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SESSION NO. 32
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NINETEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

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SESSION NO. 32
Monday, November 28, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:02 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Juan Miguel “Migz” F. Zubiri, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Joel Villanueva led the prayer, to wit:

Dakilang Diyos, Ama naming sumasalangit, kami po ay naninikluhod at lumalapit sa Iyo. Sinabi po Ninyo na kung may lalapit sa Iyo ay hindi po Ninyo itataboy at patuloy Ninyong paglilingkuran.

Humihingi po kami ng kapatawaran sa aming mga kasalanan sa isip, sa salita, sa gawa—kasalanang sinasadya o hindi—at hayaan Ninyong damitan Mo kami ng Inyong damit ng katwiran.

Tulungan po Ninyo kami ngayong araw na ito sa pagbubukas ng aming sesyon. Hayaan Ninyong tanging Pangalan lamang Ninyo ang maitaas sa aming kalagitnaan.

Tulungan po Ninyo ang aming mga kababayan mula sa Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao, at sa ibayong dagat na nakikipagsapalaran upang magkaroon sila ng mas magandang buhay.

Bigyan po Ninyo kami ng kalakasan, katalihuhan na nagmumula sa langit upang magampanan namin ang aming mga tungkulin bilang Iyong mga lingkod-bayan.

Hayaan Mong maparangalan Ka namin sa lugar na ito; at sa Iyong mga kamay, aming inilalahad at ipinapaubaya ang lahat ng aming gagawin ngayong araw na ito, at sa mga susunod na araw para sa Iyong kaluwalhatian.

Maingat po naming ibinabalik sa Iyo ang lahat ng papuri, pasasalamat, at pagdakila.

Sa Pangalan ng aming Panginoong Hesus. Amen.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Thereafter, everybody sang the national anthem.

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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:

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

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

Senator Angara was on official mission attending the bicameral conference on the 2023 General Appropriations Bill with his counterparts from the House of Representatives.

Senator Escudero attended the session online due to his exposure to COVID-19.

Senator Cayetano (A) was absent.

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. 31 (November 23, 2022) and considered it approved.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

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

- Active and reserve members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines participating in the Cybersecurity Program of the University of Cincinnati in Ohio, U.S.A.;
- His Excellency Ilan Fluss, Ambassador of Israel to the Philippines;
- Mr. Nir Balzam, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Israel; and
- Mr. Or Haviv, partner and head of Global Innovation at Arieli Capital.

Senate President Zubiri welcomed the guests to the Senate.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Senator Cayetano (P) informed the Body that the Senate, in collaboration with the Embassy of Israel, was holding a photo exhibit in the premises, entitled "Bridging Innovation Between Israel and the Philippines." She stated that the exhibit would highlight various joint projects between the two countries, including agricultural projects. She also stated that her conversation with Mr. Or Haviv, partner and head of Global Innovation at Arieli Capital, centered on the same advocacy that

the Body supported over the years—the advancement of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) at the university level, as well as the ability to commercialize the innovations created as a result. She expressed hope that the conversation would be just the beginning of exploring other opportunities in the countryside.

REMARKS OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

Senate President Zubiri extended his warmest greetings to Ambassador Fluss and the Israeli delegation. He then informed his fellow senators that his visit to Israel had allowed him to personally observe how Israeli farmers were able to produce so much with such limited resources as water and soil in a desert country. He added that Israel's expertise in drip irrigation has also benefited his province of Bukidnon, which has several private sector projects utilizing the country's technological advancements.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR POE

Senator Poe expressed her delight in the Israeli government's willingness to help the country in addressing its water issues by sharing its expertise and technological innovations. Furthermore, she observed that despite its desert location, Israel has made most out of its scarce water resources, a technological feat she was thankful Israel for sharing with the Philippines. Senate President Zubiri also informed the senators of Israel's status as a world leader in the production of desalination facilities.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva associated himself with the statements of Senate President Zubiri and Senator Poe. He also stated that he had been a member of the two countries' interparliamentary association for 20 years and was a proud supporter of Ambassador Fluss.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

Senate President Zubiri further shared some information about Israel during World War II. He stated that during that time, President Quezon granted visa-free entry to Jewish patriots seeking safe refuge in the Philippines, and that the Philippines was the first to embrace Israeli nationals as brothers during the war.

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. 1520, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING AND REGULATING THE USE OF WEARABLE BODY CAMERAS AND DASHBOARD CAMERAS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS IN THE COURSE OF CONDUCTING A SEARCH OR MAKING AN ARREST, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; and Finance



Senate Bill No. 1521, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING INCENTIVES TO FILIPINO INDEPENDENT FILMS WHO WERE GRANTED HONORS IN NOTABLE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVALS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1522, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF PARENTS ASSOCIATIONS AND CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE THE NATIONAL PARENT COUNCIL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Basic Education; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1523, entitled

AN ACT PRESERVING THE INDIGENOUS GAMES OF THE PHILIPPINES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Culture and the Arts; and Sports

Senate Bill No. 1524, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AWARENESS AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

To the Committee on Health and Demography

Senate Bill No. 1525, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM, PROVIDING FUNDS FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

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

Senate Bill No. 1526, entitled

AN ACT UPGRADING THE POSITION OF SANITATION INSPECTOR TO THE NEXT HIGHER SALARY GRADE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR



Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 305, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING JOSE EFREN BAGAMASBAD FOR ATTAINING INTERNATIONAL MASTER TITLE AND WINNING GOLD IN THE 2022 ASIAN SENIOR CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP HELD IN AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 306, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND RECOGNIZING NATIONAL YOUTH CHESS TEAM FOR BEING THE OVERALL CHAMPION IN THE 6th EASTERN ASIA YOUTH CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP HELD IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 307, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND RECOGNIZING FILIPINO GYMNASTS AND SIBLINGS, KARL JAHREL ELDREW AND ELAIZA ANDRIEL YSAR YULO FOR THEIR IMPRESSIVE TEN-MEDAL HAUL IN THE 2022 JRC ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS STARS CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD LAST NOVEMBER 17 - 20, 2022 IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 308, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING THE NATIONAL YOUTH CHESS TEAM FOR EMERGING AS THE OVERALL CHAMPION IN THE EASTERN ASIA YOUTH CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP HELD IN BANGKOK, THAILAND FROM NOVEMBER 4-12, 2022

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 309, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING FILIPINO BOXERS CARLO PAALAM, NESTHY PETECIO AND HERGIE BACYADAN FOR WINN-

ING MEDALS IN THE ASIAN BOXING CONFEDERATION (ASBC) ASIAN ELITE MEN AND WOMEN BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN AMMAN, JORDAN

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 310, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING ELAIZA AND KARL ANDREW YULO FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCES AT THE JRC ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS STARS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 311, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING JOYCE GAIL REBOTON FOR HER IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE AT THE 2022 WORLD OPEN EQUIPPED POWERLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 312, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 313, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING ALL THE FILIPINO CHORAL GROUPS AND COMPOSERS WHO PARTICIPATED AND GARNERED TOP HONORS AT THE 2022 BUSAN CHORAL FESTIVAL AND COMPETITION

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 314, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING KYLIE VERZOSA FOR WINNING THE BEST ACTRESS AWARD AT THE 2022 DISTINCTIVE INTERNATIONAL ARAB FESTIVALS AWARDS HELD IN DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 315, entitled

RESOLUTION URGING THE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, TO SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL OF THE AFRICA GROUP AT THE UNITED NATIONS TO BEGIN INTERGOVERNMENTAL DISCUSSIONS IN NEW YORK AT UN HEADQUARTERS ON WAYS TO STRENGTHEN THE INCLUSIVENESS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNATIONAL TAX COOPERATION THROUGH THE EVALUATION OF ADDITIONAL OPTIONS INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING AN INTERNATIONAL TAX COOPERATION FRAMEWORK OR INSTRUMENT THAT IS DEVELOPED AND AGREED UPON THROUGH A UNITED NATIONS INTERGOVERNMENTAL PROCESS, TAKING INTO FULL CONSIDERATION EXISTING INTERNATIONAL AND MULTILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS

Introduced by Senator Hontiveros

To the Committee on Foreign Relations

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 316, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE WINNERS OF THE 29TH ANNUAL GALING POOK AWARDS

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 317, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL FOR SUCCESSFULLY GARNERING TOP AWARDS AT THE 2022 YOUNG INVENTORS CHALLENGE

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 318, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING ALEIA AIELLE AGUILAR FOR HER EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE AT THE 2022 ABU DHABI WORLD JIU-JITSU CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 246

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 246, entitled



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

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

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva stated that Senator Lapid would be submitting his sponsorship speech on the measure for insertion into the *Record of the Senate*.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR LAPID

Pursuant to the manifestation of Senator Villanueva, following is the sponsorship speech of Senator Lapid on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 246:

Isa pong karangalan ang tumayo sa harap ninyo, mga kababayan ko, upang kilalanin ang angking galing ng ating mga atleta ng Powerlifting Association of the Philippines para sa kanilang matagumpay na pagrepresenta sa ating bansa sa 2022 Southeast Asian Cup.

Kahanga-hanga ang kanilang naging paglahok sa nasabing kumpetisyon kung saan ang Men's Team ay nakahakot ng 49 medals (23 gold, 13 silver, at 13 bronze medals). Bukod sa mga medalya, sila ay nakapagtala din ng tatlong bagong Asian records sa naturang sport.

Ang Women's Team naman ay nakapagkamit ng 29 medals (21 gold, 4 silver, at 4 bronze) at nakapagtala ng pitong bagong Asian records.

Marapat lamang po na kilalanin natin ang mga atletang ito isa-isa:

Men's Open: 18 Medals – 6 Gold, 7 Silver, and 5 Bronze

- 1) Rafael Renzo Cahilig – 120 kg Open – 4 Gold
- 2) Nestor Redulla Jr. – 93 kg Open – 1 Gold, 2 Silver
- 3) Francis Oliver Retardo – 66 kg Open – 1 Silver, 3 Bronze
- 4) Emilio Lorenzo Florendo – 105 kg Open – 1 Gold, 2 Silver

Men's Junior: 27 Medals – 13 Gold, 6 Silver, and 8 Bronze

- 1) James Emmanuel Sy – 74 kg Junior – 3 Gold, 1 Bronze
- 2) Johan Chan – 83 kg Junior – 1 Gold, 2 Bronze
- 3) Ross Emanuel Teodosio – 120 kg Junior – 4 Gold
- 4) Maphi Daniel Polvora – 66 kg Junior – 1 Gold, 1 Silver, 2 Bronze
- 5) Jalen Cytienne Cruz – 105 kg Junior – 1 Silver, 3 Bronze
- 6) Lance Gabriel Laquian – 59 kg Junor – 4 Gold
- 7) Rhodison Jay Esmundo – 105 kg Junior – 3 Silver, 1 Bronze

Men's Master: 4 Medals – All Gold

- 1) Merwin Torres – 74 kg Master – 4 Gold

Women's Open: 21 Medals – 14 Gold, 3 Silver, and 4 Bronze

- 1) Joyce Gail Reboton – 76 kg Open – 4 Gold
- 2) Ma. Angelica Savillo – 57 kg Open – 3 Gold, 1 Silver
- 3) Jeremy Reign Bautista – 57 kg Open – 2 Bronze
- 4) Christine Erine Alejandro – 63 kg Open – 4 Gold
- 5) Charlene Raye Tugade – 84 kg Open – 1 Silver, 2 Bronze
- 6) April Iris Williams – 84 kg Open – 1 Bronze
- 7) Rikki Dianne Saul – 69 kg Open – 3 Gold, 1 Silver

Women's Junior: 8 Medals – 7 Gold and 1 Silver

- 1) Jeremy Reign Bautista – 57 kg Junior – 3 Gold, 1 Silver
- 2) Bea Piedad – 84+ kg Junior – 4 Gold

Matibay na testamento ang mga tagumpay at medalyang ito ng Team Philippines na hinding-hindi magpapahuli ang Pilipino sa kahit ano mang larangan.

Inaanyayahan ko ang mga kasamahan ko rito sa Senado: tayo'y magbigay pugay sa mga miyembro ng Powerlifting Association of the Philippines.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay po kayo!

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

In cosponsoring Proposed Senate Resolution No. 246, Senator Villanueva delivered the following speech:

We join Senator Lapid in congratulating and commending the Powerlifting Association of the Philippines for their incredible and, indeed, “powerful” performance during the 2022 Southeast Asian Cup held in Johor Baru, Malaysia.

Our athletes dominated the competition, bringing home a total of 78 medals. Our Men’s Team won 23 gold medals, 13 silver medals, and 13 bronze medals, while our Women’s Team bagged 21 gold medals, 4 silver medals, and 4 bronze medals. Altogether, our teams set 10 new Asian records. These powerful men and women who represented our country—I was told some, if not most, of them are here today. They are:

- 1) Rafael Renzo Cahilig
- 2) Nestor Redulla Jr.
- 3) Francis Oliver Retardo
- 4) Emilio Lorenzo Florendo
- 5) James Emmanuel Sy
- 6) Johan Chan
- 7) Ross Emanuel Teodosio
- 8) Maphi Daniele Polvora
- 9) Jalen Cytienne Cruz
- 10) Lance Gabrielle Laquian
- 11) Rhodison Jay Esmundo
- 12) Merwin Torres
- 13) Joyce Gail Reboton
- 14) Ma. Angelica Savillo
- 15) Jeremy Reign Bautista
- 16) Christine Erine Alejandro
- 17) Charlene Raye Tugade
- 18) April Iris Williams
- 19) Jeremy Reign Bautista
- 20) Bea Piedad

We are confident that our athletes will continue this winning streak as we are now considered one of the strongest teams in Asia. The exemplary performance of our athletes inspired this august Chamber to significantly increase funding for our Philippine sports through our 2023 national budget. While the PSC budget in 2022 was only P725.23 million, its budget for 2023, per Third Reading in our GAB, is P2.327 billion; and the Senate shall remain committed in supporting and empowering our world-class athletes, thanks to our dear colleague, our seatmate, Sen. Sonny Angara.

Again, we are incredibly proud of this historic feat, and we join our colleagues in congratulating and commending our athletes for bringing pride and honor to our country.

We also extend our congratulations to their coaches, their families, and all the members and staff of the Powerlifting Association of the Philippines.

May God bless us all.



COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR GO

In cosponsoring Proposed Senate Resolution No. 246, Senator Go likewise delivered the following speech:

It is with great pride and honor that I cosponsor the Senate resolution congratulating and commending the Powerlifting Association of the Philippines for their successful campaign representing our country in the 2022 Southeast Asian Cup.

I extend my profound support to our athletes who participated and exemplified their admirable dedication and perseverance for bagging 49 medals in the men's team, composing of 23 gold, 13 silver, and 13 bronze medals. Likewise, in the women's division, we were able to capture a total of 29 medals—21 gold, four silver, and four bronze medals.

Indeed, the accolades and accomplishments of our countrymen have served as a source of encouragement and inspiration. This goes to show that despite the challenges we are facing and humbling experience this pandemic has brought upon each one of us, we continue to strive harder and soar to greater heights.

Your sacrifice and commitment truly serve as an inspiration to all of us.

Ako po ay nakikiisa sa ating mga kasamahan dito sa Senado sa pagbibigay-pugay at pagsaludo sa ating mga natatanging kababayan na nagbigay karangalan sa ating lahi. Ito ang katibayan na kaya nating makipagsabayan at patunayan ang talento at kakayahan ng mga Pilipino sa larangan ng sports.

As chairman of the Senate Committee on Sports, *ako ay nagbibigay pugay sa inyo. Ang diskarte, tapang, at galing na inyong ipinamalas ay nagbigay ng malaking karangalan sa bansa. Tunay na kahanga-hanga ang pagpupursigi ng ating mga Pilipinong atleta, kaya naman nararapat lamang po na sila ay patuloy nating suportahan at tularan.*

Of course, I also give recognition to our coaching staff and trainers. You are vital pieces of our athletes' success.

Bilang vice chairperson po ng ating Committee on Finance, nagdagdag po tayo ng pondo—nabanggit ni Majority Leader—para sa susunod na taon para sa ating mga atleta at grassroots sports development program ng Philippine Sports Commission.

Importante po na mag-invest tayo sa grassroots sports development para mas marami pang promising athletes ang mabigyan ng oportunidad. Isang paraan rin po ito na mailayo ang ating mga kabataan sa ilegal na droga. Katulad ng palagi kong sinasabi, "Get into sports. Stay away from illegal drugs."

It is only proper and fitting that we give due recognition and distinction to our outstanding Filipino athletes who competed at such high level, for showing their undying devotion to our country through sports. It is for this reason that I request to be made a coauthor of this Senate resolution.

Suportahan po natin ang ating mga atleta at marami tayong promising athletes dito sa ating bansa.

COAUTHORS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, all the senators were made coauthors of the resolution.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 246

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 246 was adopted by the Body, subject to style.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senator Villanueva acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Ambassador Mohammed Rida El Fassi of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Senate President Zubiri welcomed the guest to the Senate.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 3:26 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:32 p.m., the session was resumed.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 8 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1410

(Continuation)

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

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

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

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

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

At the outset, Senator Pimentel asked what the proposed law aims to accomplish. Senator Padilla responded that the bill has cultural and religious implications because Filipinos, whether Christians or Muslims, are known for their strong religious faith. He pointed out that wearing the hijab is not something new because wearing veils is an age-old tradition.

He stated that in the Philippines, those who were unaware of the significance of wearing the hijab tend to discriminate against Muslim women, perceiving them as terrorists at times. He lamented that female Muslim job applicants had experienced rejection, were denied access to public transportation, or harassed due to the misconception that they are bad people.

He explained that the idea behind observing a National Hijab Day was to raise public awareness about the practice of wearing a head covering. He also stated that it would serve as a reminder that there is no distinction between Muslim and Christian women, as exemplified by the Virgin Mary herself, who is frequently depicted wearing a hijab.

When asked about the difference between the hijab and the niqab, he stated that the wearing of niqab, which almost completely covers the entire face, is not encouraged in Islamic schools, but only the hijab is. He stated that the niqab is traditionally worn in Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia to protect one's face during sandstorms, which does not apply in the Philippines.

On what to expect should the bill pass into law, Senator Padilla stated that he envisioned a situation similar to his experience during the Partners for Peace campaign, in which participating



Catholic school students expressed interest in learning about the hijab and its cultural and religious characteristics. He stated that the bill's intention is to encourage people to learn about the hijab and does not, in any way, intend to make its wearing mandatory.

When asked on the nature of the designated day, Senator Padilla clarified that it would be considered a day of commemoration rather than a holiday. He allayed fears, especially of employers, that the measure would lead to the creation of another holiday.

Senator Pimentel surmised that commemorative activities could include features about the hijab in traditional and online media. Senator Padilla likened it to the declaration of National Indigenous People's Day, on which initiatives highlighting Indigenous Peoples are created and celebrated.

On the designation of the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos as the lead agency, Senator Padilla stated that the agency had already been implementing similar activities that promote religious education and the hijab, but he emphasized the need to institutionalize its mandate in order to scale up the programs and activities. Senator Pimentel expressed hope that with the passage of the measure, the NCMF and its efforts would become more prominent.

Asked if the bill had any budget implications, Senator Padilla said that he had met with NCMF officials and requested that the agency perform its mandate without incurring any additional budgetary costs, at least for the current fiscal year. He underscored the importance of passing the bill, adding that any funding concerns may be addressed during future budget deliberations. Senator Pimentel pointed out that the budget implication should be limited by the objectives of the law as stated in Section 6 of the bill.

Queried on the stakeholders that were consulted during the committee hearing, and if anyone opposed the bill, Senator Padilla replied that the NCMF, the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, as well as other well-known advocates for the institutionalization of the Hijab Day like Atty. Maisara Latiph and Ms. Samira Gutoc, were among the consulted stakeholders. He stated that only the imams and ustads who attended the hearing indicated their disagreement to having the Hijab Day proclaimed as a holiday considering that Eid'l Fitr and Eid Al-Adha are the only two holidays celebrated in Islam.

On a related matter, Senator Pimentel asked for details regarding a hijab-related incident in Iran. Senator Padilla stated that the case involved a young female vlogger who died in police custody after being arrested by local authorities for wearing the hijab, as required by Iranian law, improperly. He opined that such a law is in contrast with the Philippine Constitution, which guarantees the free exercise of religion and religious worship. He stated that in Islam, all actions must be "ikhlas," or performed with complete sincerity; thus, Muslim women in the Philippines are not compelled to wear the hijab.

Asked on the impact of the legislation on Philippine society, he stated that it would help Filipinos come to a deeper understanding of the various religions and cultures in the country. He emphasized that such understanding would eliminate unfavorable biases against different religions, which were exacerbated by fake news and sensationalism.

As he noted the commonalities between the Christian and Muslim religions, Senator Padilla believed that knowing and understanding them is the initial step toward national unity. Senator Pimentel concurred, saying that the passage of the bill can be seen as a gesture of solidarity with Filipino Muslim women.

Senate President Zubiri interjected at this point, agreeing that the bill's passage would be interpreted as an expression of respect toward Muslim Filipinos. He pointed out that although some

Western countries prohibit the wearing of the hijab in schools to promote equality, the Philippines allows people to freely practice their religion. He then highlighted the similarity between the hijab and the veil worn by Roman Catholic women.

Asked by Senate President Zubiri if the wearing of the hijab and the veil is similar expression of religious practice, Senator Padilla replied in the affirmative.

Senator Pimentel proposed that, at the proper time, Section 3 include the historical reality of the hijab, so that the definition would not be limited to Muslim women. Senator Padilla welcomed Senator Pimentel's suggestion, saying that it would raise people's awareness about Islam and lead to acceptance by other faiths.

Senate President Zubiri recalled that his wife and Senator Pimentel's wife traveled to Maguindanao wearing hijab. He stated that it was their way of showing respect to the Muslim religion.

Senator Pimentel concluded by thanking Senator Padilla for allowing him to clarify certain concepts in a meaningful bill. He urged the public to read Senate Bill No. 1410 and understand that it is not a holiday and it does not impose anything on anyone, but rather serves to promote solidarity, mutual understanding, and respect.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva stated that it was a tremendous blessing that Senator Padilla was able to sponsor the bill in which he learned the distinction between the hijab and niqab. He echoed the sentiments of Senators Pimentel and Padilla that they share a belief in serving the country and people, as well as an interest in politics.

He stated that there is much to learn about the Muslim and Christian faiths. He recalled that, as a child raised in a church, he had the incorrect impression that Christians could not live in Mindanao, but when he met Cong. Mujiv Hataman, who was godfather to his son, and vice versa, he learned a great deal about their culture and traditions.

Senator Villanueva emphasized the importance of solidarity, respect for culture, and respect for the various sectors of society because they provide a proper, orderly, and clear perspective on how to interact with one another.

As coauthor of the measure, he expressed his desire to learn more about the culture and the people in order to better care for them. He stated that they may hold their own beliefs, but they can rest assured that their inherent rights are respected even more than their freedom of religion.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR HONTIVEROS

As coauthor of Senate Bill No. 1410, Senator Hontiveros expressed her appreciation for Senator Padilla's statement that the bill does not seek to compel anyone to wear a hijab, or *kombong* in Filipino.

She emphasized the importance of understanding the proper use of the hijab to prevent its misuse and abuse. She recalled that during the investigation into POGO-related prostitution, illegal detention, pastillas scam, and human trafficking, several BARMM constituents complained that the hijab was used to conceal trafficked minor women. In addition, she recalled the time when the reproductive health bill was being discussed and the Bangsamoro community, through its grand imam, issued a *fatwa* expressing its support for the RH Law and the Breastfeeding Law, which would protect their women and children, particularly the girls.

Senator Hontiveros then thanked Senator Padilla for bringing to fore a bill that would promote the wearing of the hijab regardless of religion and culture, raise the dignity of the women, and inform people of its proper use.

Senator Padilla expressed appreciation to Senators Pimentel, Hontiveros, and Villanueva for their manifestations of support.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Senator Cayetano (P) informed the Body that Taguig City is home to the largest Muslim community outside of Mindanao. Had Senator Cayetano (A) been present, she believed, he would have provided a great deal of insight on the subject, as Christians and Muslims have coexisted in Taguig City with great harmony.

She stated that it is essential to discuss religion on the floor, as it can be a means of fostering harmony amid the hatred in the world. And while she knew the underlying cause of the misunderstanding, she said that she would approach the subject with care and compassion.

Senator Cayetano (P) recalled that three years ago, a video of a girls' football game went viral when members of the opposing team formed a human shield to help a player fix her hijab. She underscored that the declaration of policy in the bill exemplifies the necessity of policies to protect women and their beliefs.

She then stated that because she still had questions and concerns on the matter for her education, she would resume her interpellation as soon as she had completed her notes.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR TULFO

Senator Tulfo, in expressing his full support for Senate Bill No. 1410, stated that the nation would recognize the significance of Muslim women wearing the hijab, which is especially significant in countries where Muslims are a minority. He stated that the recognition would mean that the Muslims would be accepted for who they are and their identity would be respected, in contrast to societies where minority rights are violated.

He added that the Philippines would serve as a shining example, reassuring those who wear the hijab that the country is a caring country with a caring government, and that all can live together while facing challenges and adversities.

He concluded that this simple, yet meaningful, gesture would further improve the lives of Filipinos and strengthen the nation.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1410

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

ADDITIONAL 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. 1527, entitled

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A WELFARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
TO FAMILIES LEFT BEHIND BY MIGRANT WORKERS**

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Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

To the Committees on Migrant Workers; Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1528, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING 13th MONTH PAY TO GOVERNMENT CONTRACTUAL AND JOB ORDER PERSONNEL

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

To the Committees on Civil Service and Government Reorganization; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1529, entitled

AN ACT ADJUSTING THE MONTHLY PENSION AND DISABILITY BENEFITS OF RETIREES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PUBLIC PURPOSE

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

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

Senate Bill No. 1530, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE AUTOMATIC INCOME CLASSIFICATION OF PROVINCES, CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE SECTION 8 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Ejercito

To the Committees on Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1531, entitled

AN ACT PRESCRIBING THE PRACTICE OF PROFESSION OF FOREIGN CITIZENS IN THE COUNTRY, PROVIDING A LIST THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill No. 1532, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING A PROPERTY REGIME FOR COHABITING SAME SEX PARTNERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality

Senate Bill No. 1533, entitled

AN ACT EXPANDING THE PHILHEALTH OUTPATIENT COVERAGE ON DIALYSIS
AND RENAL REPLACEMENT THERAPY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1534, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PATIENTS,
PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Justice and Human Rights

Senate Bill No. 1535, entitled

AN ACT EXTENDING THE PRESCRIPTIVE PERIOD OF OFFENSES UNDER THE
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN ACT, THE CRIME
OF RAPE AND THE CRIMES CHARACTERIZED AS CRIMES AGAINST
CHASTITY UNDER TITLE ELEVEN OF THE REVISED PENAL CODE,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION TWENTY-FOUR OF REPUBLIC
ACT NO. 9262, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "ANTI-VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN ACT OF 2004," AND ARTICLE 90 OF THE
REVISED PENAL CODE, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Marcos

**To the Committees on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality; and
Justice and Human Rights**

Senate Bill No. 1536, entitled

AN ACT EXPANDING THE BOUNDARIES OF LAS PIÑAS PARAÑAQUE
WETLAND PARK AND ITS VICINITIES AS PROTECTED AREA AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villar (C)

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

Senate Bill No. 1537, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 5 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10752, OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS "AN ACT FACILITATING THE ACQUISITION OF RIGHT-OF-

9A

WAY SITE OR LOCATION FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT INFRA-
STRUCTURE PROJECTS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Public Works; Justice and Human Rights; and Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 1538, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING ALL GRADUATING ELEMENTARY, HIGH SCHOOL AND
COLLEGE STUDENTS TO PLANT AT LEAST TEN (10) TREES EACH AS
A PREREQUISITE FOR GRADUATION AND FOR OTHER RELATED
PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1539, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7925, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
“PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY ACT OF THE PHILIPPINES,”
BY REQUIRING PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENTITIES AND INTERNET
SERVICE PROVIDERS TO INSTITUTE A REFUND MECHANISM FOR
SERVICE OUTAGES AND DISRUPTIONS

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Public Services

Senate Bill No. 1540, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND BENEFITS TO THE
DEPENDENTS OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE
PHILIPPINES (AFP), PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP), BUREAU OF
FIRE PROTECTION (BFP), BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENO-
LOGY (BJMP), NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (NBI), PHILIPPINE
DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY (PDEA), PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD (PCG)
AND BUREAU OF CORRECTIONS (BUCOR) WHO ARE KILLED OR
PERMANENTLY INCAPACITATED WHILE IN THE PERFORMANCE OF
THEIR DUTY OR BY REASON OF THEIR OFFICE OR POSITION

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1541, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING THE ADOPTION OF DIGITAL PAYMENTS FOR
FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND ALL
MERCHANTS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES



Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1542, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE TRANSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT TO E-GOVERNANCE IN THE DIGITAL AGE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1543, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1544, entitled

AN ACT REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF THE AGRICULTURE PROFESSION IN THE PHILIPPINES, CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE A PROFESSIONAL REGULATORY BOARD FOR AGRICULTURISTS, 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. 1545, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING SANITARY LEAVE OF ONE (1) DAY A MONTH WITH ONE HUNDRED PERCENT DAILY RENUMERATION TO ALL FEMALE EMPLOYEES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation

Senate Bill No. 1546, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING JULY 27 OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL NATIONAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9645, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "COMMEMORATION OF THE FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF THE IGLESIA NI CRISTO"

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Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Constitutional Amendments and Revision Of Codes

Senate Bill No. 1547, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE ABRA RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, PRESCRIBING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committees on Government Corporations and Public Enterprises; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1548, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING MT. KITUMMAN LOCATED IN BARANGAY TUNGNGOD IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LAGawe, PROVINCE OF IFUGAO, AN ECOTOURISM DESTINATION, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill No. 1549, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY COCOY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TINOC, PROVINCE OF IFUGAO

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill No. 1550, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill No. 1551, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION, DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING, ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF BASIC RESERVE OFFICERS TRAINING CORPS (ROTC) IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES, VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS AND OTHER TERTIARY



EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, FURTHER AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7077, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "CITIZEN ARMED FORCE OR ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES RESERVIST ACT," AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9163, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM (NSTP) ACT OF 2001," AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

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

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Report No. 12, submitted jointly by the Committees on Local Government; and Electoral Reforms and People's Participation, on House Bill No. 3968, introduced by Representatives Loyola and Revilla (R. J.), entitled

AN ACT CONVERTING THE MUNICIPALITY OF CARMONA IN THE PROVINCE OF CAVITE INTO A COMPONENT CITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE CITY OF CARMONA,

recommending its approval with amendment, taking into consideration Senate Bill No. 1355.

Sponsor: Senator Ejercito

To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUEST

At this juncture, Senator Villanueva acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Commissioner Nelson Celis of the Commission of Elections.

Senate President Zubiri welcomed Commissioner Celis to the Senate.

SPECIAL ORDER

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 12 on House Bill No. 3968 from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 12 ON HOUSE BILL NO. 3968

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading, House Bill No. 3968 (Committee Report No. 12), entitled

AN ACT CONVERTING THE MUNICIPALITY OF CARMONA IN THE PROVINCE OF CAVITE INTO A COMPONENT CITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE CITY OF CARMONA.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXII 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*.

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The Chair recognized Senator Ejercito for the sponsorship.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR EJERCITO

Senator Ejercito, on behalf of the Committee on Local Government, submitted for plenary consideration House Bill No. 3968, entitled “An Act Converting the Municipality of Carmona in the Province of Cavite into a Component City to be Known as the City of Carmona,” under Committee Report No. 12.

The full text of Senator Ejercito’s sponsorship speech follows:

Your Committee Chairperson on Local Government understands fully the importance of this measure and its contribution to the future of Carmona and its people. Being former mayor who saw and worked for the progress of a small town to a highly-urbanized and developed city, I can only support this wholeheartedly and acknowledge the toil and dedication of the people behind this measure.

Ang atin pong layunin ay maparami pa ang mga lungsod sa ating bansa. Higit marahil sa karangalan na matawag na isang “city” ang isang bayan, ay kaakibat nito ang kaunlaran at mas maginhawang buhay para sa mga mamamayang naninirahan dito. Kaya po naunawaan ko po kung bakit umaapaw sa suporta ang panukalang batas na ito mula sa mga kasamahan natin sa Kapulungan na ito na mula sa Lalawigan ng Cavite.

We especially acknowledge the support of our colleagues to this measure—a true and respected Caviteño, Sen. Bong Revilla—by filling a counterpart bill, Senate Bill No. 1355.

This is a historic legislation not just for Carmona, but for this august Chamber. Today, we sponsor the first bill on conversion of a municipality into a component city following the passage of Republic Act No. 11683. This law, which was passed in the last Congress, amended the Local Government Code on the requisites for conversion and effectively recognizes thriving municipalities that are fiscally competent as reflected in their locally-generated income but could not qualify as city because of limitations in their land area or population.

Kapag nagkataon po ay ang bayan ng Carmona ang unang magiging benepisaryo ng batas na nabanggit. Ngunit ito ay maituturing na bunga rin ng walang pagod na pagsisikap ng kanilang mga mamamayan upang mas mapaganda at mapaunlad ang kanilang munting bayan. Karapat-dapat ang Carmona na matawag at kilalanin bilang isang lungsod. Kinapos man noon sa populasyon, o nalimita man ang lupain, ngunit umaapaw naman sa progreso.

We laud the champions of local government units—the sponsor and author of RA 11683, our distinguished colleague, Sen. Francis “Tol” Tolentino—and former Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Since the early 1990s, Carmona has been an industrialized and highly commercialized first-class municipality and boasts of major characteristics of a city.

It is an industrial community that, to date, hosts 12 industrial estates and four industrial compounds housing more than 329 manufacturing, garments, semiconductor, electronic, and steel fabrication industries. Its proximity to Metro Manila and, at the same time, being the gateway to the south has made it an ideal venue for business and development.

Ngunit higit sa bilang ng mga pagawaan at pabrika, marahil ay mas mahalaga na mabigyan ng pansin ang mga trabaho at oportunidad na naibigay ng mga ito hindi lamang para sa kanilang bayan kung hindi pati na rin sa kanilang mga karatig lugar.

Carmona is also a rising smart city, and its biggest ongoing development investment is expected to further transform Carmona into one of the most modern and highly urbanized communities in the Philippines.

In terms of its basic services for its constituents, it has no shortage of hospitals, universities, playgrounds and leisure parks, public market, commercial establishments, and highways and transportation networks. In addition, there are also numerous subdivisions and real estate developments, as well as BPO companies within the locality.

Indeed, Carmona has all the characteristics of a city but does not enjoy such privilege despite being one of the most prosperous municipalities in the country today.

Under R.A. No. 11683, the Municipality of Carmona is now qualified for conversion into a component city. It has complied with the two criteria set forth by the said law:

First, it has an average locally-generated annual income of P499.907 million for fiscal years 2020 and 2021 based on 2012 constant prices, as certified by the Bureau of Local Government. In terms of finance, Carmona has reached the required P400 million under Republic Act No. 11683 and five times more than the required income in Sec. 450 of the Local Government Code of 1991, as amended.

Second, its population as of May 1, 2020, based on the 2020 census of population and housing conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority, was 106,256. It is projected to significantly increase in the near future with the recent developments. It is compliant with the population of not less than 100,000 as required by law.

This humble Representation believes that the income requirement would be the greatest hurdle that any municipality that aspires to be a city must comply with. However, the Municipality of Carmona has passed this obstacle with flying colors. Though it has already complied with the population requirement, I firmly believe that because of its beauty and continued industrialization, more and more would choose to live in Carmona. It is not only the lights that fascinate one to live in a city but the opportunities it can bring to his or her life.

During the committee hearing for this measure, we had the chance to invite the authors of this measure, Cong. Roy Loyola and Cong. Jolo Revilla, who both attested to the progress and qualifications of the Municipality of Carmona. For our counterparts in the House of Representatives and for the people of Carmona, it has been 12 long years of pursuit for their cityhood. We have high hopes that during this Congress, we will finally pave the way for the realization of this dream.

Hindi po matatawaran ang pagod at hirap ng mga mamamayan ng Carmona, sa pangunguna ni Cong. Roy Loyola at kaniyang maybahay na si Mayor Dahlia, upang dumating ang araw na matawag na rin na lungsod ang kanilang pinakamamahal na bayan. Naibigay po nila kung ano man ang hinihingi sa kanila ng batas. Sapat na siguro ang kanilang paghihintay.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR REVILLA

In cosponsoring House Bill No. 3968, Senator Revilla delivered the following speech:

It is my honor to associate myself as a cosponsor of this measure and express my full support in converting the Municipality of Carmona in the Province of Cavite into a component city to be known as the City of Carmona.

Being a first-class urban municipality in the Province of Cavite, the Municipality of Carmona has long proven its economic viability and stability. For fiscal year 2020 and 2021, it generated an average local annual income of more than P400 million. Its conversion will enhance its capability of attracting investments, further improving services to the constituency, enhancing development and progress, as well as promoting peace and order in the locality. *Sa madaling salita, ang pagpasa ng panukalang ito ay nangangahulugan ng mas mahusay na serbisyo para sa kapakanan ng mga nasasakupang mamamayan ng Carmona.*

Bilang anak ng Cavite, isang malaking hakbang ito upang kilalanin ang patuloy na pagyabong ng probinsya.

Cavite, in recent years, has truly been a melting pot of Filipinos who have either found stable jobs in the province, been born and raised in its fertile grounds, or have simply made it home. *Ito na po ang tamang panahon.* Aside from all its accomplishments, it has already complied with all the requirements set forth by existing laws.

This Representation also commends the effort and great help of our chairperson of the Committee on Local Government, Sen. Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito, for sponsoring this measure.

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SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Ejercito, the session was suspended.

It was 4:36 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:37 p.m., the session was resumed.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 3968

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Ejercito, the session was suspended.

It was 4:37 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:29 p.m., the session was resumed.

CHANGE OF REFERRALS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body approved the change of referrals of the following from the Committee on Rules to the committees hereunder indicated:

1. Senate Bill No. 1176 (*declaring the Province of Leyte a tourism zone*) — Committee on Tourism; Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change; and Committee on Finance;
2. Senate Bill No. 1154 (*declaring Luzon Datum in Mogpog, Marinduque a tourism spot*) — Committee on Tourism; Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change; and Committee on Finance; and
3. Senate Bill No. 1356 (*declaring August 1 of every year a special non-working holiday in Kawit, Cavite*) — Committee on Local Government.

WITHDRAWAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 387

Senator Villanueva stated that in a letter to Senate President Zubiri, Senator Gatchalian had manifested that he was withdrawing Senate Bill. No. 387 (Senior High School ROTC), which he authored and was referred to the Committees on Basic Education, and Finance.

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body approved the withdrawal of the bill.

WITHDRAWAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 231

Senator Villanueva stated that Senator Padilla had also written Senate President Zubiri to express his desire to withdraw Senate Bill No. 231 (amending RA 8178, as amended), which

he authored and was previously referred to the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform, Ways and Means, and Finance, in view of the filing of an improved version thereof.

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body approved the withdrawal of the bill.

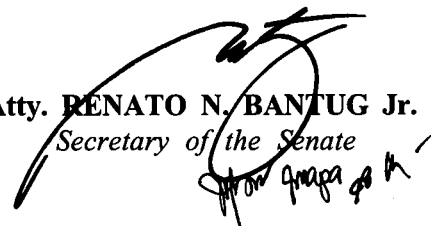
ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of the following day.

It was 5:33 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

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



Approved on November 29, 2022