket, we have 1,484 veterans; and
4. *Marami sa kanila ay bedridden na. Pagbabahagi pa ni PVAO Administrator Undersecretary Reynaldo Mapagu, may nakilala siyang isang beterano mula La Union na 104 years old na napakalakas pa at kayang-kayang maglakad. Sana all.*

In their twilight years, they are still fighting, albeit a different battle altogether. If I may use the words of former Sen. Alberto G. Romulo in his March 5, 1990 sponsorship speech, our veterans are a “vanishing breed of Filipinos” who offered “supreme sacrifice in the defense of our country.” He also went on to say, “If there is one debt we should acknowledge and pay immediately, this is the debt to the veterans of this nation.”

This Representation is hoping and praying, along with our war and military veterans, for the Chamber’s support and swift approval of this measure, which was previously passed on Third and Final Reading by the House of Representatives during the 18th Congress.

It is a simple gesture of gratitude and appreciation for the invaluable service, loyalty, and gallantry of our military veterans, to whom we owe the freedom, democracy, and peace we all enjoy today. As PVAO stated during our hearing, for our veterans, it means “additional disposable income that they can use for their everyday living expenses.” But more so, it is a “reassurance to our veterans that we are not forgetting them,” and “a tangible manifestation of the whole government’s continued pledge to ensure the welfare of our country’s veterans by guaranteeing that their pension is responsive to their current needs.”

## COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR REVILLA

In cosponsoring Senate Bill No. 1480, Senator Revilla delivered the following speech:

It is my honor to associate myself as a cosponsor of this measure and express my full support to rationalize the disability pension of our beloved veterans.

*Alam nating lahat na walang katumbas ang serbisyo at sakripisyo ng ating mga war veterans na naging makabuluhang bahagi ng ating kasaysayan. Higit sa lahat, hindi natin malilimutan kung paano nila nabigyang daan ang pagkamit natin ng minimithing kalayaan at pagpapanatili ng kapayapaan sa ating bayan.*

*Mula noon hanggang ngayon, walang patid ang ating pagtingala sa lahat ng kanilang kontribusyon sa bansa. At bilang pasasalamat sa ating mga beterano, nararapat lamang na magtulungan tayo sa pagsusulong ng mga panukalang makapagpapaangat ng kalagayan nila sa buhay.*

*Kaya naman, taas-noo nating susuportahan at titindigan ang panukalang para sa kanilang kapakanan.*

Senate Bill No. 1480 institutionalizes the gratitude of a nation who will never forget those who came before them.



It is our privilege to cosponsor this measure that increases the disability pension of our veterans who have been disabled due to sickness, disease, wounds, or injuries sustained in the line of duty.

It is high time that we amend Republic Act No. 6948, which is a 32-year old law, that sought to standardize and upgrade the benefits for military veterans and their beneficiaries. Increasing and rationalizing the disability pension rates of our veterans will, indeed, help them counter the never-ending challenges brought about by the pandemic, as well as the recent surging prices of our basic commodities.

More than the monetary value of this proposed measure, this will serve as a loving gesture for our veterans—whose exceptional sacrifice, loyalty, and bravery will never be forgotten.

This Representation commends the efforts of the chairperson of the Committee on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation—my good friend, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada—whose hard work is instrumental in uplifting the welfare of our valiant heroes, our treasured veterans.

Lastly, with the permission of the good sponsor, I respectfully manifest my intent of becoming a coauthor of this meaningful legislation.

### COAUTHOR

Upon his request, and with the concurrence of Senator Estrada, Senator Revilla was made a coauthor of Senate Bill No. 1480.

### COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR ANGARA

In cosponsoring Senate Bill No. 1480, Senator Angara delivered the following speech:

*Inihahayag namin ang aming paghanga at pasasalamat kay Committee on National Defense and Security, Peace and Reconciliation Chair Sen. Jinggoy Estrada para sa kanyang agarang pag-aksyon sa panukalang batas na ito para pataasin at gawing mas angkop ang disability pension na natatanggap ng ating mga beteranong nagkasakit, nasaktan, o kaya'y nabaladado habang nasa serbisyo.*

*Maaga sa kasalukuyang 19th Congress, nakatanggap po tayo ng sulat mula sa Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) na idinidiin na halos tatlong dekada na ang dumaan na hindi pa tumataas ang disability pension na ito. Talaga pong nakadidismaya, lalo na at napakahalaga ang serbisyong inihain ng ating mga beterano para sa kapakanan ng ating bansa. Kaya tulad po ni Senator Estrada, agad po tayong umaksyon at naghain ng ating sariling bersyon ng panukalang ito.*

According to the present law—Republic Act No. 6948, as amended by RA 7696—the current monthly pension offered to disabled or sick veterans falls between the range of P1,000 to P1,700 a month depending on the level of their disability, and an additional P500 for their spouse and for each of their minor children.

*Naitala ang mga halaga na ito noong 1994 pa. Kaya ngayon na nagsitaasan na ang mga presyo ng bilingin, kakarampot lang ang mabibili ng kasalukuyang disability pension at kailangan na talagang palakihin ito.*

With the present proposal being sponsored by Senator Estrada, we seek to increase by at least 450 percent the disability pension to range from P4,500 to P10,000 a month, and to double to P1,000 the benefit given for the veteran's spouse and for each of their minor children.

*Ayon sa PVAO, aabot sa 7,957 na tao ang nakakatanggap ng disability pension sa ngayon—4,386 na beterano, 2,776 na kanilang asawa, at 795 na menor de edad. Batid po natin na may kinakaharap na kagipitan ang bansa ngayon pagdating sa pondo. Ngunit, batay sa datos mula sa PVAO as of October 19, 2022, aabot lamang sa P442 million ang fiscal impact ng panukalang batas na hinahain ngayong 2023; P434.1M sa 2024; P402.3M sa 2025; P384.6M*

sa 2026; at P366.8M sa 2027. So, ito po ay tingin ko, nararapat po na gastos para bigyan ng dignidad ang ating mga beterano.

*At sa atin pong pagsuporta sa panukalang ito, naaalala po natin ang salitang isinulat ng ating pambansang bayani, si Dr. Jose Rizal sa El Filibusterismo sa panauhin ni Simon: "Walang kabuluhan ang buhay na hindi iniuukol sa isang dakilang layunin. Iya'y isang munting batong natapon sa kaparangan na hindi naisama sa pagkabuo ng isang bahay."*

*Wala na sigurong mas dakilang layunin pa na maaaring pag-ukulan ng panahon at pagod kaysa sa pangalagaan at depensahan ang siguridad ng ating bansa. Iyan po ang papel na ginampanan ng ating mga beterano. Kaya sa mga panahon na sila ay nagkasakit, nasaktan, o kaya nabaladado habang nanunungkulan, hindi sila dapat hayaan maging tulad ng mga "batong natapon sa kaparangan." Nararapat lamang na bigyan sila ng estado ng sapat na ayuda at suporta para patuloy nilang itaguyod ang kanilang mga sarili at ang kanilang mga mahal sa buhay, at panatilihin nakataas ang kanilang buhay.*

## REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Senator Ejercito believed that we would not have freedom if no one fought for it.

## COAUTHORS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Senators Padilla and Dela Rosa were made coauthors of Senate Bill No. 1480.

## MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva stated that his grandfather was also among the war veterans and that he takes pride of their contributions for the country's freedom and independence.

## COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR DELA ROSA

In cosponsoring Senate Bill No. 1480, Senator Dela Rosa delivered the following speech:

It is my honor and privilege to cosponsor Senate Bill No. 1480, under Committee Report No. 11, a measure which seeks to increase the disability pension of our veterans.

To call our veterans our country's living heroes is an understatement as they have risked their own lives without any reservations, and knowing fully well the sacrifice they have to make to allow us to have the freedom which we all enjoy today. Thus, we laud the then passage of Republic Act No. 6948, which standardized and upgraded the benefits of our military veterans and their dependents.

Nonetheless, it also beyond question that a 1990 law can no longer address the needs of the beneficiaries in this present day, especially with inflation as the prices of commodities continuously go up. Unfortunately, the annual inflation does not carry with it a consequent rise in the pension benefits granted to the beneficiaries which have remained steadily for 32 years.

With the passage of this measure, we can ensure that the pension that we have granted to our veterans may actually be utilized for their everyday needs. For the record, the insufficiency of the veteran's pension benefits has already been recognized when the monthly old-age pension of senior veterans was increased during the time of President Duterte from P5,000 to P20,000.00. Thus, it is but right for this august Chamber to likewise support this proposed measure, given that the current disability pension merely ranges from P1,000 to P1,700. While these amounts may seem more than sufficient back when the law was passed, its value today merely equates to more or less a pensioner's food for a week or worse, less than half of a vehicle's gas tank.

*Bagamat hindi matutumbasan ng kahit anong salapi ang sakripisyo ng ating mga beterano, it is my hope that through this measure, we can at least continuously honor their sacrifices which*

*A*

gave us peace and stability today. It is but our responsibility as legislators to ensure that laws enacted are not only enacted with good intention but more importantly, responsive enough to actually carry out the very intent and spirit behind it.

### MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR PADILLA

Senator Padilla requested that he be made a coauthor of Senate Bill No. 1480. He reminded the Body that even Gen. Douglas MacArthur admired and respected the Filipino soldiers, as the general said, "Give me ten thousand Filipinos and I shall conquer the world." He said that the benefits for the war veterans were not merely a money matter but rather a matter of caring for the great and brave character of the Filipino as embodied by the war veterans.

### SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1480

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

### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Availing herself of the privilege hour, Senator Cayetano (P) delivered the following speech about websites scamming tourists and travelers from paying for Philippine eArrival cards that are actually free:

I rise today on a matter of personal and collective privilege about a very important matter. This is something that, I feel, ruins our reputation as a country and makes it very difficult for tourists, and even balikbayans and travelling Filipinos, to have faith in our country when these things happen.

Currently, the country requires that every arriving passenger, whether Filipino or foreign national, fill out and submit an eArrival card. That in itself is not something I have an issue with. This is currently the practice in many countries in the world. Some have completely abandoned any kind of extra arrival requirements that have to do with COVID status but many countries still require this. I have no issue with this.

Last week, during the budget hearing of the Department of Tourism, our vice chairperson of Finance, Sen. Nancy Binay, mentioned that many people have been misled by a fake website or websites asking them to pay for their eArrival card when, in fact, this should be free. My understanding from Senator Binay's discussion was that this has already been brought to the attention of both DOT and DOH. In any case, we also discussed this with DOH because two days later, this representation handled the budget of the DOH.

Over the weekend, I came to know through my daughter that a particular website, and that will be flashed on our screen, is asking for a fee of US\$79 dollars, which is roughly equivalent to P4,500 for the issuance of an e-arrival card. There it is.

*At this juncture, a photo of the Philippine eArrival card website page was flashed on the screen.*

So, anyone who is told that there is such a requirement would normally pull out his phone, Google eArrival card, and what would pop up when one Googles Philippine eArrival Card or eArrival Card in the Philippines, is what is now shown on the screen.

The name is "*ph.entryform.com.*" We will notice that it is at the very top. It is a sponsored ad. Maybe our tech experts can tell us but, obviously, it is sponsored. So, *binayaran*, and it is an ad.

So, *iyang lumalabas*. And, if we are travelling, *nagmamadali ka, nandoon ka na, nakapila ka na roon, natataranta ka na kung overweight iyong bagahe mo o excited ka na makita iyong loved ones mo, siyempre* you will click on the first one. I have done it myself. I clicked on the



first pero ako kasi kuripot, so when it comes to money, *ii-scroll ko pa lahat iyan hanggang kamatayan nang mahanap ko iyong mura*. But, in any case, you do not assume *naman na may bayad o hindi natin alam*, so click *ka diyen*. And then, it will bring us to the site.

Let me bring you back to that particular site. I will tell later on about the disclaimer. So, *ito ka na, magki-click ka "apply online"* and what you will see next is the application form wherein unlike a discount or a promo where we can get something even if we put a fake address. *Hindi mo naman gagawing fake kasi* this is the e-card application, *kailangan mag-match iyan sa passport mo* and whatever else one is filling out. So, he would put his complete address and then he would submit it. And it is upon submission that he is then told that there is a fee. So, like I said, imagine, *nagmamadali siya, ayaw niyang maabala pagdating niya sa immigration sa Pilipinas*, excited *siya*. I do not know how many will whip up their card and they accept all kinds of card. I am just curious if they accept the e-payments other than the credit card. I do not know how many people *ang naloko rito*. But, the reality is, for the record, there is no payment required to secure this e-card. None, zero.

So, *maliwanag iyan, ang e-arrival card* is free of charge. So, *bakit may ganito? Bakit may raket na ganito?* I am told that DOH has submitted this case and asked for the assistance from NBI. They have also written to Google because this is a Google search. I also, on my own, have reached out to Google and I have also made representations that this is damaging not only to our reputation but damaging to the pockets of Filipinos and foreigners who would be victims of this scam.

So, before I end my very short privilege speech, again, I will reiterate that this was first brought up during the budget hearing chaired by Sen. Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay because we want to promote tourism. Again, I have no issue; I would tend to follow the recommendations of DOH on the requirements; I have an issue that there are people who are taking advantage of our tourism, of tourists, of *balikbayans* coming back to a financial price that they need not pay. In fairness, there are news reports on this, I am not the first person to bring this up.

And before I end, I would like to point out—*iyang mga* news reports which we are showing online—*uulitin ko, mga kababayan, mga kapatid, mga minamahal nating OFW na babalik*, our foreign friends who are coming, there is no payment required to fill up the e-arrival card. But it is very confusing when the very first website that you will see at Google search, when we click on it, there will be a payment required. The website itself—*ito iyong kanilang pagmamalini*s—Philippine e-arrival card, most likely, when they see this, they will click on apply online, right? So, they will miss *iyong napakaliit na statement doon sa ilalim na kahit siguro lumapit ako, hindi ko pa rin mababasa, kaya* I have asked my team to just print it for me to see clearly. It goes on to say that this is a professional travel agency that aims to help individuals and that there is a service fee. So, I am sure, *iyang mga pagmamalini*s nila. But it is not right, it does not make it right. *Unang-una, kung gusto talaga nilang hindi makaloko, dapat ibalandra nila roon: "There is no need to pay." Ano bang tulong ang ginawa nila? Wala! Wala naman silang tulong except pagkakitaan ang mga Pilipino o mga bisita dahil nagbayad sila ng sponsored ads para ma-click sila; wala naman silang service na ino-offer*, and I still consider that fraudulent.

So, that is it. The purpose of this speech is to bring it to the attention of our colleagues, to bring it to the attention of the public. Again, as far as the government agencies are concerned, they already know, but to also ask them to be very vigilant about these things because every day that passes that the ad is there, it is deceiving Filipinos and foreigners entering our country.

## REMARK OF THE CHAIR

Senator Ejercito informed the Body that he also fell victim to the e-arrival scam in July 2022 which nearly caused him to miss his flight.

## INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva associated himself with the privilege speech of Senator Cayetano (P). He stated that with the present technology, practically everything could be done online, including



studying and engaging in business activities. However, he lamented that scammers are taking advantage of digitalization even with the recent passage into law of the SIM Card Registration Act.

He pointed out that based on Manila International Airport Authority's operational statistics, there were 2,723,010 international passenger arrivals at all MIAA terminals from January to August 2022. He predicted that the number and total value of the e-arrival card scams would peak as annual international arrivals increase to as much as 12,000,000 passengers, which was the actual pre-pandemic arrivals. He revealed that his office found out that the One Health Pass scam has been going on since March 2022 or earlier, based on a travel advisory issued by the Philippine Consulate General in San Francisco on March 31, 2022, warning the public about the existence of a fraudulent website masquerading as an official website, which they later investigated.

He revealed that the One Health Pass was eventually replaced by the e-arrival card only on November 1, 2022. At this point, he displayed on screen the fake websites that had already been taken down, namely, philippinesohp.com, transform-philippines.com, Philippine.form.com, and www.phentry.com.

On the lesson learned from neighboring countries on dealing with such scams, he cited that Singapore has an Anti-Scam Center that proactively dismantled scam operations even before the people reported to them and the center had recovered more than \$200 million from various scams.

Senator Cayetano (P) recalled that the IATF wrote to Google and the NBI regarding the e-arrival scams. However, she admitted that she was not an expert on the subject and would defer to the experts. She stated that the DOH also wrote to the executive director of the Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center. She suggested that the NBI be called once the appropriate committee has completed its investigation.

She averred that the disclaimer included by scammers in fraudulent websites is so small that the website user would miss it. She stated that it shows that there is an intent to defraud.

Senator Villanueva expressed optimism that the NBI would be able to provide the Body updates on the scams. With the replacement of the One Health Pass with the e-arrival card, he inquired if there were any ways to improve the current system. Senator Cayetano (P) suggested that instead of manually inputting the data, the technology might be open to adopting a system similar to that of Singapore, where the e-arrival card or health pass could be completed on-site or submitted ahead of time, so that the health card is already present when the passenger arrives at immigration.

Senator Villanueva expressed hope that safeguards would be implemented in the future to protect travelers from similar fraudulent activities in the future. He expressed concern that many tourists and OFWs would fall prey to unscrupulous people. He stated that he understood the necessity of prioritizing health in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, he stated that the government must be determined to keep people from other types of viruses.

Finally, he reiterated his support for Senator Cayetano (P) on the issue, urging the Body to conduct an investigation into the matter in order to get to the bottom of the problem, exact accountability, and put in place necessary measures, including legislation, to prevent similar incidents in the future.

Senator Cayetano (P) noted that, aside from being rendered in small fonts, the entity clearly intended to mislead, as it admitted in the disclaimer that it was, after all, a professional travel agency. Furthermore, she stated that the sentence "There is a service fee which includes expert help and assistance, and the fees charged by government" further showed the intent.

96



She then stated that there are currently no fees in securing the e-card. She stated that tourists and Filipinos alike, who knew of how the health pass was previously implemented, would be surprised by the notice and may, for the sake of convenience, avail of the “expert help” by paying the “service fee.” Furthermore, she denied that there was a “lower” cost for applying for e-arrival cards, saying that there was actually no cost at all. She believed that the instructions for the cards were worded in a way that would compel arriving individuals to avail of the “expert services.”

Senator Cayetano (P) also believed that the name of the website alone, “e-arrival card,” would lead one to wonder if there were legitimately offered tours or services that would require a fee. She argued that because the “service” being offered involved personal information that the person receiving it would be in a better position to know—name, vaccine status, among other things—it could be easily interpreted as a ploy to take advantage of unsuspecting individuals.

### **INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR POE**

Senator Poe thanked Senator Cayetano (P) for bringing the issue to the Body’s attention. She expressed surprise that a document as recent as the e-arrival card would already have a fake website dedicated to it. She then informed the Members that P274.73 million had been allocated to the Department of Information and Communications Technology for its Cybersecurity Management Program. She pointed out that the program had been duplicating some of the NBI’s work, which only added to the confusion.

She stated that there was currently no central government office where people could file complaints about cases involving fake websites. Senator Cayetano (P) agreed that there was a duplication of functions among agencies, as complaints of such nature could be filed with the NBI, the DICT, and the Philippine National Police. She believed that DICT’s Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center (CICC) could serve as a scams complaints hotline.

Senator Poe then asked if the Senate could direct the CICC to act on the matter as it involved the public and a website whose IP address could be traced. Senator Cayetano (P) replied that because the website appeared to be sponsored, it would imply that the entity behind paid for it, and there is a contract with Google. She also confirmed that the website was also accepting credit cards.

Senator Poe pointed out the possibility for the banks involved to review the website’s accounts and consider suspending those accounts, given the details discussed. She also wondered if a government agency should be tasked to direct the banks not to accept the accounts of the companies involved. Nonetheless, she believed that the DICT should be informed about the situation.

Senator Cayetano (P) stated that she would instruct her staff to contact the DICT and provide it with a letter summarizing the Body’s observations on the matter for its immediate action. Senator Poe suggested that the names of the websites be included in the letter. She stated that the government should spend money to protect its citizens, which could involve paying a fee to Google to place an advertisement and have the website appear at the top of its search results. In response, Senator Cayetano (P) stated that based on information provided to her, government websites are usually at the top of search results.

Senator Poe stated that government of the algorithms involved, websites normally end up on top of the list. However, she believed that if there was a fee involved, the situation would be different. Senator Cayetano (P) surmised that the government’s advertisement would go up in the list as well. She stated that the government would have to discuss the matter with Google, adding that she had already communicated the matter to one of its high-level officers. Senator Poe expressed confidence that Google would cooperate with the government, especially if a crime was committed.

Senator Cayetano (P) lamented how the Senate had to bring the issue to Google's attention in the first place, when it should have been the other government agencies coordinating with the international company in the first place. Senator Poe suggested that Senator (P) Cayetano's office draft the letter to Google, with her office following up on the matter to ensure that the websites are taken down or their IP addresses tracked down as well. She added that including the banks in the coordination loop was critical because the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has an anti-fraud division as well.

Senator Poe noted that actions taken to reverse credit card charges incurred due to fraud typically take a long time. Senator Cayetano (P) opined that it was another matter worth looking into.

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

Senator Ejercito thanked Senator Poe for raising the issue for the information of the Members, stating that he, too, had been a victim of fraudulent websites. He stated that the same had cost him US\$80, as well as a nearly-missed flight due to a fake One Health Pass. He believed that a greater awareness of fake websites would benefit both Filipinos and foreign tourists.

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

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Cayetano (P) and the interpellations thereon primarily to the Committee on Justice and Human Rights, and secondarily to the Committee on Tourism.

#### **SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

*It was 4:49 p.m.*

#### **RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 4:50 p.m., the session was resumed.

#### **PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR DELA ROSA**

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Dela Rosa delivered the following speech on his participation in the 30<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) and his official visit to Vietnam:

Almost thirty years ago, or on January 13, 1993, former Senators Teofisto Guigona and Heherson Alvarez attended the inaugural meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum, or the APPF.

Almost thirty years later, I was given the opportunity to attend and participate in the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the APPF hosted by the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Thailand. It was my profound honor and privilege to represent our beloved Senate President as the head of the Philippine Congressional delegation. I was joined by our colleague, Sen. Francis Tolentino, and members of our House of Representatives, Deputy Majority Leader Jude Acidre, Representatives Geraldine Roman, Gerardo Valmayor Jr., James Ang Jr., Ferjenel G. Biron, and Mohamad Paglas.

The 30<sup>th</sup> APPF focused on the theme "Parliaments and the Post-COVID-19 Sustainable Development." In their concept note, the APPF Secretariat emphasized that the COVID-19 pandemic has proven once more that we live in the same world with common interests, and share the same future. "One World, One Destiny," so to speak. The impacts of the pandemic are felt not only in public health, but also in the economy, education, society, and politics.

In the advent of the pandemic, everyone seemed to have been preoccupied with competition; with acquiring and accumulating anything and everything that would put his or her nation on top. But when the coronavirus arrived, it brought death, sickness, and for many—immeasurable sorrow. But from the same devastation it caused, we have come to realize a new sense of meaning in life and our relationships.

Indeed, in the past two years, surviving through the pandemic was full of ironies. We were told to distance ourselves from each other to avoid the spread of the virus. But in isolation, we have learned that it is difficult to live alone. We were given responsibilities as individuals, and yet, we were introduced to terms such as “herd immunity.”

The phrase “no man is an island” has never been more cliché in recent memory. How much more meaningful would it be, coming from an archipelago in the middle of the Pacific? If we want to survive, we must work together.

A happening so catastrophic and destructive has brought out the best in humanity. We have closed our borders and subjected ourselves to lockdowns and self-quarantines. But the doors to our hearts remained open. Health restrictions did not hinder the outpour of foreign aid and vaccines. In that moment, we were a community of nations.

When the dust began to slowly settle, it was now time to rise again. We gradually re-opened our gates to our neighbors and began life anew. With this, your Philippine delegates shared some of their insights during the sessions of the APPF.

Senator Tolentino spoke during one of the plenary sessions, specifically on the sub-topic “Promoting regional tourism and understanding of cultural diversity,” where he pointed out how global tourism was painfully crippled by the restrictions of COVID-19 pandemic, and that the Asia-Pacific Region suffered the greatest reduction in tourist arrivals. He urged fellow parliamentarians to consider having an integrated regional tourism policy to ensure that COVID-19 impacts on tourism are managed, and recovery strategies gather support for effective implementation of a more sustainable tourism development blueprint for the future.

Members of the Philippine House of Representatives also delivered their statements:

- Representatives Paglas and Valmayor spoke during the second Plenary session on Economic and Trade Matters, where they highlighted the need for the APPF Member-Parliaments to work together and achieve greater synergy in transforming the region as a leading digital community and economic bloc, powered by secure and transformative digital services, technologies, and ecosystems;
- Representative Acidre participated in the Roundtable for Young Parliamentarians, and shared that the youth have been among those hit hardest by the pandemic due to school closures, job losses, missed vaccinations, and a regression in health and nutrition;
- Representative Roman, who also accompanied me during the South East Group, spoke during the Women Parliamentarians’ Meeting. She recommended the development of mechanisms and procedures to address the difficulties faced by women in the employment sector during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Likewise, this Representation took part during the first Plenary session on the sub-topic “Promoting parliamentary diplomacy for regional security.” I emphasized that parliamentary exchanges are essential elements in order to address the complexities posed by the security challenges in the region. I also shared the Philippines’ concern on terrorism, citing the measure which we passed last Congress, the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020.

With prior consent and authority of our beloved Senate President, I, together with all the Philippine delegates to the 30<sup>th</sup> APPF, formally accepted the hosting of the Philippines of the 31<sup>st</sup> APPF next year. Please allow me to show you the video of our ceremonial acceptance of the flag.

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

As I have said in my acceptance speech during the final Plenary session, to be offered the chance to host the APPF for 2023 fills me, as a Filipino, with gratitude and pride. I believe,

with the leadership of our Senate President Zubiri, our hosting will be at par with the preparedness and hospitality that the Thai National Assembly had offered us.

I consider our representation in the 30th APPF fruitful and productive. In addition to the Philippines' hosting next year, I also met with Thai Senator Thawip Netniyom, who is my upper-class man in the Philippine Military Academy ("Dimalupig" class of 1981). He mentioned their existing Thailand-Philippines Parliamentarians Friendship Group, which he heads. In response, while I intimated to him that there is an existing Philippines-ASEAN Parliamentary Friendship Association, there is no existing Philippines-Thailand Parliamentary Friendship Association.

With the consent of our Senate President, we are currently establishing the Philippines-Thailand Parliamentary Friendship Group here in the Senate. As of today, we have a number of senators who intend to be a member of the Friendship Group. Our counterpart in the House of Representatives already relayed their intention so that the group can have bicameral representation, similar to the composition of the friendship group in the Thai Senate.

After our well-spent time in Thailand, we went to Hanoi, Vietnam.

We first met the Filipino community in Hanoi. I am happy to report that they are doing well, mostly working as professionals in English language-teaching centers, hospitality sector, as well as engineering firms. They are thankful to the Vietnamese government for the job opportunities.

I also met with the Hon. Lt. Gen. Tran Quang Phuong, Vice Chairman of the National Assembly of Vietnam. During our meeting, the importance of the strategic partnership between the Philippines and Vietnam, and the vital importance to strengthen our bilateral relations have been discussed. Areas of cooperation including defense, maritime security, pandemic recovery, economic and trade were mentioned during our exchanges.

I also relayed our gratitude for the assistance provided by the Vietnamese government to more than 1,400 Filipinos who were safely repatriated to the Philippines at the height of the pandemic.

Before we ended the meeting, I was reminded by National Assembly Chairman Vuong Dinh Hue of their official visit to the Philippines from November 23 to 25, 2022. I was tasked by our Senate President to head the welcoming committee of the Vietnamese Parliament tomorrow. I will meet them at the airport. *Kung sino ang gustong sumama sa akin, samahan ninyo ako para hindi ako magsosolo roon na sumalubong sa kanila.* I hope Senator Tolentino will go with me.

Not so recently, we heard news of travel bans, and yet a lot of countries professed their intention to visit us. Anyone who chooses to be friends with us, Filipinos, are very much welcome here in our country.

In closing, it is true that our role as legislators is limited within our territorial jurisdiction. However, the words of Linda Fisher Thornton are equally applicable to us when she stated, "Because we are a globally connected village, we need to remember that our choices are not isolated. They have a powerful ripple effect, and that ripple is global."

Our laws may be confined within our archipelago, but their implications are beyond our borders.

Our hosting of the 31st annual meeting of the APPF next year and the official visit of the National Assembly of Vietnam to our country starting tomorrow is a testament to our nation's continued commitment to foster cooperation with our fellow parliamentarians to sustain peace and promote stability in the region.

## MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR TOLENTINO

Senator Tolentino associated himself with the speech delivered by Senator Dela Rosa. The former said that the latter was the example of a true delegation leader who showed the real hallmarks of hard work and punctuality by always being present and early in all the sessions. As such, he expressed confidence that Senator Dela Rosa was truly qualified to head the organizing committee for the APPF the following year.



Senator Tolentino also expressed hope that the other Members would support Senator Dela Rosa as the ceremonial, if not the official, head of the organizing committee for the 2023 forum, as he could handle the responsibility of organizing 300 prospective delegates coming into the country.

He also agreed with Senator Dela Rosa on the importance of connectivity in the region as a global village. He stated that the APPF Thailand, which they attended, was the precursor to the APEC. He believed that the Thai government really rolled out the red carpet in the forum, not only for the APPF members but also for the APEC, which President Marcos also attended.

Senator Tolentino reiterated his call for the other Members to support the APPF 2023 and expressed confidence that Senator Dela Rosa could singularly handle the forum, adding that the senator would begin working on the event by welcoming the Vietnamese delegation who were arriving the following day.

He noticed that Senator Dela Rosa was also a pacifier after witnessing how he used his golden voice to calm a tense situation between the Russian and the Australian delegations. He then congratulated Senator Dela Rosa as well as the members of the House of Representatives who were of great assistance to the forum, particularly Rep. Ferjenel G. Biron, who was a pioneer and founder of the Thai Pharmaceutical Industry and had brought antibiotics and syringes to the Thai populace.

#### **REMARKS OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)**

Senator Cayetano (P) commended Senator Dela Rosa for representing the Philippines well at the APPF, noting that such meetings have the potential of fostering very strong relationships.

Noting that Senator Dela Rosa indulged his fellow delegates in the forum with a song during their fellowship night, Senator Cayetano (P) believed that the Philippines was well represented during the forum, adding that having a colleague who could not only discuss parliamentary matters but also warm the hearts of their ASEAN and Asia Pacific colleagues was advantageous.

Senator Cayetano (P) then recalled that nine months into her term as a senator, she represented the Philippines as the president of the women's inter-parliamentary union meeting, which was held in the Philippines, and that her companions were former Senators Drilon and "Nene" Pimentel. She then emphasized the importance of attending such fora and asked Senator Dela Rosa for updates on the APPF. She also stated her willingness to assist Senator Dela Rosa in hosting the APPF 2023.

On another matter, Senator Cayetano (P) stated that she would hold a hearing on two very important health bills on Thursday, November 24, one of which is on the establishment of a center for disease control, adding that its success would rely heavily on interaction among ASEAN countries.

In this regard, she inquired as to the significance of cooperation among countries in the region. Senator Dela Rosa averred that regional cooperation is very crucial. He informed the Body that one of the topics in the forum was Vietnam, which has been very vocal about its claims to parts of the West Philippine Sea or the South China Sea and had even asked the Philippines for assistance in that regard. He stated that it would be one of the issues that Vietnam would take up with Senate President Zubiri the next day. He believed that cooperation between the Philippines and Vietnam is critical because the latter is a strategic partner of the country, particularly in security matters.

Senator Cayetano (P) stated that before discussing hard security issues such as peace and order, or soft security issues such as access to clean water or food, the Philippines must first deal with its ASEAN neighbors. She stated that maintaining ties with them is critical because it affects the country's access to water and safe travel.

She then congratulated Senators Dela Rosa and Tolentino, as well as their House colleagues, on their successful participation in the APPF and reiterated her cooperation and support for the forum.

### REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Dela Rosa as well as the manifestations thereon to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR PADILLA

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Padilla delivered the following speech on the forced relocation and deaths of the members of the Teduray tribe due to landslides at the height of Typhoon Paeng:

*Audhu billah himinas shaytanir rajim  
Bisbillahir Rahmanir Rahim  
Alhamdulillah Rabbil 'Alamin  
Bismillahi wa salatu wa salamu 'ala Rasulillahi  
As salamu alaykum wa rahmatu Allah wa barakatuh.*

*Sa mga miyembro ng Lupon na ito, ako ay tumitindig sa pulpitong ito, sampu ng lahat ng maralitang katutubong Pilipino na nasasadlak sa patuloy na kasawian dahil sa sakuna. Hindi lamang dulot ng natural na kalamidad kundi higit na kari-marimarim at nakakagalit dahil sa kagagawan at kapabayaan ng kapwa tao.*

*Ika-dalawampu't walo ng Oktubre, kasabay ng paghagupit ng bagyong "Paeng" sa Mindanao, nilipol ng pagguho ng putik at bato, kasabay ng rumaragasang baha mula sa Mt. Minandar, ang tirahan ng tribong Teduray. Dalawampu't apat na katutubong Teduray ang nasawi at higit sa tatlumpung iba pa ang naulat na nasugatan sa trahedya.*

*Ilang buhay po na naman ang naisama sa tala ng nasawi sa kalamidad. Ngunit masalimuot ang ugat ng kasawian ng ating mga katutubo. Kung lilimlin ang buong salaysay, matagal na pong nasa peligro ang kanilang buhay dahil sa hindi umano'y sapilitang pagpapalipat sa kanila sa paanan ng Mt. Minandar.*

*Ayon po sa ulat na ibinalita, Disyembre ng taong 2020 nang mag- petisyon ang 127 na pamilyang Teduray sa National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) ukol sa kanilang sapilitang paglipat ng tirahan mula sa coastal area patungo sa Sitio Tabunan sa paanan ng Mt. Minandar. Walang tugon o aksiyon ang natanggap mula sa NCIP ukol sa petisyon. Naghihintay rin tayo ng komento mula sa Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs (MIPA) ng BARMM dahil sila ang dapat na nakatutok sa hinaing ng mga katutubo batay sa kanilang mandato.*

*Dahil sa sapilitang relokasyon mula sa kanilang ninunong lupain, napilitang manirahan ang mga katutubo sa paanan ng Mt. Minandar — ang naging himlayan ng higit na 20 Teduray.*

*Ayon din po sa ulat, "they were forced to relocate because a powerful person*

wanted to use the place for a resort.” *Paano po nangyari ito? Ano ba ang dapat manaig? Ang kapangyarihan ng batas o ang kapangyarihan ng isang tao?*

*Nakapagtataka po dahil daan-daang taon na simula nang manirahan ang mga katutubong Teduray sa nasabing lupain. Doon sa baybayin na iyon ay nakalatag ang kapaligiran ng kanilang kultura. Dito rin po nakalagak ang libingan ng kanilang mga ninuno. Sa ngayon, wala na sa kanilang pag-aari ang ninunong lupa.*

*Tayo na po ba ngayon ang mananakop ng tinubuang lupa ng katutubong Pilipino?*

*Hanggang kailan natin hahayaang masupil ang kanilang karapatan at kayamanan? Lagi na lamang ba tayong ganito? Hindi po ito katanggap-tanggap. Nakalulungkot na sa kabila ng pagkakapasa ng higit 25 taon nang nakararaan na Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act upang kilalanin, protektahan, at itaguyod ang karapatan ng mga katutubo, patuloy pa rin ang ulat ng pananamantala at pagyurak sa karapatan ng ating mga katutubo.*

*Sa punto pong ito—pasensiya na po kayo, ako ay nagiging emosyonal—naghain tayo ng Resolution No. 280 na hangaring imbestigahan ang trahedya ng tribong Teduray at ang posibleng tunguhin ng lehislatura bilang tugon sa isyung ito at sa patuloy na pang-aabuso sa ating mga katutubong maralita na pilit inaalisang ng lupang ninuno.*

*Bilang ako po ang inyong chairman ng komite ng Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs kung saan naisanguni ang naturang resolusyon, ang inyong lingkod ay nangangakong didinggin ang nasabing isyu sa lalong madaling panahon. Hangad ko po na mapansin ng Lupon ang napakahalagang isyung ito.*

*Sawang-sawa na ako sa isyu. Sasandali pa lamang ako dito sa Senado, katakot-takot na reklamo na ng mga katutubong Pilipino ang natatanggap ko. Hindi ko alam kung ano pa po ba ang gagawin natin. Sunod-sunod na po ito. Mayroon din po akong resolusyon patungkol sa mga Ita sa Clark. Ngayon na naman po, patungkol na naman sa mga Teduray.*

*Hinihingi ko po sa Senado na bigyan ito ng pansin sapagkat para saan tayo kung hindi natin mabigyan ng proteksiyon iyong mga maralitang katutubo, ano tayo? Tayo na mismo, tayo na ang pumalit sa mga dayuhang mananakop, tayo na ang kumukuha ng lupa ng mga taong ito at dinadala natin sa kapahamakan.*

*Kaya hinihingi ko po sa inyong lahat, sa aking mga kasama, na tingnan nating mabuti ito dahil hindi natin maipagmamalaki ang banderang iyan sa harap natin hangga’t may katutubong Pilipino na inaapi ng sarili nating lahi.*

## REMARKS OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

At this juncture, Senator Villanueva indicated his support for the investigation of the matter by the Committee on Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs.

## INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Senator Cayetano (P) thanked Senator Padilla for bringing the Teduray people’s plight to light, and expressed disappointment that they had been removed from their ancestral land only to be relocated to an unsafe area where they had suffered tragic loss.

Asked for details on the incident, Senator Padilla explained that the Tedurays had long occupied their ancestral coastal lands before being told that they needed to relocate to the foot of the mountain due to the danger of storm surges. He said that the tribe had protested the move and sought assistance from the National Commission for Indigenous People (NCIP) for help, but the commission had not responded.

Senator Cayetano (P) opined that it was but natural for indigenous people to resist leaving their ancestral lands, especially if the area they had been occupying for decades has been proven to be



safe. She said that there were ways to verify whether the Tedurays' ancestral land was vulnerable to storm surges. And she stated that the Tedurays have the right to be informed by the NCIP about the status of their land, as she expressed surprise that the NCIP did not respond to their request for assistance.

Upon further query, Senator Padilla stated that the Tedurays were relocated only a few months after being informed of the plan. He said that he received information that the person behind the relocation was a very influential person, and that it has come to the tribe's knowledge that their land had been turned into a resort.

Senator Cayetano (P) stated that she would like to get more information on the tribe's relocation during the upcoming committee hearing on the filed resolution.

After being informed that the death toll suffered by the Tedurays stood at 24, with around 30 people injured and four more missing, Senator Cayetano (P) stated that several laws were violated when the Tedurays were uprooted from their land. She cited Article 10 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which states: "Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their land or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior, and informed consent of the indigenous people's concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return." She emphasized that the Philippines is a signatory to the declaration.

She then adverted to Article II, Section 22 of the Philippine Constitution, which states that "The State recognizes and promotes the rights of indigenous cultural communities within the framework of national unity and development," as well as Article XII, Section 5, which states that "The State, subject to the provisions of this Constitution and national development policies and programs, shall protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to their ancestral lands to ensure their economic, social, and cultural well-being."

She also cited Section 7(c) of Republic Act No. 8371, or The Indigenous People's Rights Act of 1997, which states: "Right to Stay in the Territories. — The right to stay in the territory and not to be removed therefrom. No ICCs/IPs will be relocated without their free and prior informed consent, nor through any means other than eminent domain. Where relocation is considered necessary as an exceptional measure, such relocation shall take place only with the free and prior informed consent of the ICCs/IPs concerned and whenever possible, they shall be guaranteed the right to return to their ancestral domains, as soon as the grounds for relocation cease to exist. When such return is not possible, as determined by agreement or through appropriate procedures, ICCs/IPs shall be provided in all possible cases with lands of quality and legal status at least equal to that of the land previously occupied by them, suitable to provide for their present needs and future development."

Upon query, Senator Padilla stated that there was no free, prior, and informed consent from the tribe before its people were forced to leave their land, and that they even protested the move. Senator Cayetano (P) debunked the justification that the relocation was by virtue of eminent domain because the government did not expropriate the land.

Asked if he would investigate the alleged plan to build a resort on Teduray lands, Senator Padilla responded that he would conduct a site visit as soon as the committee can schedule a hearing on the resolution, and he would invite the other Members to join him in the visit.

Senator Cayetano (P) addressed Senator Padilla's concern that agencies of government and other stakeholders might refuse to cooperate and ignore the hearing, saying that the Senate has the authority to compel the attendance of the players involved and that she and the other Members would support him in that endeavor.



Senator Cayetano (P) assured that the Body would get to the bottom of things, regardless of the outcome of its investigation – it may be an unbearable sight, a painful lesson in exchange for the 24 lives lost, or a better future for those affected. She stated that it is the Senate’s privilege and responsibility to bear and correct sad stories, which incidents had occurred even before Senator Padilla became a senator.

As regards RA 8371, she cited Section 46(g), to wit: “Legal Affairs Office — There shall be a Legal Affairs Office which shall advise the NCIP on all legal matters concerning ICCs/IPs and which shall be responsible for providing ICCs/IPs with legal assistance in litigation involving community interest.”

She stated that the process was clearly violated because the law states that IPs will not be relocated unless they give their free and informed consent. She stated that the Tedurays should have been informed and the reason for their relocation explained. She expressed her hope that the issue would be resolved and that their ancestral land would be returned to them. She advised the committee to include the legal affairs office and the LGU in the hearing because they are also involved in the matter.

Senator Padilla informed the Body that the Tedurays occupy the areas of Upi, South Upi, Ampatuan, Datu Odin Sinsuat, and the entire Maguindanao Province up to Sultan Kudarat. He stated that the committee was awaiting responses from the BARMM’s Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs because the incident happened within its jurisdiction. He lamented that while many commented in social media platforms about the tragedy, no one questioned why they were in that location. In law, he said, the source of the crime should always be established. He emphasized the need for the committee to find out the reason why the Tedurays were resettled in the area.

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

At this juncture, the Chair informed the Body that Proposed Senate Resolution No. 280 was referred to its proper committee the previous day, and that Senator Padilla could start the inquiry and investigation on the matter.

Senator Cayetano (P) stated that, among other things, environmental concerns should be addressed during the hearing as well. She stated that Section 58 (*Environmental Consideration*) of RA 8371 provides that: “xxx. No ICC-IP shall be displaced or relocated for the purpose enumerated under this section without the written consent of the specific persons authorized to give consent.” She expressed hope that the hearing would shed light on what happened to the 30 lives that were buried in the mudslide. She then commended Senator Padilla for his passion and concern for the IPs, and hoped that the other Members would support the investigation.

Senator Padilla invited his colleagues to join the committee in hearing about the tragedies involving the IPs. He also invited them to read anthropologist Stuart Schlegel’s book, “Wisdom from a Rainforest: The Spiritual Journey of An Anthropologist,” in which he discussed the Teduray’s rich culture and spirituality. He stated that the Tedurays are not Christians or Muslims, but rather Lumads whose lives revolve around God’s works, nature, and their traditions.

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

Senator Hontiveros stated that Senator Padilla was able to send the message loud and clear that the Teduray tribe had been violated: 1) by the forcible displacement from their ancestral domain; and 2) by their relocation to a deforested land, which resulted in the tragic death of 30 Tedurays. She assured the Body that the Minority would support the hearing on the resolution in order to discover the truth and to formulate appropriate recommendations to correct the mistakes done to the Tedurays.

## MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva joined the Body, especially Senator Padilla in his efforts to help indigenous peoples. He stated that he is from Bulacan, the home of the Dumagats, and that they also have coordination issues with the NCIP as well as concerns about how they are to be protected in their ancestral lands.

## REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Padilla and the interpellations thereon to the Committee on Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs.

## PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR TULFO

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Tulfo delivered the following privilege speech on the travails of Landmark employees:

*Narito po ulit ako sa harap ninyo at kinakalampag ang mga dapat magising dahil sa nangyayari sa mga kawawang manggagawa natin—mga hamak na kahera at empleyado ng Landmark—na lumapit po sa akin upang matugunan ang kanilang problema.*

Inasmuch as I would like to say that there is no need for me to bring this to everyone's attention, the truth is, it is very much needed. I tried to help them and address their concerns outside these halls, but it seems that these employees did not merit the attention of the company they worked for.

It all started with the post of Erika Joy Buendicho that went viral online, and concerned netizens called my attention to intervene. I invited Erika Joy to my program and she explained what happened to her. She is a cashier at Landmark Makati. On her third day at work, she got the surprise of her life when her supervisor called her attention that there was a shortage in her cash turnover the previous day, amounting to P4,993.71. She tried to explain her transactions to her supervisor, but was still accused of taking the amount. The security officer who interrogated her was forcing her to admit that she took the amount. Personal information about her family was being used against her to establish that she was poor and, therefore, in dire need of money, that is why she took the amount.

I was surprised by this practice. From what I know, when it comes to these kinds of establishments, transactions are checked at the end of the day in the presence of the cashier to make sure that things are balanced.

Erika Joy asked for the computation and documents that would prove her shortage, but was told that the accounting documents are confidential. Concerned for her safety, because of the intimidating behavior of Security Officer Juanito Tanod-tanod, she signed a blank document and effectively waived whatever salary she had, and even paid an additional P500 to cover the supposed shortage she had.

*Ang nakaka-high blood po, dito lumabas na si Erika Joy pa po ang nagbayad sa Landmark, sa halip na siya pa dapat ang sinuwelduhan ng Landmark.*

Erika Joy told the story online and a lot of Landmark employees reached out to her who experienced the same thing. There were about 28—I repeat, 28—more stories similar to Erika Joy's.

Appalled by what she told me, I invited those who suffered the same fate to come to my office so that I could find out the nature and magnitude of this modus operandi. Honestly, I wanted to give the owners of Landmark the benefit of the doubt because this might be an isolated incident of a few unscrupulous managers and supervisors. Sad to say, this was not an isolated case.

A few days later, several more cashiers approached my office—eight more employees of Landmark with the same story—all cashiers being accused of shortage in their turnover. *Lahat po*

*sila ay pare-pareho ang kuwento. After a few days, minsan isang linggo pa ang inaabot, bago sila sinasabihan na nag-short. And when they confront the management on the basis for the shortage, they are told that the documents are confidential. They are not even provided a calculator while they are being asked about the computation, and they are forced to sign a cashier shortage report waiving their salaries in order to cover the supposed alleged shortage. And, sometimes, if they do not sign the said document because they are insisting that they did not take any money, the amount is still deducted from their salary.*

*Nasaan po ang due process sa establishment na ito? Ang takot na takot na manggagawa na iniisip na sila ay makukulong kung hindi nila sasagutin ang nawawalang pera ay napipilitan pong magbayad. Bakit napababayaan ang ganitong kalaran? Bakit walang maayos na proseso ang pag-turn over ng pera para maprotektahan ang mga kawawang kahera?*

*May isang mapalad na kahera na lumapit sa DOLE at ini-report ang pangyayari. Matapos lamang ang isang conference, lo and behold, hindi natuloy ang pagkaltas sa kaniyang suweldo. Ito ang aking ipinagtataka. Kung ito ay na-DOLE na, bakit hindi pa rin naayos ng management at bakit hindi naiimbistigahan ng DOLE? Bakit paulit-ulit pa ring nangyari ito sa mga kahera nila?*

*Isang nakapagtataakang kuwento ng mga kahera ay nangyayari ang mga insidente ng shortage tuwing nalalapit na ang suweldo o hindi kaya tuwing malapit ng matapos ang kanilang anim na buwan sa kumpanya. Kahit sino na makaririnig ng kuwentong ito ay walang ibang iisipin kundi hindi ito ay "isolated incident." It is bordering on a practice being implemented by the management. I am not sure if it is the top-most management or only on the level of the branches of Landmark, but these cashiers who approached me are from Landmark-Makati and Nuvali in Laguna.*

Is it possible that this is being used to go around the regularization of employees? It is highly improbable that the directors and officers of Landmark have not heard of this. So, are they covering this up? Are they condoning the said practice?

*Itong Juanito Tanod-tanod na ito na security officer ng Landmark na inireklamo ni Erika Joy at ng isang Norman Cabero na dinuro-duro at sinakal siya—uulitin ko po, sinakal siya—noong siya ay in-interrogate, siya ay pinoprotektahan ng mga abogado ng Landmark. Ang sabi nila, may sakit sa puso na raw po itong si Tanod-tanod kaya huwag na munang imbestigahan at baka raw atakihin sa puso. Pero ayon kay Norman, si Juanito Tanod-tanod ay malakas pa sa kalabaw at naroon lamang sa Landmark, nagtatrabaho at pangisi-ngisi pa.*

*Sa ngayon, ang mga kahera na ito ay lumapit po sa DOLE upang magsampa ng kaso. Ngayon lamang sila lumapit dahil sa tulong ng aking opisina. Bakit? Kasi ang mga mahihirap ay walang sapat na pera para ituloy ang laban nila. Kung hindi ko sila inudyukan na maglakas loob na lumaban, lulunukin na lamang nila ang kanilang sitwasyon na sila ay binansagang magnanakaw, at iiyak na lamang sila sa suweldong hindi nila nakuha sa kababayad ng mga short nila.*

One injustice should be enough to wake us up from our slumber because, as legislators, we have to look after those who do not have the opportunity and courage to stand up and fight for their rights.

The powerful is always prying on the weak. We must put a stop to this.

*Kadalasan ang naririnig natin sa balita ay mga employer na ninanakawan ng mga manggagawa. Pero dito baliktad po, ang amo ang nagnanakaw sa mga tauhan. Kung tutuusin, baka may dalawang pagnanakaw dito, iyong nawalang pera na na-short mula sa mga transaksyon at iyong sweldo na kinuha sa kawawang kahera na napagbintangan. Kawalanghiyaan at its finest. Extreme na pang-aabuso sa mga maliliit nating walang kalaban-labang pobreng manggagawa. Minimum wage na nga ang sahod, ninanakaw pa.*

One thing I want to be reviewed is the liability of directors and officers for fraudulent schemes such as these. Our office is studying how we can provide a rebuttable presumption against management when circumstances of fraud are presented by the employee. This will ensure that management will be active and take responsibility for the managers and supervisors they are putting in place.

And again, more than ever, my proposal that there must be a way to ensure that employees can recover from the employers as necessary. The cash bond that covers the money claims of employees for labor claims come to play upon appeal from the labor arbiter to the NLRC. How about before that? What protection do labors have? We need to find a way for money claims of laborers to be covered by the employers, including the directors and officers if there is bad faith on their part.

I look forward to working with my esteemed colleagues, the chairman of the Committee on Labor, Sen. Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada. I hope that the rest of my colleagues can join me in this advocacy in protecting our laborers. *Ang parati po sinasabi ng mga employers: "If there is no work, there is no pay." Pero ang nangyari na ay "There is no pay even if they work." Dapat tumatayo na po tayo para sa ating kawawang mga manggagawa. Walang ibang gagawa nito para sa kanila kung hindi tayo.*

### **MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA**

Senator Villanueva stated that Senator Tulfo's revelation was alarming. He stated that he had heard numerous stories about Filipinos working in malls who were duped not only by the "endo" scheme but also by the new scheme that requires them to pay or sign a waiver. He added that there was a sense of urgency in doing something to protect the workers' best interests.

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

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Tulfo to the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS**

At this juncture, Senator Villanueva acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Pastors Cora Tabucal and Mercy Tabucal of the Jesus is Lord Church.

Senator Ejercito welcomed the guests to the Senate.

### **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 Wednesday, November 23, 2022.

*It was 6:04 p.m.*

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

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

Approved on November 23, 2022