



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
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SESSION NO. 44
Tuesday, January 31, 2023

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

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Senate of the Philippines

SESSION NO. 44
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CALL TO ORDER

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

PRAYER

Sen. Raffy T. Tulfo led the prayer, to wit:

Ating pong alalahanin na tayo ay nasa presensiya ng Panginoon.

Matthew 14:16-20: “Ang Mahimalang Pagpapakain sa Limang Libo.”

Sabi ni Hesus sa kaniyang mga disipulo: “Hindi na sila kailangang umalis. Kayo ang magpakain sa kanila.”

Sumagot sila: “Wala po tayong pagkain kung limang tinapay at dalawang isda.”

“Dalhin ninyo rito,” sabi ni Hesus... Kinuha ang limang tinapay at dalawang isda, tumingala siya sa langit at nagpasalamat sa Diyos. Pinaghati-hati Niya ang mga ito at iniutos sa mga alagad na ipamahagi iyon sa mga tao. Nakakain at nabusog ang lahat.

Panginoon, gaya po ng mga disipulo, kami po ay lumalapit sa Inyo dahil hindi po sapat ang mayroon kami upang matugunan ang pangangailangan ng taumbayan, kaya’t inaalay namin sa Inyo ang lahat ng aming ginagawa dito.

Inaalay po namin ang mga talakayan, pag-aaral, at pagsusulat ng mga batas.

Inaalay po namin ang lahat ng ito sa Inyong mapaghimalang kamay upang ito ay gawin Ninyong sapat para sa mga tao na umaasang ang kanilang gutom ay mapapawi.

Panginoon, muli po, kami ay nagpapasalamat sa pagkakataong makapagsilbi sa bayan at maging instrumento ng Inyong pagmamahal dito sa mundo.

Amen.



ROLL CALL

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

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

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

Senator Cayetano (A) was on official business to attend gatherings of organized associations of Filipinos in Singapore and other meetings, as stated in the January 30, 2023 letter of his chief of staff.

Senator Escudero was unable to attend the session because he was out of the country, as stated in the January 23, 2023 letter of his chief of staff.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senator Villanueva acknowledged the presence in the gallery of the delegation from the Bangsamoro Transition Authority Parliament secretariat led by Plenary and Committee Affairs Department Director Jaime M. Ayub, together with the staff of its Plenary, Bills and Index, and Journal Divisions; and Mayor Ronaldo Apostol of Cabangan, Zambales.

Senate President Zubiri welcomed the guests to the Senate.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journal of Session No. 43 (January 30, 2023) and considered it approved.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1753, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT CORPORATE COUNSEL (OGCC), BY RATIONALIZING AND FURTHER PROFESSIONALIZING ITS ORGANIZATION, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Angara



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

Senate Bill No. 1754, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 6, 9, AND 11 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10410, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "EARLY YEARS ACT OF 2013," AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Angara

To the Committees on Basic Education; and Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality

Senate Bill No. 1755, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A BARANGAY TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY DENGAO IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF TINOC, PROVINCE OF IFUGAO, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill No. 1756, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CALASIAO PROVINCE OF PANGASINAN, TO BE KNOWN AS THE CALASIAO DISTRICT HOSPITAL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill. No. 1757, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE SUYO-SIGAY-DEL PILAR ROAD, LOCATED IN THE PROVINCE OF ILOCOS SUR INTO A NATIONAL ROAD AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill. No. 1758, entitled

AN ACT CONVERTING THE PROVINCIAL ROAD STRETCHING FROM BARANGAY MABINI-PINTOR-UNION, MUNICIPALITY OF GAMU TO MANGCURAM-LULLUTAN, CITY OF ILAGAN, ALL OF THE PROVINCE OF ISABELA INTO A NATIONAL ROAD, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill. No. 1759, entitled

AN ACT REVERTING THE NAME OF BARANGAY SAN MARIANO IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BANTAY, PROVINCE OF ILOCOS SUR, TO ITS ORIGINAL NAME BARANGAY SALLACONG

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill. No. 1760, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC CREMATORIUMS IN CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES AND EXTENDING FREE CREMATION SERVICES TO INDIGENT FAMILIES AND AMENDING FOR SUCH PURPOSE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE AND THE CODE OF SANITATION

Introduced by Senator Tulfo

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

Senate Bill. No. 1761, entitled

AN ACT DEFINING AND PROVIDING FOR MORE SEVERE PENALTIES FOR LARGE SCALE EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION OF CORALS AND CORAL REEFS, TAKING ENDANGERED SPECIES, AND OTHER SIMILAR ACTS OF DESTRUCTION OF MARINE RESOURCES, FURTHER AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8550, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE PHILIPPINE FISHERIES CODE OF 1998, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10654

Introduced by Senator Tulfo

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

Senate Bill. No. 1762, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF PLASTIC POSTERS DURING THE CAMPAIGN SEASON, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 3 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9006, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS FAIR ELECTION ACT

Introduced by Senator Tulfo

To the Committee on Electoral Reforms and People's Participation

Senate Bill. No. 1763, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING CORPORATIVE FARMING AND PROVIDING INCENTIVES FOR ITS EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

Introduced by Senator Tulfo

To the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; and Ways and Means

Senate Bill. No. 1764, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE LIFETIME VALIDITY OF PERSON WITH DISABILITY IDENTIFICATION CARDS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE MAGNA CARTA FOR DISABLED PERSONS, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9442 AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10524

Introduced by Senator Tulfo

To the Committee on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development

Senate Bill. No. 1765, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING PROTECTION, SECURITY, AND BENEFITS FOR NEWS MEDIA WORKERS

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Public Information and Mass Media

Senate Bill. No. 1766, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING FULL INSURANCE COVERAGE TO ALL QUALIFIED AGRARIAN REFORM BENEFICIARIES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6657, AS AMENDED, BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9700, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM LAW OF 1988"

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; and Finance

Senate Bill. No. 1767, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Public Services

Senate Bill. No. 1768, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Lapid

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



Senate Bill. No. 1769, entitled

AN ACT TO DESIGNATE THE SIXTH (6TH) DAY OF JANUARY OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY TO BE KNOWN AS TANDANG SORA DAY, MANDATING CONCERNED AGENCIES TO CONDUCT EVENTS DURING ITS OBSERVANCE, TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committees on Basic Education; and Finance

Senate Bill. No. 1770, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill. No. 1771, entitled

AN ACT CONVERTING THE MOUNTAIN PROVINCE – ILOCOS SUR ROAD VIA DACUDAC-PILIPIL ROAD INTO A NATIONAL ROAD AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill. No. 1772, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TESDA) TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT CENTERS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LIBJO, PROVINCE OF DINAGAT ISLANDS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill. No. 1773, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill. No. 1774, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF THE BENGUET GENERAL HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LA TRINIDAD, PROVINCE OF BENGUET FROM TWO HUNDRED (200) TO FOUR HUNDRED (400) BEDS, PLACING THE HOSPITAL UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION AND CONTROL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill. No. 1775, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING ALL GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND ESTABLISHMENTS TO ADOPT POLICIES TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS THE ACTS OF BULLYING AND OTHER SIMILAR ACTS IN THEIR WORKPLACE

Introduced by Senator Tulfo

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

Senate Bill. No. 1776, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING HMO BENEFITS TO ALL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES IN THE PHILIPPINES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Tulfo

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

Senate Bill. No. 1777, entitled

AN ACT REGULATING THE OWNERSHIP AND OPERATION OF DRONES BY PRIVATE PERSONS

Introduced by Senator Tulfo

To the Committees on Public Services; and Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship

Senate Bill. No. 1778, entitled

AN ACT REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4635 OR "AN ACT TO SAFEGUARD THE HEALTH OF THE PEOPLE AND MAINTAIN THE DIGNITY OF THE NATION BY DECLARING IT A NATIONAL POLICY TO PROHIBIT THE COMMERCIAL IMPORTATION OF TEXTILE ARTICLES COMMONLY KNOWN AS USED CLOTHING AND RAGS," SETTING NATIONAL POLICIES ON THE COMMERCIAL IMPORTATION OF USED TEXTILES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES



Introduced by Senator Tulfo

To the Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; and Ways and Means

Senate Bill. No. 1779, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Tulfo

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

Senate Bill. No. 1780, entitled

AN ACT SEPARATING THE IFUGAO STATE UNIVERSITY (IFSU) – POTIA CAMPUS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ALFONSO LISTA, PROVINCE OF IFUGAO, FROM THE IFSU IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LAMUT, PROVINCE OF IFUGAO, CONVERTING IT INTO A STATE COLLEGE TO BE KNOWN AS THE EASTERN CORDILLERA STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (ECSCAST), INTEGRATING THEREWITH THE IFSU-LUPAO CAMPUS, HENCEWORTH TO BE KNOWN AS THE ECSCAST-LUPAO CAMPUS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill. No. 1781, entitled

AN ACT DIVIDING BARANGAY POBLACION IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LA PAZ PROVINCE OF ABRA INTO DISTINCT AND INDEPENDENT BARANGAYS TO BE KNOWN AS BARANGAY NORTH POBLACION AND BARANGAY SOUTH POBLACION

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill. No. 1782, entitled

AN ACT CONVERTING THE LA PAZ DISTRICT HOSPITAL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LA PAZ, PROVINCE OF ABRA INTO A GENERAL HOSPITAL UNDER THE FULL AUTHORITY AND TECHNICAL SUPERVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO BE KNOWN AS THE LA PAZ GENERAL HOSPITAL, INCREASING ITS BED CAPACITY FROM TWENTY-FIVE (25) BEDS TO ONE HUNDRED (100) BEDS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules



RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 382, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING SANDREX GAINSAN FOR WINNING THE GOLD MEDAL IN THE QIANGSHU EVENT OF THE 8TH WORLD JUNIOR WUSHU CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN TANGERANG, INDONESIA

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 383, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING SOFIELLE PRAJATI "PRAJ" DELA CRUZ FOR WINNING TWO GOLD MEDALS AND ONE SILVER MEDAL FOR THE PHILIPPINES IN THE 2022 INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SPORT CLIMBING-ASIAN KIDS CHAMPIONSHIP HELD IN JAMSHEDPUR, INDIA

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 384, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING JOVAN MEDALLO, RENZ DACQUEL, AND CHEIN YOSOREZ FOR THEIR STELLAR PERFORMANCES AT THE ASIAN KICKBOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2022

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 385, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STATE OF FOOD SECURITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 386, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM TO INQUIRE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE CURRENT CAPACITY OF OUR AIRPORTS TO RECEIVE INFLUX OF TRAVELERS AND TOURISTS AS OUR COUNTRY REOPENS ITS BORDERS FOR TOURISM

Introduced by Senator Binay

To the Committees on Tourism; and Public Services

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 387, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING THE OUTSTANDING
FILIPINO (TOFIL) AWARDEES FOR 2022 FOR THEIR EXEMPLARY
CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATION BUILDING

Introduced by Senator Revilla

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 388, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND RECOGNIZING FILIPINA BEACH
VOLLEYBALL POWER DUO, CHERRY ANN "SISI" RONDINA AND JOVELYN
GONZAGA FOR WINNING THE CHAMPIONSHIP IN VOLLEYBALL WORLD
BEACH PRO TOUR FUTURES HELD ON DECEMBER 9-11, 2022 IN SUBIC,
ZAMBALES

Introduced by Senator Revilla

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 389, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING THE 2022 OUTSTANDING
RURAL WOMEN FOR BEING ROLE MODELS FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Introduced by Senator Revilla

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 390, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE/S OF THE SENATE
TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE RECENT
TECHNICAL GLITCH IN THE COUNTRY'S AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
SYSTEM WITH A VIEW TO IMPROVING THE PHILIPPINES' OVERALL AIR
TRAFFIC SERVICES, UTILIZING IT AS AN ENGINE OF FURTHER ECONOMIC
GROWTH, AND ALIGNING THE RELEVANT AGENCIES' PLANS WITH THE
GOALS OF THE PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2028 TO SPUR
THE ECONOMY, REVITALIZE THE TOURISM SECTOR, AND CREATE MORE
OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOB GENERATION

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Public Services

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 391, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICES
TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SHUTDOWN

98

OF PHILIPPINE AIRSPACE ON JANUARY 1, 2023, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF EVALUATING PHILIPPINE AIRPORT OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT INCLUDING ITS EXISTING FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT; ASSESSING THE SHUTDOWN'S TOURISM AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS; AND PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF THE PASSENGERS FOR COMFORT AND EFFICIENCY

Introduced by Senator Revilla

To the Committee on Public Services

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 392, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE/S TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF URGENT REMEDIAL LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED POWER OUTAGE AND TECHNICAL ISSUES IN THE NINYO AQUINO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (NAIA) ON JANUARY 1, 2023 WHICH RESULTED IN THE CANCELLATION OF HUNDREDS OF FLIGHTS, INCONVENIENCE OF THOUSANDS OF PASSENGERS, AND THE SHUTDOWN OF PHILIPPINE AIRSPACE, THEREBY FURTHER ADVERSELY IMPACTING THE IMAGE OF THE COUNTRY AS A TOURISM DESTINATION, AND HURTING THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Public Services

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 393, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE CONTINGENT TO THE 2022 ASIAN KICKBOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN BANGKOK, THAILAND FOR WINNING FOUR (4) GOLD, ONE (1) SILVER, AND SIX (6) BRONZE MEDALS

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 394, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE/S OF THE SENATE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES TO PREPARE AND PROTECT THE BANANA INDUSTRY FROM THE SPREAD OF THE TR4 FUNGUS AND OTHER DISEASES AND FURTHER EXPAND THE POTENTIAL OF THE BANANA INDUSTRY AS AN EMPLOYMENT GENERATOR IN THE COUNTRY

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; and Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 395, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING THE PHILIPPINE
WRESTLING TEAM FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AT THE
2022 SOUTHEAST ASIAN WRESTLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 396, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING THE PHILIPPINE KICKBOXING DELEGA-
TION FOR THEIR EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE AT THE 2022 ASIAN
KICKBOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 397, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING THE PHILIPPINE JUNIOR NATIONAL
SWIMMING TEAM FOR THEIR EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE AT THE
44TH SOUTHEAST ASIAN AGE GROUP SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 398, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING THE TEAM BEHIND
THE SHORT FILM, THE HEADHUNTER'S DAUGHTER, FOR WINNING THE
SHORT FILM GRAND JURY PRIZE AT THE 2022 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 399, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING THE TEAM BEHIND
THE FILM, LEONOR WILL NEVER DIE, FOR WINNING THE SPECIAL JURY
PRIZE FOR INNOVATIVE SPIRIT AT THE 2022 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 400, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICES

TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE RECENT AIRPORT NAVIGATION SYSTEM FIASCO THAT PARALYZED THE OPERATION OF THE NINOY AQUINO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (NAIA), RISKED THE SAFETY OF TRAVELERS, AND POSED NATIONAL SECURITY CONCERNS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF STRENGTHENING AND ENSURING SAFETY IN THE AVIATION INDUSTRY, AND PREVENTION OF ANY OTHER SIMILAR INCIDENTS IN THE FUTURE

Introduced by Senator Ejercito

To the Committee on Public Services

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 401, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE NEW YEAR SYSTEM FAILURE CRISIS AT THE NINOY AQUINO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (NAIA), RESULTING IN THE BREAKDOWN OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL AND THE DISRUPTION OF A TOTAL OF 282 FLIGHTS AFFECTING AROUND 56,000 PASSENGERS

Introduced by Senator Hontiveros

To the Committee on Public Services

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

Senator Villanueva also acknowledged the presence in the gallery of the officials of the Laguna State Polytechnic University led by its President, Dr. Mario Briones, together with the Vice President for Administration, Engr. Beltran Pedrigal, Engr. Manuel Luis Alvarez, Atty. Rushid Jay Sancon, and Punong Barangay of Barangay Kataypunan Laguna Vicente Carlos Llamas VI.

Senate President Zubiri welcomed the guests to the Senate.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 17 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1604

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1604 (Committee Report No. 17), entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ACADEMIC RECOVERY AND ACCESSIBLE LEARNING (ARAL) PROGRAM, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

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

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

To Senator Pimentel's query whether the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) program was merely a supplement to the regular curriculum of basic education, Senator

Gatchalian replied in the negative, saying that the objective of the bill was to help students who did not enroll during school year 2020-2021 and those who fell below the proficiency levels required in Language, Mathematics, and Science. He clarified that it would be a continuing program to help students improve their grades. He added that the program would not be part of the curriculum and would be more like a tutoring or remedial program because the pandemic had done so much damage to the students' proficiency levels.

Senator Pimentel stated that the Department of Education launched the MATATAG program the day before at an education summit. Senator Gatchalian informed the Body that the theme "MATATAG" centered on access, quality, equity, and well-being.

On whether that education summit touched on ideas and plans similar to the concepts in the ARAL Bill, Senator Gatchalian responded that the DepEd summit presented a list of remedies to education challenges, which were quite comprehensive in terms of the discussion on the experiences of the students vis-à-vis the country's education system. He averred that the only thing in common between the ARAL Bill and the summit was their emphasis on numeracy (counting) and literacy (reading). He stressed that the bill aimed to improve proficiency levels on the fundamental skills of reading and comprehension (Language), counting (Mathematics), and Science. He believed that if a child could not read or count, it would be challenging for that child to advance in life.

Senator Gatchalian, on the other hand, explained that while DepEd aimed to strengthen its math and reading programs, it would not change the curriculum. He also stated that the measure would not cover other subjects such as trigonometry or history, and that it would be limited to helping students with problems in language, math, and science.

On whether the program would be optional or mandatory for learners covered under Section 2 of the measure, Senator Gatchalian stated that it would be mandatory for students who did not enroll in school year 2020, which was the pandemic year, and for learners who fell below the minimum proficiency levels required in Language, Mathematics, and Science. He emphasized the importance of helping students through an intervention program in order for them to catch up with their peers in the same grade level. He clarified, however, that the ARAL program would be optional for students in private schools who would have to request DepEd to apply the program to them.

Asked on the venue of the tutorial program, Senator Gatchalian said that the local public schools have to work with the LGUs which are mandated by the bill to provide safe areas conducive to tutorial lessons; meanwhile, private schools have to discuss the tutorial program with the school division where the classes will be held.

As to the number of hours to be added to the regular school time for learners who would be required to undertake the program, Senator Gatchalian recalled that during the technical working group meeting, the experts stated that there would be no single solution for the students covered by the bill because each of them has their own set of difficulties and challenges. He emphasized that the most effective intervention and popular approach would be learner-based one-on-one tutoring, but group or class tutoring may also be used. He said that another popular approach might be remediation, and it would be up to the DepEd and the school to design the type of intervention program that would be appropriate for the learners. He underscored that the bill requires that the intervention program be well-designed and learner-centered, with a learner-based assessment and analysis of what type of intervention the students requires to catch up with their peers.



Senator Pimentel opined that because the program is mandatory, the child-learner will believe that the additional hours spent in school are part of the regular school hours.

On whether the program will contribute to the problem of school space, particularly where classes would be held in shifts, Senator Gatchalian replied that it would depend on the location of the schools. He stated that urban areas, such as Metro Manila, have a big student population, whereas rural areas typically have an average of 30 students per classroom. He said that the intervention program could last anywhere from 30 minutes to one hour, depending on the intervention identified during the assessment of the student. He reiterated that the program would focus on the foundation skills such as math and reading, as well as the fundamental subjects of Language, Mathematics, and Science.

Senator Pimentel believed that there would be no need to assess the learners individually because teacher feedback could provide the information regarding where the student was weak or trailing behind. On that basis, he believed that the teacher could already intervene, such as assigning additional work to allow the student to catch up with the rest of the class.

Senator Gatchalian stated that in the circumstances given by Senator Pimentel, remedial or tutoring sessions may not be necessary and the student may just engage in normal classroom activities. However, he stated that it would still be on a case-to-case basis, depending on the level of competencies per class, which would be determined by the teacher.

Asked by Senator Pimentel whether the objectives of the ARAL Bill could be achieved even without legislation by merely adopting the DepEd approach of intensifying the Language, Math, and Science subjects during regular class hours, Senator Gatchalian responded that it would be the best-case and most practical scenario. However, he pointed out that there were students who were in dire need of intervention, especially because of the problems brought about by the pandemic. He stated that in Valenzuela City, they discovered that around 40%-50% of students in Grades 2 to 3 could not read. He said that such circumstance prompted the LGU to develop an intervention program in which college students were employed to teach elementary learners to read.

Senator Pimentel maintained that Math, Science, and Reading teachers could just provide interventions during regular class hours from Monday to Friday instead of having ARAL tutorial sessions on Saturdays. In reply, Senator Gatchalian asserted that while teachers have the moral obligation to ensure that their students learn and pass their subjects, the reality is that there are some students who need additional help in more complicated subjects; hence the need for DepEd to tap people who can help the teachers in tutoring the students in order to acquire the desired proficiency levels. He clarified that the ARAL Program would not immediately isolate the students, but rather there would be careful determination and assessment of learners as provided under in Section 4(d) to identify those who need additional intervention.

At this point, Senator Gatchalian, using slides on the screen, presented some statistics on why the Committee on Basic Education found the ARAL Program necessary, as follows:

1. According to World Bank data on learning poverty, during pre-pandemic times, the number of 10-year-old learners who could not read and understand a simple story was approximately 69%, implying that only 30% could read and understand a story, with the situation becoming worse when the pandemic struck the country, increasing the percentage to 90%;
2. Based on a USAID-rapid assessment study on reading and literacy called the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA), a metric on learning loss called Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling (LAYS) revealed that prior to the pre-pandemic, students in the Philippines



only obtained 7.5 years in terms of learning in a 12-year educational system due to quality, number of days, and other factors, which figure was reduced to 5.8 years during the pandemic; and

3. In another USAID study, only 40% of Grade 1 students were grade ready (ready for school in terms of reading), 36% for Grade 2, and 25% for Grade 3 in the NCR, where there was internet connectivity and qualified teachers were available; and that it was even worse in rural areas, such as the Bicol Region where 85% of learners in Grade 1 were not grade ready, 75% in Grade 2, and 64% in Grade 3.

Senator Gatchalian stated that based on the aforementioned data, the Committee on Basic Education deemed it essential to promote a massive intervention program to raise the readiness of students. He pointed out that the most extensive intervention program implemented by the government was allowing the students to go back to school. However, he noted that nearly 23 million public school students were not performing in the same level in terms of proficiency as some of their peers, which is why the Committee on Basic Education saw the need to come up with an intervention program that could tap qualified warm bodies like students from college and students taking up education courses to assist the DepEd in providing intervention programs.

On the supposition that the inadequacy in the fundamentals of Math, Science, and Reading might not be attributable to mental or intellectual capacity, but to numerous physical absences during regular class hours, Senator Gatchalian clarified that the intervention would not be the first option. He said that the teachers are trained on how to assist students so they would be at par with their peers in the same grade level. He added that the intervention programs could be as short as one to two hours, as was done in Valenzuela City where a two-hour reading program was conducted once a week and was proven beneficial to the students.

Asked if the intervention program in Valenzuela was mandatory, Senator Gatchalian replied in the affirmative, saying that the program, which ran only for two months, was based on the theory that if the local government of Valenzuela would not do anything, students with extreme difficulty in classes would naturally fall behind, would not pass the next grade level, and would probably drop out of school.

At this juncture, Senator Pimentel said that when the Body resumes consideration of the bill, he would continue his interpellation and ask about the mandatory nature of the program, the consequence for students who would not comply with the mandatory intervention program, the budgetary and manpower requirements of the program, and other general principles and details of the bill.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

It was 4:05 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:06 p.m., the session was resumed.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1604

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

98


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 4:06 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

Approved on February 1, 2023


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

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