

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

S e n a t e

Pasay City

Journal

SESSION NO. 23

Wednesday, September 19, 2007

**FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

SESSION NO. 23
Wednesday, September 19, 2007

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:00 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Manny Villar, called the session to order.

PRAYER

The Body observed a minute of silent prayer.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

It was 3:01 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:05 p.m., the session was resumed.

ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary of the Senate, Emma Lirio-Reyes, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

Angara, E. J.	Lacson, P. M.
Aquino III, B. S. C.	Legarda, L.
Arroyo, J. P.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Cayetano, A. P. C. S.	Pimentel Jr., A. Q.
Ejercito Estrada, J.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Enrile, J. P.	Roxas, M.
Honasan, G. B.	Villar, M.

With 14 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senators Biazon, Defensor Santiago, Escudero, Gordon, Lapid and Zubiri arrived after the roll call.

Senator Cayetano (P) was abroad on official mission.

Senator Madrigal was also on official mission.

Senator Trillanes was unable to attend the session.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journal of Session No. 22 and considered it approved.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS**

At this juncture, Senator Pangilinan acknowledged the presence of the members of the Leyte Provincial Council of Personnel Officers.

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. 1551, entitled

AN ACT TO EXEMPT FROM THE
INCOME REQUIREMENT CAPITAL
TOWNS OF PROVINCES SUBJECT
TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
SECTION 450 OF REPUBLIC ACT
NO. 7160, AS AMENDED BY
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9009, OTHER-
WISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

To the Committee on Local Government

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Senate Bill No. 1552, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A MAGNA
CARTA FOR STUDENTS

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

**To the Committee on Education, Arts and
Culture**

Senate Bill No. 1553, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING THE COOPERA-
TIVE CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES
TO BE KNOWN AS THE PHILIP-
PINE COOPERATIVE CODE OF 2007

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

**To the Committees on Cooperatives; and
Ways and Means**

Senate Bill No. 1554, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR FREE
COLLEGE EDUCATION OTHER-
WISE KNOWN AS THE "REGIONAL
SUBSIDIZED COLLEGE EDUCATION
PROGRAM OF 2007" AND PROVID-
ING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committees on Education, Arts and
Culture; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1555, entitled

AN ACT PENALIZING MEMBERS OF A
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY,
OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
OR EMPLOYEES WHO FAIL OR
REFUSE TO TESTIFY AS PROSE-
CUTION WITNESSES IN ANY
CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

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

Senate Bill No. 1556, entitled

AN ACT RE-INSTITUTING ROTC
AS A MANDATORY COURSE
FOR ALL COLLEGE STUDENTS,
REVIVING THE PERTINENT
PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT
NO. 7077 AND COMMONWEALTH
ACT NO. 1 AND AMENDING
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9163 FOR THE
PURPOSE

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committees on Education, Arts and
Culture; and National Defense and Security**

Senate Bill No. 1557, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING THE FARMERS'
AND FISHERFOLK ASSISTANCE
ACT OF 2007 AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committees on Constitutional
Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws;
Agriculture and Food; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1558, entitled

AN ACT RESTORING TO CONGRESS
THE POWER TO APPROPRIATE
PAYMENTS ON DEBT SERVICE,
REVIVING FOR THE PURPOSE
SECTION 6 OF REPUBLIC ACT
NO. 4860 (Foreign Borrowing Act),
AND REPEALING SECTION 7 OF
PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 81,
SECTION 31 OF PRESIDENTIAL
DECREE NO. 1177 AND SECTIONS
1, 2 AND 3 OF PRESIDENTIAL
DECREE NO. 1967

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito
Estrada

**To the Committees on Finance; and
Economic Affairs**

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Senate Bill No. 1559, entitled

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN, SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OR SANGGUNIANG BAYAN, TO DECLARE WORKING OR NON-WORKING SPECIAL HOLIDAYS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE LOCALITIES TO COMMEMORATE SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC EVENTS PROVIDING GUIDELINES THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

To the Committee on Local Government

Senate Bill No. 1560, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING RESEARCH ON DYSTONIA

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1561, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING A NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION IN THE HUMANITIES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture

Senate Bill No. 1562, entitled

AN ACT TO PROTECT THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND OF ASSOCIATION RIGHTS OF STUDENTS ATTENDING INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Justice and Human Rights

Senate Bill No. 1563, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1564, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING CERTAIN PRACTICES INVOLVING COMMERCIAL USES OF TELEPHONE FACSIMILE MACHINES

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committee on Public Services

Senate Bill No. 1565, entitled

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THERAPEUTIC EQUIVALENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR GENERIC DRUGS

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committee on Health and Demography

Senate Bill No. 1566, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION IN THE PAYMENT OF WAGES ON ACCOUNT OF SEX

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

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Senate Bill No. 1567, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM AND THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS ON STATISTICS RELATING TO THE CONVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USES INCLUDING A REVIEW OF EXISTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committees on Agrarian Reform; and Agriculture and Food

Senate Bill No. 1568, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLE 245 OF THE PENAL CODE, ENTITLED "ABUSE AGAINST CHASTITY," BY RENAMING THE FELONY TO "SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY PUBLIC OFFICERS" AND ADDING ANOTHER PARAGRAPH TO BE CITED AS PARAGRAPH THREE (3) DEALING WITH CASES NOT FALLING WITHIN THE COVERAGE OF PARAGRAPHS ONE (1) AND TWO (2) OF THE SAME ARTICLE

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committees on Civil Service and Government Reorganization; and Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws

Senate Bill No. 1569, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 386, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CIVIL CODE, ARTICLE 1723, ON THE LIABILITY OF ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS OR CONTRACTORS ARISING FROM NON-OBSERVANCE OF PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS OR THE USE OF MATERIALS OF INFERIOR QUALITY

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committees on Public Works; and Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws

Senate Bill No. 1570, entitled

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A SOCIALIZED AND LOW-COST HOUSING LOAN RESTRUCTURING PROGRAM, PROVIDING THE MECHANISMS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

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

Senate Bill No. 1571, entitled

AN ACT TO REGULATE THE SALE, PURCHASE AND POSSESSION OF TOXIC AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES, INCLUDING SODIUM CYANIDE PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

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

Senate Bill No. 1572, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE COPYRIGHT PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OWNERS OF COMPUTER PROGRAMS CREATING FOR THIS PURPOSE THE BUSINESS SOFTWARE COPYRIGHT PIRACY ENFORCEMENT UNIT, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gregorio B. Honasan II ^{AS}

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**To the Committees on Trade and Commerce;
Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes
and Laws; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1573, entitled

AN ACT UPGRADING THE BENEFITS
AND INCENTIVES TO ACCREDITED
BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7883 AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Ramon "Bong"
Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Health and Demo-
graphy; and Local Government**

Senate Bill No. 1574, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A UNIFORM
REWARD SYSTEM IN THE
CAMPAIGN AGAINST CRIME AND
LAWLESSNESS

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

**To the Committees on Public Order and
Illegal Drugs; Ways and Means; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1575, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR RENDITION
OF COMMUNITY SERVICE IN
LIEU OF DETENTION TO SERVE
SENTENCE, CREATING FOR THE
PURPOSE COMMUNITY WORK
CAMPS, AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

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

Senate Bill No. 1576, entitled

AN ACT EXEMPTING MINIMUM WAGE
EARNERS FROM PAYMENT OF
INCOME TAX AMENDING FOR THE
PURPOSE RELEVANT PROVISIONS
OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL
REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS

**AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES**

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 1577, entitled

AN ACT TO FURTHER PROMOTE
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE
DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL AND
MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6977, AS
AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN
AS THE MAGNA CARTA FOR
SMALL ENTERPRISES

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

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

Senate Bill No. 1578, entitled

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RIGHT
OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON
MATTERS OF PUBLIC CONCERN
GUARANTEED UNDER SECTION
SEVEN, ARTICLE III OF THE 1987
CONSTITUTION AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

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

Senate Bill No. 1579, entitled

AN ACT INTEGRATING ROBOTICS
APPLICATION IN THE TEACHING OF
SECONDARY SCIENCE EDUCATION
IN THE PHILIPPINES, APPROPRIAT-
ING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

**To the Committees on Education, Arts and
Culture; Science and Technology; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1580, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A SCHOOL MODERNIZATION AND INNOVATION PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1581, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING A PROGRAM FOR THE CONTINUING EDUCATION OF COLLEGE TEACHERS, AMENDING FOR SUCH PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7784, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT STRENGTHENING TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES BY ESTABLISHING CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE, CREATING A TEACHER EDUCATION COUNCIL FOR THE PURPOSE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1582, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING COMPULSORY COMPUTER EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL LEVELS THROUGH THE INCLUSION OF APPROPRIATE COMPUTER SUBJECTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1583, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE MEDICAL TOURISM BUREAU WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

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

Senate Bill No. 1584, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE YEARLY ALLOCATIONS FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES (STA)

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

To the Committees on Science and Technology; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1585, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A MAGNA CARTA FOR THE WORKERS IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR, INSTITUTIONALIZING MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTATION THEREOF AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

To the Committees on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1586, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A MAGNA CARTA FOR HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

To the Committee on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement

Senate Bill No. 1587, entitled

AN ACT SAFEGUARDING THE HEALTH OF FILIPINO MOTHERS AT THE TIME OF THEIR CHILDBIRTH, PROVIDING PROTECTIVE MECHANISMS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Local Government

Senate Bill No. 1588, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY COUNCIL, PROVIDING POWERS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Local Government

Senate Bill No. 1589, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE PRESENTATION TO THE PUBLIC OR MEDIA OF SUSPECTS PRIOR TO THE FILING OF FORMAL CHARGES AGAINST THEM

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and Public Order and Illegal Drugs

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

It was 3:17 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:23 p.m., the session was resumed.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Deputy Secretary for Legislation read the following matters and the Chair made the corresponding referrals:

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

Letter of Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, dated 6 September 2007, submitting to the Senate, pursuant to the provisions of Article VII, Section 19 of the Constitution, Proclamation No. 1377, entitled

GRANTING AMNESTY TO MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES-NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY-NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT (CPP-NPA-NDF) AND OTHER COMMUNIST REBEL GROUPS

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Letter from the Secretary General of the House of Representatives, informing the Senate that on 17 September 2007, the House of Representatives passed House Bill No. 2417, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9340, RESETTling THE SYNCHRONIZED BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

in which it requested the concurrence of the Senate.

To the Committees on Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws; and Local Government

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1590, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, SENIOR CITIZENS AND INDIGENTS A TWENTY PERCENT (20%) DISCOUNT ON THE SALE OF MEDICINES

Introduced by Senator Gordon *AG*

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**To the Committees on Ways and Means;
and Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Develop-
ment**

Senate Bill No. 1591, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 31 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1177, ALLOCATING FIFTY PERCENT (50%) OF THE FUNDS, "FREED" AS A RESULT OF THE AMENDMENT TO AUGMENT THE INTERNAL REVENUE ALLOTMENTS (IRA) OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, PROVIDING FOR THE AUTOMATIC RELEASE OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE ALLOTMENTS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS AND FOR OTHER RELATED PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

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

Senate Bill No. 1592, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gregorio B. Honasan II

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

Senate Bill No. 1593, entitled

AN ACT INCLUDING GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES IN THE EXCEPTIONS FROM THE PROHIBITION AGAINST DISCLOSURE OF OR INQUIRY INTO DEPOSITS WITH ANY BANKING INSTITUTION AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISION OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1405 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "SECRECYP OF BANK DEPOSITS LAW," AND FOR OTHER RELATED PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

**To the Committee on Banks, Financial
Institutions and Currencies**

Senate Bill No. 1594, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A HOLISTIC PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT WORKERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

**To the Committees on Civil Service and
Government Reorganization; Agriculture and
Food; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1595, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A TOTAL BAN ON ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES, FOR OTHER PROHIBITIONS OR RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF LANDMINES, BOOBY-TRAPS AND OTHER DEVICES, CREATING FOR THIS PURPOSE A PHILIPPINE COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON LANDMINES, AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gregorio B. Honasan II

**To the Committees on National Defense
and Security; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1596, entitled

AN ACT COMPLEMENTING THE HIGHEST HONOR OF PRIDE TO ALL NATIONAL ARTIST OR "ARTISTA NG BAYAN" AWARDEES BY GRANTING THEM CASH PRIZES AND OTHER NON-MONETARY RECOGNITION

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

**To the Committees on Education, Arts and
Culture; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1597, entitled

AN ACT FURTHER STRENGTHENING THE PHILIPPINE JUDICIARY, GRANTING ADDITIONAL RETIREMENT BENEFITS TO ITS MEMBERS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

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

Senate Bill No. 1598, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING ALL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO PROVIDE COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP GRANT TO AT LEAST TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THEIR STUDENT POPULATION WHO ARE POOR BUT DESERVING STUDENTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

To the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture

Senate Bill No. 1599, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE PRESENTATION TO THE PUBLIC OR MEDIA OF SUSPECTS PRIOR TO THE FILING OF FORMAL CHARGES AGAINST THEM

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and Public Order and Illegal Drugs

Senate Bill No. 1600, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A MAGNA CARTA OF AGRICULTURAL OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

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

Senate Bill No. 1601, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, RATIONALIZING THE ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND CORPORATIONS RELATED TO HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

To the Committees on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement; Civil Service and Government Reorganization; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1602, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING ALL INDEPENDENT POWER PRODUCERS, GENERATION COMPANIES OR ENERGY RESOURCE DEVELOPERS TO REMIT THE AMOUNT THEY ARE REQUIRED TO SET ASIDE AS FINANCIAL BENEFIT TO HOST COMMUNITIES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

To the Committees on Energy; and Local Government

Senate Bill No. 1603, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE TEACHING OF ECOLOGY IN ALL ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS, WHETHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, ALL THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Environment and Natural Resources; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1604, entitled

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE CONDONATION OF PENALTIES ON DELINQUENT SOCIAL SECURITY

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CONTRIBUTIONS AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

**To the Committees on Labor, Employment
and Human Resources Development; and
Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes
and Laws**

Senate Bill No. 1605, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A SPECIAL
ECONOMIC ZONE AND FREEPORT
IN SOUTHERN PALAWAN, CREATING
FOR THIS PURPOSE THE SOUTH-
ERN PALAWAN ECOZONE AND
FREEPORT AUTHORITY, APPRO-
PRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

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

Senate Bill No. 1606, entitled

AN ACT ENSURING THE EDUCA-
TIONAL BENEFITS OF THE MINOR
CHILDREN OF FIREFIGHTERS
WHO ARE KILLED IN THE LINE
OF DUTY OR OF OCCUPATION-
RELATED ILLNESS, AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

**To the Committees on Public Order and
Illegal Drugs; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1607, entitled

AN ACT TO INDEX FINES OF THE
REVISED PENAL CODE AND
VARIOUS PENAL LAWS TO ADJUST
TO INFLATION

Introduced by Senator Gordon

**To the Committee on Constitutional Amend-
ments, Revision of Codes and Laws**

Senate Bill No. 1608, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING AND ENHANCING
THE EXPLORATION, DEVELOPMENT,
UTILIZATION, AND COMMERCIA-
LIZATION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY
RESOURCES

Introduced by Senator Gordon

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

Senate Bill No. 1609, entitled

AN ACT FURTHER AMENDING REPUBLIC
ACT NO. 2640 OTHERWISE KNOWN
AS "AN ACT TO CREATE A PUBLIC
CORPORATION TO BE KNOWN
AS THE VETERANS FEDERATION
OF THE PHILIPPINES, DEFINING
ITS POWERS, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES," AS AMENDED, BY
INCLUDING ALEJO SANTOS OF
THE BULACAN MILITARY AREA
VETERANS ASSOCIATION AS ONE
OF THE MEMBERS THEREOF

Introduced by Senator Biazon

**To the Committees on Government Corp-
orations and Public Enterprises; and National
Defense and Security**

Senate Bill No. 1610, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL
IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Biazon

**To the Committees on Constitutional
Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws;
and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 1611, entitled

AN ACT UPGRADING THE MINI-
MUM SALARY GRADE LEVEL
OF TEACHERS FROM SALARY
GRADE 10 TO 19

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda *AL*

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To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Civil Service and Government Reorganization; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1612, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE OFFICE OF THE TRADE REPRESENTATIVE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

To the Committees on Trade and Commerce; Foreign Relations; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1613, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SPORTS AS AN ATTACHED AGENCY OF THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION, PROVIDING THE STRUCTURE, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manuel "Lito" M. Lapid

To the Committees on Games, Amusement and Sports; Civil Service and Government Reorganization; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 1614, entitled

THE PHILIPPINE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION ACT OF 2007

Introduced by Senator Enrile

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

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 136, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGIS-

LATION, ON THE LEGAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION OF THE NATIONAL BROADBAND NETWORK (NBN) PROJECT OF THE GOVERNMENT

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

To the Committees on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations; Trade and Commerce; and National Defense and Security

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 137, entitled

RESOLUTION CREATING THE COMMITTEE ON MARITIME AFFAIRS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 13, RULE X OF THE RULES OF THE SENATE, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 138, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEES ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES; PUBLIC SERVICES; AND FINANCE TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE CONTINUING ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE OIL SPILL ON GUIMARAS ISLAND, THE REPORTED NON-PAYMENT OF CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES OF THE AFFECTED RESIDENTS, AND THE APPARENT LACK OF INTEREST OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN PROSECUTING THE RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS OF SUNSHINE MARITIME DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND PETRON CORPORATION THAT CAUSED THIS ENVIRONMENTAL TRAGEDY

Introduced by Senator M. A. Madrigal

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; Public Services; and Finance

MD

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 139, entitled

RESOLUTION CALLING THE PRESIDENT TO DECLARE A STATE OF EMERGENCY IN ALL COCONUT-GROWING PROVINCES IN THE PHILIPPINES TO ARREST THE MASSIVE INFESTATION OF THE COCONUT LEAF BEETLE (*BRONTISPA LONGISSIMA GESTRO*) AFFECTING THE COUNTRY'S COCONUT INDUSTRY

Introduced by Senator Angara

To the Committee on Agriculture and Food

COMMUNICATIONS

Letter from ALSA KA PHILIPPINES, INC., dated 25 August 2007, requesting the Senate that an investigation, in aid of legislation, be conducted on the Ombudsman's dereliction of duty, discriminatory acts and arbitrariness in the handling of cases involving MMDA Chairman Bayani Fernando, his wife Mayor Marides Fernando and their allies and subordinates.

To the Committee on Justice and Human Rights

Letter from Senior Deputy Executive Secretary & Acting Head, PLLO, Joaquin C. Lagonera of the Office of the President of the Philippines, transmitting to the Senate two (2) original copies of Republic Act No. 9495, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE PROVINCE OF QUEZON DEL SUR,

which lapsed into law on 7 September 2007, without the signature of the President, pursuant to the provisions of Section 27(1), Article VI of the Constitution.

To the Archives

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF SENATOR DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

Senator Defensor Santiago asked the Committee on Rules for a definitive interpretation of the fourth paragraph of Section 3 (*Jurisdictional Challenge*)

of the Senate Rules of Procedure Governing Inquiries in Aid of Legislation which reads: "The filing or pendency of any prosecution of criminal or administrative action should not stop or abate any inquiry to carry out a legislative purpose," which she deemed to be relevant to the Senate's inquiry into the National Broadband Network deal. She explained that certain government officials could invoke the doctrine of *sub judice* in light of the pending case before the Supreme Court on the same matter. However, she recalled that in the case of *Sabio v. Gordon*, the Supreme Court upheld the validity and effectiveness of that particular section of the Rules.

Senator Defensor Santiago posited that this provision could be interpreted in two ways: on the one hand, a restrictive interpretation would mean that the prosecution of an action that is not criminal or administrative may work to stop or abate an inquiry; on the other hand, a liberal interpretation of the phrase "any prosecution of criminal or administrative action" would mean any action in another branch of government, be it judicial, executive or administrative which is actually executive in nature. She underscored the importance of putting the Senate's interpretation of the particular paragraph on record so as to give the Supreme Court ground to cite the Senate Rules of Procedure in any future cases.

For his part, Senator Pangilinan said that the Committee on Rules would prepare a position paper on the matter. However, he believed that based on the practice of the Senate in previous Congresses, the provision has been applied liberally, meaning it applies to any proceedings, rather than just criminal or administrative. For instance, he noted that although a case was pending before the Supreme Court questioning the constitutionality of Proclamation No. 1017 (declaring a state of emergency), the Senate conducted inquiries based on a resolution that was filed and adopted by 17 senators concerning illegal acts that flowed from Proclamation No. 1017 such as warrantless arrests and the appeal to media outlets to stop covering events that took place on February 24 and 25. He recalled that he had even chaired a subcommittee that looked into the warrantless arrests. He said that this and other similar instances would be included in the position paper to be presented to Senator Defensor Santiago.

In closing, Senator Defensor Santiago clarified that she wanted to put the matter on record so that

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the Supreme Court would be aware of the Senate's official stand on the issue.

REMARKS OF SENATOR GORDON

On other matter, Senator Gordon believed that it would be superfluous to refer the Letter from the Secretary General of the House of Representatives informing the Senate of the passage of House Bill No. 2417 (*resetting of the synchronized barangay sangguniang kabataan elections*) to the Committee on Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws, considering that during the previous day's caucus, his suggestion to postpone the barangay election so that it could be automated was rejected as the majority believed that automation is not important for that electoral exercise. However, he believed that automation is vital since honest elections could never be held while the traditional paradigm is unchanged.

Senator Gordon said that in the previous day's caucus, he reminded the Body that it is not only the barangay election that is important but the automation of election as well. He noted that the mismanagement of elections has caused people to feel they were cheated.

He recalled that in 1997, when the automated election measure was enacted into law, Comelec profligately spent a billion pesos for ID card machines but the rascals in Comelec got scot-free because nobody went to jail. He bemoaned that to date, the ID card system has not been implemented and the Comelec is still paying for the automation equipment.

He said that while he prefers to extend the election to February 2008 to force Comelec to automate it in two provinces and cities to test the capability of the Comelec machines, he could not go against what was agreed upon in the caucus unless Senate President Villar or the Members tell him to do so.

At this point, Senator Pangilinan clarified that the referral to the Committee on Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws was out of courtesy considering that the matter precisely falls under the jurisdiction of the said Committee. He said that one option the Committee can take is to come out with a report recommending that the bill be archived.

Senator Gordon replied that the Committee intends to call for a meeting not to discuss the barangay elections but the computerization of elections as

he stressed the need to do it immediately in order to have honest elections.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Pimentel delivered the following speech:

THE GENERIC DRUGS ACT

September is the Generic Awareness Month.

On September 13, 1988, Republic Act 6675, otherwise known as the Generics Act of 1988, was enacted. The law was designed basically to ensure the adequate supply of drugs with generic names at the lowest possible cost and endeavor to make them available for free to indigent patients.

Under RA 6675, "generic drugs" are drugs not covered by patent protection and which are labeled solely by their international nonproprietary or generic name. The law mandates the identification of drugs and medicines by their scientifically and internationally recognized active ingredients or by their official generic name as determined by the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) of the Department of Health. It likewise promotes, encourages and requires the use of generic terminology in the importation, manufacture, distribution, marketing, advertising and promotion, prescription and dispensation of the drugs.

Our problem is that, among other things, we have many number of laws that are not implemented fairly and determinedly by the government. The Generic Drugs Law that I authored in my first term as senator has not been properly implemented. Among other things, the drugstores are supposed to put up visible signs that indicate that in that particular drugstore, generic drugs are available. The intention, of course, is to tell our people that instead of buying brand-named medicines, we can buy generic drugs. In other words, the equivalent of brand names and generic drug medicines would also be indicated. But this is not being done; up to this point, after so many years since the passage of this law in 1988, we still have the problem of medicine being made available to our people because of the price and the difficulty of affording those medicines that are prescribed by the doctors concerned and sold by the drugstores. Norvasc, for example, is being sold in this country for P52.00 per pill and yet, in India, the generic equivalent of Norvasc is being sold at P8.00. *Bakit naman sobra ang*

mahal dito sa bansa natin? And I am happy to put into the record that Sen. Mar Roxas had introduced a bill that would radically, hopefully, bring down the price of medicine by insisting that companies, which have patented medicines, should not automatically have the right to renew their patents after they are expired.

You might be shocked to know that 40% to 45% of the total health expenditures of the Filipino families are used to buy drugs. And I am sure that those of us who passed through local government, having been mayor or governor, are aware of the fact that the longest line of people queuing up everyday before the office of the mayor or the governor are people seeing the mayor or the governor for dole-outs, for money to buy drugs and medicine.

And so, it is a sign of the times that we need to do something about this matter, that we should attempt to bring down the price of medicines in this country. The enormous budget allocation for drugs dissipates the much-needed financial resources for other basic family needs.

Generic counterparts of branded drugs are far lower in prices. However, it is the sad reality that generic drugs have very low acceptability to the medical practitioners and the general public as reflected in the sales and the use of those drugs.

In fact, Henrietta Teresa O. de la Cruz, who is a doctor, wrote an article entitled *Far From Cure* (World Mission Magazine, Volume XVI, No. 2, February 2004), and she wrote:

Despite higher prices, branded products continue to be preferred by most Filipinos. Only 10%-15% of the Filipino market purchase the lower-priced unbranded drugs. In comparison, in the U.S., as much as 40% of the public prefer the same generic drug counterparts.

Many Filipinos unknowingly shoulder costs for the brighter-colored, fancy packaging and heavy marketing of labeled drugs. By industry estimates, as much as 40% to 60% of the actual chemical drug costs can go into the advertising and retailing of drug products.

An ASEAN survey showed, however, that the retail prices of medicine in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand are 40% to 70% lower than the cost of those same drugs in the Philippines, according to the Philippine International Trading Corporation.

Based on the report of the Department of Health before the Senate Committee on Health, among the current government interventions regarding pricing of medicines include parallel drug importation, which has resulted in 61% public savings, establishment of the *Botika ng Bayan* and *Botika ng Barangay*, the latter resulting in 53% public savings, and other regulatory and standard reforms, including the strengthening of the Philippine National Drug Formulary System and the Essential Drug Price Monitoring System.

But where does the problem lie? Among other things, it is not only the attitude of the patient preferring to buy branded international drug products instead of generic drugs. To a very great extent, the attitude of the doctors also comes into play. In the law, as I remember it, we tried to require that when a doctor of medicine prescribes a drug to a patient, he must tell the patient that this particular drug is available in generic form, and he can also add, if he wants to, that the branded name equivalent is this particular name drug. But, things as they are, it is surprising to note that many of our people do not really belong to the literate class — and there is a survey that shows that it is this particular segment of our population — who would prefer branded name drugs over the generic drugs. Maybe it has to do with the colonial mentality of our people that anything that sounds American is always better than those that are Filipino-sounding names. That is why today our young people have American names. We try to copy American names more than Filipino names, which probably influences the minds of the Filipinos, even in the buying of the drugs that they have to use for their families.

There is a report that of the 600 drugs currently in the essential drugs list of the country, only 200 are made by local companies, the other 400 off-patent drugs — *ibig sabihin, hindi na kasali sa patent ng mga manufacturers ng mga drugs na ito*. But still they do not have generic counterpart that is manufactured in the Philippines.

After almost two decades since its implementation, I must admit that we have yet to fully realize and completely accomplish the mandate of the Generics Drugs Act.

I believe that the best weapon for this is through the effective education of our people on generic drugs. As mandated by RA 6675, there must be a renewed advocacy and a continuous information campaign on generic drugs as an alternative of equal efficacy to the

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more expensive brand-named drugs, and for a continuing education and training of our medical and allied medical professions on drugs with generic names.

This is what I would like to see: that this law, which has a very noble purpose and which is doable, should really be implemented. Therefore, I call upon the BFAD and the Department of Health. I understand, among other things, that the reason this law has not been fully implemented is the fact that up to now, the Department of Health has not come out with the implementing rules and regulations. Can the Body imagine a law that was enacted so many years ago, 1988 *pa*, up to now, *kaya raw hindi ma-implement nang husto ay dahil sa wala pang implementing rules and regulations?* I think that we should call them to account because, to my mind, they are committing a crime against our people.

With the support of the Body, I would like to see this privilege speech referred to the proper committees — Committees on Trade and Industry, and Health and Demography — so we can move the Generic Drugs Law or RA 6675, which was passed on September 13, 1988, *na ma-implement na ang batas na ito* for the good of our people.

In the course of Senator Pimentel's speech, Senate President Villar relinquished the Chair to Senate President Pro Tempore Ejercito Estrada.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEES

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Pimentel to the Committee on Health and Demography, primarily, and to the Committee on Trade and Commerce, secondarily.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senator Pangilinan acknowledged the presence of a delegation from Bukidnon: Board Member Adoracion Raguro and the *Punong Barangay* of Maramag, Lantapan and Manolo Fortich.

VICE CHAIRMANSHIP

Senator Pangilinan manifested that Senator Legarda has been designated by Senator Ejercito Estrada as vice-chair of the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

It was 4:01 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:38 p.m., the session was resumed.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Still on the privilege hour, Senator Pimentel delivered the following speech:

Last September 15, the Architecture Advocacy International Foundation celebrated its 5th anniversary, and I was privileged to speak on that occasion before its members headed by Architect Greg Timbol II. In any event, I think we should start by discussing the meaning of architecture.

In Wikipedia—this is the new search medium in the web—it reveals the following meaning of architecture:

Architecture is the art and science of designing buildings and structures. A wider definition often includes the design of the total built environment: from the macrolevel of town planning, urban design and architecture to the microlevel of construction details and, sometimes, furniture.

I would suggest that as a nation we should go for the wider definition — the design of the total built environment from the macrolevel of town planning, urban design and landscape architecture to the microlevel of construction details and furniture. It is my view that it is time that we encouraged our architects to design buildings and structures from its macro-level perspective as in town planning to the micro-level objective of construction details.

I would like to see the Filipino spirit captured in the structures of steel and wood that our architects could conceive of in doing urban planning or landscape architecture and even in furniture-making. The fastest way to do this is to insist that Republic Act No. 9266, the Architecture Act of 2004, be implemented now.

So this is another example of a law that was passed by both Houses of Congress — *MS*

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incidentally, on a personal level, I was responsible for sponsoring this law in the Senate — that up to today is not being implemented.

I realized that there are man-made obstacles to the full implementation of the law.

As far as Republic Act No. 9266 is concerned, the obstacles mainly come from some engineers who want to hug the construction works especially in local government territories even if the law says that plans for public works must bear the approval of architects. But the fact of the matter is that to many of us lay people, especially when I was growing up in the provinces, I thought that there was no difference between engineers and architects *Pareho lamang iyon sa tingin ko*. As a matter of fact, I really did not see the difference between architects and engineers until I dug deeper into the meaning of the two professions.

Therefore, in all honesty, I failed to see the validity of the position of those who opposed the implementation of the law. The only argument that they can allege is that as engineers, for a long time, they have been the planners and implementers of government projects. But that was before Republic Act No. 9266 was passed into law.

In fact, if we take a look at the present staffing pattern of local governments as far as the engineering department is concerned, we will find out that — of course, as the name implies — the top honchos of the engineering department are always engineers. Very seldom would we find an architect in charge of an engineering department.

Now my view is that the law is already there and therefore it must be implemented, otherwise, it will not change the building environment of the nation. We will keep on putting up structures, helter-skelter, without any serious attempt at beautifying what we build. But constructing buildings and beautifying what we build are two different things. Any carpenter can construct a building but only an architect can beautify what he builds.

As John Ruskin, the social and art critic said in 1848, "Architecture is exalting discipline. It dignifies and ennobles public life. It preserves the beauty of the material it uses and serves as a source of power and renewal for the society that produces it."

It is thus the architects, in my opinion, who can put the soul of the nation into the buildings that we build today. Unfortunately, by and large, we do not see the distinctiveness of good

architecture that Ruskin speaks of in his work *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* in the buildings that dot the landscapes of the country today.

Missing in those edifices are the basic characteristics of architecture that Ruskin says flow from the virtues of sacrifice, truth, power, beauty, life, memory and obedience. These fundamental qualities bring about the best in architectural achievements and necessarily differentiate architectural works of art from the products of the mere act of constructing a building or building a construction.

But to go back to our thesis, it is precisely because the constructions that we see today do not reflect *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* that Ruskin speaks of that I want the law, Republic Act No. 9266, to be followed and implemented today.

I have tried to be restrained in my statements regarding the problem of implementing the law and to counsel patience and negotiations between the engineers and the architects. It looks like such an advice is not moving the law at all.

And therefore, I would suggest to the architects to bring matters to a head and sue before the Sandiganbayan the persons responsible for blocking the implementation of the law, including the local government officials who are abetting them for graft and corruption, because preventing the non-implementation of the law without just cause amounts to graft and corruption. Another suggestion is for them to go to the Supreme Court perhaps to question the non-implementation of the law.

Even as I am making that suggestion and even as I am sure that our architects are already at the end of their patience and are probably preparing to take the legal route, I would exhort them to try one more time to get the officials who can settle the matter extrajudicially to mediate the problem. It is always best to go the route of peaceful negotiations when we can avoid having to go to court to vindicate one's rights.

And therefore, as I close, I would like to suggest that when this privilege speech is referred to the proper committee, perhaps the Professional Regulation Commission, which has jurisdiction over architecture, be called, be summoned to attend the hearings of the committee, including the various officials of the architectural organization — there is one organization now of architects in this country — as well as the Philippine Engineering Association. Their officers should also be invited to that hearing so that we

can look for a peaceful way of settling the problem that now occurs between the architects and the engineers.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Pimentel to the Committee on Civil Service and Government Reorganization.

SECOND ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1615, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 35 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Gordon

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 1616, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 24 (A) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Gordon

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 1617, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND VETERINARY MEDICINE EDUCATION, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8178, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

To the Committee on Agriculture and Food

Senate Bill No. 1618, entitled

AN ACT PUNISHING CELLPHONE THEFT

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

To the Committee on Justice and Human Rights

Senate Bill No. 1619, entitled

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE PRESERVATION AND CULTIVATION OF THE FILIPINO HERITAGE AMONG FILIPINOS OVERSEAS THROUGH THE TEACHING OF FILIPINO LANGUAGE AND HISTORY, ASSISTANCE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF PHILIPPINE SCHOOLS AND FILIPINIANA CENTERS ABROAD AND ESTABLISHING A TRUST FUND THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Foreign Relations; and Finance

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Report No. 1, prepared and submitted by the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; Civil Service and Government Reorganization; and Finance, on Senate Bill No. 1620, with Senators Enrile, Pangilinan, Compañera Pia S. Cayetano, Manny Villar and Francis "Chiz" G. Escudero as authors thereof, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING ADDITIONAL RETIREMENT BENEFITS TO MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 910, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

recommending its approval in substitution of Senate Bill Nos. 121, 1400, 1415 and 1597. *AB*

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Sponsors: Senators Francis "Chiz" G. Escudero, Enrile, Pangilinan, Compañera Pia S. Cayetano and Manny Villar

To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

VICE CHAIRMANSHIP

Senator Pangilinan informed the Body that Senator Zubiri has been designated by Senator Honasan as vice-chair of the Committee on Agrarian Reform.


ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Senate President Pro Tempore

declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of Monday, September 24, 2007.

It was 4:53 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.


EMMA LIRIO REYES
Secretary of the Senate

Approved on September 24, 2007