



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Senate
Pasay City

Journal

SESSION NO. 58
Wednesday, February 26, 2020

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

SESSION NO. 58
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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. Emmanuel "Manny" D. Pacquiao led the prayer, to wit:

Almighty God and Father, Creator of heaven and earth, we bow before Your holy presence and recognize Your sovereignty.

With thanksgiving, we acknowledge that You created our inmost being. You saw our unformed bodies. You transformed us from nothing into something. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. Only You can satisfy the deepest longings of our hearts.

You created us for a purpose. You have empowered us to fulfill our mission as salt and light of this earth.

Panginoon, nagpapakumbaba po kami sa Inyong presensiya. Kayo po ang pinanggagalingan ng lahat ng biyaya. Sa Inyo po kami umaasa sa lahat ng

aming mga pangangailangan. Ipina-panalangin po namin ang aming mga kababayan na may sakit, pati na rin ang mga walang tirahan at walang hanap-buhay. Nawa'y magkaroon sila ng mga pagkakataon na maiangat ang estado ng kanilang pamumuhay upang makaranas din sila ng ginhawa na aming nararanasan, at Ikaw ang kanilang pupurihin sa lahat ng oras. Dahil Ikaw lamang po ang may likha sa aming lahat. Ikaw rin po ang gumagawa ng daan upang hindi kami mawalan ng pag-asa. Ipagkaloob Mo po sa amin ang proteksyon at gabay sa lahat ng aming gawain.

Father, we humbly depend on Your wisdom, knowledge and understanding through the Holy Spirit, so that we can continue serving our people with compassion, integrity and excellence. We need You, Lord, always.

As we conduct our duties as legislators and public servants, may each one of us remember what is written in Psalm 119:11, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

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.	Marcos, I. R.
Binay, M. L. N. S.	Pacquiao, E. M. D.
Cayetano, P. S.	Pangilinan, F. N.
De la Rosa, R. B. M.	Poe, G.
Gatchalian, W.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Go, C. L. T.	Sotto III, V. C.
Gordon, R. J.	Tolentino, F. T. N.
Hontiveros, R.	Villanueva, J.
Lacson, P. M.	Villar, C. A.
Lapid, M. L. M.	Zubiri, J. M. F.

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

Senators Drilon and Recto arrived after the roll call.

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

Senator Pimentel was absent.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journal of Session No. 57 (February 19, 2020) and considered it approved.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

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

- Vice Mayor Jhun Dhee C. Leparto and councilors of Sumilao, Bukidnon;
- Vice Mayor Joseph T. Durotan Sr., councilors and SK members of Quezon, Bukidnon;
- Mayor Omaradji C. Pizarro, Vice Mayor Raymon Charl O. Gamboa and councilors of Kalilangan, Bukidnon;
- Councilors from the Municipality of Columbio, Sultan Kudarat;
- Councilors from Lebak, Sultan Kudarat;
- Councilors from Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon;

- Mayor Ramil Dilangalen, Vice Mayor Mary Jane C. Bayam and councilors of Kabuntalan, Maguindanao;
- Mayor Jose Joel Doromal, Vice Mayor Edison Laure, councilors and SK members of Maramag, Bukidnon;
- Vice Mayor Cindy Aritrango and councilors of Malitbog, Bukidnon; and
- Councilor Handy Lao, president of the Philippine Councilors' League of Ilocos Norte, and his fellow councilors from Ilocos Norte.

Senate President Sotto welcomed the guests to the Senate.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

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

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1366, entitled

AN ACT REGULATING THE DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES OF DEBT COLLECTORS TO PROTECT BORROWERS FROM ABUSES, HARASSMENT, UNFAIR TREATMENT AND MISREPRESENTATIONS

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies

Senate Bill No. 1367, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROGRAM OF EDUCATION DESIGNED TO HELP ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY OF AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION TO AVOID INVOLVEMENT WITH ILLEGAL DRUGS

Introduced by Senator Binay

To the Committees on Basic Education, Arts and Culture; and Public Order and Dangerous Drugs

Handwritten initials

Senate Bill No. 1368, entitled

AN ACT ALLOWING EMPLOYEES TO TAKE SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT LEAVE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ACADEMIC SCHOOL ACTIVITIES OF THEIR CHILDREN OR TO PARTICIPATE IN LITERACY TRAINING

Introduced by Senator Binay

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

Senate Bill No. 1369, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE MAGNA CARTA OF FILIPINO SEAFARERS

Introduced by Senator Binay

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

Senate Bill No. 1370, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE COMPULSORY RETIREMENT AGE FOR OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES FROM 56 YEARS OLD TO 60 YEARS OLD, FURTHER AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 5 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1638 ENTITLED "ESTABLISHING A NEW SYSTEM OF RETIREMENT AND SEPARATION FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES" AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Pacquiao

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

RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 330, entitled

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE ELECTRIFICATION OF ALL PUBLIC PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS"

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committees on Energy; And Basic Education, Arts and Culture

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 331, entitled

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE STRATEGY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY TO MAXIMIZE THE COUNTRY'S REMAINING POTENTIAL GEOTHERMAL SOURCES TOWARDS ENERGY SECURITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Energy

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):

Circular Nos. 1073, 1074 and 1075, dated 7 and 10 February 2020; and

Circular Letter No. CL-2020-009 dated 11 February 2020.

To the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 1371, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT PROGRAM

not yet

FOR ALL DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS,
OFFICES, AND AGENCIES OF THE
GOVERNMENT

Introduced by Senator Cayetano

To the Committee on Finance

Senate Bill No. 1372, entitled

AN ACT MODERNIZING THE PUBLIC
SERVICE ACT, AMENDING FOR
THE PURPOSE COMMONWEALTH
ACT NO. 146, OTHERWISE KNOWN
AS THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT, AS
AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Zubiri

**To the Committees on Public Services; and
Economic Affairs**

Senate Bill No. 1374, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 1 OF
REPUBLIC NO. 7966 TO EXTEND
THE TERM OF THE FRANCHISE OF
ABS-CBN CORPORATION UNTIL 31
DECEMBER 2020

Introduced by Senator Revilla, Jr.

To the Committee on Rules

RESOLUTIONS

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 6, entitled

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION EXPRESS-
ING THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS
THAT ABS-CBN CORPORATION
SHOULD CONTINUE TO OPERATE
PENDING FINAL DETERMINATION
OF THE RENEWAL OF ITS FRAN-
CHISE BY THE 18TH CONGRESS

Introduced by Senator Drilon

To the Committee on Rules

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 332, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

AND FOOD TO CONDUCT AN
INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION,
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE RICE COMPETITIVENESS
ENHANCEMENT FUND (RCEF)
CREATED THROUGH THE REPUBLIC
ACT NO. 11203 OR THE RICE
TARIFFICATION LAW WITH THE
END VIEW OF DETERMINING THE
COMPETENCE AND EFFICIENCY
OF THE LEAD IMPLEMENTING
AGENCIES AS WELL AS IN DETER-
MINING WHETHER THE FUND IS
UTILIZED FOR THE INTENDED
PURPOSES SET BY THE LAW

Introduced by Senator Villar

**To the Committee on Agriculture, Food
and Agrarian Reform**

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Report No. 52, prepared and submitted
jointly by the Committees on Women, Children,
Family Relations and Gender Equality; and
Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development,
on Senate Bill No. 1373, with Senator
Hontiveros as author thereof, entitled

AN ACT PROTECTING CHILDREN BY
PROHIBITING AND DECLARING
CHILD MARRIAGE AS ILLEGAL
AND PROVIDING PROGRAMS AND
PENALTIES THEREOF,

recommending its approval in substitution of
Senate Bill No. 162.

Sponsor: Senator Hontiveros

To the Calendar for Ordinary Business

BIRTHDAY GREETING

Senator Zubiri, on behalf of the Senate, greeted
Senator Hontiveros on the occasion of her birth
anniversary on February 24, 2020.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

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



from the South: Mayor Vic Paul Salarda, Mayor Salway "Jun" Sumbo Jr., Mayor Danny "Bodgie" Martinez and Mayor Alexander Bryan Reganit.

Senate President Sotto welcomed the guests to the Senate.

APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 1233 ON THIRD READING

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, Senate Bill No. 1233, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on February 19, 2020.

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

AN ACT EXPANDING THE USE OF THE
LEGAL ASSISTANCE FUND, AMEND-
ING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 26
OF REPUBLIC ACT 8042, AS
AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS
THE MIGRANT WORKERS AND
OVERSEAS FILIPINOS ACT OF 1995.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

The result of the voting was as follows:

In favor

Angara	Marcos
Binay	Pacquiao
Cayetano	Pangilinan
Dela Rosa	Poe
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Sotto
Go	Tolentino
Gordon	Villanueva
Hontiveros	Villar
Lacson	Zubiri
Lapid	

Against

None

Abstention

None

With 21 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared Senate Bill No. 1233 approved on Third Reading.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva stated that everytime there are reports of Filipino workers abused or treated like animals in a foreign land, the nation is hurt and the public has always demanded action from the government to protect Filipino overseas workers abroad. He said that the passage of Senate Bill No. 1233 was a specific, measurable and realistic response that would expand the use of the Legal Assistance Fund or "LeAF."

Senator Villanueva lamented that it has been decades since the first reported abuse and maltreatment of overseas Filipinos workers was revealed which led composers to write sad songs like "*Napakasakit, Kuya Eddie*." He expressed hope that the LeAF Law, which would expand the use of the Legal Assistance Fund, would somehow ease and eventually remove the pain and suffering that distressed OFWs experience abroad. He then thanked the Senate, those who coauthored the bill, and the Senate leadership for the passage of the measure.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DELA ROSA

Senator Dela Rosa thanked Senator Villanueva, chairperson of the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development, for prioritizing and shepherding the passage of the bill which, he hoped, would ensure that the rights and interests of distressed OFWs are adequately protected and safeguarded. He said that the bill was a realization of the state policy of rendering assistance to all Filipinos whenever and wherever they are in the world. He likewise thanked all the Members for supporting the measure.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Senator Zubiri manifested that he was informed by the Office of Senator Recto that had Senator Recto been present during the voting, he would have voted and explained his vote; instead, he would simply submit his explanation of vote later.

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APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 1086 ON THIRD READING

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, Senate Bill No. 1086, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on February 20, 2020.

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

AN ACT CREATING AND ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE HIGH SCHOOL FOR SPORTS AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

The result of the voting was as follows:

In favor

Angara	Marcos
Binay	Pacquiao
Cayetano	Pangilinan
Dela Rosa	Poe
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Sotto
Go	Tolentino
Gordon	Villanueva
Hontiveros	Villar
Lacson	Zubiri
Lapid	

Against

None

Abstention

None

With 21 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared Senate Bill No. 1086 approved on Third Reading.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR GO

As chairperson of the Committee on Sports and one of the authors of Senate Bill No. 1086, Senator Go expressed his gratitude to the Members for supporting

the establishment of the Philippine High School for Sports (PHSS). He also congratulated and thanked Senator Gatchalian for making the PHSS measure a priority of the Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture.

Senator Go extended his gratitude to the DepEd, DBM, PSC and BCDA for their support and commitment in ensuring the successful establishment of the PHSS.

As an avid sports enthusiast, Senator Go believed that the establishment of the PHSS is long overdue. He recalled that the country was a sports powerhouse decades ago, proof that Filipino athletes have world-class skills that could give every top team a run for their money which was on display during the 2019 Southeast Asian Games where Team Philippines came out on top due to the support that the athletes received from the people and government.

Senator Go stressed that it was about time that the government sustained the renaissance of sports in the country.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ANGARA

At the outset, Senator Angara thanked Senator Gatchalian for sponsoring the measure. He recalled that he first filed the bill when he was still a congressman, inspired by the idea that was first conceptualized by Fr. Tito Caluag of the Ateneo de Manila University and former Rep. Wimpy Fuentabella and that its counterpart bill was filed by Sen. Pia Cayetano in the Senate. He expressed hope that the bill would soon become a law.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO

At the outset, Senator Cayetano acknowledged Senator Angara for mentioning the history behind Senate Bill No. 1086. She said that while the country is still on a high from the very successful Southeast Asian Games performance, the reality was that many coaches worry about the future of their athletes because many of those who won gold medals never got college education or did not even finish high school because they pursued sports instead. She said that since it is very important to help the athletes finish their education, the second part of the law should have the objective of getting them into college. In the meantime, she said that the law would ensure that the best athletes will have the opportunity to have a very good high school education.

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Senator Cayetano mentioned Senator Angara's 15-year old son, a promising young tennis player who shares the dilemma of many athletes who have a hard time figuring out how they would continue to be good students while needing to receive further training overseas, either through a homeschooling program or by being in a national high school for sports where they are allowed to compete. This, she said, could be made possible by engaging the services of a tutor, continuing their studies online or going back to school where they do not feel like neglectful athletes because they are representing the country through their pursuit of their respective sports.

Senator Cayetano thanked the members of the Body for supporting the measure. However, she cautioned that tying it to the success of the country's athletes in bringing home the medals in the recent Southeast Asian Games may not be of value to the athletes if they do not have the education that would equip them for the future when their golden medal days are over.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Senator Zubiri suggested the need to create as well a state college or state university for sports or a tertiary level sports academy because many SEA Games players are actually no longer in high school, many of them quitting their studies so that they could participate in the Southeast Asian Games, Asian Games and the Olympics. He then congratulated the authors of the measure.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR GORDON

Senator Gordon said that his vote and his coauthorship on the measure were based on the fact that the country should have a real national sports system.

He noted that the Gilas basketball team sent to Indonesia, composed of six Ateneo players, showed the importance of a high school intramural system which is not just event-oriented but system-oriented. He then congratulated all the coauthors of the bill, particularly the principal author, Senator Gatchalian.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

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

- Vice Mayor Melody Anne Benitez, together with Councilor Ville Clovis Cayetano and Councilor Franklin Cayetano from Davao Oriental;
- Vivencio Mamaril, Mark Matubang and the other members of the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Products Standards; and
- Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) representatives Pilipinas Masipag, Pedro Santos Jr. and Ma. Rowena Buena.

APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 1296 ON THIRD READING

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, Senate Bill No. 1296, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on February 20, 2020.

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

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE ENERGY RESEARCH AND POLICY INSTITUTE, DEFINING ITS OBJECTIVES, POWERS, AND FUNCTIONS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

The result of the voting was as follows:

In favor

Angara	Marcos
Binay	Pacquiao
Cayetano	Pangilinan
Dela Rosa	Poe
Drilon	Revilla
Gatchalian	Sotto
Go	Tolentino
Gordon	Villanueva
Hontiveros	Villar
Lacson	Zubiri
Lapid	

Against

None

Abstention

None

With 21 senators voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared Senate Bill No. 1296 approved on Third Reading.

APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 1083 ON THIRD READING

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, Senate Bill No. 1083, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on February 20, 2020.

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

AN ACT TO PREVENT, PROHIBIT AND
PENALIZE TERRORISM, THEREBY
REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9372,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
“HUMAN SECURITY ACT OF 2007.”

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

RESULT OF THE VOTING

The result of the voting was as follows:

In favor

Angara	Marcos
Binay	Pacquiao
Cayetano	Poe
Dela Rosa	Revilla
Drilon	Sotto
Gatchalian	Tolentino
Go	Villanueva
Gordon	Villar
Lacson	Zubiri
Lapid	

Against

Hontiveros	Pangilinan
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Abstention

None

With 19 senators voting in favor, two against, and no abstention, the Chair declared Senate Bill No. 1083 approved on Third Reading.

EXPLANATIONS OF VOTE

By Senator Hontiveros

Senator Hontiveros firmly believed that Congress should do all it can to ensure the safety and security of the Filipino people, particularly from acts of terror and other forms of violence. She said that acts of terror destroy not only the lives of the people directly affected but they could also lead to economic disruption and uncertainty, as well as create an atmosphere of fear and paranoia.

However, she pointed out that safety and security could never be at the expense of the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution. She said that while all rights permit exceptions, certain provisions of the bill, specifically those allowing the preliminary proscription of suspected terrorist organizations prior to their being given an opportunity to be heard, as well as those lowering the standard for warrantless arrest and detention, go too far and might lead to a number of pernicious consequences.

She recalled that she premised her interpellation with a statement that the Body must craft laws presuming the most despotic of implementers instead of the most benevolent of leaders.

Thus, after conferring with Senator Lacson, whom she had learned to trust during the past few decades including the past several years of legislative work on human rights, she said that she must vote against the proposed measure amending the Human Security Act, a measure that she knew was very important to him, and that he sincerely believed would be supremely beneficial for Philippine society.

She hoped that Senator Lacson would understand that her convictions, as well as her faith in the fundamental freedom enshrined in the Constitution, would not allow her to do otherwise.

By Senator Pangilinan

Senator Pangilinan explained his negative vote as follows:

First, we thank Senator “Ping” Lacson for his diligence in shepherding this measure, and

for his patience in answering all our questions with regard to it. We recognize the hours of reading, the research and interviews that went in the crafting, sponsorship, and finally defense of the measure.

However, this Representation fears that the amendments to the Human Security Act right before us may be abused as it will, among others, allow law enforcers or military personnel to place individuals and organizations under surveillance; compel telecoms to divulge their calls and messages; arrest these people without warrant; and detain them for an extended period of 14 days.

The measure also allows regional trial courts to outlaw an organization as terrorist at the requests of even foreign and supranational jurisdictions. It likewise removes the compensation for persons wrongfully detained.

At a time when legitimate critics and democratic dissent are being attacked, the Human Security Act could be likened to a certain extent to the Anti-Subversion Law during martial law, and may be used against critics and opposition leaders.

Certain questions now come to mind: Can the law be used against democratic opposition leaders? Can opposition political parties be outlawed and tagged as "terrorist organizations"? Some may say that this is farfetched, and most certainly some will say this is not the intent of the law.

Allow me to bring us back in time during the martial law years to remind us on how the law was used to go after the democratic opposition leaders.

- The Administration then claimed that it had declared martial law in response to the "communist threat" posed by the newly-founded Communist Party of the Philippines, and the sectarian "rebellion" of the Mindanao Independence Movement.
- Opposition figures at that time, including Senators Lorenzo Tañada, Jose W. Diokno, Jovito Salonga, and Ninoy Aquino, felt that the administration was exaggerating these threats, using them as convenient excuse to consolidate power and extend its tenure beyond two presidential terms by the 1935 Constitution.

Allow us to further go back to a criminal case filed against opposition leader, Senator Salonga who, at that time, was executive vice president of the Liberal Party and eventually became its president, in the case of *G.R.*

No. L-59524 dated February 18, 1985 against respondents presiding judges of Quezon City, its fiscal, and two officers of the Armed Forces.

These key facts I am to cite reinforced the well-founded fear of opposition leaders today of being persecuted under the Human Security Act given the current authoritarian climate we face and a well-grounded fear that it may be repeated.

To cite some of the facts of that case:

- A series of bombings occurred in Metro Manila from August to October 1980. After a bombing incident on September 6, 1980, military and police authorities charged Philippine-born American citizen Victor Burns Lovely Jr. with subversion, illegal possession of explosives and damage to property.
- Former Senator Salonga was implicated in these bombings because found in Mr. Lovely's possession were pictures taken in May 1980 at the party of former Congressman Raul Daza held at the latter's residence in Los Angeles, California, showing Senator Salonga and his wife with other guests, including Mr. Lovely.
- After another bombing incident on September 12, 1980, the brother of Mr. Lovely, Romeo, was presented in a television press conference. In his interview, Romeo said that he had driven Mr. Lovely to Senator Salonga's house twice in 1980.
- Arrest, search and seizure orders (ASSOs) were issued against persons implicated by Mr. Lovely in the series of bombings.
- On October 21, 1980, military officials went to Senator Salonga's room at the Manila Medical Center to issue an ASSO which, however, did not specify the charges against him.
- Senator Salonga's lawyers, for some time, were not permitted to visit him in the hospital room.
- On November 2, 1980, Senator Salonga was transferred, against his objections, to an isolation room without windows in an Army prison camp at Fort Bonifacio. Senator Salonga was not informed why he was transferred and detained nor was he ever investigated or questioned by any military or civil authority.
- On November 27, 1980, Senator Salonga was released from military custody and placed under house arrest, "still without the benefit of any investigation or charges."

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- After four months of being detained, charges for subversion, among others, were filed against Senator Salonga. All these while Senator Salonga had serious health problems.
- On March 6, 1981, and I quote the court records: "Salonga was allowed to leave the country, for among others things, the possible removal of his left eye to save his right eye."

It must be recalled that Senator Salonga almost died as one of the principal victims of the dastardly bombing of a Liberal Party rally at Plaza Miranda on August 20, 1971.

- To quote further from the records and the ruling of the court: "Senator Salonga has limited use of his one remaining hand and arms, is completely blind in the left eye, and has scar-like formations in the remaining right eye. He is totally deaf in the right ear and partially deaf in the left ear."
- Further quoting our court records: "Senator Salonga was arrested at the Manila Medical Center while hospitalized for bronchial asthma.
- When arrested, he was not informed of the nature of the charges against him. Neither was counsel allowed to talk to him until the Supreme Court intervened and issued an order directing that his lawyers be permitted to visit him."

Only after four months of detention was Senator Salonga informed for the first time of the nature of the charges against him. After the preliminary investigation, Senator Salonga moved to dismiss the complaint but it was denied.

Supreme Court, in the case of *Salonga v. Cruz Paño*, again ruled in 1985, and I quote:

- "Respondents admit that no evidence was presented directly linking Petitioner Salonga to actual acts of violence or terrorism."
- "There is no proof of his direct participation in any overt acts of subversion. Guilt by association theory is too tenuous a basis to conclude that Senator Salonga was a leader or mastermind of the bombings. He was indicted simply because some plotters masquerading as visitors have somehow met in his house."
- "The testimony of Victor Lovely against Petitioner Salonga is full of inconsistencies":
 - Senator Salonga and Atty. Renato Tañada could not have whispered to one another because the petitioner is almost totally deaf."

- Lovely could not have met Senator Salonga at the Manglapus party in Washington D.C. in 1977 because Senator Salonga left for the United States only in November of 1978.
- The pictures of Senator Salonga and Mr. Lovely at Raul Daza's birthday in Los Angeles are not proof of conspiracy. Politicians have their photos taken with many people.

Senator Salonga "invoked" the constitutionally protected right to life and liberty guaranteed by the due process clause, alleging that no *prima facie* case has been established to warrant the filing of an information for subversion against him.

The litany of lies and fabrications by the prosecution in that case revealed the extent of abuse of law enforcers inflicted upon an opposition leader and former senator.

Our fear with an administration that has jailed an incumbent senator on a case whose key witnesses are convicted drug lords, that has repeatedly warned about imposing Martial Law all over the country, that has, in fact, imposed Martial Law in Mindanao under what we continue to believe to be questionable constitutional grounds, these instances are more than simply *déjà vu*. They are more like foreboding.

The proposed new definition of terrorism is vague and encompassing, making it open to abuse in that the simplest mobilization or common crimes can be framed by errant law enforcers as acts of terrorism.

The prolonged detention is an impingement of rights and liberty. Why 14 days? If security officials and law enforcers are doing their job, why will it take them long to file a case? Or, is the practice of "arrest and detain now, produce or invent evidence later" still prevalent as it was when opposition leader Jovy Salonga was arrested, detained and charged in 1981?

The current law is not perfect and we in Congress should be working continuously to make it work for the people. The amendments, however, are worrisome and could make the Human Security Act an even worse tool for repression instead of an instrument for thwarting terrorists.

In closing, *ang batas ay dapat proteksiyon ng mamamayan, proteksiyon sa mga pagmamalabis at maling paggamit nito. Kaya kapag nagkamali sa pagpapatupad nito, dapat may-roong managot para hindi na maulit, para*

hindi na abusuhin ang batas, para hindi na pagmamalabisan ang karaniwang tao. Dahil sa karaniwang walang poder at walang kapit, maaaring maging terror ang batas.

Laws must be rights-based and must allow civil and political rights to flourish. Without respect for rights, there can never be security. *Kung walang paggalang sa karapatan, walang seguridad.*

Respectfully, I vote no to the measure.

By Senator Dela Rosa

At the outset, Senator Dela Rosa expressed his gratitude to the Body for their unwavering support in combating terrorism in the country. He said that the enactment of the law would send a brave message to the world that the country is in solidarity in the global fight against terrorism.

Senator Dela Rosa also extended his gratitude to Senator Lacson, an ally in the fight against terrorism, for shepherding and ensuring the swift but very deliberate passage of the legislative measure. He said that the law would fully equip the law enforcers, not only in terms of weapons and funding, but as protection of their right in the court of law.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the session was suspended.

It was 3:44 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:45 p.m., the session was resumed.

COAUTHOR

As manifested by Senator Zubiri, Senator Lapid was made coauthor of Senate Bill No. 1086.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR CAYETANO

Availing herself of the privilege hour, Senator Cayetano described the plight of 1.8 million Filipino children who remained abandoned or neglected and thus need to be in foster care or adoption.

The full text of Senator Cayetano's sponsorship speech follows:

The Constitution states that the State shall defend the right of children to assistance including proper care and nutrition and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation, and other conditions prejudicial to their development. For the United Nations' Children's Rights & Emergency Relief Organization, 1.8 million Filipino children remained abandoned or neglected. This accounts for more than one percent of our entire population. Imagine that one percent of our entire population, the most vulnerable—the children—are abandoned or neglected. They are the victims of extreme poverty, natural disaster, armed conflicts, or those whose parents are not willing and are not able to care for them. These kids—some, not all—are taken to State-run or accredited residential care facilities or end up on the streets.

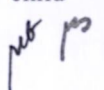
Many times, I hear of stories that out of poverty, *hindi naaalagaan ang mga bata, hindi kasalanan ng mga magulang.* But the truth is, *marami rin talagang magulang na pabaya. Totoo po iyon.* We have to face the reality that many children are better off not in the care of their natural-born parents.

I bring this up today, right now, because next week, March *na po* and February is the month that we celebrate adoption consciousness. So, it is my personal conviction that each and every one of us should consider the state of every child. Take note of these figures: according to DSWD, around 2,191 children have been placed for domestic adoption between 2010 to 2018. So, 2,191 divided by eight years is less than 300 children.

If we have close to two million children on the streets and we are placing for adoption 200, *napanganak na siguro iyong apo ng apo ko at hindi pa mailalagay sa magandang pamilya ang mga batang ito.* That is why, I bring this to this Chamber's attention.

Our birthday celebrant, our dear colleague, Sen. Risa Hontiveros, has begun her hearings on the Adoption bill and she committed to me that this also includes the Alternative Child Care Code which is the comprehensive code that will cover not just adoption but foster care. I bring this to the attention of everyone because if I could, I would probably adopt 12 children. I do not have that capacity to do so but I have adopted one child who is my son, just like my daughters are my daughters.

If I could convince everyone here to adopt a child, I can promise this Chamber, if we have three children, one more child could give us so much joy. If we have one, get another child



because, ask any adoptive parents like me, we do not distinguish between blood children. Senator Pangilinan is nodding his head because he actually adopted a child before I adopted a child.

So on that note, I leave this Chamber with that visual of 1.8 million Filipino children without families who care and love for them, not a mother or father to read them a bed time stories, to tuck them in, to even ensure that they come home when the sun goes down, to call them *na time na para kumain*—1.8 million children.

So far, we are only able to place—if this data is correct—close to not even 300 children a year for domestic adoption. I think the figures for international adoption is similar—200 plus. We will not even narrow the gap and that is the objective of improving our laws so that we can expedite these procedures, and we can make placing these children faster so that these children can have the home that they deserve.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Cayetano to the Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senator Zubiri acknowledged the presence in the gallery of the following guests: Kibawe, Bukidnon Mayor Reynaldo “Jimboy Tebontu” S. Ang Rabanes, and Vice Mayor Raymundo “Nonong” A. Batao Jr., and their councilors.

Senate President Sotto welcomed the guests to the Senate.

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 37 ON SENATE BILL NO. 1319

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading, Senate Bill No. 1319 (Committee Report No. 37), entitled

AN ACT EXPANDING THE COVERAGE
OF THE CENTENARIANS ACT OF
2016, AMENDING FOR THE PUR-
POSE SECTION TWO OF REPUBLIC

ACT NO. 10868 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, with the permission of the Body, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, only the title of the bill was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

The Chair recognized Senator Revilla for the sponsorship.

SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR REVILLA

Senator Revilla, on behalf of the Committee on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development, submitted for plenary consideration Senate Bill No. 1319, entitled “An Act Expanding the Coverage of the Centenarians Act of 2016, Amending for the Purpose Section Two of Republic Act No. 10868 and for Other Purposes,” under Committee Report No. 37.

The full text of Senator Revilla’s sponsorship speech follows:

“What is the meaning of life?” A young man once asked an old man this question. And to this, the old man replied, “If we have learned to live without fear, to drop our hate and bitterness toward others, to go through pain and suffering without complaining, to see beauty in common things around us, to love and serve the poorest and the lowliest without counting the cost, to be glad to be alive and unafraid to die, then we are advancing toward the meaning of life.”

Marahil napaisip kayo kung ano ang kinalaman ng aking unang pahayag sa panukalang batas na aking isinusulong ngayon. Simple lamang po. Ang mga ganiyang magagandang aral ay maririnig at matututunan lamang natin sa ating mga nakatatanda, sa ating mga magulang, at sa ating mga lolo at lola. Definitely, more than anyone else, our elderlies would know the meaning of life for they have lived through numerous tragedies and triumphs. They have even experienced world wars and world peace. Kaya marapat lamang na sila ay bigyan ng karampatang pagpupugay at pagpapahalaga.

Kinagisnan at kinalakihan na po natin ang kultura na kumikilala sa ating mga nakatatanda. Kaya naman ang panukalang batas na ito ay pagkilala sa mga kontribusyon nila sa



ating lipunan. Ito rin ay isang selebrasyon ng kahabaan ng makahulugang buhay ng sangkatauhan.

I rise today to sponsor Senate Bill No. 1319 under Committee No. 37, submitted jointly by the Committees on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; and Finance. This proposed measure seeks to amend the Centenarian Law so that our elderly can avail of the benefits early on. The Committee received a number of proposals of this nature and after careful study, our Committee on Social Justice respectfully reports today that we propose a staggered amount of monetary gifts for our elderlies before they reach the age of 100.

The original proposal of this representation was to give a higher amount of P25,000 to 80 years old and another P25,000 to 90 years old. The Committee, however, is constrained by the heavy budgetary requirement that it entails. *Dahil po rito, minarapat ng ating Committee na babaan ang halaga na ibibigay ngunit buo o P100,000 pa rin ang matatanggap ng ating mga centenarians.*

Sa ilalim ng panukala, pagtungtong po nila ng 80 years old, makakakuha po sila ng P10,000 at pagtungtong naman nila ng 90 years old, sila ay mabibigyan muli ng P10,000. At tulad ng aking nabanggit, P100,000 pa rin po ang makukuha ng monetary gift ng ating mga centenarians.

Mga kasamahan sa Senado, ang panukalang ito ay ating isinusulong upang mas ma-enjoy ng ating lolo at lola ang magagandang benepisyo na binibigay sa kanila. Kinikilala natin ang makabuluhang layunin na umiiral sa Centenarian Law at gusto lamang natin na mapakinabangan ng mas nakararami ang mga benepisyo mula sa batas. Nang ating dininig sa Komite ang panukalang ito, narinig natin ang mga salaysay na ang nakatatanggap ng benepisyo o cash gift na P100,000 ay masyado nang matatanda. Sa sobrang katandaan ay hindi na raw po nila naiintindihan kung ano ang kanilang tinatanggap at hindi na nila ito nae-enjoy. Marahil ganito na nga ang realidad. Ngunit sa kanila pa rin napupunta ang pakinabang nito—sa kanilang pagkain, gamot, medical care, at iba pang pangangailangan. Kaya naman ang karagdagang halaga na mas maaga nilang makukuha ay tiyak na mas magiging pakapi-pakinabang po para sa kanila.

Our Constitution no less recognizes that the family has the duty to take care of its elderly members. This is how highly we value our culture of taking care of our elderly. This proposed

measure, therefore, is another legislative effort in testimony of this unique Filipino trait.

Sa suporta ng bawat isa sa atin na narito ngayon, tiwala po ako na higit nating mapapasaya at matutulungan ang ating mga lolo at lola.

Sa inyo pong lahat, maraming, maraming salamat po.

Thank you.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR DE LIMA

On behalf of Senator De Lima, Senator Hontiveros delivered the cosponsorship speech on Senate Bill No. 1319.

Following is the full text of Senator De Lima's cosponsorship speech:

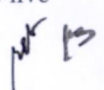
I am pleased to deliver the sponsorship speech on Senate Bill No. 1319, or "An Act Expanding the Coverage of the Centenarians Act" on behalf of my *kabaro* and respected colleague, Sen. Leila De Lima.

With Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. as the subcommittee chair and the members of the Committee on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development, I wish to submit and seek the approval of the proposed Senate Bill No. 1319, under Committee Report No. 37, entitled: An Act Expanding the Coverage of the Centenarians Act of 2016, Amending for the Purpose Sec. 2 of Republic Act No. 10868 and for Other Purposes.

From the data gathered in the course of our study and public hearing, the Committee has learned the unfortunate scenario that only a very small fraction of octogenarians live long enough to become centenarians. Even more unfortunately, many, if not most, of our centenarians are already too old, sickly, and impaired to properly enjoy the blessings of the Centenarian Law. According to the World Health Organization's statistics published in 2018, the average person residing in the Philippines has a lifespan of 69.3 years. This average shows that we are three years shorter than the global average of age 72.

In 2019, the DSWD reported to us that they were only able to serve and give the P100,000 cash gift to 739 individuals. To note, this is still below their target of 1,000 Filipino centenarians.

To provide our senior citizens with the modest support for their needs and the motivation to live



longer towards reaching their centenary age, this measure aims to expand the coverage of Republic Act No. 10868 to include those Filipinos reaching the age of 80 and 90 years old and grant them an acceptable cash gift for reaching this age.

With this bill, we will provide our dear senior citizens of a one-time cash gift amounting to P10,000 upon reaching milestone age of 80 and 90 years old. Upon reaching the age of 100, they will receive another P100,000 as currently provided by the law. Ultimately, we hope that by expanding the coverage of this law, we are able to concretely honor our elderly for their meaningful contributions and their hard-fought sacrifices to their community and the Philippine society during their years of vigor. *Sabi nila, "Huwag kang magsisisi na tumanda. Ito ay isang pribilehiyo na hindi nakakamtan ng marami."*

As a senior citizen myself, I can start to feel and relate more with them. It is a privilege to age and celebrate the gift of life that God gave us. But as we reach old age, the decline of the senior citizens' productive capacity exposes this sector to various vulnerabilities, and the government must be there to afford them the support they need together with their families.

Lahat tayo, tatanda rin. In light of the foregoing, I hereby appeal to my colleagues to lend their support for this measure as our tribute to our beloved elderly.

COSPONSOR

Senator Hontiveros manifested her intent to be a cosponsor of Senate Bill No. 1319.

COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Senator Zubiri requested that his cosponsorship speech on Senate Bill No. 1319 be inserted into the record.

Following is Senator Zubiri's cosponsorship speech:

I have the pleasure to stand before you today to cosponsor Senate Bill No. 1319, or "An Act Expanding the Coverage of the Centenarians Act of 2016."

In 2016, Congress passed Republic Act No. 10868 or the Centenarians, which honors our senior citizens by granting them a cash gift

amounting to one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00) upon reaching the age of one hundred. It is unfortunate to note, however, that not many Filipinos are able to reach this milestone. In 2019, there were only 739 centenarians who were eligible to receive the cash gift. At age 100, I can't help but wonder, "Are they still able to enjoy this cash gift that is given to them?"

With the amendment that we are introducing today, we hope to expand the coverage of this law to include our octogenarians (80-89 years old) and nonagenarians (90-99 years old) who will now be receiving ten thousand pesos and twenty thousand pesos, respectively. We hope that with this amendment, we will be able to provide our senior citizens with the motivation to live longer, as well as aid them in achieving this feat by giving them the means to purchase medicines and other necessities.

Sa totoo lang po, ang halaga ng mata-tanggap ng mga octogenarians na P10,000 at nonagenarians na P20,000 ay halos pam-palubag-loob lamang. Napakaliit po nito kung itutumbas sa mga gastusin at pangangailangan nila—mga gastusin sa gamot, pagkain, tagapag-alaga at iba pang pangangailangan nila. Hindi po matutumbasan ng maliit na halaga na ito ang kanilang naging kontribusyon at naiambag sa ating bansa. Subalit maliit man ang halaga na ito, ito ay sumi-simbulo ng pagkilala at pakikipagdiwang ng bansa sa kanilang narating, at upang sila'y maging inspirasyon sa ating mga kababayan. Kung may pondo pa po tayong mailalaan, handa po ako na itaas pa ang halaga na ito.

Let us honor our elders for their contributions to their communities and to this country by expanding the coverage of this law.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senator Zubiri acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Mayor Greman Solante, together with Vice Mayor Erwin Yu and all the councilors of Tudela, Cebu.

SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1319

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



SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the session was suspended.

It was 4:04 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

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

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS**

At this juncture, Senator Zubiri acknowledged the presence in the gallery of councilors from the Municipality of Porac, Pampanga, headed by Councilor Michael "Mike" Tapang.

Senate President Sotto welcomed the guests to the Senate.

MOTION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Senate Bill No. 1270, amending Section 2

of Republic Act No. 10868, The Centenarians Act of 2016, was deemed considered in Committee Report No. 37.

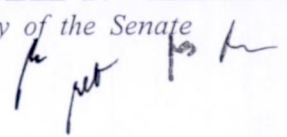
ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of Monday, March 2, 2020.

It was 5:28 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.


ATTY. MYRA MARIE D. VILLARICA

Secretary of the Senate


Approved on March 2, 2020