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CALL TO ORDER

At 3:11 p.m., the Senate President, Juan Miguel “Migz” F. Zubiri, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Win Gatchalian led the prayer, to wit:

Almighty Father, we are grateful for this day that You bestowed upon us. We thank and praise You for Your goodness in allowing us to gather in today’s session. We ask You to open our hearts and minds to choose the right path as we make decisions on behalf of this nation.

Bilang mga mambabatas, gawin Mo po kaming instrumento upang mapag-silbihan ang aming mga kababayan at matugunan ang kanilang mga pangangailangan na naaayon sa Iyong utos.

Ipagkaloob Mo po sa amin ang biyaya, lakas, at karunungan upang buong puso naming magamit ang aming kapasidad sa pagsulong ng mga batas tungo sa ikauunlad ng bansa.

Panginoong Diyos, panatilihin Mo rin ang aming katatagan sa kabila ng mga hamon na aming kinakaharap. Patnubayan Mo nawa ang mga kababayan naming patuloy na bumabangon mula sa hagupit ng kalamidad at sakuna nitong nagdaang mga buwan.

Dinggin Mo rin ang aming panalangin na hindi madagdagan ang bilang ng bagong kaso ng COVID-19 sa kabila ng pagpasok ng panibagong Omicron variant sa bansa. At ngayong buwan ng Disyembre at nalalapit na ang kapaskuhan, hinihiniling din namin na maging mapayapa at ligtas ang mga pagdiriwang at mga pagtitipon na magaganap.

In today’s session, direct our goals to align in Your righteous will. Keep us physically safe while also protecting our hearts and minds from pride and selfishness. Keep the goodness at the forefront of our minds and let it be the guiding light as we fulfill our purposes.

We honor You, in Jesus’ Name.

Amen.

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NATIONAL ANTHEM

Thereafter, everybody sang the national anthem.

ROLL CALL

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

Angara, S.	Padilla, R. C.
Binay, M. L. N. S.	Pimentel III, A. K.
Cayetano, A.	Poe, G.
Dela Rosa, R. B. M.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Ejercito, J. V. G.	Tolentino, F. T. N.
Estrada, J. E.	Tulfo, R. T.
Gatchalian, W.	Villanueva, J.
Go, C. L. T.	Villar, C. A.
Hontiveros, R.	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 Cayetano (P) arrived after the roll call.

Senator Lapid was on official business as indicated in the December 5, 2022 letter from the senator's office.

Senator Escudero was on quarantine leave due to his exposure to a person who was tested positive for COVID-19, as indicated in the December 5, 2022 letter of the senator's chief of staff.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

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

- Members of the Executive department, namely, DBM Secretary Mina Pangandaman, DOST Secretary Renato Solidum, Jr., DTI Secretary Alfredo Pascual, and their undersecretaries;
- Ambassador to Chile Celeste Vinzon-Balatbat, Ambassador to Bahrain Anne Jalandoni Louis, Ambassador to Canada Maria Andrelita Austria, Ambassador to Pakistan Maria Agnes Cervantes, Ambassador to Iran Roberto Manalo, Ambassador to Kuwait Jose Cabrera III, and Ambassador to Germany Irene Susan Natividad;
- Mayor Johnny Sambo and Vice Mayor Matias Pineda of Santo Tomas, Pampanga;
- Mayor Gerald Aritao, Vice Mayor Divina Grace Astoveza, and the councilors of Pangil, Laguna; and
- The UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery led by Sec. Gen. Fr. Louie Coronel, Dean Dr. Ma. Lourdes D. Maglinao, Regent Fr. Angel Aparicio, Assistant Dean Dr. Remedios Chan, Faculty Secretary Dr. Clifton Pe, and Faculty Council member, Dr. Larry S. King.

Senate President Zubiri welcomed the guests to the Senate. He emphasized that UST had produced some of the best doctors, nurses, and lawyers in the country.

Senator Villanueva added that the school had top economics graduates.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4488

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 4488, entitled

AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2023.

The Chair recognized Senator Angara to sponsor the report.

REPORT OF SENATOR ANGARA

In sponsoring the Conference Committee Report on the Disagreeing Provisions on House Bill No. 4488, Senator Angara delivered the following speech:

Ikinagagalak ko pong iulat sa marangal na Bulwagang ito ang pinagkasunduan ng Senado at ng Kamara sa bicameral conference committee hinggil sa pambansang budget ng 2023. Bunga po ito ng maraming pormal at impormal na pagpupulong at halos araw-araw na pakikipag-usap at konsultasyon sa ating kapwa senador at kasamahan sa Kamara.

Mabilis man ang pagpasa ng budget para sa 2023, hindi po ibig sabihin na ito ay minadali. Sinuri, inaral, pinagdebatehan natin ito nang husto, minsan pa nga hanggang madaling araw.

Sa ganitong proseso po sinigurado natin na sa unang budget na pinanday sa ilalim ng administrasyon ni Pres. Bongbong Marcos Jr. ay may angkop na suporta para sa mga programa at proyekto nito.

Banggitin ko lamang po ang ilang highlights.

May malaking suporta pa rin sa pagpapaunlad ng ating agrikultura at pagpapatibay sa ating food security. Mananatili ang makabuluhang pondo para sa sektor ng agrikultura sa ilalim ng Department of Agriculture at ng attached agencies nito at sa Department of Agrarian Reform.

Patuloy ang suporta para sa mga national program ng DA sa rice, corn, high-value crops development, organic agriculture, livestock, urban and peri-urban agriculture. Sa pangunguna po ni Vice Chairperson Cynthia Villar, tuloy rin ang pondo para sa pagtatatag ng mga cold examination facilities in agriculture sa Luzon, Visayas, at Mindanao para lalong masiguro na ligtas ang mga pumapasok na agricultural products sa bansa.

Tuloy rin po ang pagtaas ng suporta para sa KADIWA ni Ani at Kita Program at sa Young Farmers Challenge Fund alinsunod sa rekomendasyon ni Senior Vice Chairperson Imee Marcos. Magbibigay pa rin ng ayuda ang gobyerno sa mga nangangailangan nito.

Patuloy po ang pagtakbo ng 4Ps or CCT Program natin. Sa tulong naman ni Senior Vice Chairperson Marcos, pinaigting ang pondo para sa iba't ibang programa ng DSWD, tulad ng Cash for Work sa ilalim ng KALAHI-CIDSS, ang supplementary feeding program, pati ang malawakang Protective Services for Individuals and Families in Difficult Circumstances, kasama ang tinatawag na Social Assistance Fund.

May dagdag din po para sa Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS) at sa Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP) ng DSWD, pati sa mga emergency employment programs ng Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), tulad ng Tulong Panghanapbuhay sa ating Disadvantaged and Displaced workers (TUPAD). Ito ay alinsunod sa panawagan nina Senate President Zubiri, Majority Leader Villanueva, Minority Leader Pimentel, Senior Vice Chairpersons Legarda, Cynthia and Mark Villar, Poe, Binay, Ejercito, Tolentino, Go, Hontiveros, Dela Rosa, at Senadores Estrada, Padilla, Revilla, Alan Peter Cayetano, Lapid, Tulfo, at Escudero.

Mananatili naman po ang fuel subsidies sa ilalim ng DOTr sa halagang P3 billion para sa owners at operators ng public utility vehicles (PUVs), taxis, tricycles, at mga ride-hailing services; at financial assistance o subsidiya sa halagang P1 billion para sa Fuel Assistance Program For Farmers and Fisherfolk sa ilalim din po ng DA at DOTr, sa pamumuno naman po ni Vice Chairperson Grace Poe.

Nagdesisyon din po ang bicam na dagdagan ng pondong nakalaan para sa social pension ng ating senior citizens alinsunod sa Republic Act 11916, sponsored by no less than our Majority Leader. Dinoble ang halaga ng social pension ng mga lolo at lola natin na naghihirap.

Sinisigurado rin ng bicam na handa ang mga ahensiya ng gobyerno para rumesponde agad tuwing may malakas na bagyo, lindol, pagputok ng bulkan, o iba pag mga sakuna. At narito po, pinaigting ang Quick Response Fund (QRF) na nasa siyam na ahensiya ng gobyerno, kasama ang Department of Agriculture, National Irrigation Administration, Department of Education, Department of Health, Bureau of Fire Protection, Philippine National Police, Department of National Defense, Department of Public Works and Highways, at Department of Social Welfare and Development. Doon po nakalaan ang ating pinaigting na QRF.

Tinupad din po ng bicam ang utos ng Saligang Batas na dapat mapunta sa edukasyon ang pinakamataas na prayoridad pagdating sa paggugol ng pondo ng bayan. Dahil dito, patuloy ang iba't ibang financial assistance, scholarship, at subsidiya ng gobyerno para sa edukasyon. Ito ay napaloloob sa mga sumusunod na programa ng DepEd, CHED, at TESDA, at pinamunuan ni Sen. Pia Cayetano kasama si Sen. Win Gatchalian—ang Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education (UACTEA) Program; Senior High School Voucher Program; Education Service Contracting for Junior High School Program; Student Financial Assistance Programs (StuFAPs); Joint Delivery Vouchers for SHS Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Specialization; at Private Education Student Financial Assistance (PESFA). TESDA programs tulad ng Special Training for Employment (STEP) and Training for Work Scholarship Program (TWSP), increased by P832 million and P1.2 billion, respectively. At ang Tulong Trabaho Scholarship Program (TTSP) authored by our Majority Leader, increased by P1.033 billion alinsunod sa rekomendasyon niya at ni Senate President, our Minority Leader, senior vice chairperson Sen. Pia Cayetano, vice chairpersons Senators Binay, Dela Rosa, Ejercito, Hontiveros, and Senators Estrada, Padilla, at Alan Peter Cayetano.

Mananatili rin ang itinutulak ni Sen. Grace Poe na social support component ng PUV Modernization Program, ng Tsuper Iskolar Program ng DOTr at ng TESDA, at ng EnTSUPERneur Program ng DOTr at DOLE.

Ngayon na bumabalik na rin ang full face-to-face classes ng ating mga mag-aaral, minabuti rin ng inyong komite, na sinang-ayunan ng bicameral conference committee, ang pagdagdag sa pondo ng DepEd para sa repair and rehabilitation ng mga pasilidad na nasira sa mga nakaraang bagyo o lindol tulad ng sa Laoag City at Batac City, among others.

Mananatili naman po ang pagtaas sa pondo para sa pagtayo ng mga national child development centers sa ilalim ng Early Child Care and Development Council (ECCD), na itinulak ng ating senior vice chairperson Sen. Pia Cayetano. Nariyan pa rin ang malaking dagdag na pondo para sa ating mga state universities and colleges (SUCs).

Patapos man ang pandemyang COVID-19, sinigurado pa rin ng bicameral conference committee na sa susunod na taon ay handa ang gobyerno para rumesponde kung sakaling muling sumiklab ang isang national health emergency. Sinisigurado rin na iigting din ang suporta para sa pagpapaunlad ng sistemang pangkalusugan sa bansa. Patuloy na magkakaroon ng pondo na nakaantabay para sa pagbili ng mga bakuna at para sa pag-hire ng mga immunization vaccinators. Ganito rin ang mangyayari para sa public health emergency benefits and allowances for health care workers (HCWs) and non-HCWs na dinagdagan din po ng bicameral conference committee.

Para naman magkatotoo ang pangarap na maging abot-kaya para sa bawat pamilyang Pilipino ang magpagamot at magpatingin sa doktor, may malaking pondo na subsidy para sa National Health Insurance Program sa ilalim ng PhilHealth. Mananatili rin ang idinagdag na pondo ng Senado para sa operations ng iba't ibang regional hospitals, health centers, at iba pang mga programa ng DOH. Mananatili rin ang dagdag na suporta para sa pagtayo ng mga specialty centers sa kanayunan alinsunod sa hiling ni Pangulong Bongbong Marcos Jr.

Mananatili rin ang pondong idinagdag para palakihin ang carrying capacity ng mga college of medicine ng SUCs tulad ng UP-Manila, para suportahan ang mga SUC na may pending medical program application sa Commission on Higher Education (CHED), para magkaroon ng seed fund na pantulong sa mga SUC na nais magtayo ng sarili nilang medical program, at para sa mga medical scholarship alinsunod sa Doktor Para sa Bayan Act. Pinaigting din po ng bicameral conference committee ang pondo para sa medical assistance for indigent patients (MAIP) na ipapatupad sa bawat ospital na pinapatakbo ng DOH sa buong bansa.

The 2023 budget also seeks to make good on the administration's promise to "Build, Better, More." For instance, the DPWH will receive a significant across-the-board increase for its various programs and projects, which includes road construction, road widening, paving, construction of diversion roads, flyovers, interchanges, and underpasses. The cost of assured funding work shall continue in earnest toward improving the safety capabilities within our maritime sector, pursuing improvements in our railways and road networks, and implementing the PUV-service contracting or Libreng Sakay Program.

Increases were also retained specifically for the DOTr's Active Transport Bike Share System and Safe Pathways Program in Metropolitan areas as recommended by our vice chairperson, Sen. Grace Poe.

And then upon the initiative of Senior Vice Chairperson Sen. Imee R. Marcos, Vice Chairperson Sen. Mark A. Villar, and this Representation, additional funds will also be set aside for the construction, repair, and rehabilitation of various airports and seaports across the country.

Steps will be taken toward continued improvements in our energy sector. For instance, upon the recommendation of Vice Chairperson Sen. Win Gatchalian, the budget of the Energy Regulatory Commission shall be augmented by P453 million to support its operations and capital outlay. This is to strengthen the commission's capacity to ensure the competitiveness of our energy sector and regulate the energy market such that end-consumers fulfill their energy needs at the most affordable cost possible.

Initiatives to restart our economy and support the growth and development of our SMSEs shall continue in the following year. Upon the recommendation of our Minority Leader, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, Senior Vice Chairpersons Sen. Loren Legarda and Sen. Imee R. Marcos, Vice Chairperson Sen. Christopher Lawrence T. Go, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) can expect an additional support for some of their programs and projects including its Shared Service Facilities (SSF) program, Pangkabuhayan sa Pagbangon at Ginhawa (PPG) and its Malikhaing Pinoy program in fulfillment of the recently-enacted Creative Industries Law.

Tuloy-tuloy din po ang mga hakbang para gumanda ang Internet ng mamamayang Pilipino at gawing mas epektibo ang gobyerno sa pamamagitan ng paggamit ng makabagong teknolohiya. Halimbawa nito ay ang DICT National Broadband Plan at ang Free Internet Access Program for public places and SUCs. Patuloy din po ang kanilang eGovernment program kung saan susuportahan nito ang digital transformation ng iba't-ibang ahensiya at ng mas maraming LGU sa paglunsad ng kanilang Integrated Business Permits and Licensing System (iBPLS).

Nagdesisyon din po ang Bicameral Conference Committee na dapat may sapat na suporta para sa muling pagbangon ng ating turismo. Sa pangunguna ni Vice Chairperson Sen. Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay, may dagdag na pondo para sa Department of Tourism at ng mga attached agencies nito. Kasama dito ang suporta para sa MOOE ng mga regional offices ng DOT para sa capital outlay ng Intramuros Administration at sa operations ng National Parks Development Committee (NPDC).

Nandiyan din po ang tulong sa agham—science and technology—sa pamumuno ni Vice Chairperson Sen. Francis Tolentino, through the DOST budget and the attached agencies for research and development.

Sumang-ayon din ang Bicameral Conference Committee sa aming panananaw na ang isang mabisang paraan para suportahan ang turismo ay sa pamamagitan ng pagpreserba at pagsulong ng ating kultura at kasaysayan. Pinagtulungan namin nina Senior Vice Chairperson Sen. Loren Legarda at Sen. Alan Peter S. Cayetano ang pagdagdag ng pondo sa National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA), National Historical Commission of the Philippines, National Library

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of the Philippines, National Archives of the Philippines, at National Museum of the Philippines sa susunod na taon.

Pinagtuunan din po ang sports sa pamumuno ni Vice Chairperson Sen. Christopher Lawrence T. Go na naglaan ng pondo para sa ating mga atleta na magko-compete sa mga international competitions sa darating na taon at kasama na rin ang hosting ng FIBA Basketball World Cup sa darating na taon.

Pinagtuunan din ng pansin ang housing sector pati ang kinahaharap na isyu hinggil sa lupa. Sa pag-uudyok ni Vice Chairperson Sen. Risa Hontiveros, may dagdag na pondo para sa Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD).

Sa pangunguna naman ni Vice Chairperson Sen. Cynthia A. Villar, makatatanggap ng dagdag na pondo ang DENR para sa National Land Titling Program nito at may nakaantabay din na pondo bilang tulong sa Support to Parcelization of Lands for Individual Titling (SPLIT) project, kung saan magkakaroon ng sariling tituladong lupa ang ating mga farmer beneficiaries.

Minabuti rin ng Bicameral Conference Committee na may malaking pondo na matatanggap ang ating mga local government units sa pagtugon sa mas mababang national tax allotment (NTA) bunga ng mas maliit na koleksiyon ng gobyerno nang dahil sa pandemya.

Panawagan po ito ng ating Senate President, Minority Leader, Senior Vice Chairpersons Sen. Imee R. Marcos at Senator Cayetano (P), Vice Chairpersons Sen. Cynthia A. Villar and Sen. Mark A. Villar, Senator Ejercito, Senator Gatchalian, Senator Go, Senator Hontiveros, Senator Padilla, Senator Revilla, Senator Cayetano (A), Senator Tulfo at Senator Lapid na may ipinasok na pondo sa local government support fund (LGSF) para sa iba't-ibang programa at proyekto na makatutulong sa pag-unlad ng ating mga lokal na pamahalaan.

Ilan lamang ito sa pinagkasunduan ng inyong Bicameral Conference Committee na dapat pondoan at suportahan sa susunod na taon. Naniniwala kami na ang lahat ng ito, at higit pa, ay alinsunod sa plano ng administrasyong Marcos na ipasa sa mas maagang panahon ang pambansang badyet. Marahil ito ay hudyat na handang-handa ang Senado para suportahan ang adhikain ni Pangulong Marcos pagdating sa kaunlaran at kasaganaan ng sambayanang Pilipino. Nagkakaisa talaga ang mayorya at minority para sa bansa.

Nagawa ito dahil sa lubos-lubos na pagsisikap at tiyaga, pati na rin ang pagpupuyat at pagliliban ng weekend at family time ng mga staff, ng mga senador, at ng Senate Secretariat, lalong-lalo na ang ating Legislative Budget Research and Monitoring Office (LBRMO) sa pamumuno ni Director General Eireen Palanca at former Director General Yolly Doblón. Malalim po ang aking pasasalamat sa kanilang lahat. Kulang na kulang po sila sa tulong.

Taos-puso rin po tayong napapasalamat, siyempre, sa liderato ng Senado—kina Senate President Juan Miguel F. Zubiri, Senate Pro Tempore Loren Legarda, Majority Leader Joel Villanueva, at Minority Leader Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III, ganoon din para sa lideratura ng Kamara, kay Speaker Ferdinand Martin Romualdez at Committee on Appropriations Chairperson Rep. Zaldy Co, and Senior Vice Chairperson Rep. Stella Quimbo.

At salamat din po siyempre sa ating mga kasamahan sa committee: ang ating Senior Vice Chairpersons Pia Cayetano, Imee Marcos, and Loren Legarda; at Vice Chairperson Cynthia Villar, Senators Ronald “Bato” Dela Rosa, Win Gatchalian, Risa Hontiveros, Maria Lourdes Nancy Binay, Grace Poe, Francis Tolentino, Mark Villar, at Joseph Victor Ejercito. At siyempre sa ating kapwa senador na sina Senators Alan Peter Cayetano, Francis Escudero, Jinggoy Estrada, Manuel “Lito” Lapid, Robinhood Padilla, Ramon “Bong” Revilla Jr., at Raffy Tulfo. Marahil sa pambansang budget na ito tunay na magsisimula ang ating muling pagbangon.

JOINT EXPLANATION OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body approved the insertion of the Joint Explanation of the Conference Committee on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 4488 in the *Journal and Record of the Senate*. (See Annex A)

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (A)

Senator Cayetano (A) congratulated the House and Senate panels as well as the Executive department for their hard work in passing the budget, notwithstanding the fact that the first year of a new administration is typically challenging.

While he wanted to support Senator Angara's report without any reservations, he said that he would like the budget to be tied to the programs, projects, and activities of the government because the public deserved accountability not only from elected officials but also from every appointee confirmed by the Commission on Appointments.

Senator Cayetano (A) proposed a more active oversight committee that allows the members, along with the Minority and independent blocs, to tally a scorecard on the administration's policy agenda, or to provide a criterion so they can monitor the development plan over a three- or five-year term. He lamented that 40% of barangays in the country lacked the required primary health center. He said that it was the reason why he supported President Marcos' program to have specialized hospitals around the Philippines; in fact, he also filed a bill in 2014 or 2015 seeking to establish the Mindanao Lung Center that specializes in kidney and heart transplants.

Thus, he stated that the reason why only 3,000 health centers were operational on the third year of the administration when 10,000 health centers were needed was not because of the budget per se but because of implementation. He hoped that the Executive department would be able to implement projects without any corruption or irregularity especially when it is intended for public convenience. He also enjoined the Body to scrutinize the budget once they get to see the details since they endeavored to adjust the same on what should be prioritized.

In lauding the long-term vision of Senator Cayetano (A) for the country, Senator Angara stated that most of the administration's targets were included in the Medium-Term Development Plan, and that they could ask the officials to be more specific or coherent when the goals of their respective agencies lacked detail.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR GATCHALIAN

Senator Gatchalian congratulated Senator Angara for a job well done on the first budget of the Marcos administration, which included many safeguards and safety nets to help the people in case the prices of oil and other commodities remain high next year.

Upon motion of Senator Gatchalian, there being no objection, the full text of his manifestation was inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*, to wit:

I would like to spread into the *Record* my most heartfelt gratitude to our colleagues for supporting this Representation's proposed amendments to the 2023 national budget. I believe that these will further strengthen our goals to provide stellar quality of services to our countrymen.

First is my proposed budget allocations for the Special Education (SPED), and Alternative Learning System (ALS) programs. Considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures on learners with disabilities and ALS learners, we need to fund and support programs for their benefit. Specifically, I would like to commend the approval of my proposal to increase DepEd's budget for the conversion of SPED Centers into Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs) from P96 million to P160 million.

I would like to acknowledge the inclusion of a special provision, which allocates P100 million for instructional materials for learners with disabilities. Ensuring the availability of these funds for our learners with disabilities is in line with Republic Act No. 11650, or "Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act."

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I am also grateful for the Body's consideration of my proposed amendment to include a special provision allocating P562 million for the ALS program, which will support the implementation of Republic Act No. 11510, or the ALS Act.

Let me also highlight the funding of the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II) under the 2023 national budget. Considering the mandate of EDCOM II to comprehensively evaluate the performance of our country's education sector, the budget allocation which we approved will help us hit the ground running in addressing the country's education crisis.

I also applaud the budget increase for the National Academy of Sports (NAS) programs. During the budget hearing, I pointed out that a cut of more than P100 million in the NAS operations budget will hamper the academy's ability to operate as envisioned under Republic Act No. 11470. This P130-million budget will be primarily used to ensure the hiring of adequate personnel and fund the monthly stipend and nutritious meals of our student athletes.

Aside from this, I would like to underscore the inclusion of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in the Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education (GASTPE) Program. I hope that this will help us address the region's education woes, including low enrolment turnout and cohort survival rates.

Further, let me also thank our colleagues for carrying out my proposal to directly release to local universities and colleges the amount required for the implementation of the Free Higher Education (FHE) program. This will address the problems of some local universities and colleges regarding the reimbursement for free higher education fees.

In relation to the energy sector, I would like to emphasize a new provision appropriating P80 million under the budget of the University of the Philippines to be used exclusively for the organization of the Philippine Energy Research and Policy Institute, pursuant to Republic Act No. 11572.

Moreover, we have moved to increase the budget of the Energy Regulatory Commission by P303 million—from P724 million to P1,0027,000,000, to enable it to timely and effectively perform its regulatory functions over the electric power sector and to start the digital transformation of the agency.

And lastly, the P167-million increase in the budget of the Governance Commission for GOCCs from P245 million to P412 million will support the commission's initiatives toward ensuring transparency and accountability in the governance and operations of GOCCs as well as in accelerating the liquidation of GOCCs that have been approved for abolition.

Through these enhanced budget allocations, we can prioritize and put into action our plans, programs, and policies to better serve our countrymen.

Again, I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to my colleagues for taking my proposals into consideration.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DELA ROSA

Senator Dela Rosa, speaking on behalf of the people in the hinterlands who were liberated from the clutches of the New People's Army, thanked the members of the Bicameral Conference Committee, especially Committee on Finance chairperson Senator Angara, for restoring the original amount requested by the Executive branch for NTF-ELCAC's Barangay Development Program in the amount of P10 billion.

Senator Angara stated that credit should be given to Senator Dela Rosa who reminded him to restore the original amount because the latter was aware of the government's anti-insurgency programs, as well as the importance of NTF-ELCAC's whole-of-government approach. He mentioned that Senators Go and Padilla also pushed for the reversion of the said budget. He added that Senators Go and Padilla also supported the measure.



INQUIRIES OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Senator Pimentel inquired if the bicameral conference committee report under consideration has met the requirements outlined in Rule XII, Section 35, paragraph 5 of the *Rules of the Senate*, to wit: "The consideration of such report shall not be in order, unless the report has been filed with the Secretary of the Senate and copies thereof have been distributed to the members." Senator Angara affirmed that a summary and copy of the adopted bicameral amendments were provided to the members. He then showed the documents to Senator Pimentel for his perusal. The latter, however, stated that he only received a digital copy.

Senator Pimentel noted that the unprogrammed appropriations in the bicameral conference committee report increased by P219 billion, which Senator Angara confirmed. Senator Pimentel also noted that although some funds were transferred or moved, the amount corresponding to the total programmed new appropriations did not increase and remained at the same level as those of the Senate, House of Representatives, and the President's versions of the budget through the National Expenditure Program.

Senator Pimentel estimated that if the approximately P588 billion in unprogrammed appropriations in the President's budget were added to the programmed new appropriations, the total would be approximately P5.8 trillion. Noting the additional increase of P219 billion, he inquired whether the government's budget for 2023 would reach an unprecedented P6 trillion.

Senator Angara opined that the Body might have to wait for 2023 to be truly certain due to the nature of the unprogrammed funds. He recalled having explained to Senator Pimentel during the deliberation on the 2023 budget that the unprogrammed appropriations should not be included in the computation because it was not accompanied by a certification from the National Treasury as to the availability of funds. He also said that the unprogrammed appropriations were dependent on three conditions mentioned in the GAA, namely, an excess in revenues, the existence of loan proceeds, and the availability of foreign funding.

Senator Pimentel argued that part of the funding for programmed new appropriations would be financed by loans. He said that in addition to loans, taxes and non-tax revenues would also be used to fund the items. Nonetheless, he disclosed that during the budget subcommittee hearing, it was acknowledged that funding would most likely be obtained through loans. He then inquired about the rationale behind the distinction, as well as the statement made in plenary in November 2022 that 80% of unprogrammed appropriations for that year had already been released. He then pointed out that programmed appropriations were essentially identical to their programmed counterpart.

Senator Angara said that the statement that not all new programmed appropriations were fully released or expended would depend on the capacity of government agencies to absorb funds. He added that the Body had observed disparities in disbursement rates between various government offices, with some having good disbursement rates and others performing poorly. If 2022 were to be the benchmark for government performance, he believed that unprogrammed appropriations for that year would be adequately funded, given the 80% rate previously mentioned by Senator Pimentel. However, he believed that it had not been the case in previous years, so it would be difficult to formulate a general rule based on diverse empirical data.

Concerning the interests of marginalized and voiceless individuals, particularly retirees from the Intercontinental Broadcasting Corporation from 2009 until 2023, whose payment of benefits was made possible through the intervention of Senator Ejercito in the Senate version of the budget, Senator Pimentel lamented that the same could be jeopardized due to the recent transfer of the item to the unprogrammed appropriations. Senator Angara responded that the transfer was merely partial.

Senator Pimentel noted that in the Senate version of the budget for such benefits, the amount of P619,530,000 was approved, whereas in the bicameral conference committee report, the amount of P187,899,000 was to be approved, or a difference of P431,631,000. In addition, he noted that moving the item from programmed new appropriations to unprogrammed appropriations made the IBC retirement benefits more contingent, whereas in the Senate version they were guaranteed of the benefits. Senator Angara expressed optimism that unprogrammed items would be funded in 2023, adding that his counterparts in the House of Representatives and some Cabinet secretaries were cautiously optimistic about their funding.

Senator Pimentel maintained that loan applications could be submitted for both programmed and unprogrammed new appropriations, regardless of the nature of the budget items. Senator Angara, on the other hand, believed on the contrary, stating that the government could choose to take out loans, but could also pursue other funding options. In addition, he stated that one of the conditions for access to unprogrammed funds would be the production of revenues in excess of targets, which was distinct from incurring loans.

Senator Pimentel reiterated that during their subcommittee hearing, the Bureau of Treasury representative stated that despite the fact that three conditions were imposed before unprogrammed items could be funded, the government did not anticipate any additional revenues, so the unprogrammed appropriations would likely be funded through loan proceeds. He lamented that IBC retirees, who were initially grateful after the Senate version of the budget was approved, would eventually realize that the transfer of their retirement benefits from programmed to unprogrammed appropriations would make them more dependent on chance.

As to the reason why the retirement benefit was chosen for transfer, Senator Angara replied that because there were so many moving parts in the 2023 budget, it was difficult to determine which of the items was more important than the others. In addition, he stated the 4% increase in fiscal space between 2022 and 2023 gave rise to new initiatives, necessitating the Committee on Finance to find ways of funding the proposals. He disclosed that even in the final days of the bicameral conference, the Senate contingent continued to receive new requests from other senators.

In this connection, Senator Angara recalled that then Minority Leader, Sen. Franklin Drilon, also questioned whether there was indeed a guarantee in funding the vaccines in the unprogrammed fund. Senator Angara believed that in 2023, there would be some assurance that the current initiatives will have a good chance of being funded. But Senator Pimentel noted that the COVID-19 vaccine and booster procurement would be in the 2023 programmed appropriations. Senator Angara pointed out that the amount of P3.5 billion for vaccine procurement would be part of unprogrammed appropriations but, nonetheless, as it was the apprehension before, the program would eventually be funded.

Senator Pimentel surmised that the unprogrammed appropriations to address the pandemic were released because the same were secured through loans. Senator Angara admitted that many of the loans were obtained through the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank.

Senator Pimentel then inquired if the "Support to the Barangay Development Program" of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) amounting to P3.66 billion was in addition to the budget that had been restored as mentioned earlier in the discussion. Senator Angara replied that Congress simply reinstated the original amount found in the NEP. He explained that adding P3.6 billion to the agency's original P6 billion budget items would equal approximately P10 billion, which was the amount mentioned in the aforesaid budget document.

Senator Pimentel noted that while the NEP recommended P10 billion for the NTF-ELCAC, the allocation was reduced by P5 billion by the House of Representatives and retained in the Senate

version. He then inquired as to why, following the bicameral conference, the original amount of P10 billion was reinstated.

As to why the allocation for the NTF-ELCAC in the bicameral report became P10 billion despite the Senate and House versions proposing to give it a budget of only P5 billion, Senator Angara explained that it is possible to have an entirely new provision to emerge during the bicameral conference, as has been settled in the case of *Tolentino vs. The Secretary of Finance*. He believed that the final outcome was in response to the request of some congressmen for an increase in the allocation during the two weeks that passed between the House and Senate approvals. He believed that the changes were not brought to light until the bicameral conference.

Senator Pimentel stated that he would have readily noticed and brought up for plenary discussion any proposal from the Senate to increase the P5 billion budget recommended by the House for the NTF-ELCAC. He wondered if there was a concerted effort by some parties to avoid discussing the contentious item during plenary deliberations. Senator Angara, however, pointed out that the topic was discussed during the interpellations.

On another matter, Senator Pimentel observed that the NEP proposal for the Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund (MPFB) had been reduced from P84 billion to P26.6 billion in the bicameral report, while the P267.9 billion for the Pension and Gratuity Fund had also been reduced to P176.6 billion. He then asked whether the miscalculation on the two items, amounting to P150 billion, indicated a failure in DBM's budget planning.

Senator Angara responded in the negative, stating that the agency's proposal was merely an estimate and that the DBM acknowledged that, under the Constitution, the final decision in the budgetary process belongs to the elected representatives of the people—the members of both Houses of Congress. He explained that the committee consulted with DBM on matters such as the schedule of payments before making certain adjustments.

On whether the proposed P26.64 billion budget for the MPBF was grounded on reality, Senator Angara replied that he could not speak for the DBM as he was unfamiliar with the agency's methodology and formula in coming up with its projections.

Senator Pimentel expressed confidence that the Senate panel tried its best to defend its version during the bicameral conference but he would ask his staff to analyze whether there was a pattern to the MPBF's budget increase in the NEP.

In addition, he suggested that the Senate look into the significant changes in departmental allocations between the bicameral report and the Senate version. As an illustration, he stated that there was a P500 million difference between the P10.3 billion budget of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in the Senate version and the P9.8 billion proposed in the bicameral report. Such a change, he noted, might give the impression that agrarian reform was no longer a priority of the administration.

Senator Angara explained that the difference in the NEP, the GAB, and the bicameral report was due solely to the transfer of the Support to Parcelization of Lands for Individual Titling (SPLIT) project of the DAR from programmed funds to the unprogrammed funds. He said that the committee placed several programs which required foreign funding in the unprogrammed funds to ensure that there would be flexibility, so that in case the loan proceeds would not materialize, there would be congressional appropriation to support such programs.

He cited Special Provision No. 219, which states: "Support to Foreign-Assisted Projects – The amount of P344 billion appropriated herein chargeable against Purpose No. 4 shall be used

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to support foreign-assisted programs and projects such as, but not limited to the following....” He stated that the provision provided a long list of foreign-funded projects, including Infrastructure Preparation and Innovation, LRT Line 1-Cavite, Metro Manila Subway Project, and SPLIT project.

Senator Pimentel observed, however, that in the table provided to him by Senator Angara, the Senate version’s allocation of P4 billion for the SPLIT project had been changed to zero in the bicameral report. Senator Angara clarified that the budget for the SPLIT project had been increased to P 8 billion and could be found under the line item Support to Foreign-Assisted Projects, where an estimated P330 billion in “unprogrammed funds” had been deposited.

On whether the SPLIT project and the second additional financing for Philippine Rural Development Project had been transferred to the unprogrammed appropriations, Senator Angara replied in the affirmative.

At this juncture, Senate Villar (C) inquired whether the local counterpart of the Philippine Rural Development Project, which is the major activity of the DAR and has a foreign counterpart, had been removed. Senator Angara replied in the negative.

Asked by Senator Pimentel why the SPLIT project was moved from the “programmed fund” to the “unprogrammed fund” when its funding was already secured by the World Bank, and whether such a change would have a practical impact on the program, Senator Angara explained that he had sought the advice of the DBM for its inclusion under the items in the “unprogrammed funds,” as had been done with the projects under the DOTr.

On the observation that the P219 billion increase in unprogrammed appropriations would make the 2023 GAA the first P6 trillion budget of the Philippines, Senator Angara stated that it would only be true if the “unprogrammed appropriations” were fully funded. Senator Pimentel stated that they have yet to get a report from the DBM, DOF, and BIR detailing how much of the 2022 unprogrammed appropriations have been spent.

Asked why there was a P1.5 billion increase in the budget of the Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) in the bicameral conference committee report, Senator Angara replied that it would be for the medical school that would be constructed in line with the Doktor Para sa Bayan Act.

In response to further queries, Senator Angara explained that the P1.25 billion increase in the budget of the Central Bicol State University would be for the Digital Campus Transformation Project in its Pili campus in Camarines Sur. He stated that the amendments were initiated by the House of Representatives. Senator Pimentel questioned, however, why the proposed increase was not included in the bill when it reached the Senate.

On a related matter, Senator Angara explained that the P900 million increase in the budget of the West Visayas State University would be used to construct a college of law building, a medical arts building, a parking area, patients’ rooms, and a training center. He noted that there were additional smaller items for Higher Education research and innovation, financial assistance to athletes, expansion of the college of medicine’s carrying capacity, and the like.

Senator Pimentel lamented the fact that the identified items were not discussed during the budget deliberations in plenary. He then asked if the said amendments were last-minute proposals made by the House during the bicameral conference committee. Senator Angara answered in the affirmative.

Asked why the budget of Cebu Technological University had been increased by only P157.3 million when the Senate had proposed a P327.3 million increase, Senator Angara answered that the

line item for the construction of buildings on the Liloan and Borbon campuses of the Cebu Technological University remained intact but was lodged under the DPWH for implementation. He stated that the transfer of P170 million from the university's budget to DPWH was at the request of Deputy Speaker Vincent Frasco. He reiterated that the Senate version had been preserved but transferred to a different implementing agency for implementation.

Senator Pimentel then questioned how the House of Representatives could justify adding the last-minute addition of P1.5 billion to the Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU). Senator Angara replied that it was allocated to the Intelligent Campus enhancement program.

Senator Villanueva interjected that EVSU was also planning to establish another satellite campus in Dulag.

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

Senator Pimentel noted an allocation of P17.8 billion under unprogrammed funds in the bicameral version of the budget for Smart Intelligent Campus, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) modernization, and advanced digital infrastructure program of different universities and colleges. He then asked if the amount was in addition to the billion-peso increases in some SUCs' budget for the same purpose. Senator Angara responded in the affirmative and said that it was a House amendment. He informed the Body that the Senate did not add any funds for digital infrastructure, and that most of its proposed additions to SUCs were for implementing the Doktor Para sa Bayan program and other construction projects.

Asked why there was a P120 million increase in the budget for Leyte Normal College (LNC), Senator Angara explained that the House had given a list of programs to be funded by the additional allocation. He said that three programs would be funded for the LNC: Tulong Dunong program; construction of the Multipurpose Building Integrated Learning School in the LNU Main Campus in Tacloban; and construction of the Multipurpose Building Research Extension and Innovation Center for the Leyte Normal University, Palo Campus.

Queried on the details on the P2.3 billion increase in the Mindanao State University (MSU) budget, Senator Angara stated that it was an amendment proposed by the House for the following programs: 1) MSU Marawi's design and development of students' Smart Hub and Resiliency Center, P1.08 billion; 2) MSU Marawi's Enhancement of Productivity and Operational Efficiency Application System, P250 million; and 3) MSU Naawan's Digital Transfiguration and Literacy Systems Development, P1 billion.

Asked on the P731 million decrease in the budget of the Bureau of Customs, Senator Angara replied that the amount was moved to the item Support to Foreign-Assisted Projects (FAPs) under the unprogrammed funds.

Senator Pimentel opined that transferring the amount from programmed to unprogrammed funds would reduce the Bureau of Customs' funding predictability. Senator Angara concurred, but emphasized the consistency of foreign-assisted funding.

Senator Angara provided the same explanation when asked about the decrease in the funding from P579.8 million to P319.5 million for the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF): that the decreased amount went to unprogrammed funds under FAPs, and was labeled as Local Governance Reform Project.

Citing the decrease in the DOH budget from P221.7 billion to P209.6 billion, Senator Pimentel asked which DOH programs would be affected by the transfer of around P11 billion from the

department's budget to unprogrammed funds. Senator Angara identified the following: 1) Health System Enhancement to Address and Limit (HEAL) COVID-19 project; 2) Philippine COVID-19 Emergency Response Project 2 (PCERP-2); and 3) World Bank Philippine Multisectoral Nutrition Project. He pointed out that the House transferred about P7 billion to another agency, leaving the DOH with approximately P3 billion for the three programs.

Queried further on the P11.2 billion that the Senate proposed to add to the DOH budget, Senator Angara stated that it was placed under unprogrammed funds for health workers compensation.

Senator Pimentel then noted that the DICT budget had also decreased by P442 million and questioned if it was due to Congress's dissatisfaction with the department's performance. Senator Angara explained that the House reprioritized the funds to other items.

Asked why the NTC budget increased by P100 million, Senator Angara explained that the agency had requested the funds for the purchase of equipment and the construction of infrastructure projects for its central and regional offices.

Senator Pimentel expressed his hope that the DBM would have accommodated the request prior to legislative deliberations instead of the changes happening at the bicameral level.

Asked why the Senate-recommended increase of P146.7 million for the Office of the Solicitor General had not been accommodated, Senator Angara explained that the Solicitor General had made two requests for the same item to both Houses of Congress, and it was discovered that both requests were granted which would have resulted in a double entry, hence the withdrawal of one item.

Senator Pimentel noted that the Senate version of the budget for the DOLE proposed an increase of P1.7 billion, whereas the bicameral committee reduced the budget by P365.7 million. He then inquired how it would affect the Office of the Labor Secretary.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Angara, the session was suspended.

It was 4:51 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:04 p.m., the session was resumed.

Senator Pimentel informed the Body that, according to his staff, the Office of the Solicitor General's budget under the NEP was P1.244 billion, whereas it was P1.371 billion in the bicameral conference, giving the OSG an increase. He also expressed concern about the budget cut of P365.7 million in the Office of the Labor Secretary, and hoped it would not affect the agency.

Regarding the P2.22 billion budget cut in TESDA, he stated that the Senate wanted a budget of P19.3 billion, but the bicameral committee settled on P16 billion. He then inquired as to whether the P3.3 billion decrease would affect the agency's programs and projects.

Senator Angara stated that the P16.1 billion would still exceed the NEP's figure of P13.4 billion. According to him, despite reallocations and reprioritization, the House of Representatives still

ended up about P2.53 billion more than the NEP's proposal. He emphasized that both Houses of Congress ensured that the final figure would be favorable to TESDA's education program and its mandate. He said that the amendments were made by Senators Villanueva and Legarda.

Taking advantage of the presence of Secretary Pangandaman, Senator Angara asserted that there are laws which are unfunded annually. He stated that while the DBM may not have perfect knowledge of the amounts included in a lot of laws, Congress has been productive. He surmised that there was a time lag between the funding and the passage of laws. In addition, consistent with the assertion of Senator Cayetano (A) that part of the oversight function of Congress is to ensure that laws do not become unfunded mandates, he invited the DBM to a conference in 2023 to discuss Doktor Para sa Bayan, Mental Health Law, Rare Diseases Law, Tulong Trabaho Law, and other laws. He stated that the Senate would increase funding for the laws annually due to the DBM's policy of not funding congressional initiatives despite their recurring need for such. He stated that the Body wished to remedy the situation and assist the DBM with the matter.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva lauded the efforts of the committee to secure funding for the Tulong Trabaho Law in the 2023 GAB, as it had not been funded in the last three years. In addition, he stated that the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act (UAQTEA) has never been allocated in the Senate's version of the budget. He said that Senator Angara was able to put an additional amount of P106 million to fund the law.

Thanking Senator Villanueva for his inputs, Senator Pimentel asserted that if the DBM continued to disregard congressional initiatives amendments regarding the funding allocated to a law, it would be a recurring issue in the budgeting process. He stated that if funds are allocated to implement a law, the department should be mindful to adjust an agency's initial budget.

Senator Angara agreed with Senator Pimentel that the purpose of inviting the DBM is to put budgets on recurring unfunded laws, such as the Doctor Para sa Bayan Act. He stated that the Senate had already allotted a budget prior to the law's passage, but when it became a law, its funding was not included in the NEP.

At this juncture, Senator Villanueva recalled having met with the previous administration's Budget Secretary Wendel Avisado who admitted that the DBM did not fund the *Tulong Trabaho* Law at that time. Fortunately, he said, the current DBM under Secretary Amenah Pangandaman already funded the program in the 2023 national budget. Senator Angara credited the DBM for being already receptive to the proposal even during the budget call. Senator Pimentel averred that DBM should not disregard congressional initiatives but should provide the start-up fund to implement a program under a law.

Senator Pimentel then manifested that the bicameral version of the budgets for the following departments were lower than the Senate version: the DMW-Office of the Secretary; the DOST and its attached agencies' total budget which was lower by P197 million; the DSWD-Office of the Secretary which was lower by P19 billion, from P215.2 billion in the Senate version to P196.5 billion in the bicameral version.

Senator Angara explained that the bicameral version actually provided DMW a higher amount than the NEP which set the amount at P14.979 billion as compared to the bicameral version of P15.894 billion, or an increase of approximately P1 billion. He also clarified that no budget was reduced under the bicameral report and that the changes were House realignments. He also stated that while the NEP provided P196.7 billion for the DSWD in 2023, the bicameral version provided P199.25 billion, or an increase of P2.48 billion.

Amid the movements in the allocation, Senator Angara noted the importance of prioritizing and increasing the budget of certain agencies—such as the TESDA, DMW, and the DSWD—from the NEP to the bicameral version.

Senator Pimentel, however, maintained that the Senate version already passed a P19 billion increase from the NEP amount for the DSWD which was not adopted by the bicameral committee. In reply, Senator Angara noted that the Senate version was based on the House GAB version, such that the Senate would have to respect the House decision to reprioritize the spending between agencies.

Senator Pimentel expressed his disappointment that the Senate version's increase of P7.98 billion to the DSWD-Office of the Secretary was not granted in the bicameral report. Nevertheless, he recognized that the bicameral report's version was higher by P2.48 billion from the NEP version.

On the DOTr budget, Senator Pimentel stated that the bicameral report version was P105.5 billion while the Senate version was P174.3 billion or a decrease of P69 billion. He added that the House version was P122.5 billion or P17 billion lower than the Senate version.

To clarify, Senator Angara stated that the DOTr budget for the fiscal year 2023 under the NEP was P168.48 billion, which was reduced in the GAB to P224.34 billion, increased in the Senate version to P276.2 billion, and finally settled in the bicameral report at P107.42 billion. He explained that since many of the big-ticket items in the DOTr were foreign-assisted projects, the bicameral conference committee decided to move funds to the unprogrammed funds in order to support foreign-assisted projects.

Senator Angara enumerated the following items, which are infrastructure preparation and innovation facility projects, that were moved to the unprogrammed funds under the Support to the Foreign-Assisted Projects: the LRT Line-1 Cavite Extension, the Metro Manila Subway Project, the North-South Commuter Railway System, the PNR South Long Haul Project, Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Project, the EDSA Greenways Project, the Cebu Bus Rapid Transit Project, the MRT-3 Rehabilitation Project, and the Mindanao Railway Project. He also noted that the bicameral amount of P107.42 billion was still an increase of P27 billion from the 2022 budget amounting to about P80 billion.

Senator Pimentel stated that in his copy of the bicameral report, the DOTr's final budget was P105,530,385,000 against Senator Angara's figure of P107 billion. Senator Angara clarified that he already included in his figure the budget for the GOCCs P100 million for the CAAP, P1.05 billion for the LRTA, and P740 million for the PNR in the P107.4 billion.

On whether it was the Philippine government counterpart for the foreign-assisted project or the loan proceeds in the programmed appropriations that was moved, Senator Angara replied that the decrease was in the budget for right of way and that the support to FAP and the 10 projects was still in the DOTr budget. He affirmed that the GOP counterpart was moved, such that it then became contingent on the realization of the three conditions before unprogrammed appropriations are released. On FAPs, he also clarified that such projects usually receive funding from the national government.

At this point, the Chair (Senator Ejercito) stated that the GOP side would be used for the right of way and the VAT payments while the loan proceeds would be used for the civil, mechanical, and electrical works.

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Senator Pimentel then asked if the movement of the GOP counterpart to the unprogrammed appropriations would mean that the national government would have to borrow funds, encounter delays in the project implementation, and incur higher commitment and penalty fees. Senator Angara replied that it would depend on the department's implementation speed and how quickly it would obligate the money. Nonetheless, he affirmed that the transfer from the programmed appropriations to unprogrammed appropriations would not affect the agency's efficiency in implementing a foreign-assisted project.

Senator Pimentel stated that he would be raising his concerns again on the penalty fees, bank fees, and commitment fees in the next budget cycle. He noted that the said fees could reach up to P200 million with the DOTr alone.

On the CHED budget, Senator Pimentel noted that the House version was P34.95 billion, which the Senate increased to P35.77 billion, but settled at P30.88 billion under the bicameral report or a difference of about P5 billion. As to which CHED programs would be affected in the reduction, Senator Angara said that he was just waiting for the document that includes the NEP amounts before giving his reply.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Angara, the session was suspended.

It was 5:29 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:33 p.m., the session was resumed with Senate President Zubiri presiding.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 4488

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bicameral conference committee report on House Bill No. 4488.

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. 33 (November 29, 2022) and considered it approved.

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 336

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 336 entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS FACULTY OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY ON ITS SESQUICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY AND FOR ITS CONSIDERABLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH CARE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE COUNTRY.

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*.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Villanueva for his sponsorship speech.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

In sponsoring Proposed Senate Resolution No. 336, Senator Villanueva delivered the following speech:

It is my honor and privilege to cosponsor Proposed Senate Resolution No. 336, commending the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery in its sesquicentennial or 150th anniversary celebration this 2022. This resolution is very special to me as a Thomasian, as an athletic scholar from high school to college, and a former UST growling tiger in the 90s.

Despite the rumors behind me I would still like to put on record that I am thrilled to note that we have in the gallery our dean of the UST School of Medicine, Dean Ma. Lourdes D. Maglinao; Secretary-General, Fr. Louie Coronel; Regent, Rev. Fr. Angel A. Aparicio; Assistant Dean, Prof. Remedios D. Chan; faculty secretary, Asst. Prof. Dexter Clifton C. Pe; faculty council member, Prof. Larry S. King.

Muntik na po akong maging magna sa UST. Hindi po magna cum laude. Muntikan na akong mag-nine years pero, praise God, eight years lamang po ang ginugol ko sa UST campus dito po sa España, Manila. Marami po akong unforgettable moments sa loob ng campus at maging nangyari doon sa UST Medicine auditorium na may pinakamalaking auditorium noon sa UST.

Huwag po kayong mag-alala. Hindi po ako magkukuwento ng 150 stories sa UST. Pero gusto kong sabihin na marami akong hindi makalimutan na istorya sa buhay ko sa UST College of Medicine. Kapag nagko-concert po iyong Side A, I have to be there. At marami pang concert na nangyari doon sa College of Medicine.

That is why I would like to thank our dear Senate President Senator Juan Miguel Zubiri for initiating this resolution and inviting this humble Representation, being the son of UST, and inviting also the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery to grace our session today. I am sure that they had to look for relievers, just to be with us today.

I am used to the thought of how long 150 years is. Indeed, no one of us could reach that age, but our institutions do. People come and go, but our institutions, our universities, this august Chamber, will stay for as long as it takes. For the UST FMS, it is 150 years and counting. Reaching this milestone must have been ecstatic, not only for the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, but to the entire Thomasian community worldwide.

What is uplifting and downright inspiring is that our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, who used both pen and scalpel hand-in-hand in fighting for our freedom, studied medicine at UST from 1878 to 1882. I have nothing but an impeccable admiration for our hero doctor who shared with the same university as the other equally talented individuals who swore the Hippocratic Oath. Dr. Jose Rizal received six *sobresaliente* marks or excellent, and six *aprovechado* or very good, among others, in his academic track as a medicine student at UST.

The saying, "Tell me who your teachers were, and I will tell you who you are" speaks of the role of UST in molding the heart and mind of Dr. Jose Rizal which led him to become our national hero. UST is indeed a hero-maker and a change-maker. Above all, it was an epoch-maker.

In an article Dr. Luis Mayo Lao narrated that prior to the establishment of UST's Faculty of Medicine, Filipinos had to go to Mexico to study medicine.

Sa layo po ng Mexico at haba ng biyahe sa dagat noon, literally, suntok po sa buwan para sa mga Pilipino ang pag-aaral ng medisina. Subalit sa pagbubukas ng medisina sa UST, naging abot-kamay ito para sa mga Pilipino.

The UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, originally founded in the year 1871, is the oldest medical school in the Philippines. Everyone knows that UST was established in 1611, older than Harvard. It has been through the toughest of times, yet it emerged as the country's pioneer faculty in medicine and healthcare.

Over the years, UST produced over 40,000 doctors. Its roster of alumni included secretaries of the Department of Health and national leaders like Dr. Luisa Estrada, who served at the Philippine Senate from 2001 to 2007.

Excellence is evident in its exemplary performance in the recently held October 22 Physician Licensure Examination with 416 successful Thomasian doctors and three topnotchers, namely: Dr. Kim Zapatos Sia (Top 4); Dr. Neill Steven Cachuela (Top 7); and Dr. Christian Jerell Cosme (Top 9).

Over the last five years, from 2018 to 2022, aside from having the biggest number of medical graduates, UST has consistently landed in the list of top performing schools in the physician licensure examinations.

Pero ang magagaling na performance ng UST sa Physician Licensure Examination ay hindi lang po nitong mga nakaraang taon. From my first year in UST High School in 1992 until my graduation, naging permanenteng display na po ang mga streamers—wala pa ho kasing mga tarpaulin noon o video wall noong time na iyon—congratulating Thomasian topnotchers in the physician licensure examinations. Sa totoo lang po kahit nakaka-proud, sawang-sawa na po kaming magkakaklase sa mga streamers sa UST medicine building noon.

The UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery's pandemic response became a beacon for our healthcare professionals in the battle against COVID-19. Amidst the new normal, they came up with learning setups that best suit the delivery of education, especially in the Internal Medicine Clerkship Program.

Let me say that if we look at the history of UST, we can better understand Philippine education. When we were first deliberating on EDCOM II bill, we requested our chairperson of the Committee on Basic Education, Senator Gatchalian, to invite our educators from UST, whose key insights led to the passage of RA 11899.

I believe that the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, having grown from the oldest existing university in Asia, can contribute immensely to education reforms, including the implementation of the *Doktor Para sa Bayan* Law, a law we passed during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic to improve our country's doctor-to-population ratio.

Kung may pamantayan po tayo ng kalidad ng ninanais natin para sa Medical Scholarship and Return Service Program, wala pong iba kundi ang Doctor of Medicine Program ng ating minamahal na alma mater, University of Sto. Tomas.

As a Thomasian, I am confident that the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery will continue its tradition of excellence in medical education, health science research and community services, guided by Christian ethics and values.

In closing, to the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, congratulations on your 150th anniversary and may God bless you all.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

Senate President Zubiri stated that UST is considered as one of the Top 4 universities in the Philippines and it has produced a number of fine doctors and nurses who have gone all over the world to help the suffering humanity. He said that UST is likewise known for its great architects and that there are several lawyers in the Senate who graduated from UST. Finally, he congratulated the UST College of Medicine and Surgery on its 150th anniversary.

Upon request of Senate President Zubiri, the full text of his cosponsorship speech was inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*, as follows:

I am honored to stand here today to sponsor Senate Resolution No. 336, commending the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Medicine and Surgery (UST-FMS) on its 150th Anniversary!

We would of course like to greet the UST Secretary General, Fr. Louie Coronel, who is with us today, with the UST-FMS Dean, Dr. Ma. Lourdes Maglinao; the Regent, Fr. Angel Aparicio; Assistant Dean Remedios Chan; and Drs. Clifton Pe and Larry King of the UST-FMS. Welcome to your Senate!



As our oldest existing Catholic medical school in the Philippines, UST-FMS has been a greatly influential institution, shaping generation after generation of our best and brightest medical professionals in the country—many of whom have gone on to serve in key roles in government, including as secretaries of health.

In this way, UST-FMS has not only produced our best doctors, it has had a big hand in shaping our country's medical policies as well. But what I most want to highlight, being a Catholic and a Red Crosser myself, is how UST's medical training is anchored on the values of compassion and service.

While UST-FMS undeniably provides top-notch training, and is indeed properly recognized as a center of excellence, what sets them apart is the importance that they place on compassion at the heart of the medical profession. This makes UST-FMS not just a great institution, but a truly transformative one—for its students and also for the country.

So again, congratulations to the UST-FMS! *Mabuhay po kayo.*

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ESTRADA

At the outset, Senator Estrada associated himself with the speech of Senator Villanueva as he congratulated the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery. He stated that his wife graduated from UST and his mother, Sen. Luisa Estrada, is an alumna of UST College of Medicine. He disclosed that he was earlier informed by Dr. Malinao that the UST College of Medicine in 2018 gave his mother a recognition award. He thanked them in her behalf for such recognition.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR GO

In cosponsoring Proposed Senate Resolution No. 336, Senator Go delivered the following speech:

It is an honor to cosponsor the resolution congratulating the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Medicine and Surgery on its 150th Anniversary and for its considerable contribution to the development of medical and healthcare educational institutions in the country.

As the chairperson of the Committee on Health and Demography, I would like to express my profound gratitude to the whole community of the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Medicine and Surgery for their undying commitment to help our fellow Filipinos through their various medical initiatives and programs. Your contributions to our country's health sector are indeed worthy of celebration.

As one of the top-performing medical schools in the Philippines, contributing more than 400 new physicians yearly and topping the medical boards consistently, it is worth commending and recognizing their valuable contributions in producing competent doctors and medical practitioners. Our physicians and healthcare workers are the most essential aspect of the response, and the country is forever honored for their dedication, professionalism and commitment.

Kaya naman, patuloy nating sikapin ang pagpapadami pa ng ating healthcare workers sa bansa.

Muli, ang tagumpay ng UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery ay tagumpay ng bayan at ng buong Pilipino.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR POE

Senator Poe associated herself with the commendation of Senator Villanueva for the UST College of Medicine. She disclosed that her father-in-law, Dr. Teodoro Llamanzares, is a graduate of UST and is an Otolaryngologist. She likewise mentioned that during her recent trip to the UK, she had the pleasure of meeting the first woman who administered the Covid-19 vaccine, May Parsons, and she was a graduate of UST.

Senator Poe also recalled that as a child, she was usually admitted to the UST Hospital when she was ill, so she knew that the nurses and doctors there were competent and caring. She also mentioned that the UST has produced many distinguished alumni not only in the health sector but also in architecture and fine arts. She stated that the honor was well-deserved and that she wanted to be associated with Senator Villanueva's sponsorship speech.

COAUTHORS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, all senators were made coauthors of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 336.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 336

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 336 was adopted by the Body, subject to style.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 5:51 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:03 p.m., the session was resumed.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 13 ON HOUSE BILL NO. 6224

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of House Bill No. 6224 (Committee Report No. 13), entitled

ACT GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO MR. JUSTIN DONTA BROWNLEE.

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

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

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva stated that Senator Revilla requested that his cosponsorship speech on House Bill No. 6224 be inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR ESTRADA

Senator Estrada inquired as to whether Mr. Brownlee would be willing to stay in the country when his playing days are over. In reply, Senator Tolentino stated Mr. Brownlee's response at the committee hearing demonstrated his willingness to remain in the country. He recalled Mr. Brownlee saying that he was willing to serve in the Armed Forces of the Philippines or volunteer in disaster relief operations. Senator Tolentino informed Senator Estrada that Mr. Brownlee was 34 years old.

Asked whether Mr. Brownlee could speak the Filipino language and whether he knew how to sing the national anthem, Senator Tolentino said that he understood Filipino but was not proficient in it, and that he could sing a few Filipino songs.

Senator Estrada voiced reservations about the matter, recalling Andray Blatche, who was granted Filipino citizenship but left the country and settled in the U.S. after representing the country in international tournaments.

Senator Tolentino speculated that the reason for those granted citizenship returning to the United States was the lack of prospects in the country, particularly in the Philippine Basketball Association or even in other local leagues. He surmised that they were not permitted to play because their skills were far superior to that of the local players.

Senator Estrada, on the other hand, believed that both Blatche and Douthit were not given the chance to play again because of old age.

Senator Tolentino supposed that they might have experienced discrimination as naturalized Filipinos.

Senator Tolentino stated that he did not know what happened to the application of former PBA player from Alaska Aces, Sean Chambers, as head coach of the UST Growling Tigers. Senator Estrada said that the Basketball Coaches Association of the Philippines opted to protect the interest of local coaches. Senator Tolentino however noted that there were foreign coaches like Tab Baldwin and Tim Cone.

Asked if Mr. Brownlee could play in the PBA All-Filipino Cup after being naturalized, Senator Tolentino admitted that the PBA administrators seemed not to be in favor of the idea, even as 136 naturalized players were allowed by countries like France, Germany, Switzerland, Middle East, and African countries to play as locals in the FIFA World Cup in Qatar. With such trend happening worldwide, he wondered why the Philippines should discriminate against naturalized athletes from other countries.

At this juncture, a table showing the number of naturalized players per country were shown on the screen.

Asked if Mr. Brownlee would be considered as Fil-Am, Senator Tolentino said that the term "Fil-Am" only refers to an American with Filipino blood, but neither of Mr. Brownlee's parents is Filipino. He disclosed that one of the options he suggested with the PBA administration was to allow Mr. Brownlee to become a coach when he is over the playing age.

Asked if Mr. Brownlee's salary would be affected when he becomes a naturalized Filipino player compared to his salary as an import, Senator Tolentino stated that the salary cap is not based on citizenship but individual skills.

As to whether Andray Blatche has renounced his Filipino citizenship, Senator Tolentino stated that the latter is still a Filipino, and was very willing to play in the PBA as he is just 36 years old. On the part of Mr. Brownlee, he noted that aside from playing for Gilas Pilipinas, the player also expressed his willingness to play for two local government teams the San Juan Knights and Tagaytay Warriors.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR PADILLA

At the outset, Senator Padilla stated that he had no objection to the grant of citizenship to Justin Brownlee since height is truly essential in basketball but not in the game of football. He said that



he would not agree in hiring foreigners to play football because there are many Filipinos who could play the game well.

For his part, Senator Tolentino explained that the reason for mentioning football was that many people have been watching the FIFA World Cup every night, and half of the players from Morocco team which was at the top 16 slot, were born in other countries, just as Swiss striker Breel Embolo who was from Cameroon. He noted that since the 1920s, it has been the trend that top athletes were sourced from other countries, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Spain, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and the United States of America. He then recalled that one of the football players for Azkals, Bienve Marañon, was a naturalized Filipino citizen who was born in Spain. He clarified that he was not for outright sourcing of foreign players but that he found nothing wrong if doing so would upgrade the skills development program of Filipino athletes.

Senator Padilla reiterated that his only concern was the outsourcing of football players abroad; he was not objecting to the naturalization of a basketball player especially when such person was willing to be a military reservist of the Philippines.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva believed that the limit in outsourcing foreign players must not only be for football but also for arnis and baseball. He noted that the reason why the senators were keen in scrutinizing the measure was that they did not want to deny the local players the opportunity to represent the country.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Asked by Senator Pimentel on the legal requirements for Philippine citizenship, and whether the applicant should know the national language or how to sing the national anthem, Senator Tolentino stated that only the same documentary requirements for judicial, legislative, or administrative naturalization would be submitted as well as the applicant's intent to become a Filipino citizen, not only because of basketball, but because he wanted to embrace the Filipino way of life. Senator Pimentel believed that Filipinos should be proud that a talented sportsman like Mr. Brownlee wanted to become a citizen of the country because he would bring with him the Philippine pride whenever he plays in international basketball competitions.

Asked if any existing anti-discrimination law would be violated if Mr. Brownlee would continuously be treated like a foreigner or import even if he is granted Philippine citizenship, Senator Tolentino believed that the Labor Code of the Philippines would be violated as he should be given opportunity to be employed as a Filipino basketball player.

Noting Blatche's departure from the country because he was apparently not treated as a Filipino despite his skills set and naturalized citizenship, Senator Pimentel hoped that Mr. Brownlee would be treated better.

Senator Tolentino stated that in his possession was Justin Brownlee's special work permit from the Bureau of Immigration but in case the latter gets his naturalized citizenship, he would no longer need to secure a special work permit and would be entitled to PhilHealth benefits.

At this juncture, Senator Villanueva broached the dilemma of teams competing with another team with two naturalized players in the caliber of Brownlee and Ange Kouame. He said that the league's governing body should set the guidelines on this situation.

He said that he has known Mr. Brownlee for a long time and had watched him improve his skills over time. He also recalled the first instance that he saw Mr. Brownlee play against the Alaska Aces, and observed that he was not in a good condition then having arrived in the



Philippines without his rubber shoes, because he flew to the country as soon as he got a call in Las Vegas. While that was the case, he recalled that Mr. Brownlee played with passion and really worked hard to become a part of the Ginebra San Miguel team. Moreover, he stated that when the basketball import became part of the team, he would do volunteer work in the Gilas team in order to train its members, calling to the fore his vast experience from the time that he played with so many teams outside the country in international competitions. He added that Mr. Brownlee's stint in the Alab Pilipinas gave glory and pride to the country, particularly during the team's winning performance in the ASEAN Basketball Cup Tournament that time.

Lastly, he said that if there was anyone that should benefit from the citizenship laws being passed by the Body, taking into account his own experience as a former basketball player and member of the Philippine team in 1994 and 1995, it would be Mr. Brownlee.

Senator Pimentel replied that the bill's substance was not a concern to him. However, he cautioned the Body to learn from their experience with Mr. Blatche. Once the measure is enacted into law, he urged his fellow senators to give the soon-to-be member of the Filipino community a better experience and the opportunity to be gainfully employed as a professional basketball player once the measure is passed into law.

Asked by Senator Tolentino if there was need to amend the Labor Code of the Philippines to the effect that naturalized Filipinos need not present special permits anymore, Senator Pimentel stated that there was no need to amend existing laws.

Noting that citizenship bills should originate from the House of Representatives, Senator Pimentel inquired whether the committee would consider the measure as a Senate bill even though the House bill has not yet reached the Senate. Senator Tolentino replied that, as the measure was a private bill, it was required by the Constitution to await the committee report and the completion of Third Reading to finish in the House of Representatives. He added that while the Senate committee had already held a hearing on the subject, the committee report would not be released until the House of Representatives completed its Third Reading of the bill.

He then cited a portion of Art. VI, Sec. 24, of the 1987 Constitution, which states that "private bills shall originate exclusively in the House of Representatives." He explained that although Senate counterpart measures existed that were more or less the same in content, legislative authorizations emanate from the House of Representatives. Consequently, he assured that the procedure was followed. He added that the same process was followed under Article VI, Sec. 1 of the 1987 Constitution, when Congress passed the following citizenship measures: Republic Act No. 11570 on Mr. Bienvenido Morejon Marañon; Republic Act No. 11543 on Kakou Ange Franck Williams Kouame; Republic Act No. 10636 on Andray Blatche; and Republic Act No. 10148 on Marcus Eugene Douthit. He stated that although Mr. Brownlee submitted 21 requirements that were carefully considered by the committee, it was necessary to await the outcome of the proceedings in the House of Representatives.

Senator Pimentel then surmised that the Senate committee handling the measure was, in fact, hearing a Senate bill because the House bill has not yet reached the Senate. He also stated that the Senate committee had to await the arrival of the House bill before releasing its report.

Senator Tolentino pointed out that the House measure was exactly the same version of the Senate bill, except for their authors. He then disclosed to the Members that time was of the essence with regard to the measure's approval, as there was a FIBA World Cup in February the following year, and a deadline has been set for the submission of lineups from participating countries. He also said that the length of time for passport application had to be considered due to the Christmas break, as well as the length of time it would take before the President signs the measure into law, or should



the bill lapses into law. Considering that the country would be hosting the FIBA World Cup, he said that there was urgency in putting together a strong lineup to ensure a fighting chance for the Philippines.

Senator Pimentel concurred on the matter, adding that Mr. Brownlee's inclusion in the Philippine team would surely be an advantage. However, he stated that although the Senate bill was a duplication of the House measure, it is still, in essence, not the House bill. He then inquired if the Executive branch made it into a certified measure, or if the Presidential Legislative Liaison Office had stated that it would interpose no objection, or if the bill would not be vetoed.

Senator Tolentino replied that the bill was not a certified measure. As regards the committee report, he said that although the committee merely adopted the House bill, it took into consideration the three Senate bills that were heard by the Committee on Justice and Human Rights. If every procedure were to be followed, and considering that the Department of Foreign Affairs would close during the holiday season, he informed the Body that the earliest date that Mr. Brownlee may be issued a passport would be on January 24, 2023.

Additionally, he mentioned that according to information provided to him by Senator Villanueva, Mr. Brownlee had been applying for Filipino citizenship since 2021, but had to contend with additional difficulties brought up by pandemic-related lockdowns. In response, Senator Pimentel reiterated that he had no issue as to the substance of the measure and believed that Mr. Brownlee's desire to become a Filipino citizen was independent from a specific basketball tournament. He added that while the Body would do its best to have the measure approved in time for Mr. Brownlee's participation in the FIBA World Cup, failure to meet the aforesaid deadlines would not affect Mr. Brownlee's participation in future international competitions representing the Philippines as a member of the country's official team. He then expressed hope that Mr. Brownlee would return to the Senate by then, after scoring victories for the country. In the meantime, Senator Tolentino was optimistic that the athlete's right to work would be respected. Senator Pimentel shared the same sentiment in that regard.

REMARK OF THE CHAIR

Senate President Zubiri hoped that Mr. Brownlee would be a welcome addition to the Philippine team once the measure is passed into law. He surmised that by then, the athlete could play with his heart and soul for the country; and that the Philippines would be able to soar to greater heights because of it.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA


Senator Villanueva thanked Senator Tolentino for recognizing his previous effort in filing and refiling the bill on the subject, despite meeting unfavorable circumstances which hindered it from finally being realized.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INTERPELLATIONS

There being no further interpellation, upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of interpellations and proceeded to the period of committee amendments.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF AMENDMENTS

There being no committee or individual amendment, upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of amendments.



APPROVAL OF HOUSE BILL NO. 6224 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, House Bill No. 6224, taking into consideration Senate Bill Nos. 1336, 1516, and 1519, was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL NO. 6224

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

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 6:44 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:46 p.m., the session was resumed.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON HOUSE BILL NO. 4488

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration of the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions 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.

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

The Chair recognized Senator Angara, sponsor of the report, and Senator Pimentel for the continuation of his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

(Continuation)

Senator Pimentel recalled his previous discussion with Senator Angara regarding the reduction in the CHED budget from both the Senate and House versions: P5 billion from the Senate version, and approximately P5 billion from the House version.

Asked what specific programs, activities, and projects of the Commission might be affected by the decrease in its budget, Senator Angara replied that the Tertiary Education Subsidy (TES) as well as the Tulong Dunong Program (TDP) were the primary items in the CHED's PAP that would be impacted by the budget cut. He added that the TDP would suffer a net loss of approximately P4.2 billion. He stated the PAPs were originally included in the GAB but were withdrawn at the bicameral level.

Senator Pimentel noted that despite the consensus between the two Houses of Congress to increase the Commission's budget, considering that its budget in the House version was around P34.9 billion, while the Senate version was P35.7 billion with the final version at P30.8 billion,

the bicameral level figures signified a decrease in the previously mentioned amounts. Consequently, he surmised that the decision to cut the TES and TDP had been made.

Senator Angara affirmed the observations. Additionally, he stated that the amendments were not made in the Senate, but rather in the House of Representatives, where they were subsequently reprioritized. He then reassured Senator Pimentel that the amount added to the CHED budget by the Senate would remain unchanged.

Concerning the budgetary support to government corporations under the Department of Agriculture, Senator Pimentel noted that the budget of the Philippine Fisheries Development Authority amounting to P5.16 billion was reduced to P2.46 billion, or a decrease of P2.7 billion.

Regarding the Budgetary Support to Government Corporations under the Department of Agriculture, Senator Pimentel noted that the allocation of P5.16 billion for the Philippine Fisheries Development Authority in the GAB had been reduced by P2.7 billion, bringing the total to P2.46 billion. Senator Angara responded that P1.2 billion of the budget cut had been realigned to the Office of the Secretary-DA, while the remaining P1.5 billion was an outright reduction.

Senator Pimentel agreed with the realignment, but pointed out that the Office of the Secretary-DA would see a P2.1 billion reduction in the bicameral report. Senator Angara stated that it was because they placed certain items, such as support to Foreign-Assisted Project (FAP), in the unprogrammed funds, which was item No. 13 under the Special Provisions.

Responding to the comment that the DOH's special purpose funds under the Budgetary Support to Government Corporations, which includes the Lung Center of the Philippines (LCP), the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTI), the Philippine Children's Medical Center (PCMC), and the PhilHealth, was lower by P1 billion in the bicameral report than the Senate version, Senator Angara explained that there was a decrease in the Senate version from P108.1 billion to P107.1 billion. However, he pointed out that the allocation was still higher than the NEP at P105.2 billion and the 2022 GAA version at P85 billion and would also be a significant increase of P22 billion compared to the budget for 2022.

On the observation that the decrease in the subsidy for Small Business Corporations from 1.5 billion to P750 million in the bicameral report was inconsistent with the President's commitment to support Micro- and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) through microfinancing, Senator Angara explained that the cut was made in order to fund some of the DTI's ancillary programs. He recalled that Senator Pimentel was even among those who moved for additional funding for the shared services facilities, such as the Malikhaing Pinoy Program.

On whether there was an issue with the SBC funding, Senator Angara opined that they would have wanted to maintain or increase its budget; however, it still had enough funds being carried over from the Bayanihan CARES Program.

Asked if the amendments he proposed to the confidential and intelligence funds (CIF) were sustained in the bicameral level, Senator Angara stated that the proposals submitted by Senators Pimentel and Hontiveros were not accepted by their House counterparts who wanted to return the fund to the DepEd as originally envisioned under the NEP. Senator Pimentel, however, wondered if nothing was retained of the total cut of P152,668,000 that had been presented to the Body.

Senator Angara explained that the cuts made on the other agencies were not affected except for the Senate realignment of P187.6 million, through the initiative of Senators Pimentel and Hontiveros, of which P120 million was from DepEd. He emphasized that the House returned the

P120 million to the DepEd, but the P67.6 million remained for several agencies, such as DFA, DOJ, DSWD and Other Executive Offices (OEO) like the ERC, OPAPP, and Ombudsman.

On whether the proposed CIF for the Office of the President at P500 million and for the Office of the Secretary-DepEd at P150 million would push through and become a new practice, Senator Angara responded that the agencies already had such funds in the past and it was just more of a revival of the practice. Senator Pimentel averred that in the past, the OVP was granted a maximum of P5 million to P6 million as CIF but not in the magnitude of P500 million which would now be given to the DepEd. Senator Angara maintained that both agencies had smaller funds then.

Senator Pimentel asked on the status of the special provisions and general provisions which he and Senator Hontiveros introduced in the Senate version of the budget wherein they asked for the work plan for all the agencies with CIF, as well as the agencies' submission of their quarterly accomplishment reports not only to the Office of the President but also to both Houses of Congress.

Senator Angara replied that the proposals were not retained in the bicameral conference upon the insistence of the House of Representatives. He stated that in the case of the 2021 GAA, the President vetoed a similar provision mandating the submission of quarterly accomplishment reports to both Houses of Congress, with the veto message emphasizing the duty of the President and the protection of the national security and the maintenance of public safety; thus, all activities and reports involving intelligence gathering that have a direct impact on national security and public safety shall only be reported directly to the President. He added that the veto message also pointed out that the intelligence fund covers programs, projects, and activities related to national security which are deemed confidential or classified information, and was one of the recognized exceptions to the right to information.

Senator Angara cited the case of *Senate vs. Ermita* in 2006, wherein the Supreme Court ruled that there is government privilege against public disclosure with respect to state secrets regarding military, diplomatic, and other national security matters.

As regards the Confidential Funds in the 2023 GAA, he stated that the bicameral conference committee did not adopt the Senate amendment on the submission of a work plan due to a COA-DBM Joint Circular No. 2015-01 which already provides explicit guidelines as to the reporting of the use of the CIF. He said that the circular directs all heads of national government agencies, local government units, and GOCCs, which release confidential funds and/or intelligence funds, to submit quarterly accomplishment reports to the President, to the GCG for the GOCCs, and to the DILG Secretary for the LGUs.

Furthermore, Senator Angara stated that the additional submission of a work plan was deemed redundant as the joint circular already requires a physical and financial plan approved by the head of agency indicating the proposed amount allocated for each program, activity, and project which shall be the bases for disbursements pertaining to confidential expenses and intelligence expenses. He said that the physical and financial plan is submitted as follows: Upon approval of the GAA, the head of agency of the department submits to the DBM a special budget request, and the DBM endorses the Special Budget Request (SBR) to the Office of the President (OP) for approval. He explained that the budget includes the CIF allocation for the project purpose under the agency's specific budget in the GAA and reflected in the physical and financial plan.

He also explained that before any GOCC can allocate confidential funds in its corporate operating budget, it must first obtain clearance from the GCG to justify it.

As for LGUs, Senator Angara said that it is only when there is a request for additional confidential funds that the physical and financial plans for both the original allocation and the additional request shall be submitted to the concerned DILG field officer.

He stressed that all agencies are required to submit a physical and financial plan in order to support the disbursement voucher for the grant of cash advances for Confidential Funds and Intelligence Funds. In other words, he stated that the House believed that such reports to Congress would be a duplication of what was already being implemented with respect to the COA, which has sufficient safeguards.

But Senator Pimentel noted the desire of both Houses of Congress in the 2022 budget for the use of intelligence funds to be reported not only to the Office of the President but to both Houses of Congress, except that it had been vetoed. He believed that the successor President is not bound by the veto of his predecessor; hence, the safer approach would have been to include it in the GAA in order to find out whether or not the incumbent President would exercise his veto power.

As regards the establishment of a Senate Select Oversight Committee on Confidential and Intelligence Funds, Senator Pimentel asked what the such committee would examine and oversee if no reports on intelligence funds would be submitted to the Senate. Senator Angara replied that it could scrutinize the quarterly reports submitted to both Houses of Congress. However, Senator Pimentel pointed out that the quarterly reports only pertain to confidential funds.

In response to the remark that the Senate's select oversight committee would not be able to examine the intelligence funds because there would be no submissions, Senator Angara stated that, as a newly-appointed member, he was reviewing the committee's jurisdiction.

In addition to the committee's composition, Senator Pimentel noted that the GAB required the submission of both confidential and intelligence funds to both Houses of Congress. With the final version of the GAA not requiring agencies with intelligence funds to submit periodic reports to the House and the Senate, he believed that the committee's jurisdiction and powers had been diminished.

Senator Angara confirmed that the committee's oversight jurisdiction encompassed the disbursement and expenditures of both intelligence and confidential funds. Furthermore, he asserted that the committee's oversight power is inherent in the committee, and he saw nothing in that law that prevented it from requiring the submission of accomplishment reports for both funds.

Senator Pimentel said that he shared Senator Angara's view that the committee has the power to request accomplishment reports for intelligence funds, even if it is not expressly stipulated in the GAA.

Asked to explain the P12,042,456,000 increase in the budget of the House of Representatives, bringing its total allocation to P28 billion, Senator Angara said that the funds were for the construction of buildings, the acquisition of vehicles, personnel services requirements of the new members, and operational requirements including district staffing. He expressed willingness to provide Senator Pimentel with a copy of the list submitted by the House.

Senator Pimentel then enumerated the education budget, as follows: Department of Education (DepEd), P678.3 billion; state universities and colleges (SUCs), P107 billion; Commission on Higher Education (CHED), P30.8 billion; and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), P16 billion. He estimated the total amount to be approximately P832.2 billion.

He also compared the education sector budget with the P893.1 billion allocated to the DPWH, which was nearly P60 billion higher, and expressed concern that education did not appear to be the government's top priority for 2023.

Senator Pimentel inquired if the 2023 GAA violates Article XIV, Section 5, paragraph 5 of the 1987 Constitution, which states: "The State shall assign the highest budgetary priority to education

and ensure that teaching will attract and retain its rightful share of the best available talents through the adequate remuneration and other means of job satisfaction.”

Senator Angara replied that funding for the education sector also includes the following institutions: National Maritime Polytechnic, P121 million; Philippine National Police Academy, P1.476 billion; Philippine Public Safety College, P727.7 million; National Defense College of the Philippines, P126 million; Philippine Military Academy, P1.47 billion; the Philippine Science High School, P376.7 million; and DOST Science Education Institute, P7.089 billion. He added that the education infrastructure budget also counted under education with a budget of P8.5 billion.

He pointed out that by adding the funds appropriated to all of the aforementioned agencies, the total budget for the education sector amounted to approximately P900.9 billion which was higher than the P890 billion budget of the DPWH.

Further, he stated that in the Supreme Court case of *Guingona vs. Carague* where the DepEd budget was not given the highest priority, the Court decided that:

“The constitutional provision mandating Congress to assign the highest budgetary priority to education does not mean that the hands of Congress are so hamstrung as to deprive it of the power to respond to the imperatives of the national interest and for the attainment of other state policies or objectives.”

He opined that the provision is not self-executory, but rather, more of a constitutional policy.

On the contrary, Senator Pimentel opined that the provision is a mandate and a directive to Congress to prioritize the education budget. He then quoted a portion of President Marcos’ budget message:

“The following are the priority sectors in our agenda for prosperity: The education sector will receive the highest allocation with P852.8 billion. This consists of the allocations for the Department of Education, State Universities and Colleges, Commission on Higher Education, and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. While this is consistent with the constitutional mandate to assign the highest budget priority to education, it also reflects my commitment to invest in human capital development and empower the youth.”

He posited that the President himself considered the education sector to be comprised of only the aforementioned agencies. He maintained that even if the other agencies mentioned by Senator Angara were to be considered, and their budgets were to be combined, it still would not be enough to surpass the budget of DPWH. He also stated that the budget for education infrastructure should not be considered as part of the educational sector as the said infrastructures also have other purposes and does not directly translate to the education of the people.

Senator Angara stated that traditionally, the other educational institutions he mentioned had always been considered as part of the education sector budget.

However, Senator Pimentel stated that even the combined budgets of the DepEd, CHED, SUCs and TESDA would still not surpass the budget of the DPWH, as gleaned from the bicameral conference committee report.

In response, Senator Angara explained that the figures cited by Senator Pimentel from the bicameral conference report represented new appropriations, and that there were other expenditures for education that were automatic appropriations, such as teachers’ retirement benefits. He said that obligations-based budgeting had been utilized, where new appropriations as well as automatic appropriations were considered.



Senator Pimentel requested the assistance of the Legislative Budget Research and Monitoring Office in clarifying and summarizing the figures with regard to the educational sector.

Senator Pimentel thanked Senator Angara for the clarification. He stated that he has yet to examine the automatic appropriations as well as the new appropriations made by Congress, as it appeared that more funds had been appropriated for public works than for education.

Senator Angara believed that it would depend on where the boundaries were drawn. Nonetheless, he pointed out that the bicameral conference committee allocated approximately P7 billion more for education than for infrastructure. He said that it also included the budgets for the government maritime schools and the PNPA.

Senator Pimentel requested that the committee provide an explanation for better comprehension, as it had raised concerns regarding compliance with the constitutional provision and mandate that education shall receive the highest budgetary priority. He then expressed his gratitude to Senator Angara for guiding the Body in understanding the final form of the budget approved by the bicameral conference committee.

APPROVAL OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, the Conference Committee Report on the disagreeing provisions of House Bill No. 4488 was ratified by the Body.

EXPLANATIONS OF VOTE

By Senator Hontiveros

In explaining her negative vote on the bicameral conference committee report, Senator Hontiveros delivered the following statement:

Today, the 19th Congress missed an opportunity to show its independence. We failed to demonstrate that we do hold the power of the purse.

Nagpapasalamat po ako sa Mataas na Kamara at sa chairperson ng ating Senate Committee on Finance. Salamat po for accepting my amendment in the Senate to realign confidential and intelligence funds in DepEd to specific programs in the department. Ngunit ako ay nalulungkot sa sinapit sa bicameral conference committee, na ito ay muling ibinalik. Tila naging mapuro! at pudpod ang proteksiyong ibinigay sa pondo ng bayan by granting in full all the requests for confidential and intelligence funds under the Marcos-Duterte administration. Worse, the legislature agreed to remove provisions that require congressional reporting of the utilization plan and disbursement of the confidential and intelligence fund. In the absence of such provision, in spite of the Select Oversight Committee on Confidential and Intelligence Funds, how can we be expected to exercise checks and balances? At kung hindi natin makumbinsi ang mga kasamahan sa House sa napagkaisahan natin sa Senado, how can we ensure transparency and accountability?

Nakapanghihinayang po na sa unang budget ng administrasyon, Congress has shown its malleability to the whims of the administration and has squandered an opportunity offered by the Senate for more transparency and accountability and less opportunities for corruption. Effectively, Congress has abdicated its power of the purse to holders of civilian offices and departments in the Executive, setting a precedent for improper budget requests leading up to the elections in 2028. On account of the full restoration of the confidential and intelligence funds, as well as the removal of safeguards on the proper use of the CIFs, I regret that I am constrained to vote "no" to the bicameral conference committee report.

By Senator Pimentel

Senator Pimentel manifested his negative vote to the bicameral conference committee report, the explanations for which could be found in the interpellation that had just transpired.

4

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ANGARA

Senator Angara thanked the Senate leadership headed by Senate President Zubiri, Senators Villanueva, Legarda, Pimentel, and all the committee vice-chairpersons, and the Senate staff.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR POE

Senator Poe expressed gratitude and admiration to Senator Angara, chairperson of the Committee on Finance, for hurdling so many issues. She believed that Senator Angara wanted and fought for the best interests of the Senate during the bicameral conference committee. However, she stated that the budget is not solely determined by the Senate. She also thanked Senator Angara for accepting her pro-people amendments, particularly her concerns for the drivers and the transport sector, and for his very even, composed, and diplomatic demeanor throughout the process.

In response, Senator Angara thanked Senator Poe for steering the DOTr and DICT budgets—particularly the Libreng Sakay and the bike lanes projects—under her leadership as vice chair of the committee.

REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Senate President Zubiri thanked Senator Angara not only for the hard work that he had done but also for increasing the budget for specialty hospitals.

Senator Angara stated that the specialty hospitals were the initiative of Senate President Zubiri, whose instructions were very clear. In addition, he thanked Senators Ejercito, former chairperson of the Committee on Health and Demography Sen. Pia Cayetano, Senator Villanueva, and other Members who were very insistent that the regional specialty medical centers be prioritized in the 2023 budget. He expressed hope that Senate President Zubiri would relay to President Marcos the efforts of the senators as it was a shared advocacy and a campaign promise.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR LEGARDA

Senator Legarda expressed her most sincere and heartfelt congratulations to Senate President Zubiri as the GAB is the first budget bill under his leadership; to Senator Angara for his hard work, fairness, cool and never pressured demeanor, diligence, and brilliance; to all the vice-chairpersons and all the members of the Senate; and to the two members of the Minority. She stated that the budget is a collaborative effort, a first for the new administration and the new Senate leadership. She also thanked the hardworking LBRMO, the entire Senate secretariat, and the Senators' staff.

Senator Legarda stated that she was thankful that the Members were able to fund existing laws that had not been funded previously, including the Tertiary Education Act, the Universal Health Care Law, the regional specialty hospitals, the limited funding for MSME laws for the pandemic recovery program, and the limited budget for environment and climate change, which she hoped would be increased in the budget for the following year. She emphasized that the budget represents everyone's best effort, giving the constraints of resources and time.

REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Senate President Zubiri informed the Body of the existence of the Oversight Committee on Confidential and Intelligence Funds, Programs and Activities within the Congress. He stated that the members of the committee would monitor the government's expenditure of funds. He assured the Body that the Senate panel, of which Senator Pimentel is a member, could hold the Executive accountable for the funds during the next budget deliberation. He reiterated his gratitude to the

secretariat, which worked tirelessly for two weeks in order for the Senate to pass the bill, and to Senator Villanueva who shepherded the measure on the floor.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLAR (M)

Senator Villar (M) stated that despite it being his first year in the Senate, he was impressed by all the senators, staff, and everyone who worked so diligently to pass the measure. He expressed his deepest respect and admiration to everyone and wished everyone a merry Christmas.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR EJERCITO

Senator Ejercito commended Senator Angara for being “a man for others.” He stated that given the limited fiscal space, Senator Angara was able to secure funding for the most important government programs, such as the regional specialty hospitals, which Senate President Zubiri also advocated, by increasing their budget from P2 billion to P6 billion. He stated that the goal of having lung, kidney, and heart centers in strategic areas in the country would soon become a reality.

He noted that Senator Angara had also pledged that funding for the infrastructure and railway projects would come from unprogrammed funds because there could be additional costs incurred if the government did not fulfill its end of the agreement regarding right of way, among others things.

Senator Angara thanked Senator Ejercito for his manifestation and acknowledged that the latter was one of the hardworking senators who stayed in the Senate from the beginning to the end of the work day. He added that Senator Ejercito, along with Senators Cayetano (P) and Go, led the committee in amending the DOH budget. He believed that in the future, when people reflect on that group of senators, they would be able to say that they worked to improve the country’s healthcare system and budget.

REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

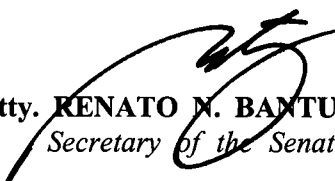
Senate President Zubiri stated that the 19th Congress had seen a very hardworking Senate. He said that he had never witnessed 18 senators present on the floor even at 2:00 a.m. He then thanked the senators for their service for the people, specifically Senator Angara for a job well done, Senator Pimentel for being a fiscalizer, and all those who submitted their amendments to formulate a responsive budget – a budget for national reconstruction.

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 7:49 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.


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

Approved on December 6, 2022

Angara




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

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**Joint Explanation of the Bicameral Conference Committee Report on the
 Disagreeing Provisions of House Bill No. 4488
 (Fiscal Year 2023 General Appropriations Bill)**

The following are the major changes in House Bill No. 4488 or the General Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2023:

1. Recasted the budget of the **Department of Agriculture** to provide additional funds for various programs, activities and projects under the National Banner Program (OSEC); Establishment of Cold Examination Facility (OSEC); Establishment of Composting Facilities for Biodegradable Wastes (OSEC); Herd Build-Up of Genetically Improved Dairy Buffalos (PCC); Balog-Balog Multi-Purpose Project (NIA); Unfunded legislated hatcheries (BFAR); and Dairy Herd Build-Up Program (NDA), among others.
2. A net increase of **₱1.087 Billion** for the **Department of Education (DepEd)**, including **₱759 Million** for various projects and activities for the development/preservation/rehabilitation of national collections, cultural properties, national and regional museums, and satellite offices (NMP); and the **₱232 Million** for the establishment of National Child Development Centers (ECCDC).
3. The **117 State Universities and Colleges (SUCs)** will get an additional budget of **₱13.212 Billion**, of which **₱1.910 Billion** is for the **University of the Philippines System**. The increase includes the support to the College of Medicine and to nursing and allied health programs; higher education research and innovation projects; capacity development on futures thinking and strategic foresight; Tulong Dunong; and other projects.
4. The **Department of Health (DOH)** will have a net decrease of **₱871 Million** but increased the allocation for Health Facilities Enhancement Program (HFEP); Operations of DOH Regional Hospitals, DOH Hospitals in Metro Manila, National Reference Laboratories and Regional Offices; Cancer Assistance Fund; Epidemiology

and Surveillance; Hiring of Immunization Vaccinators; Bureau of Quarantine; Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases; and Public Health Management.

5. The **Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)** will be augmented by **₱1.910 Billion** including the PNP's new National Headquarters Building.
6. The **Department of Justice (DOJ)** will have a net increase of **₱1.771 Billion** to fund the demolition of old structure and initial civil works for the new building (NBI); digitalization of processes (NBI); Supermax Detention Facility (BuCor); and hiring of Prosecution Attorneys (OSEC).
7. The net increase of **₱915 Million** under the **Department of Migrant Workers** will provide additional budget for the OFW Hospital, regional offices, and capital outlays; opening of additional Migrant Workers Offices; and additional MOOE for Workers Welfare and Government Placement Services.
8. The net decrease of **₱25.737 Billion** in the **Department of National Defense (DND)** budget includes the transfer of the **₱30.0 Billion** Revised AFP Modernization Program from the General Headquarters to a new Special Purpose Fund—Revised AFP Modernization Program; and the increase of **₱4.263 Million** for various activities and projects.
9. The **Department of Science and Technology (DOST)** will be given an increase of **₱769 Million** which includes additional fund for Community Empowerment through Science and Technology (OSEC); Local Grant-In-Aid Program (OSEC); Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (OSEC); establishment of new weather stations (PAGASA); operations and development of earthquake monitoring and information system (PHIVOLCS); operation and development of volcano monitoring and warning systems (PHIVOLCS); and additional budget for other DOST attached agencies.
10. Realignment within the **Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)** to provide additional fund for Protective Services for Individuals and Families in Difficult Circumstances-Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations, including Social Assistance Fund (OSEC); Supplementary Feeding Program (OSEC); Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services:

Kapangyarihan at Kaunlaran sa Barangay (Cash for Work) (OSEC); Implementation of the Centenarians Act of 2016 (OSEC); and Disaster Response and Rehabilitation Program (OSEC).

11. The budget of the **Department of Transportation (DOTr)** was reduced but additional funds were allocated for various ports and airports (OSEC); and new programs were introduced, namely: DOTr-TESDA Tsuper Iskolar Program and DOTr-DOLE EnTSUPERneur Program.

12. **The Judiciary's** budget is augmented by **P2.169 Billion** including the provision for the 2023 Bar Examinations.

13. The budgets of the **Civil Service Commission (CSC)**, the **Commission on Audit (COA)** and the **Commission on Human Rights (CHR)** will be increased by **P105 Million, P150 Million, and P160 Million**, respectively.

14. The **Commission on Elections (COMELEC)** will get an additional fund of **P250 Million** for the construction of its main and integrated field office building.

15. The net increase of **P6.213 Billion** under the **Allocations to LGUs (ALGU)** includes the partial restoration of the Local Government Support Fund - Support to the Barangay Development Program (LGSF-SBDP) of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC); provision for the dredging/deepening of various rivers (MMDA); and expansion of the National Capital Region Command, Control and Communications Center (MMDA).

16. On **General Provisions**, the following were adopted:

- To ensure food availability and to help increase the income of farmers and fisherfolk, the government shall directly purchase available agricultural and fisheries products from local farmers, fisherfolk, or their associations/cooperatives to be utilized in the government feeding programs, relief operations, rice subsidy, and other programs;
- In aid of economic recovery, the government shall give preference to materials and supplies made and manufactured in the Philippines in the procurement of goods and infrastructure projects; and

- To address some of the current procurement issues, particularly on the engagement of a procurement agent such as the PS-DBM and PITC, the following conditions and limitations are adopted: (1) the engagement of a government procurement agent is allowed only when the agency has no qualified personnel to constitute its own Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) or when its existing BAC lacks the proficiency and expertise to undertake a particular procurement project; (2) prohibition against a lumpsum or general engagement of a procurement agent or limited to a per procurement project basis; (3) no transfer of funds, other than the service fees, shall be allowed; (4) the award of contract shall be made by the procuring entity.

17. On **Special Provisions**, the following were adopted:

- Medical assistance to the indigent and financially-incapacitated patients shall also apply to patients of private health facilities when the government hospitals are unable to accommodate the patient due to the voluminous number of patients in their facilities and during emergency cases when the private health facility is the closest in the distance from the patient needing medical treatment; and
- To ensure the employment and steady source of income of beneficiaries, the DOLE and TESDA shall conduct a training program to develop the skills and competencies of TUPAD beneficiaries

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



SEN. SONNY ANGARA
Chairperson
Senate Panel



REP. ELIZALDY S. CO
Chairperson
House Panel

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NINETEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

RECEIVED BY

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CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Bicameral Conference Committee on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on House Bill No. 4488, titled:

"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"

having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do hereby recommend to their respective Houses that House Bill No. 4488 be approved with amendments, as follows:

Department/Agency/Corporation/Fund	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (HB No. 4488)	Increases	(Decreases)	Net Change	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (BICAM REPORT)
(In Thousand Pesos)					
DEPARTMENTS	3,027,905,522	351,260,504	(221,545,835)	129,714,669	3,157,620,191
I. CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES	25,869,979	13,308,286	-	13,308,286	39,178,265
A. Senate	8,480,150	934,830	-	934,830	9,414,980
B. Senate Electoral Tribunal	311,765	-	-	-	311,765
C. Commission on Appointments	875,016	331,000	-	331,000	1,206,016
D. House of Representatives	15,972,195	12,042,456	-	12,042,456	28,014,651
E. House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal	230,853	-	-	-	230,853
II. OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT	8,969,005	60,000	-	60,000	9,029,005
A. The President's Offices	8,969,005	60,000	-	60,000	9,029,005
III. OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT	2,292,673	51,218	-	51,218	2,343,891
A. Office of the Vice-President	2,292,673	51,218	-	51,218	2,343,891
IV. DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM	14,397,370	26,000	(4,561,567)	(4,535,567)	9,861,803
A. Office of the Secretary	14,397,370	26,000	(4,561,567)	(4,535,567)	9,861,803
V. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	99,722,201	16,776,427	(17,634,231)	(857,804)	98,864,397
A. Office of the Secretary	87,988,150	14,633,348	(16,739,530)	(2,106,182)	85,881,968
B. Agricultural Credit Policy Council	2,833,322	-	-	-	2,833,322
C. Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources	6,206,077	1,343,900	(733,900)	610,000	6,816,077
D. Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority	250,102	-	-	-	250,102
E. National Fisheries Research and Development Institute	375,089	30,000	(30,000)	-	375,089
F. National Meat Inspection Service	534,377	30,000	(30,000)	-	534,377
G. Philippine Carabao Center	555,648	698,879	(58,415)	640,464	1,196,112
H. Philippine Center for Post-Harvest Development and Mechanization	369,260	-	-	-	369,260
I. Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries	214,704	-	(22,086)	(22,086)	192,618
J. Philippine Fiber Industry Development Authority	395,472	40,300	(20,300)	20,000	415,472

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Department/Agency/Corporation/Fund	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (HB No. 4486)	Increases	(Decreases)	Net Change	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (BICAM REPORT)
J.7 Iloilo State University of Science and Technology	447,249	5,000	-	5,000	452,249
J.8 Northern Iloilo State University	603,916	5,000	-	5,000	608,916
J.9 Northern Negros State College of Science and Technology	259,999	55,000	-	55,000	314,999
J.10 University of Antique	561,746	60,000	-	60,000	621,746
J.11 West Visayas State University	1,811,594	990,791	-	990,791	2,802,385
K. REGION VII - CENTRAL VISAYAS	4,079,456	424,215	-	424,215	4,503,671
K.1 Bohol Island State University	696,053	108,615	-	108,615	804,668
K.2 Cebu Normal University	538,744	145,700	-	145,700	684,444
K.3 Cebu Technological University	1,775,408	157,300	-	157,300	1,932,708
K.4 Negros Oriental State University	923,044	6,300	-	6,300	929,344
K.5 Siquijor State College	146,207	6,300	-	6,300	152,507
L. REGION VIII - EASTERN VISAYAS	5,137,979	1,815,602	-	1,815,602	6,953,581
L.1 Biliran Province State University	368,829	5,000	-	5,000	373,829
L.2 Eastern Samar State University	632,986	61,274	-	61,274	694,260
L.3 Eastern Visayas State University	655,262	1,529,646	-	1,529,646	2,184,908
L.4 Leyte Normal University	321,006	126,300	-	126,300	447,306
L.5 Northwest Samar State University	264,055	5,000	-	5,000	269,055
L.6 Palompon Polytechnic State University	281,252	5,000	-	5,000	286,252
L.7 Samar State University	403,860	47,317	-	47,317	451,177
L.8 Southern Leyte State University	498,079	6,300	-	6,300	504,379
L.9 University of Eastern Philippines	715,763	6,300	-	6,300	722,063
L.10 Visayas State University	996,887	23,465	-	23,465	1,020,352
M. REGION IX - ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA	2,664,110	115,600	-	115,600	2,779,710
M.1 Basilan State College	194,051	40,000	-	40,000	234,051
M.2 J.H. Cerilles State College	332,975	5,000	-	5,000	337,975
M.3 Jose Rizal Memorial State University	696,610	5,000	-	5,000	701,610
M.4 Western Mindanao State University	900,565	14,300	-	14,300	914,865
M.5 Zamboanga Peninsula Polytechnic State University	312,313	45,000	-	45,000	357,313
M.6 Zamboanga State College of Marine Sciences and Technology	227,596	6,300	-	6,300	233,896
N. REGION X - NORTHERN MINDANAO	4,541,871	371,066	-	371,066	4,912,937
N.1 Bukidnon State University	801,829	113,600	-	113,600	915,429
N.2 Camiguin Polytechnic State College	132,127	5,000	-	5,000	137,127
N.3 Central Mindanao University	838,527	25,000	-	25,000	863,527
N.4 MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology	1,292,972	56,300	-	56,300	1,349,272
N.5 Northern Bukidnon State College	234,169	45,000	-	45,000	279,169
N.6 Northwestern Mindanao State College of Science and Technology	239,355	5,000	-	5,000	244,355
N.7 University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines- Cagayan de Oro Campus	796,146	101,166	-	101,166	897,312
N.8 University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines- Claveria Campus	206,746	20,000	-	20,000	226,746
O. REGION XI - DAVAO	1,686,688	194,655	-	194,655	1,881,343
O.1 Davao de Oro State College	224,681	15,000	-	15,000	239,681
O.2 Davao del Norte State College	207,837	6,300	-	6,300	214,137

Hon. Speaker
 Hon. President
 Hon. Vice President
 Hon. Secretary
 Hon. Members of the House of Representatives
 Hon. Members of the Senate
 Hon. Members of the Judiciary
 Hon. Members of the Local Government Units
 Hon. Members of the Bar
 Hon. Members of the Press
 Hon. Members of the Public
 Hon. Members of the Commission on Audit
 Hon. Members of the Commission on Elections
 Hon. Members of the Commission on Human Rights
 Hon. Members of the Commission on Information
 Hon. Members of the Commission on Labor
 Hon. Members of the Commission on the National Government
 Hon. Members of the Commission on the National Police
 Hon. Members of the Commission on the National Youth
 Hon. Members of the Commission on the National Women's
 Hon. Members of the Commission on the National Workers
 Hon. Members of the Commission on the National Teachers
 Hon. Members of the Commission on the National Veterans
 Hon. Members of the Commission on the National Youth League
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 Hon. Members of the Commission on the National Veterans League

Department/Agency/Corporation/Fund	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (HB No. 4488)	Increases	(Decreases)	Net Change	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (BICAM REPORT)
O.3 Davao del Sur State College	185,198	5,000	-	5,000	190,198
O.4 Davao Oriental State University	263,833	5,000	-	5,000	268,833
O.5 Southern Philippines Agri-Business and Marine and Aquatic School of Technology	159,016	5,000	-	5,000	164,016
O.6 University of Southeastern Philippines	646,123	158,355	-	158,355	804,478
P. REGION XII - SOCCSKSARGEN	1,722,211	119,900	-	119,900	1,842,111
P.1 Cotabato Foundation College of Science and Technology	273,719	20,000	-	20,000	293,719
P.2 South Cotabato State College	81,696	6,300	-	6,300	87,996
P.3 Sultan Kudarat State University	523,593	26,300	-	26,300	549,893
P.4 University of Southern Mindanao	843,203	67,300	-	67,300	910,503
Q. REGION XIII - CARAGA	1,899,896	23,900	-	23,900	1,923,796
Q.1 Agusan del Sur State College of Agriculture and Technology	246,939	6,300	-	6,300	253,239
Q.2 Caraga State University	481,296	6,300	-	6,300	487,596
Q.3 North Eastern Mindanao State University	706,406	5,000	-	5,000	711,406
Q.4 Surigao del Norte State University (formerly Surigao State College of Technology)	465,255	6,300	-	6,300	471,555
R. BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANO (BARMM)	5,122,327	2,739,348	-	2,739,348	7,861,675
R.1 Adiong Memorial Polytechnic State College	94,899	5,000	-	5,000	99,899
R.2 Cotabato State University	279,279	5,000	-	5,000	284,279
R.3 Mindanao State University	3,675,853	2,693,348	-	2,693,348	6,369,201
R.4 MSU-Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography	679,350	5,000	-	5,000	684,350
R.5 Sulu State College	223,920	26,000	-	26,000	249,920
R.6 Tawi-Tawi Regional Agricultural College	169,026	5,000	-	5,000	174,026
IX. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY	1,320,735	-	-	-	1,320,735
A. Office of the Secretary	1,320,735	-	-	-	1,320,735
X. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES	23,041,980	1,001,134	(751,112)	250,022	23,292,002
A. Office of the Secretary	17,884,847	966,134	(751,112)	215,022	18,099,869
B. Environmental Management Bureau	2,328,917	5,000	-	5,000	2,333,917
C. Mines and Geosciences Bureau	1,239,228	10,000	-	10,000	1,249,228
D. National Mapping and Resource Information Authority	1,378,395	-	-	-	1,378,395
E. National Water Resources Board	122,724	20,000	-	20,000	142,724
F. Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff	87,869	-	-	-	87,869
XI. DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE	22,893,000	145,448	(1,136,916)	(991,468)	21,901,532
A. Office of the Secretary	1,031,936	-	-	-	1,031,936
B. Bureau of Customs	4,435,596	145,448	(876,540)	(731,092)	3,704,504
C. Bureau of Internal Revenue	12,446,731	-	-	-	12,446,731
D. Bureau of Local Government Finance	579,877	-	(260,376)	(260,376)	319,501
E. Bureau of the Treasury	4,180,557	-	-	-	4,180,557
F. Central Board of Assessment Appeals	14,740	-	-	-	14,740
G. Insurance Commission	6	-	-	-	6

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Signed: _____
 Date: _____
 Department of Energy
 Office of the Secretary

Signed: _____
 Date: _____
 Department of Environment and Natural Resources
 Office of the Secretary

Department/Agency/Corporation/Fund	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (HB No. 4488)	Increases	(Decreases)	Net Change	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (BICAM REPORT)
XVIII. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT	49,173,122	2,925,500	(5,466,700)	(2,541,200)	46,631,922
A. Office of the Secretary	27,251,955	1,803,500	(2,169,200)	(365,700)	26,886,255
B. Institute for Labor Studies	55,586	-	-	-	55,586
C. National Conciliation and Mediation Board	275,591	-	-	-	275,591
D. National Labor Relations Commission	1,382,999	-	-	-	1,382,999
E. National Wages and Productivity Commission	271,402	-	-	-	271,402
F. Professional Regulation Commission	1,699,585	50,000	-	50,000	1,749,585
G. Technical Education and Skills Development Authority	18,236,004	1,072,000	(3,297,500)	(2,225,500)	16,010,504
XIX. DEPARTMENT OF MIGRANT WORKERS	14,979,276	1,065,000	(150,000)	915,000	15,894,276
A. Office of the Secretary	3,309,837	865,000	-	865,000	4,174,837
B. Overseas Workers Welfare Administration	11,669,439	200,000	(150,000)	50,000	11,719,439
XX. DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE	230,302,898	4,263,434	(30,000,000)	(25,736,566)	204,566,332
A. Office of the Secretary - Proper	678,988	500,000	-	500,000	1,178,988
B. Government Arsenal	1,419,876	100,000	-	100,000	1,519,876
C. National Defense College of the Philippines	116,729	10,000	-	10,000	126,729
D. Office of Civil Defense	1,249,307	225,270	-	225,270	1,474,577
E. Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO)-Proper	601,843	-	-	-	601,843
F. Veterans Memorial Medical Center	2,298,374	250,000	-	250,000	2,548,374
G. Armed Forces of the Philippines	223,937,781	3,178,164	(30,000,000)	(26,821,836)	197,115,945
G.1 Philippine Army (Land Forces)	109,826,684	501,687	-	501,687	110,328,371
G.2 Philippine Air Force (Air Forces)	35,368,675	200,000	-	200,000	35,568,675
G.3 Philippine Navy (Naval Forces)	34,713,427	226,477	-	226,477	34,939,904
G.4 General Headquarters, AFP and AFP-Wide Service Support Units (AFPWSSUS)	44,028,995	2,250,000	(30,000,000)	(27,750,000)	16,278,995
XXI. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS	737,357,327	245,486,450	(89,722,737)	155,763,713	893,121,040
A. Office of the Secretary	737,357,327	245,486,450	(89,722,737)	155,763,713	893,121,040
XXII. DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	23,762,254	769,476	-	769,476	24,531,730
A. Office of the Secretary	6,042,097	382,236	-	382,236	6,424,333
B. Advanced Science and Technology Institute	424,510	-	-	-	424,510
C. Food and Nutrition Research Institute	551,577	50,000	-	50,000	601,577
D. Forest Products Research and Development Institute	210,564	12,184	-	12,184	222,748
E. Industrial Technology Development Institute	430,916	-	-	-	430,916
F. Metals Industry Research and Development Center	235,364	11,431	-	11,431	246,795
G. National Academy of Science and Technology	122,918	40,000	-	40,000	162,918
H. National Research Council of the Philippines	139,992	45,000	-	45,000	184,992
I. Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration	1,103,777	100,000	-	100,000	1,203,777
J. Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resource Research and Development	1,434,602	-	-	-	1,434,602
K. Philippine Council for Health Research and Development	771,196	-	-	-	771,196
L. Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development	834,692	-	-	-	834,692

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Approved: _____
 Department of Science and Technology
 Office of the Secretary
 Date: _____

Approved: _____
 Department of Labor and Employment
 Office of the Secretary
 Date: _____

Department/Agency/Corporation/Fund
 FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (HB No. 4488)
 Increases
 (Decreases)
 Net Change
 FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (BICAM REPORT)

Department/Agency/Corporation/Fund	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (HB No. 4488)	Increases	(Decreases)	Net Change	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (BICAM REPORT)
XXVIII. OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY	990,069	90,000	-	90,000	1,080,069
A. Office of the Press Secretary (Proper)	403,072	90,000	-	90,000	493,072
B. Bureau of Broadcast Services	439,448	-	-	-	439,448
C. National Printing Office	16,034	-	-	-	16,034
D. News and Information Bureau	131,515	-	-	-	131,515
XXIX. OTHER EXECUTIVE OFFICES	48,111,895	6,342,540	(5,811,731)	530,809	48,642,704
A. Anti-Money Laundering Council	108,828	75,000	-	75,000	183,828
B. Anti-Red Tape Authority	256,099	80,000	-	80,000	336,099
C. Climate Change Commission	128,210	-	-	-	128,210
D. Commission on Filipinos Overseas	151,577	29,440	-	29,440	181,017
E. Commission on Higher Education	34,951,393	1,436,500	(5,500,000)	(4,063,500)	30,887,893
F. Commission on the Filipino Language	70,487	10,156	-	10,156	80,643
G. Dangerous Drugs Board	363,658	-	-	-	363,658
H. Energy Regulatory Commission	723,910	318,112	(15,000)	303,112	1,027,022
I. Film Development Council of the Philippines	243,483	63,441	-	63,441	306,924
J. Games and Amusements Board	139,972	-	-	-	139,972
K. Governance Commission for Government-Owned or Controlled Corporations	245,702	166,999	-	166,999	412,701
L. Mindanao Development Authority	158,958	42,291	-	42,291	201,249
M. Movie and Television Review and Classification Board	44,622	20,562	-	20,562	65,184
N. National Commission for Culture and the Arts	564,316	487,862	-	487,862	1,052,178
N.1 National Commission for Culture and the Arts (Proper)	25,163	248,500	-	248,500	273,663
N.2 National Historical Commission of the Philippines	212,772	123,162	-	123,162	335,934
N.3 National Library of the Philippines	161,122	66,200	-	66,200	227,322
N.4 National Archives of the Philippines	165,259	50,000	-	50,000	215,259
O. National Commission of Senior Citizens	103,343	90,000	-	90,000	193,343
P. National Intelligence Coordinating Agency	1,058,662	326,413	-	326,413	1,385,075
Q. National Security Council	332,027	86,807	-	86,807	418,834
R. Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity	1,891,030	76,134	(6,000)	70,134	1,961,164
S. Optical Media Board	71,657	-	(23,441)	(23,441)	48,216
T. Philippine Competition Commission	843,708	8,500	(267,290)	(258,790)	584,918
U. Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency	3,009,572	12,000	-	12,000	3,021,572
V. Philippine Information Agency	431,208	10,000	-	10,000	441,208
W. Philippine Racing Commission	189,380	50,000	-	50,000	239,380
X. Philippine Space Agency	747,658	100,000	-	100,000	847,658
Y. Philippine Sports Commission	181,700	2,095,000	-	2,095,000	2,276,700
Z. Presidential Legislative Liaison Office	104,917	-	-	-	104,917
AA. Presidential Management Staff	995,818	757,323	-	757,323	1,753,141
XXX. JOINT LEGISLATIVE - EXECUTIVE COUNCILS	2,879	-	-	-	2,879
A. Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council	2,879	-	-	-	2,879
XXXI. THE JUDICIARY	51,426,283	2,168,893	-	2,168,893	53,595,176
A. Supreme Court of the Philippines and the Lower Courts	41,923,098	1,248,516	-	1,248,516	43,171,614
B. Presidential Electoral Tribunal	162,072	-	-	-	162,072
C. Sandiganbayan	2,074,283	346,947	-	346,947	2,421,230
D. Court of Appeals	6,492,046	365,298	-	365,298	6,857,344
E. Court of Tax Appeals	774,784	208,132	-	208,132	982,916

Department/Agency/Corporation/Fund
 FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (HB No. 4488)
 Increases
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 Net Change
 FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (BICAM REPORT)

Hon. Speaker
 Hon. Deputy Speaker
 Hon. Members of the House of Representatives
 Hon. Members of the Senate
 Hon. Members of the Commission on Audit
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Ombudsman
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Inspector General
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Comptroller General
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Secretary of the Department of Budget and Finance
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Secretary of the Department of Transportation
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Secretary of the National Economic and Development Authority
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Secretary of the Office of the Press Secretary
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Secretary of the Other Executive Offices
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Secretary of the Budgetary Support to Government Corporations - Others
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Secretary of the Allocations to Local Government Units
 Hon. Members of the Office of the Secretary of the Contingent Fund

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Department/Agency/Corporation/Fund	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (HB No. 4488)	Increases	(Decreases)	Net Change	FY 2023 General Appropriations Bill (BICAM REPORT)
G. DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM	113,646	150,000	-	150,000	263,646
G.1 Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority	113,646	50,000	-	50,000	163,646
G.2 Tourism Promotions Board		100,000	-	100,000	100,000
H. DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY	1,710,940	-	(750,000)	(750,000)	960,940
H.1 Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority	46,283	-	-	-	46,283
H.2 Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions	164,657	-	-	-	164,657
H.3 Small Business Corporation	1,500,000	-	(750,000)	(750,000)	750,000
I. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	1,793,620	100,000	-	100,000	1,893,620
I.1 Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines		100,000	-	100,000	100,000
I.2 Light Rail Transit Authority	1,053,363	-	-	-	1,053,363
I.3 Philippine National Railways	740,257	-	-	-	740,257
J. NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	254,609	-	-	-	254,609
J.1 Philippine Institute for Development Studies	254,609	-	-	-	254,609
K. OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY	125,159	187,899	-	187,899	313,058
K.1 Intercontinental Broadcasting Corporation		187,899	-	187,899	187,899
K.2 People's Television Network, Incorporated	125,159	-	-	-	125,159
L. OTHER EXECUTIVE OFFICES	4,997,317	601,887	-	601,887	5,599,204
L.1 Authority of the Freeport Area of Bataan	191,260	-	-	-	191,260
L.2 Bases Conversion Development Authority	2,684,371	-	-	-	2,684,371
L.3 Cagayan Economic Zone Authority	243,508	256,492	-	256,492	500,000
L.4 Credit Information Corporation		60,000	-	60,000	60,000
L.5 Cultural Center of the Philippines	356,267	100,000	-	100,000	456,267
L.6 Development Academy of the Philippines	577,027	104,967	-	104,967	681,994
L.7 Philippine Center for Economic Development	27,435	10,000	-	10,000	37,435
L.8 Philippine Postal Corporation		45,000	-	45,000	45,000
L.9 Southern Philippines Development Authority	48,582	25,428	-	25,428	74,010
L.10 Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority	592,894	-	-	-	592,894
L.11 Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority	275,973	-	-	-	275,973
M. BUDGETARY SUPPORT TO GOVERNMENT CORPORATIONS - OTHERS	28,606	-	-	-	28,606
XXXVIII. ALLOCATIONS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS	59,511,290	9,876,536	(3,664,000)	6,212,536	65,723,826
A. Metropolitan Manila Development Authority	4,382,275	900,000	-	900,000	5,282,275
B. Special Shares of LGUs in the Proceeds of National Taxes	33,588,409	-	-	-	33,588,409
C. Local Government Support Fund	11,185,300	8,976,536	(3,664,000)	5,312,536	16,497,836
D. Special Shares of LGUs in the Proceeds of Fire Code Fees	710,324	-	-	-	710,324
E. Barangay Officials Death Benefits	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
F. Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)	9,594,982	-	-	-	9,594,982
XXXIX. CONTINGENT FUND	13,000,000	-	-	-	13,000,000

OMNIBUS MOTION

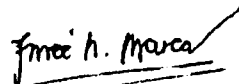
1. The Technical Staff of the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance are authorized to effect corrections of typographical, grammatical and printing errors, as well as necessary adjustments such as performance indicators and section number of general and special provisions, as a consequence of the amendments.
2. In case of conflict between the Conference Committee Report and the printed copy of the bill, the latter shall prevail.

CONFEREES ON THE PART OF THE SENATE


HON. SONNY ANGARA


HON. PIA S. CAYETANO



HON. LOREN LEGARDA


HON. F. M. MARCOS


HON. CYNTHIA A. VILLAR


HON. RONALD "BATO" DELA ROSA


HON. WIN GATCHALIAN


HON. CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE T. GO

HON. RISA HONTIVEROS


HON. MARIA LOURDES NANCY S. BINAY


HON. GRACE POE

CONFEREES ON THE PART OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



HON. ELIZALDY S. CO


HON. STELLA LUZ A. QUIMBO


HON. RALPH G. RECTO



HON. AURELIO "DONG" D. GONZALES, JR.


HON. MANUEL JOSE "MANNIX" M. DALIPE

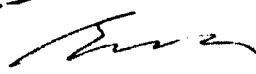

HON. FERDINAND ALEXANDER A. MARCOS


HON. DAVID "JAY-JAY" C. SUAREZ

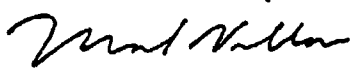

HON. NEPTALI M. GONZALES II



HON. JOSE "JOBOY" S. AQUINO II



HON. RAUL ANGELO "JIL" D. BONGALON

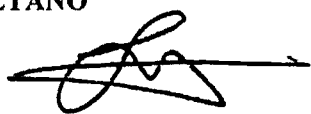

HON. ELEANDRO JESUS F. MADRONA


HON. FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO


HON. MARK A. VILLAR


HON. JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO

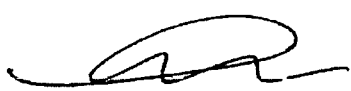
 With reservations
HON. ALAN PETER "COMPAÑERO" S. CAYETANO


HON. FRANCIS "CHIZ" G. ESCUDERO


HON. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA


HON. MICHAEL JOHN R. DUAUIT


HON. MARCELINO C. LIBANAN


HON. EDCEL C. LAGMAN

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