



Republic of the Philippines
SENATE
Pasay City

JOURNAL

SESSION NO. 69
MONDAY, 15 MAY 2023



NINETEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

SESSION NO. 69
Monday, May 15, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:09 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Juan Miguel "Migz" F. Zubiri, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Joel Villanueva led the prayer, to wit:

Let us put ourselves in the presence of the Lord.

In Psalm 91:1-4, it says, He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my rock and my refuge, my God, in whom will I trust. Surely, He shall deliver me from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover me with His feathers, and under His wings shall thou trust; His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

Heavenly Father, we come to You, humbling ourselves, knowing that without You, we can do nothing; apart from You, we are nobody. But because You are with us, indeed, no one and nothing, no circumstances here on earth can be against us.

Today, as we open the session, we ask for the forgiveness of our sins. Cleanse us with Your most precious Blood shed in Calvary, and help us to be Your representatives here in this august Chamber.

Today, we ask for your treasury of wisdom to be upon each and every one of us as we do our job, and as we help each and every Filipino, not only inside this country but also outside of the Philippines.

We ask that You bless the works of our hands. Bless every family represented here today. Bless our leaders in government. Bless our Senate President. Bless our President, our Vice President, and all the institutions and agencies of government.

Into Your hands we commend everything, as we carefully give back to You all the glory, all the honor, and all the praise.

In the Name that is above every name. In the Name of Jesus Christ, we pray, Amen.



NATIONAL ANTHEM

The Himig Roseña choir of the Colegio de Santa Rosa – Makati led the singing of the national anthem and thereafter rendered the song, entitled “Orde-e,” arranged by Ms. Maria Theresa Vizconde-Roldan.

ROLL CALL

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

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

With 20 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senator Tulfo arrived after the roll call.

Senator Tolentino was on official mission abroad.

Senators Escudero and Cayetano (A) were absent.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

At the instance of Senator Villanueva, the Members greeted Senator Binay, who celebrated on her birthday on May 12, 2023, and all mothers on the occasion of Mother’s Day on May 14, 2023.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 3:18 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:25 p.m., the session was resumed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

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

- His Excellency Luc Véron, European Union (EU) Ambassador to the Philippines;
- Rep. Neri Colmenares;



- Sec. Arsenio M. Balisacan of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA);
- Atty. Elmore O. Capule of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP);
- National Treasurer Rosalia V. de Leon;
- Chairperson Emilio Benito Aquino of the Securities and Exchange Commission;
- Senior Vice President Gonzalo Benjamin Bongolan and other senior officials of the Land Bank of the Philippines;
- Asst. Vice President Mylene A. Peras of the Development Bank of the Philippines;
- Assist. Vice President Elize C. Galvan of the Development Bank of the Philippines;
- Usec. Leo Angelo Larcia of the Department of Budget and Management;
- Usec. Krystal Lyn Tan Uy of the National Economic and Development Authority;
- Usec. Alu Dorotan of the Department of Finance;
- Sec. Benjamin Diokno of the DOF;
- Members of the Philippine Women's National Football Team, namely: Maya Taylor Rosales Alcantara, Alicia Balicoco Barker, Sophia Nicole Dador Harrison, Hali Moriah Candido Long, Olivia Alexandra Isip Davis-McDaniel, Chandler Blue Isip McDaniel, and Inna Kristianne Besa Palacios; and
- Delegation from the Philippine Football Federation: Mr. Mariano Araneta Jr. (President), Atty. Edwin Gastanes (General Secretary), Mr. Jefferson Cheng (Team Manager), Ms. Neille Anne Casalmer (Asst. Team Manager), Ms. Isabella "Belay" Fernando-Dela Cruz, and Mr. Cedelf Tupas.

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. 68 (May 10, 2023) and considered it approved.


APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 1480 ON THIRD READING

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, Senate Bill No. 1480, copies of which were electronically distributed to the senators on May 9, 2023.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the *Rules of the Senate*, upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Secretary Bantug read only the title of the bill, to wit:

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

Secretary Bantug called the roll for nominal voting.



RESULT OF THE VOTING

The result of the voting was as follows:

In favor

Angara	Marcos
Binay	Padilla
Cayetano (P)	Pimentel
Dela Rosa	Poe
Ejercito	Revilla
Estrada	Tulfo
Gatchalian	Villanueva
Go	Villar (C)
Hontiveros	Villar (M)
Lapid	Zubiri
Legarda	

Against

None

Abstention

None

With 21 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared Senate Bill No. 1480 approved on Third Reading

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ESTRADA

Senator Estrada delivered the following manifestation on the approval of Senate Bill No. 1480 on Third Reading:

This is to express my sincerest gratitude to my dear colleagues for lending support to this measure, which I truly feel is long overdue. Our veterans who sustained disabilities and injury in the line of duty have long waited for this legislation to update the monthly disability pension rates which have remained unchanged for 29 years.

Thank you to our chairperson of the Committee on Finance and coauthor of this measure, Sen. Sonny Angara. To our distinguished Minority Floor Leader Sen. Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III for helping this sponsor in refining provisions of the measure. Also to the members of this august Chamber who are coauthors and cosponsors of this bill: Majority Floor Leader Sen. Joel Villanueva, Senate President Pro Tempore Sen. Loren Legarda, Sen. Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid, Sen. Cynthia Villar, and our Committee on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation committee vice chairpersons Sen. Francis Tolentino, Sen. Christopher Lawrence T. Go, Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., Sen. Ronald "Bato" Dela Rosa, and Sen. Robinhood C. Padilla.

I am proud to be part of this Senate, under the leadership of our Senate President Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri, who truly cares for the welfare of the Filipino people. This legislation is one way of honoring our military and war veterans who served and defended the country in their prime, in ensuring that in their twilight years, they and their families are accorded adequate benefits and assistance.

EXPLANATION OF VOTE OF SENATOR DELA ROSA

In explaining his affirmative vote, Senator Dela Rosa stated that the day's approval of the measure on rationalizing the disability pension of veterans is a testament that the government has



not and will never forget the sacrifices of the country's veterans. He said that they had endangered their own lives in order for the Filipinos to have the freedom they currently enjoy.

Senator Dela Rosa stated that as a former military officer and police officer, he had witnessed the veterans' valor, selflessness, and patriotism. He emphasized that no amount of money could ever adequately compensate for their service and dedication; therefore, they should not be denied the compensation and recognition they so rightfully deserve.

He believed that the veterans should receive a pension sufficient for their medical and daily needs. He believed that the bill's enactment into law would assist them in coping with the escalating costs of essential goods like medicines.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUEST

At this juncture, Senator Villanueva acknowledged the presence in the gallery of DBM Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman.

Senate President Zubiri welcomed Secretary Pangandaman to the Senate.

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 50

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 50, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE
WOMEN'S NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE WOMEN'S
CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE ASEAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION (AFF) HELD
LAST JULY 17, 2022 AT RIZAL MEMORIAL STADIUM MANILA,

taking into consideration Proposed Senate Resolution Nos. 51, 54, 57, 62, 89, and 117; and Proposed Resolution No. 88.

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 Cayetano (P) for her sponsorship.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Cayetano (P), the session was suspended.

It was 3:36 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:39 p.m., the session was resumed.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

In sponsoring Proposed Senate Resolution No. 50 and Proposed Resolution No. 88, Senator Cayetano (P) delivered the following speech:

I rise to sponsor Proposed Senate Resolution Nos. 88 and 89 which I filed last August 2022. So, they are almost one year late in having the Senate give them honor. But better late than never.



Both resolutions commend and congratulate the Philippine Women's National Football Team, also known as the "Filipinas," for their achievements.

Making Philippine sports "herstory" by winning in two major football tournaments with historic results. And I do not even know if this is up to date when I say two because this is based on the resolution, as I said, that I filed last year.

So, as the Majority Leader has read into the *Record*, we have members of the Filipinas Team present and we have also presented the men and women who have been supporting this team, the team led by PFF President Nonong Araneta, Atty. Edwin Gastanes, and, of course, their team manager, Jefferson Cheng.

On that note, let me just include some of the highlights of their career.

The Filipinas qualified for the 2023 Women's FIFA World Cup. This is a first in Philippine history both in the men and women's team. Often, we need to correct reports because, I am not just talking for women's football, but many times, there will be announcements, even international, not just locally, about achievements of certain male football players; and, of course, they have achieved many things as well. But then they forget to take into consideration that many times, the women have already achieved that. But, usually, late in recognizing that these women have achieved these milestones and *mapapansin lamang* after *ulit banggitin na* the men have achieved this.

So, women athletes are used to that, but I commend our team and men and women who support them, precisely because they have dreamt their dreams and have now made it part of history that we have qualified for the Women's FIFA World Cup.

So, in the qualifying match, they won against Chinese-Taipei in the AFC Women's Asian Cup quarter finals in India. This is the first time, as I said, that any Philippine football team has secured a spot in this prestigious football tournament. They entered the semi-finals of the Asian Football Confederation Women's Asian Cup for the first time ever. As of March 24, 2023, FIFA reported that the Philippines earned their highest standing to date, ranked 49th in the Women's Football in the whole world.

Saan kayo nanggaling two years ago, out of curiosity? From 76. *Noong bata ka pa, Nonong, nagpo-football ka, wala pang ranking?* No ranking yet. So, we are now ranked 49th.

They won the Philippines first ever championship title at the Women's ASEAN Football Federation (AFF) championship. This is the one that was held here, which I watched. In July 2022, the Filipinas were crowned as the AFF Women's Champions following their victory against Thailand. First time ever that the Philippine Football Team, either men's or women's, has won a title under the AFF banner. They beat then defending champion title holder, Vietnam, during their semi-finals match.

So, in preparation for 2023 FIFA World Cup, that will be held in Australia and New Zealand from July 20 to August 20, wherein the Philippines will compete in New Zealand, the Filipinas have been conducting training camps led by their head coach, Alen Stajcic.

As the FIFA Women's World Cup comes closer, the Filipinas have been training hard and joining prestigious football tournaments. My understanding is that most of the members of the team are members of their own teams in their different clubs. So, in between tournaments where they played together, they go back home and they compete with their teams which serves as their continuous training.

So, from September to November 2022, the Filipinas joined various international friendlies with teams such as New Zealand, Costa Rica, Chile, and Papua New Guinea. And February 2023, the Women's Team also debuted in their maiden Pinatar Cup in Spain where they gained tremendous experience playing against teams from Iceland, Wales, and Scotland. And I had the pleasure of joining them there as their head of delegation.

In April 2023, the team battled it out for the Paris 2024 Olympic Qualifying Tournament versus Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Hong Kong where they were able to progress to the second round.

Their participation in many international friendlies with other teams have yielded favorable and promising results. Sacrificing their time and efforts away from their family and loved ones,

to prepare for the World Cup is something that is not a stranger to any member of this team and any of their supporting crew. They have and they continue to endure long training hours that we can only imagine.

The Filipinas and other female athletes have served as an inspiration for the country. They have achieved what would have been considered impossible only a few years ago. This is an accomplishment not just for Philippine sports but for Philippine women and for Philippine athletes. Hard work, dedication, and passion for the sport are the building blocks for reaching goals, dreams, and successes.

Many, if not all, of these athletes have started very young. They have been able to harness their passion into a craft. They have the discipline and they have what it takes to work together as a team to accomplish their goals. They bring pride and honor to the country and inspired athletes not just in the country but worldwide.

Congratulations to the Filipinas.

REMARKS OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

Senate President Zubiri congratulated the Filipinas football team for bringing pride to the country. He said that the senators even watched their games.

He disclosed that his Arnis team was competing that day in Cambodia at the 2023 Southeast Asian Games. He also informed the Body that the Philippines had overtaken Singapore in the events, placing fifth in the ranking of the countries. He hoped that the Filipino athletes could defeat Cambodia and be ranked fourth place in the events.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECHES

In cosponsoring Proposed Senate Resolution No. 50, Senators Villanueva, Go, and Legarda delivered their speeches:

By Senator Villanueva

It is my honor and privilege to cosponsor the resolutions congratulating and commending the Philippine Women's National Football Team for their victory at the ASEAN Football Federation Women's Championship held last July 17, 2022.

This Representation also filed Proposed Senate Resolution No. 54, congratulating our national team for this incredible and historic feat.

Earlier last year, the Filipinas team made football history when they secured a spot in the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, which will be held this July in Australia and New Zealand. In addition, the team is now ranked 49th in the latest FIFA Women's World Ranking released last March – their highest ranking to date.

Indeed, our Filipinas team deserves all the support, praise, and commendation of the entire nation for these historic feats. We wish them all the best and we will be cheering and praying for the entire team when they compete in the upcoming World Cup.

Muli, binabati natin ang Filipinas Women's National Football Team. Mabuhay kayo! Mabuhay ang mga atletang Filipino!

By Senator Go

As chairperson of the Committee on Sports, it is with great pride and honor that I cosponsor today the Senate resolution congratulating and commending the Filipinas Football Team for winning the women's championship of the ASEAN Football Federation (AFF).



The Philippine women's football team has made us all proud through their dedication, hard work, and passion, which had led them to capture their first and historic win in the 2022 ASEAN Football Federation Women's Championship after taking a decisive win over the Thailand War Elephants last July 17, 2022. This feat signifies the maiden triumph of the country under the AFF banner, and I take great pride in acknowledging their achievement today in this esteemed Chamber. I also congratulate the team for qualifying in the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup following their historic quarterfinal win in India.

Their unwavering commitment to excellence has inspired us all and has surely made a lasting impact in the history of Philippine football. It bears stressing that their victory is a testament of the Filipinos' unrelenting competitiveness in international sporting competitions.

Rest assured that all of us in government will fight for the rights and welfare of Filipino athletes as part of our ongoing efforts to restore the Philippines' glory in sports and cement our status as a sports powerhouse in Asia.

Sa katunayan po ay lumipad kami papuntang Cambodia ni Senate President Zubiri at Senator Tolentino para panoorin ang ating mga atleta na lumalahok sa 2023 Southeast Asian Games. Nandoon po tayo to uplift their spirit and boost their morale para lumakas ang kanilang kompiyansa. Nandito po ang ating gobyerno na sila po ay sinusuportahan. Makaasa po kayo na ipagpapatuloy ko ang pagsulong sa mga programa at panukala na tutulong mapalakas ang grassroots sports program sa ating bansa na direktang susuporta sa ating mga atleta.

Once again, I would like to extend my sincerest congratulations to the Filipinas Football Team. We look forward to seeing you continue to excel as you make your mark in the international sporting scene.

By Senator Legarda

I stand before you today to commemorate the Philippine National Women's Football Team's victory in the ASEAN Football Federation Women's Football Championship. This remarkable achievement is a testament to the team's hard work and determination, and we, as a nation, are extremely proud of their achievements.

As we all know, sports have always been an integral part of our culture. It brings people together and promotes camaraderie and healthy competition. The Philippine National Women's Football Team has shown us that with perseverance and teamwork, anything is possible.

This victory is a testament to the team's unrelenting spirit and their commitment to excellence. They have inspired all women athletes in our country to pursue their dreams and achieve greatness in their respective fields.

Their victory serves as a beacon of hope for all women, reminding them that they can overcome any obstacle and achieve anything they set their minds to.

In addition, this victory is not only a celebration of their success but also a reminder that we should continue to support and empower our athletes by providing them with the necessary resources and opportunities to excel in their chosen fields.

As representatives of the people, it is our duty to recognize and honor the accomplishments of our fellow Filipinos. With this, I would like to once again express my heartfelt congratulations to the Philippine National Women's Football Team for their outstanding performance in the championship. You have made your country proud, and we will always be grateful for your contributions to Philippine sports history.

Mabuhay ang atletang Pilipina at mabuhay ang Pilipinas!

COSPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF SENATOR REVILLA

In cosponsoring Proposed Senate Resolution No. 50, Senator Revilla joined the other members of the Body in congratulating and commending the Philippine Women's National Football Team for their victory at the ASEAN Football Federation tournament conducted on July 17, 2022.



He pointed out that their win has placed the Philippines among the ranks of the best in football in Southeast Asia and the world after they successfully defeated four-time champion Thailand. He acknowledged the Filipinas' athletic prowess and their spirits' resiliency, praising them for being a living testament and having the potential for greatness through their passionate and diligent work. In addition, he remarked that the fruits of the athletes' hard work were the very seeds they had sown.

COAUTHORS

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, all the Members were made coauthors of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 50.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 50

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 50, taking into consideration Proposed Senate Resolution Nos. 51, 54, 57, 62, 88, 89, and 117, was adopted by the Body.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 3:54 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:11 p.m., the session was resumed.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

Senate Bill No. 2137, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING ALL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS, OFFICES, AGENCIES, AND INSTRUMENTALITIES, INCLUDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS AND GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR -CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS, TO SOURCE A MINIMUM PERCENTAGE OF THEIR ELECTRICITY FROM RENEWABLE ENERGY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

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

MANIFESTATION OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

At this juncture, Senate President Zubiri informed the Body that the Philippines won a gold for Arnis in the Southeast Asian Games.



Senate Bill No. 2138, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING THE USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGY IN HOMES AND STRENGTHENING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NET-METERING PROGRAM, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9513, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE RENEWABLE ENERGY ACT OF 2008

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Energy

Senate Bill No. 2139, entitled

AN ACT ENHANCING VOTING ACCESSIBILITY FOR SENIOR CITIZENS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, AND PREGNANT WOMEN, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10366, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS TO ESTABLISH PRECINCTS ASSIGNED TO ACCESSIBLE POLLING PLACES EXCLUSIVELY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND SENIOR CITIZENS," PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

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

Senate Bill No. 2140, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE STANDARDS FOR A LIVING WAGE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 124 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 2141, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING AUGUST 9 OF EVERY YEAR AS THE PHILIPPINES-ISRAEL FRIENDSHIP DAY

Introduced by Senator Villanueva

To the Committees on Culture and the Arts; and Foreign Relations

Senate Bill No. 2142, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE HAZARD PAY OF ALL PERSONNEL OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES TO TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT (25%) OF THEIR BASE PAY AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 2143, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING EVACUATION CENTERS IN EVERY CITY AND MUNICIPALITY, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; Public Works and Finance

Senate Bill No. 2144, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE RIGHT OF GOVERNMENT TO EXPROPRIATE LANDS FOR SOCIALIZED HOUSING, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 9, 10, AND 11 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7279, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING ACT OF 1992"

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement

Senate Bill No. 2145, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE AND RATIONALIZED GRANT OF REWARDS OF INFORMERS FOR THE DISCOVERY OF VIOLATIONS OF INTERNAL REVENUE AND CUSTOMS LAW

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 2146, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING OPEN ACCESS IN DATA TRANSMISSION AND PROVIDING ADDITIONAL POWERS TO THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Science and Technology; and Public Services

Senate Bill No. 2147, entitled

AN ACT ENHANCING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF PHILIPPINE MARITIME TRADE BY STRENGTHENING THE OVERSIGHT FUNCTIONS OF RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES OVER THE IMPOSITION OF SHIPPING CHARGES BY INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING LINES AND INSTITUTIONALIZING MECHANISMS FOR THE EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF GOODS

Introduced by Senator Estrada

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

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

Senate Bill No. 2148, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A VAT REFUND MECHANISM FOR NON-RESIDENT TOURISTS, ADDING FOR THE PURPOSE A NEW SECTION 112-A TO THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 2149, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLE 179 OF THE REVISED PENAL CODE (ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED) BY INCREASING THE PENALTY PROVIDED THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Justice and Human Rights

Senate Bill No. 2150, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE OF THE PHILIPPINES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8293, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES"

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship

Senate Bill No. 2151, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 493 TO INCLUDE IN THE COVERAGE OF PROHIBITION THE USE, WEARING, MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF UNIFORMS AND TEXTILE OF UNIFORMS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE, PRESCRIBING STIFFER PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; and Public Order and Dangerous Drugs

Senate Bill No. 2152, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF VOLCANOLOGY AND SEISMOLOGY (PHIVOLCS), PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Science and Technology; Ways and Means; and Finance



Senate Bill No. 2153, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF OUR LADY OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY PARISH CHURCH LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ROSARIO, PROVINCE OF CAVITE, A TOURISM DESTINATION

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Tourism; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 2154, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF SAINT MARY MAGDALENE PARISH CHURCH LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KAWIT, PROVINCE OF CAVITE, A TOURISM DESTINATION

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Tourism; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 2155, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS OF SAN ROQUE PARISH CHURCH, ALSO KNOWN AS THE DIOCESAN SHRINE OF NUESTRA SEÑORA DELA SOLEDAD DE PORTA VAGA, LOCATED IN THE CITY OF CAVITE, PROVINCE OF CAVITE, A TOURISM DESTINATION

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Tourism; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 2156, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF VOLCANOLOGY AND SEISMOLOGY (PHIVOLCS), PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Science and Technology; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 2157, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING THE EMPLOYMENT OF QUALIFIED LIFEGUARDS IN ALL PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS AND BATHING FACILITIES, AND PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; and Local Government



Senate Bill No. 2158, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE RIGHT OF MARRIED WOMEN TO RETAIN THEIR MAIDEN SURNAMES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 370 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 386, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NEW CIVIL CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 2159, entitled

AN ACT EXTENDING THE PERIOD OF AVAILMENT OF THE ESTATE TAX AMNESTY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11213, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "TAX AMNESTY ACT"

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 2160, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICE IN THE FIFTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE OF BATANGAS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill No. 2161, entitled

AN ACT RE-NUMBERING THE CEBU FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH DISTRICT ENGINEERING OFFICES TO CONFORM AND CORRESPOND, RESPECTIVELY, WITH THE NUMBERING OF THE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS IN THE PROVINCE OF CEBU THEREBY REPEALING REPUBLIC ACTS NUMBERED 9043 AND 9218

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Public Works

Senate Bill No. 2162, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE FULL REHABILITATION, UPGRADING, AND MAINTENANCE OF ROMAN SUPERHIGHWAY IN THE PROVINCE OF BATAAN

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill No. 2163, entitled

AN ACT RENAMING AGHAM ROAD AND BIR ROAD LOCATED IN QUEZON CITY AS SENATOR MIRIAM P. DEFENSOR-SANTIAGO AVENUE

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Public Works

Senate Bill No. 2164, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF VOLCANOLOGY AND SEISMOLOGY (PHIVOLCS), PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

To the Committees on Science and Technology; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 2166, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE BED CAPACITY OF THE WAO DISTRICT HOSPITAL, PROVINCE OF LANA DEL SUR, FROM TWENTY-FIVE (25) TO ONE HUNDRED (100) BEDS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 3607, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill No. 2167, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill No. 2168, entitled

AN ACT TO DESIGNATE THE FOURTH DAY OF MAY OF EVERY YEAR A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY TO BE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS' DAY, MANDATING THE BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION CONDUCT EVENTS DURING ITS OBSERVANCE, TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

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

Senate Bill No. 2169, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING SENIOR CITIZENS, A MINIMUM OF FIVE PERCENT (5%) DISCOUNT ON THE FIRST 150 KILOWATT HOURS OF ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION AND ON THE FIRST 50 CUBIC METERS OF WATER CONSUMPTION, AND EXEMPTION FROM THE VALUE-ADDED TAX (VAT), AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9994, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "EXPANDED SENIOR CITIZENS' ACT OF 2010"

Introduced by Senator Lapid

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

Senate Bill No. 2170, entitled

AN ACT EXTENDING THE COVERAGE AND PERIOD OF AVAILMENT OF THE ESTATE TAX AMNESTY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11213, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "TAX AMNESTY ACT"

Introduced by Senators Zubiri, Legarda and Villanueva

To the Committee on Ways and Means

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 596, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BASEBALL TEAM FOR SECURING THEIR FOURTH (4TH) CONSECUTIVE CHAMPIONSHIP AT THE XIII BASEBALL FEDERATION OF ASIA (BFA) EAST ASIAN CUP HELD IN PATHUM THANI, THAILAND ON MAY 4, 2023

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 597, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND RECOGNIZING THE PHILIPPINE MEN'S ICE HOCKEY TEAM FOR THEIR IMPRESSIVE WIN IN THE 2023 IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION IV LAST MARCH 23 - 26, 2023 HELD IN ULAANBAATAR, MONGOLIA

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 598, entitled

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING THE NATIONAL YOUTH

WEIGHTLIFTING TEAM FOR THEIR IMPRESSIVE MEDAL HAUL AT THE
2023 INTERNATIONAL WEIGHTLIFTING FEDERATION (IWF) WORLD
YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS HELD IN DURRËS, ALBANIA

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 599, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND RECOGNIZING FILIPINO BOWLER
MERWIN TAN FOR BEING THE CHAMPION IN THE 2023 PROFESSIONAL
BOWLERS ASSOCIATION (PBA) BOWLERS ACADEMY OPEN HELD LAST
MARCH 24 - 26, 2023 IN CLOVIS, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 600, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING BIANCA BUSTAMANTE
FOR BEING THE FIRST FILIPINA TO WIN AN OFFICIAL FIA-SANCTIONED
SINGLE-SEATER RACE

Introduced by Senator Hontiveros

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 601, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE
PRICING PRACTICES OF ENERGY GENERATION COMPANIES WHICH
MAY BE VIOLATIVE OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9136, OTHERWISE KNOWN
AS THE ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY REFORM ACT OF 2001, REPUBLIC
ACT NO. 10667, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE PHILIPPINE COMPETITION
ACT, AND OTHER RELEVANT LAWS AND REGULATIONS, WITH THE END
IN VIEW OF RECOMMENDING FURTHER MEASURES TO PROMOTE
ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE WITH RELEVANT LAWS AND
REGULATIONS

Introduced by Senator Tulfo

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

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 602, entitled

RESOLUTION URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND DEMO-
GRAPHY AND/OR APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE/S TO CONDUCT
AN INQUIRY, IN THE EXERCISE OF OVERSIGHT FUNCTION, ON THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF VETERANS WARDS, AS MANDATED BY REPUBLIC
ACT NO. 6948 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT STANDARDIZING AND

UPGRADING THE BENEFITS FOR MILITARY VETERANS AND THEIR
DEPENDENTS, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7696

Introduced by Senator Estrada

**To the Committee on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and
Reconciliation**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 603, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE NATIONAL
POWERLIFTING TEAM FOR THEIR STELLAR PERFORMANCE AT THE 2023
ASIAN EQUIPPED POWERLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS IN ALAPPUZHA,
INDIA

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 604, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING JAMIE CHRISTINE
BERBERABE LIM FOR HER EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE AND WINNING
THE GOLD MEDAL IN THE WOMEN'S KARATE KUMITE 61-KILOGRAM
CATEGORY AT THE 32ND SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES IN PHNOM PENH,
CAMBODIA

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 605, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM TO
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE POSSIBLE
ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE KALIWA DAM PROJECT TO THE ECO-TOURISM
INDUSTRY IN TANAY, RIZAL

Introduced by Senator Binay

To the Committees on Tourism; and Public Works

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 606, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE
NATIONAL WOMEN'S OBSTACLE COURSE RACING TEAM FOR WINNING
THE GOLD MEDAL AND SETTING A NEW WORLD RECORD AT THE 32ND
SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES IN PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 607, entitled

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SUCCESSIVE ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION SYSTEM DISTURBANCES WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ENSURING RELIABLE AND CONTINUOUS ELECTRIC POWER SUPPLY IN THE COUNTRY

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Energy

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Letter from the House of Representatives, informing the Senate that on 8 May 2023, the House of Representatives passed the following House bills in which it requested the concurrence of the Senate:

House Bill No. 7751, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING SPECIALTY CENTERS IN HOSPITALS UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION AND CONTROL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance

House Bill No. 7393, entitled

AN ACT REGULATING THE USE OF FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

To the Committees on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; and Justice and Human Rights

House Bill No. 7446, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTING ANTI-CORRUPTION MECHANISMS IN THE OPERATION OF BANKS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1405, ENTITLED "AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCLOSURE OF OR INQUIRY INTO, DEPOSITS WITH ANY BANKING INSTITUTION AND PROVIDING PENALTY THEREFOR"

To the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies

House Bill No. 7535, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING ADDITIONAL BENEFITS TO FILIPINO CENTENARIANS, RECOGNIZING OCTOGENARIANS AND NONAGENARIANS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10868, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "CENTENARIANS ACT OF 2016"

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

House Bill No. 7540, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE SPECIAL PROGRAM IN CREATIVE ARTS FOR JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

To the Committees on Basic Education, Culture and the Arts; Ways and Means; and Finance

House Bill No. 7561, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR MANDATORY INSURANCE COVERAGE AND BENEFITS FOR ALL LINE WORKERS

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

House Bill No. 7576, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR EARLY VOTING BY QUALIFIED SENIOR CITIZENS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, LAWYERS, AND HUMAN RESOURCES FOR HEALTH IN NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS

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

House Bill No. 7584, entitled

AN ACT ALLOWING ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY LEARNERS WITH UNPAID TUITION AND OTHER SCHOOL FEES TO TAKE THE PERIODIC AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS ON GOOD CAUSE AND JUSTIFIABLE GROUNDS

To the Committee on Rules

and House Bill No. 7620, entitled

AN ACT PRESCRIBING THE USE OF NEO-ETHNIC PHILIPPINE TEXTILES IN THE ACADEMIC REGALIA OF ALL STATE AND LOCAL UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

To the Committees on Higher Technical and Vocational Education; Science and Technology; and Finance

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 59 ON SENATE BILL NO. 2021

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 2021 (Committee Report No. 59), entitled

AN ACT TO INSTITUTIONALIZE THE SHARED SERVICE FACILITIES (SSF) PROJECT FOR MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMES) BY AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6977 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE MAGNA CARTA FOR SMALL ENTERPRISES AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9501 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE MAGNA CARTA FOR MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES.

Senator Villanueva stated that the parliamentary status was the period of individual amendments.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Angara, sponsor of the measure.

PIMENTEL AMENDMENT

As proposed by Senator Pimentel and accepted by the sponsor, there being no objection, the Body approved the following amendment:

1. On page 1, after line 9, insert the following paragraphs:

THE SSFS PROGRAM SHALL ENTAIL SETTING UP COMMON SERVICE FACILITIES OR PRODUCTION CENTERS FOR CERTAIN PORCESSES TO GIVE MSMES ACCESS TO BETTER TECHNOLOGY AND MORE SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT TO TECHNOLOGY TO ACCELARATE THEIR BID FOR COMPETITIVENESS AND HELP THEM GRADUATE TO A NEXT LEVEL WHERE THEY COULD TAP BETTER AND WIDER MARKETS AND BE INTEGRATED IN THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN. THE PROJECT MAY BE IMPLEMENTED IN COOPERATION WITH DOST, AND OTHER AGENCIES, THE ACADEME, LGUS, AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS.

SHARED SERVICE FACILITIES REFER TO MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT, TOOLS, SYSTEMS, ACCESSORIES AND OTHER AUXILARY ITEMS, SKILLS, AND KNOWLEDGE THAT ARE BEING PROVIDED BY THE DTI UNDER A COMBINED AND COLLECTIVE SYSTEM TO ITS TARGET BENEFICIARIES.;

VILLANUEVA AMENDMENT

As proposed by Senator Villanueva and accepted by the sponsor, there being no objection, the Body approved the following amendment:

2. On the same page, line 11, after the acronym "DTI," insert a comma (,) and the phrase IN COORDINATION WITH RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS, AND STAKEHOLDERS;

Senator Villanueva explained that the amendment was meant to avoid duplication of functions such as that of the DOST, which implements the Community Empowerment through Science and Technology (CEST) programs, and whose intervention for livelihood opportunities include innovation and support system, funding, technology, trainings, and the like.

PIMENTEL AMENDMENT TO HIS AMENDMENT

3. On his previous amendment on page 1, line 9, as proposed by Senator Pimentel and accepted by the sponsor, there being no objection, the Body approved the insertion of the word GOVERNMENT between the words "OTHER" and "AGENCIES."

REMARKS OF SENATOR LEGARDA

At the outset, Senator Legarda thanked Senator Angara for further enhancing Senate Bill No. 2021 in order to address the sustainable recovery and development of the country's MSMEs, given that they serve as the backbone of the local economy as they represent 99.5% of business enterprises in the country. She recalled that she had authored the MSME Law (Republic Act No. 9501) in 2007 to expand the scope of assistance given to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to also include the microenterprises.

With Senate Bill No. 2021, she expected that once passed into law, it would further enhance Republic Act No. 9501 and would institutionalize the SSF for MSMEs.



She then called the attention of the DTI to automatically consider the measure and, once the bill is signed into law and institutionalizes the SSF program nationwide, that it requests funds that would already be included in the National Expenditure Program so that allocations for the program would no longer have to be inserted as amendment to the 2024 General Appropriations Bill. She opined that such funds would help the MSMEs recover from the effects of the pandemic. She also expressed her confidence that the DBM, NEDA, and the DOF would already include the SSF fund once the program is institutionalized into law.

In one committee hearing prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and right after the Marawi siege, she recalled that she had to push for the earmarking of the inadequate noninstitutionalized P50-million SSF budget for the victims of the Marawi crises and another P200 million for the extension programs of state universities and local government universities as cooperators of the DTI SSF, while the rest of the P1 billion augmentation in the DTI budget went to other MSMEs.

LEGARDA AMENDMENTS

As proposed by Senator Legarda and accepted by the sponsor, there being no objection, the Body approved the following amendments:

4. On page 2, line 15, insert the following paragraphs to read as follows:

PROVIDED, THAT, IN GRANTING SSFS, THE DTI SHALL:

- A. TIMELY PROCESS THE APPLICATIONS FOR THE GRANTING OF SSFS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11032 OR THE "EASE OF DOING BUSINESS AND EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY ACT OF 2018" ON THE MAXIMUM PRESCRIBED PROCESSING TIME DEPENDING ON THE COMPLEXITY OF THE TRANSACTIONS; PROVIDED, THAT THE APPLICATION HAS MET ALL THE REQUIREMENTS INCLUDING AMONG OTHERS THE CONDUCT OF MARKET STUDY AND OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS THAT MAY BE IDENTIFIED BY THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (NTWG);
- B. CONSULT WITH THE COOPERATORS ON THE APPROPRIATE PROJECTS TO BE GRANTED TO THEM;
- C. ENSURE THAT THE MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT, AND TOOLS ARE PROPER, SUITABLE, USABLE, AND APT WITH THE CAPABILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE FACILITIES;
- D. COORDINATE WITH SUCS AND LUCS WHERE THE SSF AND/OR SSF-FAB LABS ARE ESTABLISHED IN SETTING GUIDELINES FOR THE EQUITABLE UTILIZATION OF SAID FACILITIES AMONG USERS WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS;
- E. CLOSELY COORDINATE AND IMMEDIATELY ASSIST THE COOPERATORS WITH THEIR ISSUES OR CONCERNS REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR PROJECTS; AND
- F. PARTNER WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, IF NEEDED, TO HELP ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECTS.

Senator Legarda stated that the amendment aims to address capacity-building challenges usually faced by cooperators on the ground in the implementation of the project, such as the inability to use tools and equipment provided due to lack of training, lack of capital, and political issues.

5. After such paragraphs, insert a new paragraph to read as follows:

PROVIDED, FURTHER, THAT THE DTI SHALL ENSURE THAT THE SSFS CREATED UNDER THIS ACT ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE NATIONAL INNOVATION AGENDA AND STRATEGY DOCUMENT.

Senator Legarda emphasized the need for coherent and consistent programs and policies in the roadmap for the country's vision and long-term goals for innovation. Relative thereto,



she mentioned that she authored the Philippine Innovation Act (Republic Act No. 11293) after the 2015 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting. Given the existing laws and Senate Bill No. 2021, she expressed hope that there would soon be a convergence between the NEDA, DTI, and other concerned government agencies.

ANGARA AMENDMENT

6. On page 2, line 23, after "SSFs," as proposed by Senator Angara, there being no objection, the Body approved the insertion of the phrase "AND SSF-FAB LABS."

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS

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

APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 2021 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection. Senate Bill No. 2021 was approved on Second Reading.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 2021

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 4:40 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:41 p.m., the session was resumed.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 40 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1964 *(Continuation)*

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1964 (Committee Report No. 40), entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE GRANT OF A TEACHING SUPPLIES ALLOWANCE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

Senator Villanueva stated that the parliamentary status was the period of committee amendments.

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Revilla, sponsor of the measure.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

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

INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS

As proposed by the following senators and accepted by the sponsor, there being no objection, the following amendments were approved by the Body, one after the other:

By Senator Legarda

- On page 1, line 12, after the phrase “consistent with the,” insert the phrase POLICY AND GUIDELINES.

As to the rationale of the amendment, Senator Legarda stated that DepEd Order No. 34 provides the directive that:

“Starting November 2, 2022, all public and private schools shall have transitioned to five days in-person classes. After the said date, no school shall be allowed to implement purely distance learning or blended learning...The transition to five days in-person classes...entails judgment to the... learning modality...”

Hence, she said, the amendment emphasized on the enforced guidelines and implemented learning modality of the DepEd.

- On the same page and line, after the word “learning,” insert the word DELIVERY and, after the word “modalities,” insert the acronym LDMs;
- Still on the same page and line, after the word “recognized,” insert the word IMPLEMENTED; and
- On page 2, line 2, delete the phrase “learning delivery modalities.”

By Senator Pimentel

- On page 2, lines 4 to 7, delete the proviso “Provided, That the Teaching Supplies Allowance shall be automatically adjusted to its present value every three (3) years to account for the changing prices of teaching supplies and materials and the implementation or conduct of various LDMs.” and change the colon (:) to a period (.).

Senator Pimentel explained that every time there would be a proposed increase, they would have to go to Congress and the legislature should be sensitive to the needs of the teachers. He stated that with his amendment, beginning school year 2024-2025, the teaching supplies allowance for teachers would be P10,000 but subject to congressional review in subsequent years.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 4:51 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:54 p.m., the session was resumed.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Senator Cayetano (P) requested the sponsor to read the amended Section 3 of the bill because her proposed amendments would be based on the current status of the measure. In reply, Senator Revilla said that Senator Pimentel’s last amendment deleted the automatic adjustment provision of the bill.



SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Revilla, the session was suspended.

It was 4:56 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:57 p.m., the session was resumed.

INQUIRIES OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Senator Cayetano (P) observed that the objective of the amendment of Senator Legarda was to ensure that the cash allowance would be used only in accordance with the guidelines of the DepEd and taking into consideration the different deliveries of learning modalities.

Replying to the queries of Senator Cayetano (P), Senator Revilla stated that the funds would be disbursed in cash to the teachers on an annual basis.

On whether the teachers would have to produce receipts for the purchase of the supplies, he said that the allowance would not be subject to liquidation.

Asked how it could be ensured that the cash allowance would be used for the specified purpose, Senator Revilla that the teacher would have to be trusted, however, he would be willing to accept any proposed amendment by Senator Cayetano (P) on the matter.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Revilla, the session was suspended.

It was 5:01 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:03 p.m., the session was resumed.

Senator Cayetano (P) clarified that it was not her intention to make the issue complicated, as she recognized that the teachers are the first to contribute to augment the needs of the classroom. She added that teachers sometimes use their personal money to feed a hungry student or buy a student a pair of shoes. She doubted that the expenses she mentioned would be covered by the cash allowance envisioned by the bill.

Senator Revilla lamented that the examples cited by Senator Cayetano (P) would not be covered by the teaching supplies allowance. But he said that the Secretary of Finance took note of the concerns raised by Senator Cayetano (P).

PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

On page 2, line 2 of the bill, after the words "learning delivery modalities," Senator Cayetano (P) proposed the insertion of the phrase AND FOR ANY NEED A TEACHER DEEMS SUITED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE LEARNER. She said that such amendment would broaden the scope of the measure to cover not just supplies, but other incidental expenses that teachers are known to shoulder to improve learning delivery.



CAYETANO-ANGARA AMENDMENT

Senator Angara proposed to amend the amendment of Senator Cayetano (P) on page 2, line 2, after the words "learning delivery modalities," by inserting the phrase AND OTHER EXPENSES INCIDENTAL TO THE LEARNING OF THE CHILD.

Senator Cayetano (P) accepted the amendment to her amendment.

Senator Revilla accepted the amendment as amended and, there being no objection, the same was approved by the Body, subject to style.

Senator Cayetano stated that her amendment would address the reality that teachers spend their own money to assist their learners as if the latter were their own children.

TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD OF INDIVIDUAL AMENDMENTS

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

APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 1964 ON SECOND READING

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, Senate Bill No. 1964 was approved on Second Reading, subject to style.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE NO. 1964

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 5:11 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:46 p.m., the session was resumed with Senate President Zubiri presiding.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

It was 5:46 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:52 p.m., the session was resumed.

MOTION TO CONSIDER SENATE BILL NO. 2020

Senator Villanueva moved that the Body resume consideration of Senate Bill No. 2020, otherwise known as the "Maharlika Investment Fund Act of 2023."



MOTION TO ADJOURN

Senator Pimentel moved to adjourn for lack of quorum. The Majority Leader objected.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

It was 5:53 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:55 p.m., the session was resumed.

Upon resumption, Senate President Zubiri directed the Senate Secretary to call the roll to determine the existence of a quorum.

ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Senate President, Secretary Bantug 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.
Go, C. L. T.	Villanueva, J.
Hontiveros, R.	Villar, M. A.
Legarda, L.	Zubiri, J. M. F.

With 16 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 58 ON SENATE BILL NO. 2020

(Continuation)

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 2020 (Committee Report No. 58), entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE MAHARLIKA INVESTMENT FUND, PROVIDING FOR THE MANAGEMENT, INVESTMENT, AND USE OF THE PROCEEDS OF THE FUND, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senator Villar (M), sponsor of the measure, and Senator Dela Rosa for his interpellation.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR DELA ROSA

In reply to Senator Dela Rosa's query, Senator Villar (M) stated that a sovereign wealth fund is a state-owned special purpose investment fund which has the general purpose of maximizing state assets, promoting the development of the state, and generating robust return.



Regarding the difference between the Maharlika Investment Fund (MIF) and the funds of government-owned and -controlled corporations, Senator Villar (M) said that the sovereign investment fund would be invested on flagship infrastructure or agriculture projects that would generate huge returns in the form of equity, company shares, funds generated abroad, or funds from institutional investors.

As to why there was a need to establish a Maharlika Investment Corporation (MIC) when the existing government financial institutions already provide funds for the same purpose, Senator Villar (M) replied that as former Secretary of the DPWH, he saw the need for additional fund sources to propel more infrastructure, agriculture, and energy projects, considering the limited budget derived from the General Appropriations Act. Through the MIF, he said, the government would have other sources of funding.

Noting the proposed P500-billion authorized capital stock for the Maharlika Investment Corporation, Senator Dela Rosa inquired if there was a GOCC that has a capital stock of almost the same amount. Senator Villar (M) replied that Land Bank has an authorized capital stock of P800 billion and a net income of P40 billion.

With respect to the estimated annual income of another fund source which is PAGCOR, Senator Villar (M) stated that for 2022, PAGCOR earned a total of P55 billion less five percent (5%) franchise tax that goes to the Bureau of Internal Revenue, and the amount of P52.8 billion was retained by PAGCOR and the national government, or P26.4 billion each. Pursuant to the ten percent (10%) allocation for MIF, he explained that P2.64 billion from PAGCOR would go to the Maharlika Investment Corporation.

Senator Dela Rosa also pointed to the National Development Company (NDC) which is the Philippines' leading state-owned enterprise investing in diverse industries including development projects. He asked whether the NDC would cease to exist after the establishment of the MIC, and whether the MIF initiative could be reconciled with the government's plan to streamline the bureaucracy. In reply, Senator Villar (M) noted that during the committee hearings, it was explained that the Maharlika Investment Corporation would even complement NDC's goals in yielding funds for other government projects, if the MIC board of directors would allow it. He assured that the NDC would not be dissolved.

On whether there would be a cap on the administrative and operational expenses of the MIC, and how many employees and financial consultants would be hired for the operation of the Maharlika Investment Corporation, Senator Villar (M) stated that as provided for by law, the allocation for administrative expenses at two percent (2%) would be used for the manpower complement based on the MIC board of directors' discretion. He noted that more or less, the cap on the initial capital would be P125 billion, and that such amount would not be a one-time contribution because the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) would also contribute to the fund over a few years.

To the remark that the 2% allocation seemed onerous, Senator Villar (M) believed that it was at par with that of other GOCCs.

Senator Dela Rosa then asked which countries have successful sovereign wealth funds and how much their annual profit was. He also inquired as to the biggest loss incurred by a sovereign wealth fund and whether the bill has provisions that would ensure that the Philippines would not experience the same fate.

Senator Villar (M) stated that 5% of PAGCOR's P55 billion revenues in 2022 would be withheld as franchise tax to the BIR. He stated that P26.4 billion, or half of the P52.8 billion, would

be retained by PAGCOR, with the other half going to the national government. In addition to the P26.4 billion earmarked for the national government, he stated that P2.64 billion, or 10% of what PAGCOR retained, would be added to PAGCOR's capital contribution to the Maharlika Investment Corporation.

Senator Dela Rosa stated that the National Development Company is the Philippines' leading state-owned enterprise, investing in diverse industries, including development projects. In this regard, he inquired as to the reason for the need to establish the MIF and the MIC. He also inquired as to how the measure might be reconciled with the government's aim to streamline the bureaucracy.

Senator Villar (M) responded by recalling that the same issue was raised during the bill's committee hearings, during which the NDC opined that the establishment of the Maharlika Investment Corporation may possibly be complementary to their goals. He acknowledged that the NDC has been around for a long time, supporting businesses in reaching their next level. Similarly, he stated that the Maharlika Corporation could invest in other governmental projects as long as they generate a specified amount acceptable to its board of directors.

Asked if NDC would be dissolved, he replied in the negative, saying that the NDC and the MIC can co-exist, which the NDC supports.


In reply to further queries, Senator Villar (M) said that the amount allocated for administrative and operational expenses of the MIC is comparable to that of other GOCCs, which is 2% as provided for in the law.

Asked how many employees and financial consultants would be required to have a functional Maharlika Investment Corporation, he stated that there will board of directors who will have discretion with the use of the fund within the 2% cap on the initial capital of approximately P125 billion.

Senator Dela Rosa stated that he would often hear the expression "high risk, high return" being associated with investment. In this regard, he inquired as to which countries have already established a successful sovereign fund and how big their annual profit or income was. He also inquired as to which country has the sovereign fund with the largest loss in history. He also asked if the measure has mechanisms to ensure that the MIC does not suffer the same fate as that country.

In reply, Senator Villar (M) said that the Norway Investment Fund, China Investment Corp., Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, and Vietnamese State Capital Investment Corporation are among the existing sovereign funds. He believed that it is important to look at the state funds not in the short term, but rather for a minimum of a five years and up to 10 years. He noted, for example, the Norway Investment Fund, which has averaged a 10% despite periodic dips. He said that looking at investments over a certain lifespan would allow them to see the cumulative average growth rate (CAGR) as the long-term return.

In terms of the Maharlika Fund, he stated that the minimum target return would be 8%. Nonetheless, considering that nothing is definite when it comes to investing, he assured that experts will be consulted to minimize losses. In fact, he stated that there will be an advisory board comprised of respected and competent finance personalities, namely, the DBM, the Treasurer, and the NEDA, who will guide the board of directors of MIC, comprised of nine members representing the private sector as well as those who have invested capital in the company, in generating the returns required in Maharlika.



He once again referenced the Norway Wealth Fund as having the worst performance of any sovereign wealth fund ever recorded, with paper losses of negative (-) 14% in the first half of 2022. However, he emphasized the need of analyzing investments over an extended period of time, which in the case of the Norway Wealth Fund was 10 years, in order to determine overall performance. He noted that like the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), it has an upward trajectory but with no straight returns.

He expressed confidence that the minimum target return of 8% was realistic, citing his experience as a former DPWH secretary, when he witnessed more 15% IRR from a number of infrastructure projects vetted by NEDA. Apart from having several projects that may generate revenue for the government, he believed that the Maharlika has enough safeguards in place to ensure that the government achieves a good rate of return.

Asked if the Norway Wealth Fund mentioned still exists, Senator Villar (M) replied in the affirmative.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR POE

Senator Poe stated that based on previous discussions, PAGCOR would contribute around P2 billion to the Fund's budget. Senator Villar (M) responded in the affirmative, noting that it is an estimate based on PAGCOR's revenue generation from the previous year because it still does not know what its revenue will be next year.

Asked how much PAGCOR earns on average every year, he said that PAGCOR earns between P55 billion to P60 billion per year.

Senator Poe stated that if LANDBANK and others would contribute a substantial amount, it would be difficult to track what PAGCOR spends; thus, that it would be better for PAGCOR to contribute more to a fund such as the one under consideration where it can be tracked.

Asked on the current inflation rate in the Philippines, Senator Villar (M) replied that the latest inflation figure was around 6.6%. In terms of a fund's average yield, he confirmed that a fund would have a yield of 6% to 8%.

Senator Poe noted that the Norway Wealth Fund had experienced its worst period, with paper losses of negative (-) 14% in the first half of 2022. She then inquired as to when the aforementioned fund reached its peak. Senator Villar (M) replied that he has yet to get the information.

On another matter, Senator Poe stated that if the 2% administrative expenses previously mentioned are factored in the average expected return of 8%, the Fund would have to outperform predictions or the yields from the previous two years. Senator Villar (M) responded that the ideal goal is to fund inflation in any fund. However, he recognized that the inflation was currently higher than it has been in previous years. As a result, he believed that if the 6% inflation rate continues, the targets would need to be revised. Nonetheless, he stated that there is an assumption that inflation would be on a downward trajectory.

Senator Poe, on the other hand, averred that when the economy reopened following the COVID-19 pandemic, the opposite happened. Reiterating that the administrative fee provided is 2% at the most, according to the Secretary of Finance, she inquired as to how much would it be and whether such a number was a little too generous. Senator Villar (M) said that the amount would be 2% of the total funds under administration, which is P75 billion.

In response to an earlier question concerning the best performance of the Norway Wealth Fund, he stated that the highest rate it obtained in a year was 25%. Senator Poe remarked that

Norway's performance had been rather promising. However, she stated that, unlike Norway, which has surplus income, the Maharlika Fund would draw on resources that have already been allocated.

As regards the board members in the Maharlika Fund, Senator Villar (M) reiterated that it would be comprised of nine directors. As to the qualifications of the members and who would appoint them, he stated that the advisory board, which includes the DBM, the NEDA, and the Treasurer recommends, while the President appoints.

Asked if each member of the board of directors is required to have experience in finance, Senator Villar (M) replied in the affirmative, citing the extensive qualifications for the board of directors under Section 20 of the bill, to wit: "The regular directors shall be citizens of the Philippines, at least 35 years of age, and must be of good moral standing and reputation, of recognized probity and independence, and have substantial experience and expertise in any of the following: (i) corporate governance and administration, (ii) investment in financial assets, (iii) management of investments in the global and local markets. The regular directors shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines upon recommendation of the Advisory Body for a term of three (3) years."

Senator Poe noted that the provision cited by Senator Villar (M) on the qualifications of the board of directors does not specify a time period or number of years of experience. Senator Villar (M) believed that the required time period or number of years of experience in finance should be included in the measure's IRR.

At this juncture, Senator Poe thanked Senator Villar (M) for his responses and stated that due to the lateness of the hour, she will continue with her more detailed questions the next session week session.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 2020

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 6:24 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 6:41 p.m., the session was resumed.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

Senator Villanueva manifested that Senator Legarda was designated co-chairperson of the subcommittee on Senate Bill No. 238 (*Northern Antique Protected Seascape and Landscape Act of 2022*) created on February 8, 2023.

He stated that pursuant to Section 25 of Republic Act No.11641 (Department of Migrant Workers Act), and in accordance with the letter dated May 15, 2023 from the Office of Senator Tulfo, as delegated by Senator Estrada, the chairperson of the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development, Senate President Zubiri designated the following senators to the Joint Congressional Oversight Committee on Migrant Workers — chairperson, Senator Tulfo; vice chairperson, Senator Estrada; and members, Senators Go, Revilla, Pimentel, and Hontiveros.

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 6:43 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

Approved on May 16, 2023

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

