



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
**Senate**  
Pasay City

# Journal

**SESSION NO. 65**

Monday to Thursday, May 18 to 21, 2020

**EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

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Monday to Thursday, May 18 to 21, 2020

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 1:30 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Vicente C. Sotto III, called the session to order.

**PRAYER**

Sen. Joel Villanueva led the prayer, to wit:

*Let us put ourselves in the presence of the Lord.*

Believe, our God is not limited by space, distance, and even time.

*Dakilang Diyos, Ama naming sumasalangit, Diyos na may gawa ng langit at lupa, Diyos na nagmahal sa amin nang gayon na lamang.*

*Naninikluhod po kami at lumalapit sa Iyong paanan, inihihingi po namin ng tawad ang anumang kasalanan, sa isip, salita o gawa. Kasalanang sinasadya man o hindi, patawarin po Ninyo kami.*

*Hugasan po Ninyo kami ng Iyong banal na dugo na nabuhos sa krus ng kalbaryo.*

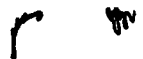
*Kinikilala po namin na wala po kaming magagawa kung wala Kayo sa amin.*

*Ipinapanalangin po namin, O Diyos, ang pagbubukas ng aming sesyon ngayong linggo. Hinihingi po namin ang Inyong paggabay. Hinihingi po namin ang Iyong pagpapala, kalakasan, kalusugan, maging ang katalinuhan na nagmumula sa langit.*

*Ipinapanalangin din po namin ang aming minamahal na bayan, lalo na ang aming mga kababayan na kasalukuyan ay may pinagdadaanan. Yakapin Mo po sila ng Iyong pagmamahal. Tulungan po Ninyo kami na matulungan sila at sa Iyong mga kamay ay aming ibinibigay ang lahat-lahat sa amin.*

*Pagpalain Mo ang bawat isa sa amin maging ang bawat kapamilya na nirepresent ng bawat isa sa amin.*

*At muli, O Diyos, sa Iyo namin ibinabalik ang lahat ng papuri, pasasalamat, sa tanging Pangalan ng aming Panginoong Hesus, Ang lahat ay makiisa at magsabi ng Amen.*



**NATIONAL ANTHEM**

Everybody remained standing for the singing of the national anthem.

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

With 19 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senators Gordon, Hontiveros, Pimentel and Recto arrived after the roll call.

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

**DEFERMENT OF THE JOURNAL**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body deferred the consideration and approval of the Journal of Session No. 64 (May 11 to 13, 2020) to a later hour.

**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. 1531, entitled

AN ACT DEFINING THE OFFENSES OF DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS AND INDISCRIMINATE FIRING OF FIREARMS AND PROVIDING STIFFER PENALTIES THEREFOR,

AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSES ARTICLE 254 OF ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED PENAL CODE, AND REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10591, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE COMPREHENSIVE FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION REGULATION ACT

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

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

Senate Bill No. 1532, entitled

AN ACT PRESERVING THE INDIGENOUS GAMES IN THE PHILIPPINES

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committees on Basic Education, Arts and Culture; and Sports**

Senate Bill No. 1533, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11332, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE MANDATORY REPORTING OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES AND HEALTH OF PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN ACT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

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

Senate Bill No. 1534, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS FOR HEALTH WORKERS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Finance**

**RESOLUTIONS**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 405, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, COMMERCE, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT A HEARING, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON PHILIPPINE TRADE, COMMERCE, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND THE POSSIBLE WAYS TO “RESTART” THE ECONOMY DURING AND AFTER THE “COVID-19 ERA”

Introduced by Senator Pimentel III

**To the Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; and Economic Affairs**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 406, entitled

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND SYMPATHY AND SINCERE CONDOLENCES OF THE SENATE ON THE DEATH OF HONORABLE MARIA TERESA “TESSIE” AQUINO ORETA, FORMER SENATOR (1998-2004), FORMER MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (1987-1998), AND THE FIRST WOMAN ASSISTANT MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Introduced by Senators Sotto III, Lacson, Gordon, Cayetano, Pacquiao, Revilla, Jr., Binay, Lapid, Zubiri, Villanueva, Angara, Recto, Tolentino, Villar, Dela Rosa, Marcos, Go, De Lima, Gatchalian, Drilon and Poe

**To the Committee on Rules**

**COAUTHORS**

At this juncture, Senate President Sotto said that Senator Pangilinan and all the other senators are coauthors of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 406.

**APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 1354 ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, Senate Bill No. 1354, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on May 14, 2020.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rules XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, Secretary Villarica read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLES 183 AND 184 OF ACT NO. 3815, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE REVISED PENAL CODE.

Secretary Villarica called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

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

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 20 senators present voting in favor, none against, and no abstention, the Chair declared Senate Bill No. 1354 approved on Third Reading.

**EXPLANATION OF VOTE OF SENATOR LACSON**

Senator Lacson explained his vote as follows:

I voted in favor of the measure with very



strong reservations because of the following reasons:

1. A solemn oath - to tell truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth - is exactly what it is - SOLEMN. To desecrate the solemnity of that oath and worse, with the deliberate and evil purpose of destroying other people's lives whom they could have succeeded in putting away for the rest of their lives by their lies, thus denying them the basic and sacred right to freedom, is most detestable.
2. The penalty equivalent to the punishment for a crime after a perjured witness or accuser has executed under oath a sworn statement or testimony on its material points that maliciously intends to accomplish is what my version of the bill is all about. Needless to say, it is my bill's essence and main purpose.

You may want to ask, "Is this personal to me?" You bet it is.

Having said that, I hope none among the present members of this Senate of the 18<sup>th</sup> Congress will someday experience what I had endured for nine long and tortuous years while serving as a duly elected senator of the Republic, based on perjured sworn statements from characters obviously suborned by malevolent officials in the highest echelons of the government bureaucracy.

I can only pray that fate will not bring you there. But if and when it comes to that, I am afraid we will look back and regret why we did not vote on this issue.

3. During our committee hearing presided by the honorable chair of the Committee on Justice and Human Rights and sponsor of the measure, and attended by this Representation and another distinguished colleague, Sen. Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa, last February 12, 2020, at exactly 1:08 p.m., of which Page 5 of the transcript, I would like to share with the rest of our colleagues. At least two of our main resource persons, Judge Felix Reyes, president of the Philippine Judges Association, and Assistant Secretary Nicolas Felix Ty, representing the DOJ, were asked by the Chair if the proposed penalty under my bill would fall under the so-called "cruel and unusual punishment" and, therefore, may face constitutional challenge. Please allow me to quote verbatim what they had to say:

"MR. REYES. It is very expensive to secure the services of a private counsel. Well, the penalty is very, very low, Your Honor.

"THE CHAIRPERSON. Right. Atty. Ty, do you share the same?"

"MR. TY: Yes Your Honor, we share the same sentiment. But in the opinion we submitted to this Committee, our focal point was mostly just the constitutionality and the legality of the bill, and insofar as that is concerned, we have no objection. When it comes to increasing the penalty, we believe that is left to the wisdom of the Senate.

"THE CHAIRPERSON. It will not fall into unusual and cruel punishment?"

"MR. TY. It will definitely not, Your Honor.

On page 6,

"CHAIRPERSON. That is right."

It is for these reasons and more that while I voted in favor of the measure, I am consoling myself with a thought that I am settling for second best in supporting the passage of the measure although with very strong reservations.

#### EXPLANATION OF VOTE OF SENATOR REVILLA

Senator Revilla submitted his explanation of his affirmative vote, to wit:

As a coauthor of the said measure in its original version as reported under Committee Report No. 49, I fully agree with the provisions introduced therein by the good sponsor. In particular, I support the imposition to the perjured witness of the penalty similar to the penalty of the crime that he or she incriminated or imputed another person with. I believe that this is a strong deterrent to the commission of false testimony or perjury which victimized many, including officials in various branches of our government.

This provision, however, was eventually deleted during the period of amendments in plenary debates. With this, I believe that the proposed law lost an integral part that could have potentially strengthened our justice system.

I believe in the noble intent of the measure and I submit to the wisdom of the Chamber; hence my affirmative vote with reservation to the passage of the said measure.

#### CHANGE OF COMMITTEE REFERRAL

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair referred Senate Bills Nos. 1403

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and 1374 (ABS-CBN franchise), which were referred to the Committee on Rules, to the Committee on Public Services as the primary committee.

#### **PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 406**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 406, entitled

**RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND SYMPATHY AND SINCERE CONDOLENCES OF THE SENATE ON THE DEATH OF HONORABLE MARIA TERESA "TESSIE" AQUINO ORETA, FORMER SENATOR (1998-2004), FORMER MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (1987-1998), AND THE FIRST WOMAN ASSISTANT MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.**

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.

*At this juncture, Senate President Sotto relinquished the Chair to Senator Lacson.*

Thereupon, the Chair recognized Senate President Sotto for the sponsorship.

#### **SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATE PRESIDENT SOTTO**

Senate President Sotto delivered his sponsorship speech on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 406 as follows:

These past months two former senators left the stage of life and politics. Last month it was a respectable leader and good friend, Senator Sonny Alvarez; now, another dear friend, a strong woman legislator, Sen. Maria Teresa "Tessie" Aquino Oreta.

My family and I are so saddened by her demise. She was very close to me and Sec. Gregorio Honasan—she was like a sister to us—and in fact to some other members of the Senate now who are also close to Senator Tessie.

I will remember her as a very passionate and strong woman legislator whose advocacies

focused on empowering women and children through landmark legislations like the Solo Parent Act and the Early Childhood Care and Development Act, just to name a few.

Sen. Maria Teresa "Tessie" Aquino Oreta's penned legislations had likewise aimed at improving the country's educational system as she believes that "Education is the key to the improvement of the quality of life of Filipinos." The Philippine Science Highschool System Act and Governance of Basic Education Act are some of her bills that were enacted into law.

Not only had she supported education, Senator Tessie also sought to improve the employment status, working conditions, and welfare benefits of public school teachers. As what she has often said, "I want to take care of the teacher so that the teacher in turn will take care of our children so, in turn, our children will take care of the future of the country."

One's legacy upon death is not dependent on the eloquence of those who will deliver eulogies, for it would be dangerous to rely on orators to make a verdict on how a life was lived.

One's life is the best speech about one's self.

Truly, Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta had demonstrated to us that a life as public servant is a life well-lived.

To our dear Tessie, you are a great friend, a mother, grandmother and a dedicated public servant. You will be missed. Rest in peace in the arms of our Lord.

#### **SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

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

*It was 1:51 p.m.*

#### **RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 1:51 p.m., the session was resumed with Senate President Sotto presiding.

#### **COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA**

Senator Villanueva delivered his cosponsorship speech as follows:

With heavy hearts, we express our sympathy and condolences on the death of a former senator

*PH*

of the land, Honorable Tessie Aquino-Oreta. She was a legislator for 17 straight years. She served the people of Malabon and Navotas for 11 years as their representative. She was also a senator of the Republic for six years. Soon after the 1986 EDSA Revolution, it was quite a feat for a woman of her time to be elected in the legislature. On her first term, she became Assistant Majority Leader, the first woman to hold that post in the history of the Lower House.

Her victory in the 1998 senatorial race would eventually become a feat for the country's education sector.

As chairperson of the Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture, she advanced legislative landmarks that increased the momentum of reforms in the post-EDCOM Philippine educational system. Among these laws is Republic Act No. 9155, or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 that transformed DECS into what is now the DepEd.

Nothing compares with her love for our teachers. In 1999, she spearheaded the Project TAO, said to be the most comprehensive survey of its kind involving about 420,000 teachers nationwide. The project revealed situations besetting public school teachers. The survey result served as the compass for many educational reforms at that time.

In 2009, as if to fulfill her destiny as an education reformist, she was appointed chairperson with a cabinet rank of the then newly-created ECCD Council. During her stint as ECCD chairperson, she wasted no time advocating for early childhood care. She took definitive actions to help unlock the minds of Filipino children ages zero to six.

Her initials are "TAO." It symbolizes her legacies as a public servant in the over two decades of public life, the causes that she believed in and chose to fight for speak in volumes. They evidence how she put the *tao* at the forefront. The Filipinos, especially women and children, are at the center of her public service.

I experienced how Tita Tessie — Senator Tessie — loved the Filipino people. I bear witness to it. She used to invite us to her house when I was a neophyte congressman together with other partylist representatives, and I am sure the Senate President, Tito Sotto, and Sen. Greg Honasan would remember that.

She endlessly talked passionately on issues close to her heart. Especially dear to her were matters of education and how families can

benefit from it. She often said that "education is the lifeblood of the family."

What she meant is crystal clear to me right now, having been in TESDA for a while and as current chairperson of the Committee on Higher, Technical and Vocational Education.

I have no doubt former Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta left an indelible mark. She bequeathed our nation with a legacy that will make us proud Filipinos.

*Tita Tessie, maraming salamat po. May you rest in peace.*

## **COSPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR PACQUIAO**

Senator Pacquiao joined the entire Senate of the Philippines in honoring former Sen. Maria Teresa Aquino-Oreta who passed away on May 14, 2020 at the age of 75. He said that as they mourned her death, they were also celebrating her legacy. He expressed his full support for Proposed Senate Resolution No. 406 expressing the Senate's profound sympathy and sincere condolences on the death of one of the strong advocates of education, women and children, livelihood and employment, among others, Sen. Aquino-Oreta.

Senator Pacquiao ended his speech offering his prayers of God's comfort and strength to her husband and their children, as well as to their relatives and friends.

## **ADOPTION OF PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 406**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 406 was adopted by the Body.

## **SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Following Senate tradition and as a sign of respect and honor to the legacy of the late Senator Tessie Aquino-Oreta, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the session was suspended until 1:30 in the afternoon of Tuesday, May 19, 2020.

*It was 1:58 p.m.*

## **RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 1:30 p.m. of Tuesday, May 19, the session was resumed with Senate President Sotto presiding.

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

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

**BILL ON FIRST READING**

Senate Bill No. 1535, entitled

AN ACT ENCOURAGING A BASELINE POLYMERASE CHAIN REACTION COVID-19 TESTING FOR VULNERABLE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY FOR THE PURPOSE OF INTERCEPTING COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

Introduced by Senator Angara

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

**RESOLUTIONS**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 407, entitled

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO THE DOMESTIC DISSEMINATION OF FOREIGN PROPAGANDA THROUGH PHILIPPINE PUBLIC RADIO BROADCASTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Introduced by Senator Hontiveros

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

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 408, entitled

RESOLUTION HONORING THE COUNTRY'S FALLEN FRONTLINE HEALTHCARE WORKERS AND EXPRESSING THE PROFOUND CONDOLENCES OF THE STATE

Introduced by Senator Binay

**To the Committee on Rules**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 409, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE TO

CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, TO DETERMINE THE BUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT TO UTILIZE INNOVATIVE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND ACCELERATE THE BUILDUP OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE TOWARDS IMPROVING GOVERNANCE, SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROMPT DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

Introduced by Senator Angara

**To the Committee on Finance**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 410, entitled

RESOLUTION URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS AND THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPOSING AND COLLECTING TAXES FROM MULTINATIONAL ONLINE STREAMING SERVICES AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY IN GENERAL

Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.

**To the Committee on Ways and Means**

**REMINDER OF SENATOR ZUBIRI**

Senator Zubiri reminded the members of the Body who were in teleconferencing that afternoon to log out of the Webex link as it is only for the regular sessions on the floor, and to open a new link that was emailed by the Senate EDP to get online to the Committee of the Whole hearing.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, the session was suspended to allow the Body to convene as a Committee of the Whole as earlier constituted.

*It was 1:33 p.m.*



## RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 9:40 p.m. of Thursday, May 21, 2020, the session was resumed.

## CHANGE OF REFERRALS

Upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair referred Senate Bill Nos. 66, 319, 332, and 948, which were originally referred to the Committee on Rules, instead to the Committee on Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking as the primary committee, and to the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change as secondary committee. In line with the same motion, the Chair also referred Senate Bill No. 66 to the Committee on Finance as the tertiary committee.

Thereafter, upon motion of Senator Zubiri, there being no objection, the Chair approved the change of referral of Senate Bill Nos. 285 and 1518 from the Committee on Public Services to the Committee on Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking as the primary committee.

Senator Zubiri also manifested that the aforementioned bills would retain the Committee on Public Works as the secondary committee, with the Committee on Finance as the tertiary committee.

## MANIFESTATION OF SENATE PRESIDENT SOTTO

At this juncture, Senate President Sotto manifested that last Tuesday, May 19, 2020, the Senate

suspended its session to give way to the holding of the first hearing of the Committee of the Whole.

## MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Senator Zubiri thanked the other members and, in particular, Senate President Sotto for his hard work in hosting the Committee of the Whole.

## 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, May 26, 2020.

*It was 9:43 p.m.*

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.



**ATTY. MYRA MARIE D. VILLARICA**

*Secretary of the Senate*



Approved on May 26, 2020