



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Senate
Pasay City

Journal

SESSION NO. 4
Monday, August 2, 2010

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

SESSION NO. 4
Monday, August 2, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:33 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Juan Ponce Enrile, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. "Compañera" Pia S. Cayetano led the prayer, to wit:

Our God and Father in heaven, please accept our gratitude for Your kindness to us as a nation. You have given us a new beginning. You have given us a reason to hope for a better future for all Filipinos, both here and abroad.

We come to You mindful of the sacredness of the duty which we now bear as senators of the people. We are fully aware of the moral obligation which You have placed before us for the good of Your people.

We ask for the blessing of principled harmony and productive unity. We ask for the ability to raise our concerns with positive intentions and a willingness to engage in a healthy and beneficial dialogue.

At the end of our term, may we have the privilege of looking back and say with firm conviction: I did what was expected of me.

Thank you for everything. In Jesus' Name, we pray.

Amen.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

The Senate Choir led the singing of the national anthem and thereafter rendered the song, entitled "*Lupa: Isang Dugo, Isang Lahi, Isang Musika.*"

ROLL CALL

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

Angara, E. J.	Lapid, M. L. M.
Arroyo, J. P.	Legarda, L.
Cayetano, A. P. C. S.	Marcos Jr., F. R.
Cayetano, C. P. S.	Osmeña III, S. R.
Defensor Santiago, M.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Drilon, F. M.	Recto, R. G.
Ejercito Estrada, J.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Enrile, J. P.	Sotto III, V. C.
Escudero, F. J. G.	Villar, M.
Guingona III, T. D.	Zubiri, J. M. F.
Honasan, G. B.	

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

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Senator Lacson was absent.

Senator Trillanes was unable to attend the session as he was under detention.

**APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL
OF SESSION NO. 3**

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journal of Session No. 3 (July 28, 2010) and considered it approved.

At this juncture, Senate President Enrile relinquished the Chair to Senate President Pro Tempore Ejercito Estrada.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Deputy Secretary for Legislation, Atty. Edwin B. Bellen/Committee Affairs Bureau Director, Eduardo Garvida, read the following matters and the Chair made the corresponding referrals:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 101, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7884, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL DAIRY DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1995

Introduced by Senator Escudero

To the Committees on Agriculture and Food; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 102, entitled

AN ACT PENALIZING INFLUENCE PEDDLING AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Escudero

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

Senate Bill No. 103, entitled

AN ACT REORGANIZING THE PHILIPPINE STATISTICAL SYSTEM

Introduced by Senator Escudero

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

Senate Bill No. 104, entitled

AN ACT REDEFINING THE JUST SHARE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS IN THE INTERNAL REVENUE TAXES AMENDING FOR THAT PURPOSE SECTIONS 284 AND 286 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991

Introduced by Senator Escudero

To the Committees on Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 105, entitled

AN ACT RATIONALIZING LOCAL TAXATION AMENDING FOR THAT PURPOSE SECTION 150, CHAPTER 1, TITLE ONE, BOOK II OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE

Introduced by Senator Escudero

To the Committee on Local Government

Senate Bill No. 106, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE FUNCTIONAL AND STRUCTURAL ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Escudero

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

Senate Bill No. 107, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES TO

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SUBMIT A WRITTEN PERMISSION OR WAIVER IN FAVOR OF THE OMBUDSMAN TO LOOK INTO ALL DEPOSITS OF WHATEVER NATURE WITH BANKS OR BANKING INSTITUTIONS BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE PHILIPPINES INCLUDING INVESTMENT BONDS ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES, ITS INSTRUMENTALITIES AND PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Escudero

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

Senate Bill No. 108, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A MAGNA CARTA FOR STUDENTS

Introduced by Senator Honasan II

To the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture

Senate Bill No. 109, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING A NATIONAL LAND USE POLICY, PROVIDING THE IMPLEMENTING MECHANISMS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Honasan II

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 110, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK AND CREATING AN INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Honasan II

To the Committees on National Defense and Security; Foreign Relations; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 111, 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 Honasan II

To the Committees on National Defense and Security; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 112, entitled

AN ACT TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE ANTI-DRUG CAMPAIGN OF THE GOVERNMENT AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF R.A. 9165 ENTITLED AN ACT INSTITUTING THE COMPREHENSIVE DRUGS ACT OF 2002, REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6425, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE DANGEROUS DRUG ACT OF 1972, AS AMENDED, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Honasan II

To the Committee on Public Order and Illegal Drugs

Senate Bill No. 113, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE NATIONAL MAPPING AND RESOURCE INFORMATION AUTHORITY (NAMRIA)

Introduced by Senator Honasan II

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; National Defense and Security; Ways and Means; and Finance

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Senate Bill No. 114, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING A NATIONAL PEACE POLICY THEREBY CREATING A COMMISSION ON PEACE

Introduced by Senator Honasan II

To the Committees on Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; Civil Service and Government Reorganization; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 115, entitled

AN ACT TO PREVENT THE PROLIFERATION OF CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS, AS WELL AS CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS BY REGULATING THE TRANSFER OF STRATEGIC GOODS AND DUAL-USE GOODS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Honasan II

To the Committees on Public Order and Illegal Drugs; National Defense and Security; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 116, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLE NINETY-NINE OF ACT NUMBERED THIRTY-EIGHT HUNDRED FIFTEEN, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED PENAL CODE

Introduced by Senator Honasan II

To the Committee on Justice and Human Rights

Senate Bill No. 117, entitled

AN ACT ADJUSTING THE SUBSIDIARY IMPRISONMENT FROM ONE DAY FOR EACH P8.00 TO ONE DAY FOR EACH P362.00, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE THIRTY-NINE OF THE REVISED PENAL CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Honasan II

To the Committee on Justice and Human Rights

Senate Bill No. 118, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR STIFFER PENALTIES AGAINST PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES WHO REFUSE OR NEGLECT TO ACT PROMPTLY ON THE PUBLIC'S PERSONAL TRANSACTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS AS REQUIRED UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6713, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES

Introduced by Senator Osmeña III

To the Committee on Civil Service and Government Reorganization

Senate Bill No. 119, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE STANDARDS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Osmeña III

To the Committee on Public Services

Senate Bill No. 120, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR AGRO-INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT INCENTIVES TO ACCELERATE DEVELOPMENT IN MINDANAO, CREATING THE MINDANAO INCENTIVES DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FOR THIS PURPOSE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Osmeña III

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

Senate Bill No. 121, entitled

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PHILIPPINE BUSINESS REGISTRY DATABANK

Introduced by Senator Osmeña III

To the Committees on Trade and Commerce; Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 122, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Osmeña III

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

Senate Bill No. 123, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE FAIR TRADE COMMISSION, PRESCRIBING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS IN REGULATING TRADE COMPETITION AND MONOPOLIES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Osmeña III

To the Committees on Trade and Commerce; and Economic Affairs

Senate Bill No. 124, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE PRESERVATION, REFORESTATION, AFFORESTATION, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MANGROVE FORESTS IN THE PHILIP-PINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Osmeña III

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; and Local Government

Senate Bill No.125, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING SHIPOWNERS, SHIP CREW, AND CONCERNED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO PROVIDE FOR AND ENSURE THE SAFETY OF PASSENGERS AT SEA, PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Osmeña III

To the Committee on Public Services

Senate Bill No. 126, entitled

AN ACT GIVING MEANING TO THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO INFORMATION ON MATTERS OF PUBLIC CONCERN GUARANTEED UNDER THE CONSTITUTION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Osmeña III

To the Committees on Public Information and Mass Media; and Civil Service and Government Reorganization

Senate Bill No. 127, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Osmeña III

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

Senate Bill No 128, entitled

AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Drilon

To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and Finance

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Senate Bill No. 129, entitled

AN ACT TO REGULATE THE CARRYING OF FIREARMS, PROVIDE PENALTIES FOR ITS VIOLATION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Drilon

To the Committees on Public Order and Illegal Drugs; and National Defense and Security

Senate Bill No. 130, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A CAP ON PUBLIC DEBT TO ENSURE LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH FISCAL DISCIPLINE

Introduced by Senator Drilon

To the Committees on Finance; and Economic Affairs

Senate Bill No. 131, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS SUBMITTED TO TAX AUTHORITIES AS MINIMUM SECURITY REQUIREMENTS FOR BANK LOANS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 40 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8791, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE GENERAL BANKING LAW OF 2000

Introduced by Senator Drilon

To the Committees on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; and Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 132, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 86(A)(4) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997

Introduced by Senator Enrile

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 133, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE TO EXCLUSIVELY INVESTIGATE, PROSECUTE AND HANDLE TAX-RELATED CASES, AMENDING SECTION 220, CHAPTER II, TITLE VIII OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8424, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "TAX REFORM ACT OF 1997," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Enrile

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 134, entitled

AN ACT DEFINING CYBERCRIME, PROVIDING FOR THE PREVENTION, SUPPRESSION AND IMPOSITION OF PENALTIES THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Enrile

To the Committees on Science and Technology; Constitutional Amendments, Revision and Codes and Laws; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 135, entitled

AN ACT REMOVING IMPRISONMENT AS PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 22, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT PENALIZING THE MAKING OR DRAWING AND ISSUANCE OF A CHECK WITHOUT SUFFICIENT FUNDS OR CREDIT

Introduced by Senator Drilon

To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and Constitutional Amendments, Revision of Codes and Laws

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Senate Bill No. 136, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, DEFINING ITS MANDATE, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Drilon

To the Committees on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 137, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9225, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CITIZENSHIP RETENTION AND REACQUISITION ACT OF 2003

Introduced by Senator Drilon

To the Committee on Justice and Human Rights

Senate Bill No. 138, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING MANDATORY BASIC IMMUNIZATION SERVICES AGAINST HEPATITIS-B FOR INFANTS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 996 AS AMENDED, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Cayetano (P)

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 139, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE APPOINTMENT OF ONE MIDWIFE FOR EACH BARANGAY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Cayetano (P)

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

Senate Bill No. 140, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

Introduced by Senator Cayetano (P)

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; Local Government; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate No. 141, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING A NATIONAL LAND USE POLICY, PROVIDING THE IMPLEMENTING MECHANISMS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Cayetano (P)

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 142, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING REFORMS IN LAND ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM, CREATING THE LAND ADMINISTRATION AUTHORITY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Cayetano (P)

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; Civil Service and Government Reorganization; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 143, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING COMPULSORY COVERAGE TO ACCREDITED BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS IN THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM AND THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7883 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Cayetano (P)

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To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Local Government

Senate Bill No. 144, entitled

AN ACT PRESCRIBING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION TO HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Cayetano (P)

To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Trade and Commerce

Senate Bill No. 145, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE LA MESA WATERSHED IN THE CITIES OF QUEZON AND CALOOCAN AND IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF RODRIGUEZ, PROVINCE OF RIZAL AS A WATERSHED RESERVATION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Cayetano (P)

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 146, entitled

AN ACT PROCLAIMING THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF PATIENTS, PROVIDING A GRIEVANCE MECHANISM THEREOF AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Cayetano (P)

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

Senate Bill No. 147, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING INDEPENDENT HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR ALL MINING PROJECTS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE THE PHILIPPINE MINING ACT OF 1995

Introduced by Senator Cayetano (P)

To the Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; and Health and Demography

Senate Bill No. 148, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING CIVIL SERVICE ELIGIBILITY TO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS, WHOSE STATUS OF APPOINTMENT IS EITHER CASUAL OR CONTRACTUAL AND WHO HAVE RENDERED A TOTAL OF FIVE YEARS OF EFFICIENT SERVICE

Introduced by Senator Pangilinan

To the Committee on Civil Service and Government Reorganization

Senate Bill No. 149, entitled

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO INFORMATION ON MATTERS OF PUBLIC CONCERN GUARANTEED UNDER SECTION SEVEN, ARTICLE THREE OF THE 1987 CONSTITUTION AND THE STATE POLICY OF FULL PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF ALL ITS TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING PUBLIC INTEREST UNDER SECTION TWENTY-EIGHT, ARTICLE TWO OF THE 1987 CONSTITUTION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Pangilinan

To the Committees on Public Information and Mass Media; and Civil Service and Government Reorganization

Senate Bill No. 150, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1379, PROVIDING CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Pangilinan

To the Committee on Justice and Human Rights

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At this juncture, Senate President Pro Tempore Ejercito Estrada relinquished the Chair to Senate President Enrile.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR CAYETANO (A)

Availing himself of the privilege to speak on matters of public interest, Senator Cayetano (A) delivered the following speech:

SA PAGBABAGONG INAASAM-ASAM, SONA'Y IKAW NA NGA

Righteousness Can Uplift the Nation

The Book of Proverbs says, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (14:34). "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn" (29:2).

We have mourned and grieved for too long under the previous administration plagued by cheating, stealing and lying.

We join all Filipinos in praying that this time, righteousness or good governance will be the hallmark of this Administration and that there will be rejoicing and not mourning or grieving.

Tama ang Pangulong Aquino na sinentro niya ang State Of The Nation Address sa good government, sa kontra abuso, sa paglaban ng mga anomalya sa pamahalaan, sa pagbabagong inasam-asam. Mr. President, Sona'y Ikaw Na Nga.

Tradition dictates that the Minority Leader should rise to speak in reaction to the State of the Nation Address (SONA) delivered last Monday by the President of the Republic of the Philippines. It is a tradition and obligation hallowed by the years and one that has become a fundamental element of our democratic processes. By tradition it is an opportunity for the Opposition to criticize and even take apart the President's speech and counter it point by point — an opportunity fueled by the simmering passions either of a just concluded election or a forthcoming election.

Yet today what fuels the Opposition's marking of this tradition is a simmering passion brought about by a long-awaited and hard-fought victory that can be claimed both by members of the Administration and the Opposition and those who are still with the Opposition.

Because it was not too long ago when many of those now in power were one with us fighting together for a common cause, fighting for common principles, and fighting against a common foe.

Fought Alongside Against A Common Enemy For A Common Goal (Good Government)

It was not too long ago when many of us were together in fighting for honesty, integrity and transparency in government.

Those were long dark days and nights of our democracy. And I am proud to say that during those long dark days and nights, there were many of us who stood together, *kasama rin si Pangulong Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III.*

When we were fighting against the excesses of the previous government — symbolized by anomalous contracts that became its hallmark— *kasama rin namin si Pangulong Aquino.*

When we were questioning the legitimacy of a government elected under some of the most dubious circumstances ever — symbolized by the infamous greeting, "Hello Garci—" *kasama rin namin si Pangulong Noynoy.*

When we had to struggle in the face of various executive and administrative orders issued in order to keep us from discovering the truth, *kasama rin namin si Pangulong Noynoy.*

When members of the legislature who dared challenge the Administration found their funds for district projects withheld during their whole terms, *kasama ka rin namin, Pangulong Aquino.*

Sa lahat ng pang-aapi, sa lahat ng pananakot at sa pag-attempt na bilhin ang mga lumaban sa administrasyon, kasama namin ang Pangulong Noynoy

Kasama ka namin noon, Pangulong Aquino, sa pakikibaka para maitatag ang isang tunay na lehitimong pamahalaan.

At kung masasabi natin na sa pama-magitan lamang ng halalan nitong taong 2010 ay tunay tayong nagwagi kami po sa oposisyon ay nagbubunyi rin.

Indeed, it can be said that the votes in 2010 marked the victory of all forces struggling to banish that darkness. And while it can be argued that for every voter who cast his vote for the President, one cast his vote for someone else, I would like to think that the mandate for this Administration lies in the fact that three out of four voters cast their votes for candidates of the Opposition, rejecting those candidates more closely aligned with the Administration.

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That is the mandate for change that the Administration must heed. That is the same mandate of change that the Senate Minority Bloc will be fighting for.

Kasama ka namin noon sa pakikibaka, Pangulong Noynoy. Panalo ka sa botohan, pero panalo rin ang Oposisyon. Tatlumpong milyong botante ang bumoto para sa Oposisyon. Makaka-asa ka na patuloy pa rin kaming magbabantay at makikibaka upang tunay na matupad ang mga adhikain at mga hangarin ng ating mga kababayan.

The Role of the Minority Bloc

Some may ask then: "Why the need for an Opposition especially in the Senate where everyone is independent? Is it merely tradition? And will this tradition get in the way of this Administration's success?"

The Senate minority group is clear about its role. Our continuing fight for good governance is one that did not end with the 2010 elections. It is a continuing fight.

We in the Minority commit to be constructive when we criticize; to be cooperative in our watchfulness; to be harmonious even when at times we need to raise issues that could be perceived as being disruptive.

We know what the Filipino people are expecting from us: to be supportive of the Administration, when it is doing right, and to challenge it to do even more or make the reforms faster and more meaningful.

We will be vocal when the Administration's actions are not in line with the priorities and advocacies that were the bases for the mandate from our people. *Babantayan po namin na mananatiling nasa daang matuwid ang administrasyon ni Pangulong Noynoy.*

The Tasks Ahead

We are, in fact, very well aware that the challenges ahead may seem herculean. This is so because numerous issues cry out for prioritization. *Napakaraming issues, napakaraming suliranin, napakaraming sektor na sumisigaw na dapat silang unahin. Naintindihan namin ang bigat ng dalahin ng isang Pangulo.*

a) First, we have the needs of our overseas workers, whom we have properly identified to be the unsung heroes of our economy but who continue to work under adverse conditions while crying out for more effective government support and protection. While fighting for the welfare of OFWs is good, we

also know that the best protection that our OFWs can get is to have enough better-paying jobs or sources of livelihood in the country so that they do not have to look for them abroad and they can come home to be reunited with their families.

Ang pinakamagandang maibibigay sa mga OFWs ay mas magandang trabaho at oportunidad para makapiling muli ang mga kamag-anak;

- b) The urban poor who continue to dream the Filipino dream of owning their own home or at least a roof over their heads, a stable job for the head of the family, and the opportunity to send their children to school;
- c) Our countrymen in conflict areas who seek a just and lasting peace so that progress can finally come to their communities;
- d) Our womenfolk who worry about food security, *ang kakainin ng kanilang pamilya*, about the health of their children, and who, with their whole household, are concerned about the issue of peace and order in their neighborhoods, not to mention the problem on illegal drugs and the crimes that it causes; and
- e) Yes, finally, the entire nation that has been so enamored with the call to arms embodied in the words "*Kung Walang Corrupt, Walang Mahirap*" that they are hungry to see action taken on the many instances when their interests were sacrificed to the greed of a few.

We in the Opposition believe that this Administration has a unique opportunity and a mandate to not only fight graft and corruption, but even end it.

Mga kababayan, alam natin ang tunay na mukha ng corruption sa ating bansa. Alam natin na dapat habulin ang mga tax evaders, ngunit alam din natin na dapat ang mga corrupt at grafters ay maipakulong.

Sa Pilipinas, bawal magnakaw...bawal magnakaw ng konti. Kasi yung nagnanakaw po ng konti dahil kailangan ng kakainin ng pamilya o dahil kailangan ng gamot, nakukulong. Ngunit yung nagnanakaw ng daan milyon at bilyon, siya pa ang naghahari-harian sa ating bansa.

Sampolan mo na, Mr President, hindi lamang ang big fish, pati mga pating at buwaya isama mo na. Show them that your government means business. This is the chilling effect that everyone has been waiting for and wanting in dealing with the corrupt.

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We believe that the mechanisms for transparency and accountability found in the Freedom of Information (FOI) bill is the great equalizer which will put a check on government transactions and allow every citizen to be a watchdog or a graftbuster. We ask the President to certify this bill as urgent and rally his allies both in the House of Representatives and in the Senate to enact this bill.

While waiting for such legislation, the Administration can take a giant leap forward by putting in place the mechanisms found in the FOI bill by issuing an executive order to be implemented by all departments and offices of the Executive Branch. *Para wala nang itatago ang mga departamento at bawat ahensya ng gobyerno, ilagay na sa executive order na kailangan, kapag hiningi ang mga kailangan ng ating mga mamamayan, maging miyembro ng media, maging ordinary citizen, ay makuha ang mga dokumento.*

We are fortunate to have a President who is a believer in the power of education. For structural reforms that is being proposed, we praise the President. But it will take time for his policies to bear fruit. In the meantime, the reality is that recent studies have shown that out of 100 children who enter Grade 1:

- 86 lamang po ang pumupunta ng Grade 2;
- 76 lamang po ang pumupunta ng Grade 4;
- 67 lamang ang pumapasok sa Grade 6;
- 65 lamang ang guma-graduate ng elementary;
- out of the 65, 58 lamang pumapasok ng high school; and
- only 42 ang ga-graduate ng high school.

Sa 100 na pumasok ng Grade 1, 14 na agad nagdra-drop out sa Grade 2. Mahirap siguro ang mangarap kahit malinis ang gobyerno kung Grade 2 palang ay drop-out na. Kaya yung pantawid na mga programa ay importante rin.

This means, as urgent as improving the overall quality of our graduates, it is also urgent to address the increasing drop-out rates and spreading illiteracy. These very basic concerns can have far-reaching consequences in our productivity as a nation. *Ang realidad, maganda ang mga reporma ngunit kailangan ng agarang pantawid na solusyon sa mabigat na problemang dala ng kahirapan.*

Parang sa pag-alis ng "tongpats," tama ito at dapat itong unahin. Ngunit ang epekto ay matagal pang mararamdaman ng mga

mahirap nating kababayan lalo sa sinasabi ng SWS na four million na nakadama ng "tomguts" o gutom. Ganoon din sa mga commuters ng MRT at LRT, umaasa na pagwalang corrupt walang mahirap. Ngunit nangangamba na sa pagtaas ng pasahe mauubos ang konting sweldo na mauwi sana sa pamilya.

Again, mga pantawid na programa para maapektuhan ang maliliit nating kababayan.

The President said, "*Pwedeng mangarap muli.*" Essential ingredients to fulfill these dreams are concrete programs and policy on jobs, prices, and redistribution of wealth. *Trabaho, presyo ng bilihin at ang pagbigay solusyon sa suliranin ang kayamanan ng Pilipinas ay nasa kamay ng iilan lamang.*

While we join our people in disgust over the benefits and bonuses of the MWSS officials and their indifference to their retirees whose pensions have not been paid, we ask ourselves: Is MWSS the exception? *Ito ba ay nakalusot lang? Or is it the rule? Lahat ba ay ganito rin ang ginagawa?*

Magsusumbong kaya ang mga bagong appointees mo sa mga government-owned and -controlled corporations? O mamahalin din ang 200, 300 o 400 daan-libong piso na buwan-buwang sahod, benepisyong at bonus?

Maganda ang ginawa ng Secretary of Finance na pina-audit kaagad sa COA ang mga GOCCs. Ngunit may mas mabilis at epektibong paraan. Ngayon pa lamang na umpisa pa lang ng inyong Administrasyon, ilantad na, ilabas ang sahod, bonuses at benepisyong ng bawat opisyal ng GOCCs. Have them submit it to the Palace, to the Senate, and to the House of Representatives. Malaman natin kung lahat ba ng GOCCs o iilan ang ganito ang patakaran para matigil na. Pangalawa, mag-issue ng guidelines ang Palasyo sa limitation sa mga bonuses at benepisyong para ngayon at sa darating na panahon walang aabuso at wala nang taguan ng bonuses o ng mga pondo ng bayan.

Anomalies Both in National and Local Levels

I am very much aware that many of the discoveries that President Aquino is making at the national level is also being made or also being discovered at the local level. Indeed, when the President announced that so much of the national budget has been spent, leaving only so little for the rest of the year, and when the President mentioned abuse and anomalous

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contracts, I could only shake my head in the knowledge that this, too, is happening in my own hometown of Taguig. *Nangyayari po ito sa bawat ahensya, pati sa local government.* And when the President remarked that these discoveries are only the beginning, I could only shake my head in worry as to what else the new bureau directors, governors and mayors – of so many other offices, agencies, towns and cities nationwide – will discover about the excesses of their predecessors.

The Bible tells us not to worry. Sadly, excesses committed by some who ran under the same party with the President are now boasting *na malakas naman sila sa administrasyon. Naniniwala kami na magiging patas ang Aquino Administration. Ang tama ay tama, at ang mali ay mali, sumuporta man sa kanya o kinalaban man siya noong huling halalan.*

We in the Minority are well aware of all of these, and more, and are one with President Aquino in seeking to achieve all the promises of his Administration at the earliest possible time.

SONA Ay Ikaw Na Nga

We are also aware, *mga kababayan*, that not everyone now with the Administration has always been with us in the good and noble fight!

Kung maaaring tignan ng Pangulong Noynoy ang kanyang bakuran, makikita niya na hindi lahat ng kasama niya ngayon ay kasama niya sa laban noon.

Hindi lahat ng sumama sa kanya sa eleksyon ay kasama niya rin sa paglaban sa dating administrasyon. Katunayan, marami o mayroon sa kanila ay kasama rin sa mga nagpakasarap sa Arroyo Administration.

Totoo ring marami sa Oposisyon ang hindi niya kasama sa eleksyon ngunit kasama niya sa tunay na paglaban sa administrasyon na muling kinikilala sa stealing, cheating and lying.

Salamat at pinatawad ninyo ang mga nakasakit sa inyo. Ngunit hindi lamang kayo ang nasaktan, nakasakit din ang partido at grupo ninyo. Kaya para sa tunay na reconciliation, pinapatawad na rin namin kayo.

Ang paghingi ng patawad ay dapat lamang, dahil tayo ay humihingi rin ng patawad sa Panginoon. We all make mistakes. Kung nakasakit, patawarin sana.

Ngunit, tulad ng binangit ninyo, ang patawad ay madali sa nakasakit sa isang pulitiko ngunit ang nakasakit sa bayan ay dapat maparusahan. Again, sampolan mo na ang mga nang-api at nakasakit sa bayan!

That President Aquino today enjoys almost 90% approval rating is something to cheer about. But I need not tell him how quickly that support will dissipate if he is not careful about those who seek to endear themselves to him.

The reality is that history is replete with administrations launched with the most noble of circumstances or under the most overwhelming of mandates that somehow lost their direction along the way. It is the role of the Opposition to remind the Administration to be true to its course. *Manatili sa daang matuwid.*

It was not too long ago when a President declared that his Administration will be governed by the principle of “*Walang kama-kamag-anak, at walang kai-kaibigan.*” They were much applauded remarks and warmly welcomed by the public. But soon allegations went out that this Administration was losing its way, with forces perhaps outside the President’s control as the culprit. And one day we were captivated by an image of one of the most popular presidents of our Republic having to leave Malacañan Palace as victim of the conspiracy of circumstances. Clearly, the lesson is that popularity fades and is no guarantee that a popular president could stay in office for the duration of his term.

This was followed by another set of lofty remarks, uttered amidst the euphoria of another People Power. Who can forget the lofty promises of the succeeding administration embodied in four core beliefs?

1. We must be bold in our national ambitions, so that our challenge must be that within this decade, we will win the fight against poverty.
2. We must improve moral standards in government and society in order to provide a strong foundation for good governance.
3. We must change the character of our politics in order to create fertile ground for true reforms. Our politics of personality and patronage must give way to a new politics of party programs and process of dialogue with the people.
4. Finally, I believe in leadership by example. We should promote solid traits such as work ethic and dignified lifestyle, matching action to rhetoric, performing rather than grandstanding.

Again, they were much applauded remarks, warmly welcomed by the public, especially by the people on the stage together with the new President.

These were the words of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo when she took the presidency.

But what happened?

Again, very soon, there were allegations that the administration was losing its way, with forces perhaps outside the President's control as the culprit. And one day we were captivated by the voice of the President speaking to an election officer – and sparking what was to be the most serious threat to its hold on power. Yet this time the administration was able to capitalize on the captive political system – and the frailties of human nature – to stay in power long after its popular mandate has turned into popular disdain. The lesson here is that “unpopularity” was no guarantee that a President could be ousted from office.

In both instances, two much-applauded proclamations of principles at the start of two different administrations were overtaken by the painful realities of politics. Can this happen again? The answer is yes. Can it happen under this Administration, under this President? Again, the answer is yes.

And that is where we in the Opposition come in. History has shown us that given human nature and even our Filipino values of *pakikisama* and *utang na loob*, sometimes it is the Opposition that is the only one that can tell the President the truth or paint for him the true picture.

The truth is, in this case, sometimes our friends can be our worst enemies.

The author Francis Fukuyama has already pointed out the dangers of small circles of trust. In his book *Trust*, Fukuyama has demonstrated that societies that are most progressive are those whose hallmark is a wide circle of trust among its people – while societies not as progressive are those where the circles of trust are small, limited to the closest of friends and kin. *Ang mga progresibong mga bansa, ang mga pinagkakatiwalaan ay medyo malawak. Ngunit yung mga maliliit na bansa o yung mga bansang naghihirap, mga kaibigan at kamag-anak lang ang pinagkakatiwalaan.*

I would dare to add that this aspect of human nature is complicated further by our own nature as Filipinos, our penchant to avoid disputes – *ayaw natin ng away* or saying negative things or being the bearer of bad news, oftentimes in the desire to prevent conflict and confrontation.

The Best and the Brightest Should be in Government

Will President Aquino then be served well by the perception that he is now surrounded mostly by friends?

There have been comments that rather than having the best and the brightest around him, his Cabinet is now a Cabinet of, if not, is composed of *kapuso, kapamilya*, and also, *kabarkada*.

The criticism of getting the best and the brightest into government has been our own history – that when our government was filled with people who were the best and the brightest, *sabi nila ginagamit yung talino sa* corruption and this was the time when corruption was at its peak. But why should we fear that if we have full faith and confidence in the moral leadership of our President? *Buo ang tiwala ng ating mga kababayan sa moral compass ng Pangulong Aquino.* He can afford to get the best and the brightest in government.

Indeed, when the challenges are so high and the public's expectations even higher, we cannot gamble with not having the best and the brightest at the helm. *Maaring hindi basketball ang favorite sport ni President Aquino, but for the basketball-loving Filipinos, we know that during crunch time, sa last two minutes, o kaya sa game seven o game five, pinaka-importanteng championship game, kailangan yung first five ang tatawagin mo, yung pinakamagaling.*

This is crunch time, and President Aquino as coach must have only the best and the brightest on the floor for him, and with him.

As the President has shown, he is willing in certain instances to go out of his circle of supporters to find the best and the brightest. *Aminado po tayo na may pinili siyang the best and the brightest, we in the Opposition will do our best to help him make sure he has the best and the brightest to assist him with the work ahead.*

Proverb 11:14 says: "Where no counsel is, the people fall; but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety."

Having the Same End Goal

It had been pointed out to me that for the fifty or so years since 1960, three political families have held the highest office of the land for a total of 41 years. For four years from 1961

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to 1965, a Macapagal was president; from 2001 to 2010, another Macapagal was president, or a total of 13 years. From 1965 to 1986, a total of 21 years, President Marcos was president. And from 1986 to 1992, President Aquino and if we add that of the present President Aquino, we will have 12 years. If one were to add the six years of Fidel Ramos to those of his cousin Marcos, and the six coming years of President Aquino to those of his mother's presidency, then from 1961 to 2016, a span of 55 years, only three political clans have held the highest office of the land.

Why do I raise this matter? And why me, who can also be accused of having profited from name recognition because I, too, had a father, not to mention a sister, in the Senate before me?

When President Benigno Aquino declared during his inaugural that it is the Filipino people who is his boss, he made a declaration that was in truth and in fact superfluous. *Dahil alam naman natin lahat na boss natin ang tao.* Unless we have forgotten, ours is supposed to be a democracy which, by definition, is the rule of the people.

But why then? *Bakit po binanggit ito?* Why did the President have to make this statement? Is it because much of our political elite – which counts you and me – have long forgotten this basic fact of democracy, and have taken it that political office is an entitlement to those who come from the political clans? Worse, did the President have to make that statement – which was perhaps one of the most widely applauded in his remarks – *isa po ito sa mga pinalakpakan ng sinabi niya na amo natin ang ating kababayan* — because our people themselves have come to accept that our politics is a politics of clans? *Tanggap na ba ng mga kababayan natin ito?*

I look around this room, and see around me representatives of the Filipino people who also happen to come from Manila's political elite. But having known most of you for many years, I am heartened by the fact that entitlement is farthest from your consciousness, especially the Senate President who worked himself up from poverty to the highest position in the Senate. And indeed, it is the expectations that need to be met that are first and foremost in our priorities. *Kailangan bang klaro pa sa ating mga kababayan sa lahat ng ating gagawin na sila ang amo natin?*

But when one is in power, it is easy to forget. As former President Vaclav Havel, former

president of the Czech Republic, had pointed out in his memoirs – when a president does not have to open a door for himself, or worry about what to eat, or fear being wet in the rain; when he doesn't have to care about the price of goods in a wet market, or the cost of utilities, or even how much to pay his household help – then it is so easy to become disconnected from the reality of life around you and disconnected from the realities that our countrymen have to face, day in and day out. *Tama po si Presidente Havel. Pag hindi ikaw ang nagbubukas ng sarili mong pinto, hindi ikaw ang namamalengke, hindi ikaw ang nagbabayad ng bills mo sa pagte-text, sa pagtatawag, hindi ikaw ang nagbabayad ng tubig at kuryente, nakakalimutan mo at nagkakaroon ka ng disconnect.*

I suspect that much of what ails this country stems from that disconnect – a disconnect that I am hopeful will be a thing of the past under this Administration, if the “*wang wang*” is to be our gauge *dahil nasapol at nakita ito ng ating Presidente at naramdaman niya ang pulso ng ating mga kababayan.*

And then again, unless the President of the Republic is constantly reminded of the realities of life – *kailangan nating ipaalala ito palagi* — especially the realities of the lives of the common folk — that he may have not lived himself — then it is easy for him to forget.

We will be watching. We are humbled by the task and opportunity of being among the vanguards of the President's campaign promises.

We in the Opposition, in serving God and our people, will do our best to faithfully serve both him and our Republic by constantly reminding him of those realities.

Allow me to end with this appeal to President Aquino: Do your job as you see fit and to the best of your abilities, and we will do the same. But rest assured that while we may differ as to the means, our having fought in the trenches together for the establishment of a government that is honest, that is transparent and that is legitimate, guarantees that our end-goals are the same.

Sa pagbabagong matagal nang pinag-darasal, sa pagbabagong inaasam-asam, SONA'y ikaw na nga.

Mabuhay ang sambayanang Pilipino! God bless the President, God bless the Philippines! God bless us all.

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SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended for an all-senators' caucus at the Senators' Lounge.

It was 4:25 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:21 p.m., the session was resumed.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIPS

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, there being no objection, the following senators were elected chairs of the committees hereunder indicated:

Senator Ejercito Estrada

- *Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development*

Senator Ejercito Estrada asked whether he can already manifest on the floor the members of the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development. The Chair replied that the organization of the membership will be done the following day so that the Body can finish first the election of committee chairs.

Senator Drilon

- *Committee on Finance*

Senator Pangilinan

- *Committees on Agriculture and Food; and Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development*

Senator Recto

- *Committees on Ways and Means; and Government Corporations and Public Enterprises*

Senator Honasan

- *Committees on Public Order and Illegal Drugs; Agrarian Reform; and Public Information and Mass Media*

Senator Osmeña

- *Committees on Energy; and Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; and Joint Congressional Power Commission*

Senator Escudero

- *Committees on Justice and Human Rights; and National Defense and Security*

Senator Revilla

- *Committees on Public Works; and Public Services*

Senator Lapid

- *Committees on Games, Amusement and Sports; and Tourism*

Senator Guingona

- *Committees on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations; and Peace, Unification and Reconciliation*

Senator Angara

- *Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Science and Technology*

Senator Legarda

- *Committee on Climate Change; Foreign Relations; and Cultural Communities*

Senator Zubiri

- *Committees on Environment and Natural Resources; and Cooperatives*

Senator Villar

- *Committees on Economic Affairs; and Trade and Commerce*

Senator Marcos

- *Committees on Local Government; and Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement*

Senator Lacson

- *Committee on Accounts*

Senator Trillanes

- *Committee on Civil Service and Government Reorganization*

Senator Cayetano (P)

- *Committees on Health and Demography; and Youth, Women and Family Relations*

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SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Sotto, the session was suspended.

It was 5:26 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:27 p.m., the session was resumed.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIP

Nominated by Senator Sotto, there being no objection, Senator Cayetano (P) was elected chairperson of the Committee on Ethics and Privileges

SUGGESTION OF THE CHAIR


The Chair suggested that the committee chairmen organize their respective committees by nominating the vice chairmen and members in coordination with the Minority.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

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

It was 5:28 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.


EMMA LIRIO REYES
Secretary of the Senate *lls*
pas *AS*

Approved on August 3, 2010