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SESSION NO. 13
Tuesday, August 20, 2019

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

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CALL TO ORDER

At 3:00 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Vicente C. Sotto III, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Imee R. Marcos led the prayer, to wit:

A Prayer for the Nation

Father of all mankind,

We ask You to look down upon Your people, that we may have the grace and the wisdom to look into ourselves, and in so doing see our weaknesses and our strengths.

So many of us have lived in corruption, greed and violence, forgetting that this nation—or any other nation—cannot survive and grow and prosper unless we learn to live as brothers, striving not for our selfish ends, but for the common good.

Give us strength to rebuild our lives, leaving forever our selfish, corrupt, and derelict ways.

Make us see what we are and what we could be; open our eyes, our minds, and our hearts to do the things that need to be done, and the things that we can do to make this rich and beautiful land a joy and comfort to all our people.

When the day's toil is ended, teach us to look at tomorrow's labor as a part of our continuing sacrifice; bring us not to the temptation of luxury, ease, or privilege; nor to the blandishments of power or comfort that corrupt, but make us a sturdy race, self-reliant, cheerful and upright.

Cleanse us, finally, of all our anger, our bitterness, and our recriminations of the past, spare the doubts and anxieties of the present, and purify us for our sacrifice so that we may raise a people who will be their own strength today, and their own warranty against the future.

So help us God.

Amen.

ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Senate President, the Secretary of the Senate, Atty. Myra Marie D. Villarica, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

Angara, S.	Lacson, P. M.
Binay, M. L. N. S.	Marcos, I. R.
Cayetano, P. S.	Pimentel III, A. K.
Dela Rosa, R. B. M.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Drilon, F. M.	Sotto III, V. C.
Gatchalian, W.	Villanueva, J.
Go, C. L. T	Villar, C. A.
Hontiveros, R.	Zubiri, J. M. F.

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

Senators Gordon, Pacquiao, Poe, Recto and Tolentino arrived after the roll call.

Senator Lapid was on official mission in Japan from August 20 to 23, 2019 at the invitation of the Overseas Filipino Workers' community in Tokyo, as authorized by Senate President Sotto in Travel Order No. 2019-SR-003 (PS-OIRP).

Senator De Lima was unable to attend the session as she was under detention.

Senator Pangilinan was absent.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

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

- Chairperson Alicia dela Rosa-Bala, Assistant Commissioner Ariel G. Ronquillo, and members of the Civil Service Commission;
- PEZA Director General Charito Plaza; and
- Mayor Judy Amante of Cabadbaran, Agusan del Norte.

Senator Zubiri said that the new DBM Secretary, Wendel Avisado, was in the Senate Lounge as well.

Senate President Sotto welcomed the guests to the Senate.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journal of Session Nos. 11 (August 14, 2019), as amended, and 12 (August 19, 2019) and considered them approved.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

At this juncture, Senator Zubiri encouraged his colleagues to avail themselves of the privilege hour, as he was about to do, to discuss their advocacies.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Zubiri presented to the Body his concept of inclusive mobility through the construction of elevated walkways especially along the stretch of EDSA for the use of pedestrians and bikers.

Following is the full text of his speech:

I stand here today on a matter of collective and personal privilege on an issue that affects every single person who has to endure traffic in Metro Manila, particularly traffic along EDSA, that great avenue that has been canonized in our history books. That same EDSA has now become historic for all the wrong reasons, being one of the densest urban thoroughfares in Southeast Asia, if not the world. Probably also, the most number of memes for a highway could be credited to EDSA. *Mayroon pa nga akong nabasa, kung gusto mong maging malapit sa inyong mahal sa puso, pumunta kayo sa EDSA at matagal-tagal kayong puwedeng magkwentuhan doon dahil nakaupo pa kayo sa sasakyan ng halos apat na oras.*

In August 2016, exactly three years ago, I brought up the concept of inclusive mobility in this Chamber. Inclusive mobility is a people-centric framework of mobility. It ensures that all sectors of society have access to safe and efficient transport systems. Meaning, in solving our traffic problems, we should not only focus on vehicular traffic, we should also consider commuter experience and other means of moving our people around our cities. Inclusive mobility would increase productivity and support acceleration of economic growth. Recent studies show that the economic cost of traffic in Metro Manila ranges from P3 billion to P3.5 billion daily and continues to rise as traffic in Metro Manila worsens.

It was then that I raised the proposal for the construction of elevated walkways along EDSA for the use of pedestrians and bikers. Three years later, the project has gone unrealized, and the traffic in Metro Manila has worsened considerably, especially in the hellscape that is called EDSA.

I even recall that in the 2018 budget hearings, MMDA said they had allotted P400 million for elevated walkways in the Ortigas-EDSA area, and I was surprised, when we asked them last week during the hearing of Sen. Grace Poe—the hearing on Committee on Public Services

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—they said there was no such funds, although there was an item in that particular 2019 budget.

I stand here today to restate my case, and stress our urgent need to reorient our urban mobility scheme to be more inclusive and people-friendly. We can try all manners of regulations to control vehicular activity on EDSA, but the truth is, there is no controlling the kind of vehicular volume that avenue ferries every day. The only way to truly introduce change is to create alternative channels of transport, preferably ones that are more favorable to commuters rather than motorists.

When I gave my privilege speech in August 2016, the volume on EDSA was at 360,000 vehicles a day. At the close of 2018, that number rocketed to 400,000 vehicles a day—going over the daily capacity of 288,000 vehicles by 40%.

And reading the Land Transportation Office's (LTO) statistics, we can clearly see a trend of growth in the number of vehicles in Metro Manila. In 2016, there were 2.4 million registered vehicles in the National Capital Region alone. By 2017, that number had ballooned to 2.6 million; and by 2018, it went up to 2.8 million vehicles.

Every year, more Filipinos are adding to the already packed traffic situation, and as car prices and downpayment schemes become more affordable, we can only expect the numbers to steadily climb.

Private vehicles comprise over 80% of the volume in EDSA. The problem then does not really lie in *pasaway* buses and jeeps—although they do not help the situation—but in the sheer number of private cars that clog EDSA every day.

The question now is how to get drivers and riders out of their cars and into a mobilization framework that prioritizes people over motor vehicles. How do we get people to leave the comforts of private transport, when commuting and navigating the sidewalks of EDSA as a pedestrian is a cumbersome, inconvenient, and often unsafe endeavor?

We need to create walkable, bikeable cities.

Currently, EDSA sidewalks supposedly for pedestrians and PWDs are narrow and overly crowded with vendors, parked vehicles, electric posts, plant boxes—not to mention pickpockets and other individuals of ill intent roaming about. These sidewalks are near unnavigable and make it difficult for pedestrians to walk from, say, a call center shift in Ortigas to her rented apartment along Boni; or for a TNVS food delivery rider stuck whereabouts in Cubao to bike home to Quezon Avenue. An elevated walkway or bike

lane along EDSA would open up a new people-centric avenue to connect Metro Manila's major business districts.

We really must consider the alternative transport channel as it will not only ease up vehicular traffic in our roads, but it will also be a pro-poor, pro-people project that will give citizens from all walks of life an avenue for safe and easy mobility.

At this juncture, Senator Zubiri showed pictures of elevated walkways abroad.

These are pictures of countries that have adopted this system—in Seoul, South Korea; Shanghai, China; Bangkok, Thailand; and Boston, Massachusetts. We can see that the traffic in Bangkok is legendary, and yet, they were able to create an alternative route for commuters. We could have our EDSA walkways look like this—comfortable, air-conditioned, all-weather where our people can walk. It is not such a bad walk. From end to end of EDSA—Roxas Boulevard all the way to the corner of EDSA Balintawak—is 26 kilometers; Makati to Ortigas is only seven kilometers. That is nothing for Senator Pia Cayetano who can go jogging in that and she will be there in—how many minutes per kilometer? I think she probably runs below four minutes a kilometer. So, definitely, she can be in her destination quite easily. And, you know, when I was in Singapore, their walkways allowed people who had the motorized mopeds—*naka*-motorized mopeds *po sila*. *May isang lane sila doon* so they can take this little scooter—it is like a two-wheeler *na para siyang* skateboard *na may handle*—that can be utilized and easily packable so our people can put it in their backpacks during work and when they have to go home, they just put it out and use that in our elevated and protected walkways.

These walkways will not discriminate between those who can afford to endure traffic in a luxury car and those who must resort to cheap, over-capacity, open-air buses that are exposed to all the filth and smog in the city. In these elevated walkways, everyone will be on equal footing to get where they need to be.

We all have the support and cooperation of alternative transport advocates such as the commuters groups Alt Mobility PH and Move Metro Manila in our bid to bring these elevated walkways to reality. The Filipino public has long been clamoring for positive change in the nation's traffic situation. I fully believe that this elevated walkway is a step towards that. And let us all work together towards a future of clean, safe,

and walkable cities that accommodate the need for the commuting public.

Just this weekend, our Minority Leader, Sen. Franklin M. Drilon, was honored by the City of Iloilo and all its stakeholders because he has transformed what was once a dirty, noisy, I would say, deteriorating city to what it is now one of the most livable cities of the country—and a walking city at that. If you have seen their esplanade which will take them from one end of Iloilo City to the other, it is absolutely beautiful. It is now the peg of several cities and provinces. In Bukidnon and Cagayan de Oro, together with Sen. Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III, we are trying to do the same. Hopefully, one day, we can do what Senator Drilon has done for Iloilo City. We have to give credit where credit is due. It is possible, but we have to put all our minds, hearts, and resources.

I am prepared to work for an institutional amendment, with the permission of Senators Lacson and Angara, in the 2020 budget that will allot at least P1 billion for Phase 1 of this project connecting either Quezon City to Ortigas or Ortigas to Makati. And I enjoin my colleagues to support this institutional amendment, in this endeavor to support the welfare of the Filipino public.

I think *kung nagkakaproblema tayo sa* additional trains and we are still waiting for the metro subway which will be constructed underground and which will take another six to seven years to build, it is easy.

At this juncture, Senator Zubiri showed a picture of the Makati Walkway.

This is a Makati Walkway done by the family of the Binays, and we have Senator Binay with us here. If people walk around the Ayala Center, they can go from one area to another without passing through the driveways and the roads. It is all elevated and it connects to all the malls. So, it is quite convenient and it is actually being used in the City of Makati.

How I dream that one day, I just get out of my house, walk towards EDSA, go up the elevated walkway, take my little scooter and reach the Senate without having to go through our thoroughfares or without having to step foot on EDSA with these elevated walkways.

I hope that this dream will become a reality. With all the support of my colleagues, the support of this Chamber, we can make this happen.

REMARK OF SENATE PRESIDENT SOTTO

Senate President Sotto informed the Body that the original name of EDSA in 1946 was *Avenida 19 de Junio* which was changed to “Highway 54” in 1950 on the belief that it was 54 kilometers long, but since it was not, as it was only 26 kilometers long as pointed out by Senator Zubiri, the name was changed to Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue in 1959.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO

At the outset, Senator Cayetano commended Senator Zubiri for his idea of elevated walkways and expressed her support for the same as she believed that the walkways are a necessity that would benefit millions of people not only from Metro Manila but also provincial residents from the north and south. She expressed appreciation for the idea which, in her belief, is an alternative to driving through the streets. She recalled seeing a long line of about 100 meters earlier that day in an MRT station which she attributed to the fact that the current transportation system cannot accommodate the huge population.

Senator Cayetano said that encouraging people to walk, ride bikes, scooters, and other alternatives have health benefits that the soon-to-be organized Sustainable Development Goals Committee should be able to bring into the consciousness of the Filipinos. She said that a lot of those goals, such as making the cities livable, would also address health and environmental concerns which should be fully supported by the government.

She informed the Body that she filed a bill—the proposed Sustainable Transportation Act—which promotes bicycle as an alternative mode of transportation. She revealed that Taguig City has a multi-use road around the entire Laguna Lake, similar to Senator Drilon’s esplanade in Iloilo City, with separate lanes for bicycles, pedestrians and vehicles.

Senator Cayetano believed that the proposal should be funded, and asked whether it had been discussed with the DPWH. In reply, Senator Zubiri said that during the DOTr and DPWH hearings, he was told that the government has no budget for the project, although he recalled that during the MMDA budget hearing, P400 million had already been allocated for Laguna Lake. He suspected that the fund was used for something else because no elevated walkway was built.

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Senator Cayetano said that she would propose a dedicated budget for the purpose. She said that as vice-chair of the Committee on Finance tasked to hear the DOTr budget, she would be happy to realign budgets that would be used to build elevated walkways.

Senator Zubiri recalled that in the last meeting of the Public Services Committee, there was an under-secretary who said that such plan already exists but is still in the feasibility study phase. He noted, however, that it has always been used as the common excuse for projects that have not taken off, when it actually simply requires getting the top architects of the country to design the elevated walkway project and to allocate the necessary funding to implement it. He pointed out the need for the DPWH and the DOTr to be committed and to be held accountable for it.

Senator Cayetano said that while she supports e-vehicles which potentially would not contribute to pollution, her concern was on the source of energy that would fuel them, which is fossil fuel. As such, she said that they are also considered additional vehicles on the road. She believed that the walkway project takes precedence because it is for non-motorized vehicles.

Senator Zubiri recalled that when he gave a similar speech in 2016, he used Senator Cayetano as an example of senators who believe in inclusive mobility as she used to bike to work and even during the campaigns. He believed that it would not be difficult to build an L-shaped walkway in EDSA, similar to the one used in Makati City.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ANGARA

Senator Angara commended Senator Zubiri whose advocacy for elevated walkways might be the way out of the “carmageddon,” which is the current state of EDSA.

Confirming that Senator Cayetano would indeed defend the budget of the DOTr, he recalled his earlier conversation with a PNR official who pointed out that the present road policies are car-dominated and that in 1938, the country had 2,400 kilometers of rail which have been reduced to 77 kilometers today.

He believed that as the country’s policymakers, the Body needs to reboot its thinking towards pushing for more investments in the train system. He then asked the Body to consider the information given to him that one car of an MRT or LRT could carry 2,200 passengers in a day which is equivalent to 48 cars plying the road.

Senator Zubiri said that an easy leisurely one-kilometer walk would take about eight to 10 minutes, and he noted that Ortigas to Makati is about six kilometers; thus, it would take about an hour to walk from Ortigas to Guadalupe or to Rockwell, Makati.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEES

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair referred the speech of Senator Zubiri and the interpellations thereon primarily to the Committee on Public Works, and secondarily to the Committee on Public Services.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DRILON

At this point, Senator Drilon pointed out that the Journal of Session No. 11 (August 14, 2019) accurately reflected on page 261 the correction which he made, which reads: “At this point, Senator Drilon stated for the record that he would oppose the reimposition of the death penalty, regardless of its coverage.” However, he said that the Journal of Session No. 12 (August 19, 2019) erroneously misspelled “reimposition” as “reconsideration.”

The Chair directed the Secretariat to make the appropriate correction.

As an added information, Senator Drilon stated that Iloilo City has a 10-lane highway plus one bicycle lane, the only one of its kind in the country.

BIRTHDAY GREETING

On behalf of the Body, Senator Zubiri greeted Senate President Sotto who would be celebrating his birthday on Saturday, August 24, 2019.

At this point, Senate President Sotto asked Senate President Pro Tempore Recto to preside and Senator Villanueva to take over the Majority Leader’s chores. He also asked Senators Angara, Lacson, Zubiri and Drilon to join him in the senators’ lounge to accept the proposed 2020 national budget from the Department of Budget and Management.

At this juncture. Senate President Sotto relinquished the Chair to Senate President Pro Tempore Recto.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR GORDON

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Gordon spoke on the prevalence of and epidemic proportions that dengue has reached.

Senator Gordon noted that dengue cases have increased from 93,149 to 188,562 cases, or a 102% increase from January to the present, with a death toll of 807 from 497 deaths, or a 62.4% increase for the same period. He noted that while dengue is prevalent worldwide, the intensity is much higher in the Philippines. He then pointed out the need for government to focus on the problem given that the rainy season has started.

As a background, Senator Gordon stated that the Blue Ribbon Committee conducted an investigation on the Dengvaxia issue and that its findings were, among others, as follows:

- The amount used to purchase the Dengvaxia vaccines was P3.5 billion, quite bigger than the P3 billion fund for the Extended Program of Immunization (EPI) which includes measles, rubella and all other cases;
- Then President Aquino, together with then Health Secretary Garin, met with Sanofi officials three times, the latest of which was on December 1, 2015 in Paris.
- After that meeting, on December 28, 2015, the Special Allotment Release Order (SARO) for the purchase of Dengvaxia vaccines was released;
- On April of 2016, the DOH started injecting the vaccines to 800,000 people without the necessary preparations, like conducting information drive about that vaccine, including who should be given and who should not be given such injection, and securing statistics about the dengue-inflicted cases, among other things.

He recalled some experts saying that the vaccines should not be given to people who have not had dengue. He lamented that the situation worsened when the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) came into the picture, conducted its own forensic autopsy, and later claimed that those they autopsied died because of the vaccine. He admitted, though, that to date, the connection between the Dengvaxia vaccine and the cause of deaths has not been fully established.

Senator Gordon informed the Body that in his letter to DOH Secretary Duque last July, he requested the agency to look into the list of patients who were injected Dengvaxia particularly those in Region IV-A and to find out who died or got adversely affected by the vaccines and to further check if those patients have previously had dengue. He averred that the problem lay on the fact that the Dengvaxia vaccines were used without going through sufficient tests and studies.

Senator Gordon stated that the massive dengue immunization had caused public panic especially when the Public Attorney's Office came into the picture by doing an autopsy on the 144 children who died apparently due to the Dengvaxia vaccine. He said that parents are now afraid of availing of other vaccines, as mentioned by Senator Cayetano in her privilege speech on the possibility of the Philippines' losing its polio-free status.

Senator Gordon pointed out that the Philippines is not the only country that is having a vaccine scare. He stated that prior to the plenary session, the British Ambassador informed him that the United Kingdom was also facing the vaccine scare on measles, rubella and other illnesses which were administered four years ago but only presented their side effects lately.

Moreover, he stated that at present, the parents have stopped availing of whatever immunization programs that government has to offer; while parents whose children were injected with Dengvaxia are now wary about what might happen to them and are demanding that government should take care of them as they claim that it was not them who asked that their children be inoculated but that the vaccine was insisted on them and they were made to believe that the children would be dengue-free.

Senator Gordon stated that clearly under Section 15, Article II of the Constitution, it is the government's responsibility to promote and protect the welfare of its citizens. But what happened, he said, was that the past administration deliberately pushed for Dengvaxia vaccination, in effect ignoring the recommendation of the World Health Organization that "for countries considering vaccination as part of their dengue control study, prior vaccination screening is the recommended strategy." Thus, he believed that the government has to own up to its mistake as he assured of the support of the Red Cross. At this point, he informed the Body that the Red Cross has set up air-conditioned tents all over the country

because hospitals are beyond their capacity. Likewise, he said that the Red Cross has provided 7,000 units of blood and mosquito nets as advised by UP experts who warned that the aegypti mosquito would continue to spread the dengue virus to others.

Senator Gordon also pointed out the need for government to study the profile of persons who have been and are currently afflicted with dengue, those who have died and those who have survived — whether or not they have been inoculated with Dengvaxia and whether or not they had dengue prior to being vaccinated. He stated that if the patients did not have dengue prior to being injected with Dengvaxia, the government should see it as an opportunity to charge Sanofi for damages for those who fell ill and for those who died. He underscored the need for a study given that no charges have yet been filed against anyone responsible for the error because of lack of evidence.

He recalled that during the Blue Ribbon Committee hearing, both Dr. Halstead, a known expert on the dengue virus, and the World Health Organization resource persons shared the opinion that the Dengvaxia vaccine should not be applied to those who have no history of the dengue virus in their system. He said that, in fact, a year later, Sanofi admitted that the opinions of Dr. Halstead and the WHO on the vaccine were true. He said that it is important for the government to go after Sanofi if it is proven that they had been remiss of their responsibility to disclose relevant information. He also underscored the need for government to use the opportunity to study the severe side effects of the vaccine that led to the deaths of the children.

Senator Gordon informed the Body that countries like Mexico and Brazil had stopped using Dengvaxia after its reported side effects. He believed that the vaccination program would have been a success had it been done in a controlled environment and under the supervision of a doctor. Because the vaccination was done in haste and applied massively, he said that the government is faced with a serious problem because dengue is recurring.

On a positive note, Senator Gordon reiterated that the government should consider the dengue epidemic as a golden opportunity for research. He said that if Hong Kong was able to avert the SARS virus, a country with so many doctors like the Philippines could do the same with dengue. He believed that in so doing, the country could be the

dengue research capital of the world and could be a fortress against dengue. He expressed optimism on the possibility of a Filipino scientist being able to extensively study dengue and discover the real source of the illness and its possible effects and cure, possibly earning a Nobel Prize in medicine for it.

Senator Gordon recalled that in the past week he received several calls asking for the Red Cross' assistance for blood donations due to dengue, like a long distance call from the United States of America asking for blood donation for a niece from a poor family in Las Piñas; a call from a reporter whose sibling, a nurse in Nagcarlan, Laguna, requesting for blood donation for a patient who was eventually sent to the hospital through a Red Cross ambulance; and a call from a Dutch national who called to ask for assistance for his 24 year-old daughter who was in Palawan. In the latter case, he said that the Red Cross volunteers looked for the patient in El Nido but found her in Coron and eventually airlifted her to Manila. He learned that upon check-up, the patient was cleared from dengue and had since returned to the Netherlands.

Senator Gordon stated that the government should have that same sense of urgency as the Red Cross. He proposed that the government allot a budget in the DOH to have three to five family health doctors in every public health hospital who could become experts in dengue. He stated that the government should take advantage of the dengue crisis by conducting a research on the reported cases.

As regards the P1.2 billion refund by Sanofi, Senator Gordon recalled that the Senate's proposal before the end of 2018 was for the money to be used to fund all the dengue cases and for a portion to be used for dengue research. He assured the Body that the funds are intact because it was placed in the Treasury, and he implored the Members to support his proposal to have the fund used for the dengue-affected patients and for research.

Finally, Senator Gordon stated that no verdict has been released on the safety of Dengvaxia, and that more evidence is needed to conclude its efficacy. He proposed that the Food and Drug Administration be made independent of the DOH as the latter could always influence the formulary of food and drugs. He said that because the FDA is under the DOH, there is nothing that the former could do once the order comes from the higher-ups.

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Senator Gordon disclosed that some parents of indigent children have complained about the Philippine Children's Medical Center's refusal to admit their children because the hospital's funds were running out, thereby forcing some dengue patients to go instead to private hospitals which they could hardly afford. He said that such an unfortunate situation should be addressed by government.

Senator Gordon said that because of the challenges in the government's vaccination campaign, reforms must be introduced in both the Food and Drug Administration and the Formulary Executive Committee. He also requested the Department of Health to advise Congress on the cost of setting up the most advanced training program for dengue specialists and the types of testing facilities needed in anticipation of the next outbreak.

Senator Gordon disclosed that the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito—the vector of dengue viruses—is so feeble that even the slightest wind could disable it to walk beyond 400 meters. He said that the vectors could be eradicated by regular clean-up drives in the barangays to remove their breeding grounds, the same thing the Koreans did under the administration of President Park Chung Hee. He said that with such drive, even the Dengvaxia vaccine is not needed anymore unless its efficacy is proven.

Senator Gordon then quoted an American epidemiologist who said, "The use of vaccine in the control of yellow fever should occupy, more or less, the same place that typhoid fever vaccine has in the control of typhoid fever. No sanitary authority would desire to substitute typhoid vaccine for the supply of water and food. So we must not accept the yellow fever vaccine as a substitute for the elimination of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. The vaccine provides individual protection for the person who cannot be protected by more general measures."

Senator Gordon stressed the need for government to look for the people responsible for introducing and forcing the vaccine program into the country. He believed that they should be punished for their greediness.

Finally, Senator Gordon lamented the many deaths in the country that were never solved, all because people are afraid to make strong decisions. Thus, he posited the need for "*acta non verba*," or "action, not words."

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEES

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Gordon to the Committee on Health and Demography and to the Committee on Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations (Blue Ribbon Committee).

At this juncture, Senate President Pro Tempore Recto relinquished the Chair to Senate President Sotto.

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. 908, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 909, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7880 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE ALLOCATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BUDGET FOR CAPITAL OUTLAY"

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 910, entitled

AN ACT TO PROFESSIONALIZE THE PRACTICE OF PRISON MANAGE-

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MENT AND SET FOR THAT PURPOSE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUPERINTENDENTS OF THE NATIONAL PRISON SYSTEM AND WARDENS OF PROVINCIAL, CITY OR MUNICIPAL JAILS

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 911, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

To the Committees on Science and Technology; and Public Services

Senate Bill No. 912, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 913, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CAREGIVERS IN THE PRACTICE OF THEIR PROFESSION

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 914, entitled

AN ACT RECLASSIFYING THE SALARY AND QUALIFICATIONS OF CERTAIN EMPLOYEES IN THE JUDICIARY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 915, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7431, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1992" AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

To the Committee on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation

Senate Bill No. 916, entitled

AN ACT REGULATING HARBOR PILOTAGE SERVICES AND THE CONDUCT OF HARBOR PILOTS IN ALL PORTS IN THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

To the Committee on Public Services

Senate Bill No. 917, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE PHILIPPINE RISE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

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

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Senate Bill No. 918, entitled

AN ACT FURTHER AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8182, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8555, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Economic Affairs

Senate Bill No. 919, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7042, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE FOREIGN INVESTMENTS ACTS OF 1991, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8179, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Economic Affairs

Senate Bill No. 920, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MAGNA CARTA OF THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committees on Youth; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 921, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8762, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE RETAIL TRADE LIBERALIZATION ACT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship

Senate Bill No. 922, entitled

AN ACT INFORMING THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE ADDITIVES IN PET FOOD

Introduced by Senator Binay

To the Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; and Health and Demography

Senate Bill No. 923, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE INCLUSION OF BARANGAY OFFICIALS WITHIN THE COVERAGE OF THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE (GSIS), AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8291, ENTITLED "THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM ACT OF 1997," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villar

To the Committees on Government Corporations and Public Enterprises; and Local Government

Senate Bill No. 924, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING THE MAGNA CARTA FOR DAY CARE WORKERS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villar

To the Committees on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 925, entitled

AN ACT INSTILLING AND STRENGTHENING THE SENSE OF PATRIOTISM AND NATIONALISM AMONG THE YOUTH THROUGH THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDAMENTAL AND SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS IN THE BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Introduced by Senator Cayetano

To the Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 97, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NSTP LAW WITH THE END IN VIEW OF STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM AND ITS RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS (ROTC) COMPONENT

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committees on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education; and National Defense and Security

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 98, entitled

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PHILIPPINES' NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY POLICY WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ENACTING A COMPREHENSIVE NATURAL GAS REGULATORY FRAMEWORK TOWARDS ENERGY SECURITY

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Energy

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 99, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE STATUS OF MARAWI CITY RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXPEDITING ITS IMPLEMENTATION AND ENSURING THAT PROPER RELIEF IS PROVIDED TO INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 100, entitled

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND SYMPATHY AND SINCERE CONDOLENCES OF THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES ON THE DEATH OF MS. REGINA PAZ "GINA" L. LOPEZ, FORMER SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Introduced by Senator Lapid

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 101, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE IRRIGATION PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY THE NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMINISTRATION, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT MECHANISMS TO ENFORCE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT LAWS, TO ENSURE PRUDENT UTILIZATION OF PUBLIC RESOURCES, AND TO PROVIDE TIMELY AND ADEQUATE AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES TO FILIPINO FARMERS

Introduced by Senator Recto

To the Committees on Agriculture and Food; Public Works; and Finance

COMMUNICATIONS

Letters from the *Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas*, transmitting to the Senate copies of the following certified and authenticated BSP issuances, in compliance with Section 15(a) of Republic Act No. 7653 (The New Central Bank Act):

Memorandum Nos. M-2019-017, 018, 019, 020, 21 dated 28 June, 2, 19, 23 July 2019;

Circular Letter Nos. CL-2019-043, 044, 045, 046, 047, 048, 049, 050, 051, 052 dated 19, 21, 27 June, 1, 8, 9, 15, 16 July 2019; and

Circular No. 1042 dated 25 July 2019.

yo *sp*

To the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies

Letter from the Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs, submitting to the Senate the "Report to Congress on Assistance to Nationals" for the period of July to December 2018 in digital format, pursuant to Section No. 33 of Republic Act No. 8042, otherwise known as the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995, as amended by Republic Act No. 10022.

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

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 926, entitled

AN ACT CLASSIFYING VOTE-BUYING AND VOTE-SELLING AS UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY UNDER THE ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING ACT, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE RA 9160, AS AMENDED ALSO KNOWN AS "AN ACT DEFINING THE CRIME OF MONEY LAUNDERING, PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES"

Introduced by Senator Gordon

To the Committees on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; and Electoral Reforms and People's Participation

Senate Bill No. 927, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING BASIC CITIZEN SERVICE TRAINING ESTABLISHING THE CITIZEN SERVICE CORPS, CREATING THE CITIZEN SERVICE COMMISSION FOR THIS PURPOSE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gordon

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

Senate Bill No. 928, entitled

AN ACT APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF ONE BILLION ONE HUNDRED SIXTY-ONE MILLION SEVEN HUNDRED TEN THOUSAND PESOS (P1,161,710, 000.00) AS SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR FY 2019 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gordon

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill No. 929, entitled

AN ACT PENALIZING PRESENTATION OF SUSPECTS AND RELEASE OF THEIR PRIVATE INFORMATION TO THE PRESS OR PUBLIC BEFORE FORMAL CHARGES ARE FILED IN COURT

Introduced by Senator De Lima

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

Senate Bill No. 930, entitled

AN ACT TO ENSURE EASIER COMMUTING BY ESTABLISHING A NETWORK OF SUSTAINABLE ELEVATED WALKWAYS ALONG ALL MAJOR PUBLIC THOROUGHFARES IN HIGH DENSITY URBAN AREAS, ESTABLISHING APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Poe

To the Committees on Public Works; and Finance

INQUIRY OF SENATE PRESIDENT SOTTO

Senate President Sotto said that a resolution has been filed honoring former DENR Secretary Gina Lopez. He then asked Senator Drilon what his vote

was during the confirmation of Secretary Lopez by the Commission on Appointments. Senator Drilon replied that both he and Senate President Sotto voted in favor of the confirmation of Secretary Lopez.

PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 100

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 100, entitled

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND SYMPATHY AND SINCERE CONDOLENCES OF THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES ON THE DEATH OF MS. REGINA PAZ "GINA" L. LOPEZ, FORMER SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES,

taking into consideration Proposed Senate Resolution No. 105.

With the permission of the Body, only the title of the resolution was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

ALL SENATORS AS COAUTHORS

Senator Zubiri manifested that all senators are coauthors of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 100.

ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 100

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body adopted Proposed Senate Resolution No. 100, subject to style and taking into consideration Proposed Senate Resolution No. 105.

Senate President Sotto directed the Senate Secretary to send to the family of former Secretary Lopez a copy of the resolution.

CHANGE OF COMMITTEE REFERRAL

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body approved the change of referral of the following:

1. Senate Bill No. 339 (Public School Security Act of 2019) — from the Committee on Education,

Arts and Culture to the Committee on Justice and Human Rights;

2. Senate Bill No. 163 (Raising the Age of Sexual Consent Act of 2019) — to the Committee on Justice and Human Rights as the primary committee, and to the Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality as the secondary committee; and
3. Senate Bill Nos. 72 and 738 (lowering the mandatory and optional retirement age of government employees to 60 years) — to the Committee on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation as the primary committee, and to the Committee on Government Corporations and Public Enterprises as the secondary committee.

Senator Zubiri said that as a consequence of the adoption of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 6, the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture was divided into two separate standing committees: the Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture and the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education. He said that several bills which were originally referred to the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture would then be referred to either of the two committees whenever applicable.

Thus, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the following bills were referred to the Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture as the primary committee:

1. Senate Bill No. 37 (*Basic Education Teachers Pay*);
2. Senate Bill No. 55 (*Inclusive Education Act*);
3. Senate Bill No. 69 (*Inclusive Education for Children and Youth with Special Needs Act*);
4. Senate Bill No. 70 (*Additional Support and Compensation for Public School Teachers and Non-Teaching Personnel*);
5. Senate Bill No. 78 (*Books for Barrios Act of 2019*);
6. Senate Bill No. 89 (*Increasing the Number of Rays of the Sun on the Philippine Flag*);

7. Senate Bill No. 99 (*Computer Science Act of 2019*);
8. Senate Bill No. 104 (*Basic Education Teachers' Pay Increase Act*);
9. Senate Bill No. 113 (*Internet Safety Education Act*);
10. Senate Bill No. 147 (*Instructional Garden Act of 2019*);
11. Senate Bill No. 157 (*Sports Varsity Teams Basic Education Act*);
12. Senate Bill No. 171 (*Inclusive Education for Children and Youth with Special Needs Act*);
13. Senate Bill No. 214 (*Senior High School Agri-cultural Strand Act*);
14. Senate Bill No. 228 (*Mandatory Substance Abuse Prevention Education Act*);
15. Senate Bill No. 272 (*Public School Land Use Development and Infrastructure Plan Act*);
16. Senate Bill No. 310 (*Good Manners and Right Conduct Act*);
17. Senate Bill No. 329 (*Inclusive Education Learning Resource Center Act of 2019*);
18. Senate Bill No. 330 (*The Philippine High School for Sports (PHSS) Act of 2019*);
19. Senate Bill No. 338 (*Inclusive Education for Children and Youth with Special Needs Act*);
20. Senate Bill No. 345 (*Inclusive Education for Children and Youth with Special Needs Act*);
21. Senate Bill No. 367 (*The Continuing Education for Teachers Act*);
22. Senate Bill No. 369 (*Equitable Access to Math and Science Education Act*); and
23. Senate Bill No. 387 (*Pasig River Development Act*).

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE REFERRAL

At this juncture, Senator Zubiri sought the consent of the Body to consider the secondary committee referral of the bills he would later present as the third

committee referral pursuant to Section 15 of the *Rules of the Senate*.

To Senate President Sotto's concern as regards tertiary referral, Senator Zubiri said that under Section 15 of the Rules, the Committee on Rules could decide to which committee a bill could be tertiary referred.

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the following bills were referred to the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education as the secondary committee:

- Senate Bill No. 118 (*Educational Assistance to Public Schools*);
- Senate Bill No. 129 (*Social Media Awareness in Schools and Universities Act of 2019*);
- Senate Bill No. 132 (*Underprivileged Students' Discount Act of 2019*);
- Senate Bill No. 177 (*Senior High School Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) Act*);
- Senate Bill No. 191 (*Senior High School Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) Act*);
- Senate Bill No. 212 (*Basic Military and Police Training in Senior High School Act*);
- Senate Bill No. 227 (*ROTC Act of 2019*);
- Senate Bill No. 286 (*Magna Carta of Student-Athletes*);
- Senate Bill No. 311 (*Banning a No Permit, No Exam Policy Act*); and
- Senate Bill No. 320 (*Public School and State University and College Modernization Act of 2019*)

CHANGE OF COMMITTEE REFERRAL

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body approved to transfer the referral of the following bills to the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education:

- Senate Bill No. 64 (*Priority Infrastructure for Public Higher Education Institutions Act*);

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- Senate Bill No. 142 (*Local Colleges and Universities Governance Act of 2019*);
- Senate Bill No. 278 (*Labor Education Act*);
- Senate Bill No. 346 (*Students' Rights and Welfare Act of 2019*);
- Senate Bill No. 361 (*Competitive Selection Process for Power Supply Agreements Act*); and
- Senate Bill No. 370 (*Local Universities and Colleges Governance Act*).

COMMITTEE REFERRAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 62

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Senate Bill No. 62 (*Educational Roadmap Act*) was referred to the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education as the primary committee, and to the Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture as the secondary committee.

CHANGE OF REFERRAL

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body approved the change of referral of Senate Bill No. 927 (*Citizen Service Act of 2019*) from the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education to the Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture.

EX OFFICIO MEMBERSHIP

Senator Zubiri stated that pursuant to Republic Act No. 9996 (MinDA Charter), he was designated by Senate President Sotto as *ex officio* member of the Board of Directors of the Mindanao Development Authority representing the Senate.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the session was suspended.

It was 4:22 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:25 p.m., the session was resumed.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE REFERRAL

Acting on the request of Senator Tolentino, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the following bills were also referred to the Committee on Local Government:

- Senate Bills No. 316 (*Barangay Health Workers and Services Reform Act of 2019*);
- Senate Bill No. 483 (*Barangay Integrated Development Approach for Nutrition Improvement (BIDANI) Act*); and
- Senate Bill No. 231 (*Government Internship Program (GIP) Act OF 2019*).

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, August 27, 2019.

It was 4:28 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.



ATTY. MYRA MARIE D. VILLARICA

Secretary of the Senate



Approved on August 27, 2019