



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Senate
Pasay City

Journal

SESSION NO. 9
Wednesday, August 10, 2022

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION

Prepared by the
LEGISLATIVE JOURNAL SERVICE
Senate of the Philippines

SESSION NO. 9
Wednesday, August 10, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

At 3:01 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Juan Miguel F. Zubiri, called the session to order.

PRAYER

Sen. Win Gatchalian led the prayer, to wit:

Dakilang Diyos, salamat po sa araw na ito na ipinagkaloob Mo.

Maraming salamat po sa oportunidad na magkaisa kaming mga mambabatas upang maisulong ang mga adhikain para sa ikauunlad ng aming bansa.

Patuloy Mo po kaming gabayan, Panginoon, upang marinig ang boses ng aming mga kababayan at aksyonan ang kanilang mga pangangailangan. Sa ganitong paraan, mamumuhay ang lahat nang masaya, ligtas, at maginhawa.

We humbly ask for grace, strength, and wisdom as we legislators make decisions and lead our countrymen, most especially now that we are faced with calamities and crises affecting public health and our economy.

We pray that by Your amazing grace, the increasing cases of COVID-19 come to an end. We also claim the healing and recovery of our *kababayans* who have been infected.

May Your wisdom be upon the global leaders and health experts in containing the spread of COVID-19 and the monkeypox disease.

By faith, we are confident in Your power and glorious Name. Our beloved nation and the whole world will overcome this. May Your Word serve as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path in today's session.

This is our prayer in Christ's Name.

Amen.



ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Senate President, the Secretary of the Senate, Atty. Renato N. Bantug Jr., called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Angara, S. | Marcos, I. R.* |
| Binay, M. L. N. S. | Padilla, R. C. |
| Cayetano, A. P. C. S.* | Pimentel III, A. K. |
| Cayetano, P. S. | Poe, G. |
| Dela Rosa, R. B. M. | Revilla Jr., R. B. |
| Ejercito, J. V. G. | Tolentino, F. T. N. |
| Estrada, J. | Tulfo, R. T. |
| Gatchalian, W. | Villanueva, J. |
| Go, C. L. T. | Villar, C. A.* |
| Hontiveros, R. | Villar, M. A. |
| Legarda, L. | Zubiri, J. M. F. |

With 19 senators physically present and three senators virtually present, or a total of 22 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senator Lapid arrived after the roll call.

Senator Escudero was on official business.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the *Journal* of Session No. 7 (August 8, 2022) and considered it approved.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

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

- Mayor Irene Maniquis-Biñan, Board Member Jun Rundstedt “Rundy” Ebdane, Councilors Margie Maniquiz-Noveno, and Isagani Yap of Iba, Zambales;
- Mayor Celsa Rivera, Vice Mayor Micko Rivera, and the LGU officials of Padre Garcia, Batangas;
- PNP Chief Rodolfo Azurin Jr. and the entire PNP contingent; and
- Mayor Jose Nelson “Tata” Sala of Davao del Sur.

Senate President Zubiri welcomed the guests to the Senate.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 3:05 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 3:15 p.m., the session was resumed.

*Senators Cayetano (A), Marcos and Villar (C) attended the session online because of exposure to COVID-19.

DEFERMENT OF APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Body deferred the consideration and approval of the *Journal* of Session No. 8 (August 9, 2022).

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. 401, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING FINANCING PROGRAM, PROVIDING FOR THE ANNUAL AUTOMATIC APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

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

Senate Bill No. 402, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A MANDATORY BASIC MILITARY AND POLICE TRAINING PROGRAM IN ALL SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVELS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

To the Committees on Basic Education, Arts and Culture; National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 403, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL HOSPITAL FOR TEACHERS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS, CONVERTING THE EAST AVENUE MEDICAL CENTER IN DILIMAN, QUEZON CITY, INTO THE NATIONAL TEACHERS MEDICAL CENTER, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

To the Committees on Health and Demography; Basic Education, Arts and Culture; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 404, entitled

AN ACT RENAMING THE BENHAM RISE AS "PHILIPPINE RISE" OR "TALAMPAS NG PILIPINAS," NAMING THE UNDERSEA FEATURES THEREIN, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

To the Committees on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change; and Foreign Relations



Senate Bill No. 405, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE MANDATORY USE OF THE NAMES "WEST PHILIPPINE SEA" OR "KANLURANG DAGAT NG PILIPINAS" TO REFER TO THE MARINE AREAS ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

To the Committee on Foreign Relations

Senate Bill No. 406, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING INCENTIVES TO PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES ENGAGED IN THE DOMESTIC MANUFACTURE OF PEDIATRIC VACCINES AND MEDICINES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 109 OF THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1997, AS AMENDED

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

To the Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 407, entitled

AN ACT EXPANDING THE BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM, INCREASING THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BUREAU OF LEARNING DELIVERY UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO INCLUDE DISTANCE EDUCATION AND ONLINE LEARNING, THEREBY AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10533, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "ENHANCED BASIC EDUCATION ACT OF 2013," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

To the Committees on Basic Education, Arts and Culture; and Higher, Technical and Vocational Education

Senate Bill No. 408, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991," BY EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS' POWER OVER LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Tolentino

To the Committees on Local Government; and Public Services

Senate Bill No. 409, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MODERNIZATION AND CAPABILITY ENHANCEMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill No. 410, entitled

AN ACT MODERNIZING THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, EXPANDING, RATIONALIZING AND FURTHER PROFESSIONALIZING ITS ORGANIZATION, UPGRADING THE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS OF ITS OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Marcos

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

Senate Bill No. 411, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS UNIFIED INITIATIVES TO DISTRESSED ENTERPRISES FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY (GUIDE)

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committees on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies; Government Corporations and Public Enterprises; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 412, entitled

AN ACT TO PROMOTE REFORESTATION AND TO INCREASE WOOD PRODUCTION THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TREE GROWING AGREEMENT

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committees on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 413, entitled

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE FOREST CADASTRE, PROVIDING FOR ITS PROCEDURES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committees on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 414, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11165, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "TELECOMMUTING ACT," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 415, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 194, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "AUTHORIZING ALIENS, AS WELL AS ASSOCIATIONS, CORPORATIONS OR

PARTNERSHIPS OWNED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY FOREIGNERS TO ENGAGE IN THE RICE AND CORN INDUSTRY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,” AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; and Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship

Senate Bill No. 416, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 5 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 4726 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “THE CONDOMINIUM ACT,” AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement

Senate Bill No. 417, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8550 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “THE PHILIPPINE FISHERIES CODE OF 1998,” AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform

Senate Bill No. 418, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6938, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE “COOPERATIVE CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES,” AS AMENDED AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Marcos

To the Committee on Cooperatives

Senate Bill No. 419, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING THE MAGNA CARTA OF BENEFITS FOR THE OFFICERS AND PERSONNEL OF THE PHILIPPINE DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

Introduced by Senator Go

To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 420, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR RURAL EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Go

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

Senate Bill No. 421, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING AN EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEM,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Go

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

Senate Bill No. 422, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO ANY OFFICER OR ENLISTED PERSONNEL
OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL
POLICE ON ANY CHARGE BEFORE THE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE, COURT OR ANY
COMPETENT BODY ARISING FROM AN INCIDENT OR INCIDENTS RELATED TO THE
PERFORMANCE OF OFFICIAL DUTY

Introduced by Senator Go

**To the Committees on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; Public
Order and Dangerous Drugs; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 423, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL GAMES AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Go

To the Committees on Sports; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 424, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING THE "ONE TOWN, ONE PRODUCT" CONCEPT TO ENHANCE
INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Go

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

Senate Bill No. 425, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE INSURANCE COMMISSION AND REORGANIZING IT INTO
A COLLEGIAL BODY, AMENDING PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 612, AS AMENDED,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE INSURANCE CODE"

Introduced by Senator Go

To the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies

Senate Bill No. 426, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A NATIONAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND
FINANCING PROGRAM, REGULARIZING ITS APPROPRIATION FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION



Introduced by Senator Go

To the Committees on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement; Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 427, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE APPOINTMENT OF BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS IN BARANGAYS, PROVIDING FOR THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Go

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

Senate Bill No.428, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND SUPPORT OF A DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION CENTER IN EVERY PROVINCE THROUGHOUT THE PHILIPPINES AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Go

To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; Health and Demography; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 429, entitled

AN ERADICATING MOBILE PHONE, INTERNET OR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION-AIDED CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES, MANDATING FOR THIS PURPOSE OWNERSHIP REGISTRATION OF ALL SUBSCRIBER IDENTITY MODULE (SIM) CARDS FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

To the Committees on Public Services; and Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship

Senate Bill No. 430, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A MAGNA CARTA OF TRICYCLE DRIVERS AND OPERATORS, INSTITUTIONALIZING MECHANISMS FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

To the Committees on Public Services; and Local Government

Senate Bill No. 431, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE RANK CLASSIFICATION AND ORGANIZATION OF KEY POSITIONS IN THE BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION (BFP) AND BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY (BJMP), AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9263 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "BUREAU OF FIRE PROTECTION AND BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY PROFESSIONALIZATION ACT OF 2004," AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9592 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 432, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING INCENTIVE ALLOWANCE TO PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO ARE ASSIGNED OUTSIDE OF THEIR CITIES, MUNICIPALITIES, AND PROVINCES APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

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

Senate Bill No. 433, entitled

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

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

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

Senate Bill No. 434, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE APPOINTMENT OF BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS IN BARANGAYS, PROVIDING FOR THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

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

Senate Bill No. 435, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR SECURITY OF TENURE FOR ALL CASUAL AND CONTRACTUAL EMPLOYEE OF THE GOVERNMENT WHO HAVE RENDERED THE PRESCRIBED YEARS OF SERVICE IN THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

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

Senate Bill No. 436, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL TO USE A BODY-WORN CAMERA DURING LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 437, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT TO INSTALL CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV) CAMERAS IN THEIR PLACE OF BUSINESS AS A MEANS TO DETER CRIME

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

To the Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; and Public Order and Dangerous Drugs

Senate Bill No. 438, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE DEPARTMENT OF DISASTER RESILIENCE, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Dela Rosa

To the Committees on National Defense and Security, Peace, Unification and Reconciliation; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 439, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE "BUILD! BUILD! BUILD! PROGRAM"

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

To the Committees on Economic Affairs; and Public Works; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 440, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL CANCER CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

To the Committees on Health and Demography; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 441, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING ALL BARANGAY OFFICIALS, INCLUDING BARANGAY TANODS AND MEMBERS OF THE LUPON NG TAGAPAMAYAPA, A LUMP SUM GRATUITY PAY AND OTHER BENEFITS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 393 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

To the Committees on Local Government; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 442, entitled

AN ACT PENALIZING DISCRIMINATORY ACTIONS BASED ON GENDER IDENTITY OR EXPRESSION AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

To the Committees on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality; and Finance



Senate Bill No. 443, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING FREE ON-SITE LIVING FACILITIES FOR PUBLIC TEACHERS,
PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

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

Senate Bill No. 444, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF AT LEAST ONE REGISTERED NURSE FOR
EVERY BARANGAY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

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

Senate Bill No. 445, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING ALL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO INDICATE THE BLOOD TYPE OF
ALL INDIVIDUALS IN ALL IDENTIFICATION CARDS, CERTIFICATES, AND LICENSES

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and
Professional Regulation; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 446, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING ALL GOVERNMENT OFFICES TO USE RENEWABLE ENERGY,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Villar (M)

**To the Committees on Energy; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regula-
tion; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 447, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTING BUDGET REFORM THAT WILL ENSURE THE EQUITABLE
DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS AMONG THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS
FOR THE PURPOSE OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR,
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Padilla

To the Committees on Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 448, entitled

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A NURSING HOME FOR SENIOR CITIZENS AND APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR



Introduced by Senator Padilla

To the Committees on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 449, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING CIVIL UNIONS OF SAME SEX COUPLES, ESTABLISHING THEIR RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Padilla

To the Committees on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality; and Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 450, entitled

AN ACT PROTECTING THE WELFARE OF WORKERS OR INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS IN THE FILM, TELEVISION, AND RADIO ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Introduced by Senator Padilla

To the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Public Information and Mass Media

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 451, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE INCLUSION OF PHILIPPINE HISTORY AS A SEPARATE SUBJECT IN THE HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Introduced by Senator Padilla

To the Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture

Senate Bill No. 452, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING SEPTEMBER 21 OF EVERY YEAR AS SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY TO BE KNOWN AS "UNSUNG HEROES DAY"

Introduced by Senator Padilla

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

Senate Bill No. 453, entitled

AN ACT POSTPONING THE DECEMBER 2022 BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada



To the Committees on Electoral Reforms and People's Participation; Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 454, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE ESTABLISHMENT, MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE, AND REGULATION OF A RAIN WATER HARVESTING FACILITY IN ALL NEW INSTITUTIONAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN METRO MANILA

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Public Works

Senate Bill No. 455, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE E-GOVERNMENT, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Science and Technology; and Public Information and Mass Media

Senate Bill No. 456, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING GREATER RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FROM PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10361, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "BATAS KASAMBAHAY"

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 457, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE INSPECTION FUNCTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6727, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE WAGE RATIONALIZATION ACT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 458, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING ARTICLE 123 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, BY REQUIRING THE REGIONAL BOARD TO ISSUE A WAGE ORDER EVERY YEAR OR AN EXPLANATION FOR NOT ISSUING SUCH WAGE ORDER

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development



Senate Bill No. 459, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE OF THE PRESCRIBED INCREASES AND ADJUSTMENTS IN THE WAGE RATES OF WORKERS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6727, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "WAGE RATIONALIZATION ACT," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 460, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS FOR THE WORKERS AND TALENTS IN THE MOVIE AND TELEVISION INDUSTRY

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 461, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING ENHANCED PROTECTION, SECURITY AND BENEFITS FOR MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT WORKERS

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Public Information and Mass Media

Senate Bill No. 462, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE ARCHIPELAGIC SEA LANES IN THE PHILIPPINE ARCHIPELAGIC WATERS, PRESCRIBING THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF FOREIGN SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT EXERCISING THE RIGHT OF ARCHIPELAGIC SEA LANES PASSAGE THROUGH THE ESTABLISHED ARCHIPELAGIC SEA LANES, AND PROVIDING FOR THE ASSOCIATED PROTECTED MEASURES THEREIN

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Foreign Relations; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 463, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A RENTAL SUBSIDY PROGRAM FOR INFORMAL SETTLER FAMILIES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement; Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 464, entitled

AN ACT ENSURING THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF BUSINESS PROCESS OUTSOURCING (BPO) WORKERS AND OTHER SIMILARLY SITUATED PROFESSIONALS

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development

Senate Bill No. 465, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A MULTIPURPOSE GYM IN ALL MUNICIPALITIES AND CITIES TO SERVE AS EVACUATION CENTER DURING TIMES OF CALAMITY OR DISASTER AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Public Works; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 466, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE AGRICULTURE INFORMATION SYSTEM IN ALL CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; Local Government; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 467, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION MECHANISM IN THE PHILIPPINES, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9147, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "WILDLIFE RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION ACT," PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change; Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 468, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE CITIZEN ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES, REINSTITUTING FOR THE PURPOSE A MANDATORY RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS (ROTC) PROGRAM IN THE CURRICULUM OF ALL UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE, DIPLOMA, CERTIFICATE OR TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TERTIARY-LEVEL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

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

Senate Bill No. 469, entitled

AN ACT TO PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO UNDERTAKE RENTAL RESIDENTIAL HOUSING AT RATES AFFORDABLE TO LOW AND MIDDLE-INCOME FAMILIES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement; Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; and Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 470, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING ANTI-DRUG ABUSE COUNCILS IN EVERY PROVINCE, CITY, AND MUNICIPALITY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; and Local Government

Senate Bill No. 471, entitled

AN ACT ENABLING BANKS TO EXPAND SERVICE DELIVERY CHANNELS THROUGH CASH AGENTS AND PROVIDING GUIDELINES THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committee on Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies

Senate Bill No. 472, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SAFE PATHWAYS NETWORK OF BICYCLE LANES AND SLOW STREETS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Estrada

To the Committees on Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking; Public Works; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 473, entitled

AN ACT RENAMING THE LITERACY COORDINATING COUNCIL TO THE NATIONAL LITERACY COUNCIL, STRENGTHENING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, STREAMLINING ITS MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE, PROVIDING ITS LOCAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7165, AS AMENDED, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

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

Senate Bill No. 474, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE PROVISION OF ONE LAPTOP FOR EVERY LEARNER ENROLLED UNDER K TO 12 PROGRAM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, ESCALATING THE

PROVISION OF RELIABLE AND SECURE INTERNET CONNECTION FOR THE USE OF SUCH LAPTOPS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committees on Basic Education, Arts and Culture; Science and Technology; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 475, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING A NATIONAL READING MONTH IN NOVEMBER OF EVERY YEAR, PROVIDING FOR MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE INCULCATION OF A CULTURE OF READING IN BASIC EDUCATION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

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

Senate Bill No. 476, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC MATH AND SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOLS IN PREVIOUSLY UNDERSERVED AREAS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

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

Senate Bill No. 477, entitled

AN ACT DIGITIZING ALL BOOKS NECESSARY FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION AND ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE ONLINE LIBRARY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

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

Senate Bill No. 478, entitled

AN ACT MANDATING THE AUTOMATION OF A NATIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOL DATABASE

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Basic Education, Arts and Culture

Senate Bill No. 479, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING THE COMPLETION OF AN ECONOMICS AND PERSONAL FINANCE ('EPF') LITERACY COURSE AS AN ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY, TERTIARY, AND TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL GRADUATION REQUIREMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS, LOCAL UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES, STATE AND PRIVATE COLLEGES



AND UNIVERSITIES, AND TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS AND CENTERS, MANDATING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EPF TEACHERS, TEACHING FINANCIAL LITERACY TO EPF PARTNERS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

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

Senate Bill No. 480, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY MABCA, MUNICIPALITY OF SAGNAY, PROVINCE OF CAMARINES SUR TO BE KNOWN AS THE MABCA NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill No. 481, entitled

AN ACT CONVERTING THE HIBAO-AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN BARANGAY HIBAO-AN SUR, MANDURRAO DISTRICT, ILOILO CITY INTO AN INTEGRATED SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS THE HIBAO-AN INTEGRATED SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill No. 482, entitled

AN ACT SEPARATING THE VITALI NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL – SINOROPAN ANNEX IN BARANGAY LICOMO, ZAMBOANGA CITY FROM THE VITALI NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS SINOROPAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Rules

Senate Bill No. 483, entitled

AN ACT ENHANCING THE COMPETITIVE SELECTION PROCESS FOR POWER SUPPLY AGREEMENTS IN THE ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Energy

Senate Bill No. 484, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING REFORMS IN THE COMPETITIVE SELECTION PROCESS OF POWER SUPPLY AGREEMENTS FOR THE CAPTIVE MARKET OF ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR



Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Energy

Senate Bill No. 485, entitled

AN ACT ENHANCING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NET-METERING PROGRAM,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9513, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE
RENEWABLE ENERGY ACT OF 2008

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committee on Energy

Senate Bill No. 486, entitled

AN ACT REMOVING THE PUBLIC OFFERING REQUIREMENT OF GENERATION COMPANIES,
AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 43(T) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9136, OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS THE ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY REFORM ACT OF 2001

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

To the Committees on Energy; and Public Services

Senate Bill No. 487, entitled

AN ACT ENHANCING THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE ENERGY REGULATORY
COMMISSION

Introduced by Senator Gatchalian

**To the Committees on Energy; and Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional
Regulation**

Senate Bill No. 488, entitled

AN ACT DECLARING APRIL 7 EVERY YEAR AS BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS DAY TO
BE KNOWN AS BHW DAY

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Health and Demography; and Local Government

Senate Bill No. 489, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE VIROLOGY SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
INSTITUTE AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Science and Technology; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 490, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Legarda

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

Senate Bill No. 491, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR URBAN AND COUNTRYSIDE GREENING IN THE PHILIPPINES THROUGH MANDATORY TREE PLANTING AND ADOPTION OF A FOREST SANCTUARY BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Introduced by Senator Legarda

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

Senate Bill No. 492, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING PHILIPPINE PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS OF THE VENICE BIENNALE

Introduced by Senator Legarda

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

Senate Bill No. 493, entitled

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE FARM-TO-MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND PROVIDING FOR A SUSTAINED REGULAR FUNDING SUPPORT TO ACCELERATE ITS IMPLEMENTATION

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; Public Works; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 494, entitled

AN ACT CREATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT BUREAU (EPEB) UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DENR), PROVIDING FOR ITS POWER AND FUNCTIONS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 495, entitled

AN ACT EXEMPTING INCENTIVES, REWARDS, BONUSES, AND OTHER FORMS OF EMOLUMENTS RECEIVED BY THE NATIONAL ATHLETES AND COACHES FROM TAXES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10699, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL ATHLETES AND COACHES BENEFITS AND INCENTIVES ACT"



Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Sports; and Ways and Means

Senate Bill No. 496, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING ENHANCE PROTECTION, SECURITY, AND BENEFITS FOR MEDIA WORKERS

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Public Information and Mass Media

Senate Bill No. 497, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A FRAMEWORK TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Justice and Human Rights; Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 498, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE DEFENSE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Legarda

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

Senate Bill No. 499, entitled

AN ACT TO REVIVE THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY FOR A POST-COVID19 ECONOMY AND ENSURE THEIR TRANSITION TO A BETTER NORMAL

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; Ways and Means; and Finance

Senate Bill No. 500, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING EMERGENCY FOOD SUBSIDY TO EVERY POOR FILIPINO FAMILY AFFECTED BY THE QUARANTINE PROTOCOLS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Introduced by Senator Legarda

To the Committees on Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; and Finance.



SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, the session was suspended.

It was 3:38 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:55 p.m., the session was resumed.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva informed the Body regarding the discussions during the senators' caucus in the Senators' Lounge. He stated that due to the alarming increase of COVID-19 cases, the senators decided to tighten the Senate's health and safety protocols. In addition to the existing protocols, Senate President Zubiri enumerated the new guidelines which will be effective starting August 15, 2022, Monday, to wit:

1. The Senate will implement a lockdown for guests. No guests shall be received within the Senate premises for three weeks, except for resource persons which will be limited to two (2) per agency or organization. Other guests will be allowed to participate remotely.
2. The resource persons should present a negative RT-PCR test result (taken within 24 hours) with QR code or a negative antigen test result (taken within 12 hours) from any DOH-accredited facility. Self-administered test results without any valid certification shall not be accepted.
3. For committee hearings, each senator may be assisted by two (2) members of his or her staff, except the chairperson who can unilaterally determine the reasonable number of accompanying staff.
4. For session duties, the two (2) staff per senator rule will be retained.
5. The elevator shall implement a strict five-person limitation rule.

Disclosing that three Members of the chamber have recently tested positive for COVID-19, Senate President Zubiri asked for cooperation in ensuring and assuring the safety of everyone, especially of the senators and staff with comorbidities. He said that according to the DOH and OCTA Research, COVID-19 cases are expected to peak in the next two weeks and for that reason, the Senate wanted to provide a COVID-19 safety net for the next three weeks.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR CAYETANO (P)

Senator Cayetano (P) clarified that the lockdown does not mean that the Senate will not be holding sessions but rather, the lockdown only meant the limitation of the guests entering the Senate premises. She said that upon clarification with the medical bureau, the photographers in the gallery are not members of the press or media but are the personal photographers of the senators. She said that she only expressed concern that it appeared that there are a lot of people in the gallery.

REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Senate President Zubiri stressed that there will be plenary sessions and all senators are required to physically attend the sessions. However, he said that only senators who have tested positive for COVID-19, or who are exhibiting symptoms of the virus, or have close contact with confirmed COVID-19 cases will be allowed to avail of the hybrid system.

At this point, Senator Tolentino inquired whether the remarks of Senate President Zubiri would mean the revival of a resolution in the Eighteenth Congress which allowed the conduct of hybrid plenary sessions. Senate President Zubiri clarified that it was not a resolution but an amendment to the *Rules of the Senate*. He said that the Body will allow the hybrid sessions only for the specific circumstances which he mentioned earlier.



Senator Tolentino said that the reason for his inquiry was the constitutional provision which provides that there should only be one Senate sitting in one plenary.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Asked by Senator Pimentel whether the conduct of hybrid session is authorized by the *Rules of the Senate*, Senate President Zubiri replied in the affirmative, saying that the rule is found under Section 41.

Senator Pimentel asked whether it was by unanimous consent of the Body that the Senate is allowing the hybrid session under the particular circumstances stated by Senate President Zubiri such as when a member of the Body tested positive for COVID-19, has been exposed to a COVID positive person, or is exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19, Senate President Zubiri replied in the affirmative. However, he clarified that the rule applies when the Senate is in session and not only for the three weeks. He clarified that the heightened quarantine response with the moratorium on guests in the Senate shall apply for only three weeks.

INQUIRY OF SENATOR TOLENTINO

At this point Senator Tolentino reiterated whether the decision of the Senate to conduct hybrid sessions was done in consultation with the House of Representatives. Senate President Zubiri said that it was not necessary because each House is independent from the other with respect to its own rules.

Senator Tolentino said that he was referring to a constitutional provision which requires both Houses to consult each other if they would go into a different session or where the plenary session is not held in its session halls. He said he wanted to know whether the virtual session amounts to a non-compliance with the constitutional provision.

Senate President Zubiri said that upon consultation with the Secretariat, there is only one Senate conducting one session with some of its members participating online and it is compliant with the Constitution.

Senator Pimentel said that the constitutional provision regarding consulting the other House would only apply when the Senate would have to hold its session outside its normal venue or if the session is going to be extended for a few days longer than the other House as per the Legislative Calendar. He said that the provision mentioned by Senator Tolentino does not apply to the current situation which is covered under Section 41 of the *Rules of the Senate*.

Senator Villanueva emphasized that the *Rules* is not being changed but the Body has decided in caucus to limit the guests in the session hall for the next three weeks.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

Pursuant to Rule 10, Section 13 in relation to Section 18 of the *Rules of the Senate* upon nomination by Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the following senators were elected to the committees hereunder indicated:

COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

| | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| Chairperson | : | Tolentino |
| Vice Chairperson | : | Angara |
| <i>Members:</i> | | |
| Majority | : | Dela Rosa Padilla Ejercito Villar (M) Go Escudero |
| Minority | : | Hontiveros |

COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Chairperson : Padilla
Vice Chairperson : Marcos
Members:
Majority : Tolentino
Go
Dela Rosa
Angara
Minority : Hontiveros

Responding to the query of Senate President regarding the amendment of the name of the Committee on Cultural Communities to include Muslim Affairs, Senator Villanueva said that the resolution renaming the committee will be filed on Monday, August 15, 2022.

COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC OFFICERS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Chairperson : Tolentino
Vice Chairpersons : Dela Rosa
Go
Cayetano (A)
Members:
Majority : Cayetano (P)
Angara
Gatchalian
Revilla
Villar (M)
Estrada
Marcos
Tulfo
Ejercito
Poe
Lapid
Padilla
Minority : Hontiveros

COMMITTEE ON TRADE, COMMERCE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Chairperson : Villar (M)
Vice Chairpersons : Binay
Tulfo
Members:
Majority : Villar (C)
Dela Rosa
Gatchalian
Cayetano (P)
Go
Minority : Hontiveros

COMMITTEE ON BANKS, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CURRENCIES

Chairperson : Villar (M)

Vice Chairperson : Gatchalian
Angara

Members:

Majority : Villar (C)
Marcos
Cayetano (A)
Poe
Lapid

Minority : Hontiveros

COMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, INNOVATION AND FUTURES THINKING

Chairperson : Cayetano (P)

Members:

Majority : Cayetano (A)
Poe
Revilla
Gatchalian
Padilla
Villar (M)
Ejercito

Minority : Hontiveros

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE, GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

Chairperson : Revilla

Vice Chairperson : Cayetano (P)

Members:

Majority : Padilla
Gatchalian
Villar (C)
Tulfo

Minority : Hontiveros

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva manifested that Senator Legarda would submit her sponsorship speech on World Indigenous Peoples' Day for insertion into the *Journal and Record of the Senate*.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR TOLENTINO

Senator Tolentino associated himself with the privilege speech of Senator Legarda, noting that the United Nations has recognized 370 million indigenous peoples in 70 countries, and that the Philippines accounts for more than three million indigenous peoples.

REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Senate President Zubiri disclosed that he watches *Dayaw*, a documentary series hosted by Senator Legarda every night at 12:30 a.m., which is similar to watching the latter deliver a privilege speech about Philippine arts and culture.

Thereupon, Senator Villanueva recognized Senator Legarda to deliver her privilege speech in support of Senator Tolentino's manifestation.

PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR LEGARDA

Senator Legarda stated that she requested to have her privilege speech inserted into the *Journal and Record of the Senate* due to various concerns that the Members have to do after the plenary session; however, in view of the manifestation made by Senator Tolentino and the request of Senator Villanueva and Senate President Zubiri, she would instead deliver her speech on World Indigenous Peoples' Day.

In recognition of the National Indigenous Peoples Month, Senator Legarda delivered the following speech accompanied by a slide presentation:

August 9 marked a momentous day for indigenous peoples all over the world and in the Philippines because yesterday, we celebrated the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (IP) and the Philippine National IP Day.

Way back in 2015, we sponsored Republic Act No. 10689 in this Chamber, which declared August 9 as "National Indigenous Peoples Day," in recognition and protection of the rights and causes of the IPs across the country.

Pagkalipas ng pitong taon, labis ko pong ikinagagalak na makitang mas binigyan ng halaga ng ating mga kapwa Pilipino ang ating mga kapatid na katutubo.

Every day, we see more Filipinos transforming their traditional textiles and materials into beautiful contemporary pieces, such as clothing, furniture, artisan works, and art works. We also see an outpouring of public support for such creations. It is no secret that I, together with many of our colleagues, have a deep love and appreciation for the so-called tropical fabrics and native products. Indeed, today is a fitting recognition of our IPs who give meaning to our identity as Filipinos.

As we honor our IP brothers and sisters, the bearers of our cultural diversity and their overwhelming contribution to our rich arts, culture, and heritage, may we also be reminded of how far we still need to go.

Nararapat nating bigyang pansin ang mga pangangailangan ng ating mga katutubong Pilipino at bigyang lunas ang kanilang mga suliranin lalo na nga sa panahon ng pandemya.

There are 110 indigenous peoples groups in the Philippines, with each community possessing their own traditional knowledge and practices. More than expressing our appreciation for them, August 9 should serve as a constant reminder that we should provide the needed support for IPs to strengthen their part in nation building. It is also a timely reminder for us to craft and promote measures that benefit our IPs and value their rights as we continue to protect our cultural heritage amid the challenges of modernization.

The ways and means of our IPs may be considered "ancient" by some, compared to those of modern society, but everything that defines us as Filipinos is rooted in its creativity, resourcefulness, and passion of our forefathers.

For these reasons, we continue to advocate for policies and programs that would give respect, and recognition due to our IPs. We have the National Museum's Baybayin Gallery and the Manlilikha ng Bayan Gallery. We have dedicated efforts also in reviving the age-old tradition of weaving, creating the country's first permanent textile



gallery, Hibla ng Lahing Filipino, and the traveling exhibition before the pandemic to destinations like New York, San Francisco, Tokyo, Geneva, Singapore, by our weavers and some of our IPs.

We have also supported the Schools of Living Traditions (SLTs) as well as the documentation of indigenous and traditional practices.

As a legislator, we have jointly advocated for the strengthened protection of the rights and cultural heritage of our IPs.

Then in 2011, way back, we successfully organized regional assemblies in Baguio for the Luzon IPs; in Davao del Norte for the Mindanao IPs; in Iloilo for the Visayan IPs; and the First National Indigenous Cultural Summit that served as avenues for dialogue with local and national policymakers as well as international institutions.

As congresswoman of Antique, and we have indigenous peoples—we have the *Iraynon* Bukidnon; we have the *Atis* as well—we filed a resolution at that time, to protect their indigenous heritage but this was in relation to Cordillera garments that were counterfeited; fabrics from abroad that copied Cordillera fabrics. *Maski na po tayo ay representante ng Panay noon ay humingi ng tulong ng ating mga kapatid na taga-Benguet at sa Abra, at sa iba't ibang mga may katutubo na kinokopya ng bansa sa Asya ang kanilang mga disenyo ng walang paalam.*

In my return to the Senate this Nineteenth Congress, we have filed several measures—Senate Bill No. 831, which underscores the role of our indigenous communities as partners in the conservation and preservation of our protected areas within our ancestral domains. We have the “IP Resource Centers Bill” as well as Senate Bill No. 839 or the “Proposed Traditional Property Rights of IPs,” which seeks to support traditional artists and artisans by ensuring that their rights are safeguarded.

As a sign of gratitude for our work, the cultural communities of Mindanao, way back, adopted me as *Bae Matumpis*, which means literally, “the one who takes care.”

These are just a few of our strides in protecting and promoting the rights of our IPs, their culture, and their heritage. Despite these, there is still much to be done. Imagine how much more we can accomplish if we further prioritize programs and initiatives aimed in addressing the needs and issues of our indigenous communities.

That is why, as we honor the rich and vibrant culture of our IPs, I also urge each and every one of us to rise to the challenge and join me as *Bae Matumpis*.

Together, let us all be “the ones who take care.”

And I know that Bukidnon has a very rich IP culture as well and I have seen the Senate President and his father promote their indigenous peoples’ tangible and intangible heritage. The Bulacan IPs, the *Dumagats* and Aurora also has the *Dumagats*—I can go on and on as well as the Minority Leader’s province in Misamis Oriental has IPs as well. So, this is more than 110.

With that, I thank you for your patience, for your indulgence, and for listening to me once again.

REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Senate President Zubiri said that the Senate is always honored to listen to Senator Legarda’s speeches about her love for cultural arts and indigenous peoples because it makes the Philippines richer as a nation.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR DELA ROSA

Senator Dela Rosa commended and congratulated Senator Legarda not only for her moving speech, but more so for her deeds. Noting the folly of those who rely on words but fall short in action, he said that he admires Senator Legarda for walking her talk in fully supporting the country’s indigenous peoples, and remaining true to her advocacy with the hope that people would follow suit. He further expressed that he would strongly support measures and programs for the betterment of indigenous peoples.



Senator Legarda thanked Senators Dela Rosa and Tolentino for their manifestations of support.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR PADILLA

In agreeing with Senator Dela Rosa's statement that Senator Legarda walks her talk, Senator Padilla lauded the latter's love for the environment and passion to promote Filipino heritage and culture.

He remarked that love for Mother Nature signifies love for the indigenous peoples like the *Lumads*, who use their cultural and traditional beliefs to preserve and conserve mountains and oceans as it is akin to communicating with the Creator. By caring for and respecting the natural resources, he stated that they are ensured to enjoy a sustainable future.

Senator Legarda thanked Senator Padilla for his genuine and heartwarming message.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR TOLENTINO

To correct the unparliamentary procedure of enunciating his support before the actual privilege speech was delivered, Senator Tolentino reiterated his support to Senator Legarda's privilege speech, and stated for the *Record* that he would refile two bills from the previous Congress which would enable the IPs to enter the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) and the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA), irrespective of height and other requirements, as long as they are qualified to be members of the said institutions. He believed that the measure would give them an equal opportunity to serve as soldiers and policemen of the country.

Senator Legarda stated that at the proper time, she would ask to be a coauthor of Senator Tolentino's measure granting the indigenous peoples easier access to the PMA and the PNPA.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR HONTIVEROS

Prefatorily, Senator Hontiveros thanked Senator Legarda for her privilege speech.

Senator Hontiveros expressed confidence that Senator Legarda would empathize with the question she was about to ask because the latter understands that the culture of the indigenous people are not just decorations to them but are also rooted in their political and economic ways of life. She then inquired as to the current status of indigenous peoples in the Philippines in terms of the actual recognition of their right to express or provide Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) even to national government projects and programs. She likewise asked whether the indigenous peoples have been able to file Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADCs) and have been awarded Certificates of Ancestral Domain Titles (CADTs), two of the most important provisions of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA).

Senator Legarda responded by stating that the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act is already a decades-old law that should have been implemented in favor of the country's indigenous peoples, particularly on ancestral domain issues, which have been the source of much controversy in some jurisdictions locally. She also mentioned that the non-implementation of some of the IPRA Law's provisions has resulted in some violence in recent years, and suggested that the Body revisit such provisions that had not been implemented. She believed that the indigenous peoples' rights, as well as their culture, both tangible and intangible, should be protected, which is why she requested that her speech be referred to the Committee on Cultural Communities.

Furthermore, she stated that the IPs belong not only to their ancestral domain and the physical land, but also to the nature and environment in which they thrive—their caves, forests, and wetlands—all of which are protected under the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Law. She stated that there are still more conserved areas that need to be converted to protected areas under ENIPAS, particularly those populated by IPs.



With regard to the FPIC which has already been legislated, she questioned whether the FPIC provision of the IPRA is sufficient or whether the bill she filed on the protection of IPs' intellectual property is required, citing an incident in which the IPs felt slighted upon discovering that counterfeit designs of their textile were being sold in a Cordillera marketplace despite the lack of FPIC. She also brought up an issue that arose about a year or two ago involving an international vlogger who attempted to feature the traditional practice of tattooing by an elderly indigenous person in Kalinga. She stated that while the issue has already been resolved, she believes it occurred because there was no FPIC and the vlogger's group was unfamiliar with it as they attempted to document the tattooing tradition of Kalinga's Apo Whang-od, a respected and revered indigenous person. She admitted that the Body still has a long way to go in protecting the tangible and intangible heritage of the IPs, or all 110 ethnolinguistic groups in the country.

Stating that August 9 is the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples and is the Philippine National Indigenous Peoples' Day, she expressed regret that little to no attention is paid—even by the social media—to issues affecting the country's indigenous peoples. She believed that similar to the issue raised by Senator Padilla the day before on Sabah, issues involving the country's IPs are also worthy of the government's attention in the interest of the nation. She then invited Senator Hontiveros to join her in authoring the bill to strengthen the FPIC and the IPs' intellectual property rights.

Senator Hontiveros thanked Senator Legarda for bringing up the many issues concerning the country's IPs in her privilege speech. In response to the latter's statement that the country's IPs are embroiled in controversy when they assert their rights recognized by the IPRA, she hoped that the Senate could assist in the process of making more and more decisions in favor of the country indigenous peoples as stakeholders in national development.

At the intersection of the ENIPAS Law and the IPRA, she believed that there are protected areas that overlap with some ancestral domains that have already been claimed or are to be awarded CADT under the IPRA. She also revealed that she has introduced a bill seeking to provide concrete mechanisms that would ensure the protection of the rights of the country's IPs under IPRA and their declared protected areas.

As regards the FPIC, which is usually cited when development projects enter the ancestral domain of the IPs, she hoped that the senators from both the minority and majority blocs would express interest in investigating its implications, particularly on the IPs' intellectual property rights.

Finally, she agreed with Senator Legarda that the Body has a long way to go in terms of ensuring the protection of the IPs in the Philippines. She stated that while the country's indigenous peoples have remained patient as the government seeks ways to ensure that their rights are protected, she hoped that under the leadership of Senate President Zubiri, the Senate would step up even more to the task.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR TULFO

Manifesting his support for the privilege speech delivered by Senator Legarda, Senator Tulfo delivered the following statements:

Recently po, nakakatuwa na sumisikat na po at sinusuportahan ng ating mga kababayan ang mga likhang sining ng ating mga katutubo. Dito pa lamang po sa Senado, nakakatuwang makita ang pagsusuot ng mga lokal na likha ng mga naggagandahan nating kasamahan. Of course, nandiyan si Senator Cayetano (P), Senator Hontiveros, Senator Binay, Senator Marcos, Senator Poe and, of course, Sen. Loren "Ganda" Legarda. And anywhere you go, we see people proudly wearing and using goods inspired by the works of our indigenous peoples. Several commercial enterprises are diving into this trend. Ang inaalala ko po ay may sapat bang proteksyon ang intellectual property ng ating mga katutubo?



Alam ko po na mayroon tayong Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act, at may implementing rules and regulations na po dito. But it seems that there is no mention of a policy or framework on how our indigenous people or indigenous cultural communities are protected when it comes to the indigenous crafts that have inspired commercial products. Bilang pinagkakitaan na ang mga prints, designs, at pinta ng ating mga katutubo, they should be duly compensated for the intellectual property. After all, their work is a product of their hard work in history.

Sana po ay magkaroon tayo ng policy when it comes to this to encourage the support of our local products. And possibly, it will be products that we could proudly export to other nations. But let us not forget our indigenous peoples and indigenous cultural communities. Sana po ay nakikinabang din po sila sa paggamit ng kanilang likhang sining. Maybe our Committee on Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship can look and analyze the current problems faced by our IPs and ICCs when it comes to the use of their artistic works in commercial products—what are the rules when designs are used and inspired by them. And maybe we can identify and correct the government agency that can best regulate and implement these policies.

REMARK OF SENATOR LEGARDA

Senator Legarda thanked Senator Tulfo for his support and for giving importance to the indigenous peoples in the country. She then mentioned Senate Bill No. 839, or the proposed Traditional Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, which aims to help the country's traditional artists and artisans. She then invited her colleagues to study and even coauthor the measure, which she hoped would be heard at the proper time by Senator Padilla's committee.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR VILLANUEVA

Senator Villanueva also expressed support for Senator Legarda's privilege speech on the protection of the rights of the country's IPs. He stated that Republic Act No. 10689 declared August 9 of every as the National Indigenous Peoples' Day to honor the country's indigenous peoples. He stated that one study by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) reveals that there are approximately 14 million indigenous peoples in the Philippines belonging to 110 ethnic groups, including the *Dumagats* from the province of Bulacan in Central Luzon.

He recalled that while he was still with TESDA, he advocated for inclusivity in technical-vocational education and training (TVET), and that Senator Legarda was a partner of the agency in the program. He stated that the program provided numerous opportunities for human capital development, particularly for the country's indigenous peoples, by allowing them to seek better livelihood and employment opportunities.

He thanked Senators Legarda and Angara, former chairpersons of the Committee on Finance, for their support in ensuring that a sufficient budget is allocated to the program, citing TESDA data that showed that from 2019 to 2021, 246,844 indigenous peoples graduated out of the 269,505 who were enrolled. In the upcoming budget deliberations, he expressed his commitment to continue pushing for more expansive and exclusive opportunities for the country's indigenous peoples, particularly access to scholarships in TVET and higher education. He hoped that the incoming vice chairperson of the Committee on Finance, who would be sponsoring TESDA's budget, would also support such an initiative.

Senator Legarda thanked Senator Villanueva for reminding her of their close collaboration in 2015 when she was in her second or third term as a senator and the latter was still the head of TESDA. She recalled that they forged an agreement about the program during their speaking engagement together in Intramuros.

She then mentioned that the small kingdom of Bhutan has a traditional art school called the Choki Traditional Art School, which offers a four-year course on sculpting, painting, and any expression of art and culture in order to preserve Bhutanese tradition. She recalled visiting Bhutan and being amazed at how such a small kingdom in South Asia protects, guards, and safeguards its culture, noting that it is the only country in the world that has in its Constitution a mandatory 70 percent of its land under cover. She stated that she has always felt connected to the Bhutanese people who value their traditional and indigenous culture, which they even use for tertiary or college studies rather than just a technical vocation school.



INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR ANGARA

At the outset, Senator Angara commended Senator Legarda for constantly highlighting the beauty of the culture of the country's IPs. He surmised that she had indeed fallen in love with the culture, traditions, and attractive traditional dresses of the country's cultural minorities.

Senator Legarda stated that she had indeed fallen in love not only with both tangible and intangible aspects of their culture, including their culinary heritage, artisanship, songs, dances, rituals, and written languages, among others. She noted that the number of Philippine languages rivals the number of indigenous groups. She revealed that the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF) is tasked to document and preserve the country's languages, which are like the nation's endangered species.

MANIFESTATION OF SENATOR REVILLA

Senator Revilla lauded Senator Legarda for speaking up for the country's cultural minorities. He likewise expressed his support for the IPs in their fight for their rights and overall well-being. He said he holds them in high regard and sees them as cultivators of the country's culture long before foreign nations colonized the Philippines. He also stated that their historical and cultural influences contributed to national advancement. Noting that it was the IPs' forefathers who first occupied the islands that would eventually become the Philippine society, he urged his fellow senators to look after the well-being of the IPs.

Finally, he stated that the respect and importance that society accords to the country's cultural minorities reflects the importance it places on the nation's history, heritage, and traditions.

INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR EJERCITO

At the outset, Senator Ejercito lauded Senator Legarda for consistently working to promote the rights, traditions, and heritage of IPs in the Philippines. He informed the Body that he is an adopted son of Kalinga and Mountain Province.

When asked by Senate President Zubiri if he had worn the Igorot tribe's traditional outfit called *bahag*, Senator Ejercito replied in the negative. He reiterated that his work in the Senate afforded him the honor of being an adopted son of the Province of Kalinga and Mountain Province because he caused the funding of some hospitals in those areas.

He agreed with Senator Legarda that Apo Whang-Od is a national treasure. He hoped that the latter's niece or grandchildren could carry on the legacy of their tribe's last living *mambabatok*. Thereafter, he showed his colleagues Apo Whang-Od's work on his arm, consisting of three dots representing the *mambabatok's* signature.

Citing his motorcycle adventures to Sagada, Banaue, and Ifugao, Senator Ejercito asked how the government would be able to preserve the beauty of the place—considered as the Eighth Wonder of the World—when there are shanties in the vicinity. He proposed replacing the building materials with nipa or similar items to preserve the tradition, culture, and heritage of the IPs in Kalinga Province and the Cordillera Region.

Senator Legarda thanked Senator Ejercito for drawing the Body's attention to the need for hospitals that serve cultural minorities, such as those in Kalinga and Mountain Province. She assumed that the said hospitals had already been built and utilized by the IPs in the area, such as the Kalinga tribe in Kalinga Province and the Bontocs and Paracelis tribes in Mountain Province. She expressed gratitude that healthcare had already been brought closer to the tribes. In addition to hospitals, she stated that the roving Botika sa Barangay and similar programs could be used to bring healthcare closer to the IPs. She also expressed relief to learn that Apo Whang-Od, who is already 103 years old, had survived the pandemic.

In response to Senator Ejercito's earlier suggestion that the provincial government require the use of indigenous materials rather than galvanized iron (GI) sheets in the construction of houses or establishments near the Banaue



Rice Terraces, Senator Legarda stated that convincing people to retain the traditional look of their houses would be difficult. Relative thereto, she recalled a trek she made to one of the highland villages in 2012 wherein she noticed that some of the native huts were no longer made of cogon but had been replaced by GI sheets. Despite allocating funds to replace GI sheets with traditional materials, she recalled the initiative being met with resistance, owing to the fact that GI sheets, being sturdier, are bound to outlast the five to ten-year lifespan of native building materials.

Senator Legarda agreed that preserving the authentic appearance of the villages as well as prohibiting construction near public viewing areas are beneficial to tourism. However, she believes that if the issue of informal settlers is to be considered, it must be decided by the local government executives.

Despite the situation, Senator Ejercito remained optimistic that the Body would be able to address the issue later.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Senator Pimentel sought the Body's advice on the possibility of taking a picture of Apo Whang-od's tattoo work on Senator Ejercito's arm to form part of the *Record of the Senate*. He believed his proposal was worthy of consideration because the tattoo was created by one of the country's living national treasures.

In response, Senate President Zubiri stated that Senator Ejercito's manifestation was already included in the *Record*. However, he stated that he does not see any problem with including a photograph if Senator Pimentel deems it necessary. Senator Pimentel responded in the affirmative, adding that he would further explore available options.

Senator Legarda cautioned that Apo Whang-Od previously had a problem with a vlogger who documented her work and uploaded the same on social media without FPIC. She urged the Body to consider the implications of Senator Pimentel's suggestion to photograph the artist's work should Senator Ejercito agree.

Senator Pimentel believed that there is no misunderstanding on the matter because Senator Ejercito wanted to show the senators his tattoo. He again urged his colleagues to make it part of the *Record of the Senate*.

REMARKS OF SENATE PRESIDENT ZUBIRI

At this point, Senate President Zubiri informed the Members that the world celebrated the Indigenous Peoples' Day the day before. In that regard, he thanked Senator Legarda for highlighting the cultural heritage of the country's IPs. He lamented, however, that in his province of Bukidnon, many of the cultural minorities still live in abject poverty.

He then proceeded to enumerate several tribes, including the *Talaandigs*, *Manobos*, *Bukidnons*, *Tigwahanons*, and *Matigsalugs*. In addition to poverty, he stated that the tribes appear to be falling behind in educational attainment. He stated that he was unsure whether the tribes' current situation has anything to do with their culture or is simply the result of a lack of training and educational facilities.

He then urged the Body to study the issue, pointing out that many rural areas in the country have IPs. Despite the fact that the tribes are impoverished, he observed that some are not even part of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps). He revealed that he had to inquire from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as to why it was the case with his IP constituents in Bukidnon. He said that he had learned from the agency that many of his *kababayans* in Bukidnon are not part of the 4Ps because they are unable to comply with the basic requirements of the program, such as keeping all their children in school and letting them have regular medical check-ups. He lamented that such poor folk could not avail of the cash grants even though they are the ones who need it most.

He disclosed that he had actually proposed the creation of a special 4Ps for the IPs without the need to comply with the difficult requirements in order to be part of the program. He also suggested that the Senate look into the plight of the IPs by having the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) brief them on the concept of



“free and prior informed consent” (FPIC) as it has been abused and exploited by certain companies that take advantage of the land and resources of such minority groups. He said that some IPs do not benefit from having land lease arrangements with multinational companies because the lease payments went to the “datu” of their tribe.

In view of the many issues that had been raised in connection with the IPs, he believed that the speech of Senator Legarda and all the comments should be referred to the Committee on Cultural Communities so that they could invite the NCIP to help address their concerns.

He also said that he wanted to see whether there had actually been an improvement in the quality of life of the IPs over the many years that he had been a legislator or if there has only been a better documentation of their cultural heritage. He also lauded Senator Legarda for putting the focus on IPs in her television show but underscored the reality that many IPs are still living in abject poverty. He believed that they can best honor such groups by ensuring that they have better living conditions instead of merely highlighting the beauty of their culture and traditions.

Senator Legarda hoped that Senate President Zubiri’s proposal to have a special 4Ps of the DWSD for the IPs could be revived as it would be very helpful to the estimated 17 million IPs in the country.

In response, Senate President Zubiri recalled that during their discussions on the NTF-ELCAC insurgency problem, the Members had also raised the issue on the exclusion of the IPs from the 4Ps as the applicants, who are mostly nomadic farmers, cannot meet the requirement to have all of their children enrolled in school since the latter help them toil the land.

He then reiterated the view that they can best honor the IPs by finding ways to improve their lives in order to get them out of poverty.

Senator Legarda said that they could ask the NCIP to give them a report on the programs that it has initiated for IPs. She believed that the Senate should intervene and see how it can be of assistance since the commission might not have been very successful in alleviating the plight of the IPs.

REFERRAL OF SPEECH TO COMMITTEE

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the privilege speech of Senator Legarda, as well as the interpellations, and manifestations thereon were referred to the Committee on Cultural Communities.

CHANGE OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

At the instance of Senator Revilla, and upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, Senator Estrada was elected member of the Committee on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation in lieu of Senator Padilla.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Villanueva, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until three o’clock in the afternoon of Monday, August 15, 2022.

It was 6:22 p.m.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

ATTY. RENATO N. BANTUG JR.

Secretary of the Senate

Approved on August 15, 2022

