



Congressional Record

PLENARY PROCEEDINGS OF THE 14th CONGRESS, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Vol. 1

Tuesday, August 14, 2007

No. 11

CALL TO ORDER

At 4:00 p.m., Deputy Speaker Eric D. Singson called the session to order.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The session is called to order.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). Everybody will please rise to sing the Philippine National Anthem.

Everybody rose to sing the Philippine National Anthem.

PRAYER

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). Everybody will please remain standing for a minute of meditation and silent prayer.

Everybody remained standing for the silent prayer.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). Thank you. The session is suspended.

It was 4:02 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:16 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The session is resumed.

The Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. REMULLA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we call the roll.

ROLL CALL

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Secretary General will call the roll.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL, *reading*:

Abante	Present*
Abaya	Present
Ablan	Present
Agbayani	Present
Aggabao	Present
Agyao	Present
Akbar	Present
Albano	Present
Alcala	Present*
Alfelor	Present
Almario	Present
Alvarez, Antonio C.	Present
Alvarez, Genaro Jr. M.	
Amante	Present
Amatong	Present
Angara	
Angping	Present
Antonino	Present
Antonino-Custodio	Present
Apostol	Present
Aquino	Present
Arago	
Arbison	Present
Arenas	Present
Arnaiz	Present
Arroyo, Diosdado Macapagal ...	Present
Arroyo, Ignacio "Iggy" T.	Present*
Asilo	Present
Bagatsing	Present
Balindong	Present
Barzaga	Present
Bautista	Present
Beltran	Present
Biazon	Present
Bichara	Present*
Binay	Present
Biron	Present*
Bondoc	
Bonoan-David	Present
Bravo	Present*
Briones	Present
Bulut	Present*
Cabilao	Present
Cagas	Present
Cajayon	Present

* Appeared before/after the roll call

Cajes	Present	Garcia, Pablo John F.	Present
Cari	Present	Garcia, Pablo P.	Present
Casiño	Present	Garcia, Vincent J.	Present
Castelo-Daza		Garin	Present
Castro	Present	Gatchalian	Present
Cayetano	Present	Gatlabayan	Present
Celeste	Present	Go	Present
Cerilles	Present	Golez	Present
Chatto	Present	Gonzales, Aurelio	
Chavez	Present	"Dong" Jr. D.	Present
Chiongbian	Present	Gonzales, Neptali II M.	Present
Chipeco	Present*	Gonzalez	
Chong	Present	Guingona	Present
Chungalao	Present	Gullas	Present
Clarete	Present	Gunigundo	Present
Climaco		Hataman	Present*
Codilla	Present	Hofer	Present
Cojuangco	Present*	Hontiveros-Baraquel	Present
Coquilla	Present	Ilagan	Present
Coscolluela	Present	Jaafar	Present
Crisologo	Present*	Jala	Present
Cua, Guillermo P.	Present	Jalosjos	Present
Cua, Junie E.	Present	Jalosjos-Carreón.	Present
Cuenco	Present*	Javier	Present
Dangwa	Present	Jikiri	Present
Datumanong	Present	Joson	Present
Dayanghirang	Present	Kho	Present
Daza	Present	Labadlabad	Present
De Guzman	Present	Lacson	Present
De Venecia	Present*	Lagbas	Present
Defensor, Arthur Sr. D.	Present	Lagdameo	Present
Defensor, Matias Jr. V.	Present	Lagman	Present
Del Mar	Present	Lapus	Present
Del Rosario	Present	Lazatin	Present
Diasnes	Present	Ledesma	
Díaz	Present	Lim	Present
Dilangalen	Present	Limkaichong	Present
Dimaporo		Locsin	Present
Domogan	Present	Lopez	Present
Duavit		Macapagal Arroyo	Present
Dueñas	Present	Madrona	Present
Dumarpa	Present*	Magsaysay	Present
Dumpit	Present	Malapitan	Present
Durano		Mamba	Present
Dy	Present*	Mandanas	Present
Ecleo	Present	Mangudadatu	Present
Emano	Present	Marañón	Present
Enverga	Present	Marcos	Present
Ermita-Buhain	Present	Matugas	Present
Escudero	Present	Maza	Present
Estrella, Conrado III M.	Present	Mendoza	Present
Estrella, Robert		Mercado	Present
Raymund M.	Present	Miraflores	Present
Fabian	Present	Mitra	Present
Fernandez	Present*	Nava	Present
Ferrer		Nicolas	Present
Fua	Present	Nogales	Present*
Fuentebella	Present	Ocampo	Present
Garay	Present	Olaño	Present
Garcia, Albert S.	Present	Ong	Present

* Appeared before/after the roll call

Ortega Present
 Pablo Present
 Padilla Present
 Pancho Present
 Pancrudo Present
 Piamonte Present
 Pichay Present
 Pingoy Present
 Piñol Present
 Plaza Present
 Ponce-Enrile
 Prieto-Teodoro Present
 Puentevella Present
 Puno Present
 Ramiro Present
 Remulla Present
 Reyes, Carmencita O.
 Reyes, Victoria
 Hernandez Present*
 Robes
 Rodriguez Present
 Rodriguez-Zaldarriaga Present
 Roman Present
 Romarate Present
 Romualdez Present
 Romualdo Present
 Romulo Present
 Roxas Present
 Salimbangon Present
 Salvacion
 San Luis Present
 Sandoval Present
 Santiago, Joseph A. Present
 Santiago, Narciso III D. Present
 Seachon-Lanete Present
 Seares-Luna Present
 Silverio Present
 Singson, Eric D. Present
 Singson, Ronald V. Present
 Solis Present
 Soon-Ruiz
 Suarez Present
 Susano Present*
 Sy-Alvarado Present
 Syjuco Present*
 Taliño-Mendoza Present
 Tan Present*
 Tañada Present
 Teodoro Present
 Teves Present
 Tieng Present
 Tupas Present
 Umali, Alfonso Jr. V. Present
 Umali, Czarina D. Present
 Ungab Present
 Uy, Edwin C. Present
 Uy, Reynaldo S. Present
 Uy, Rolando "Klarex" A. Present
 Valdez Present
 Valencia Present

Vargas Present
 Velarde Present
 Villafuerte Present
 Villanueva Present*
 Villar Present*
 Villarosa Present
 Vinzons-Chato Present
 Violago Present
 Yap Present
 Yu Present
 Zamora, Manuel
 "Way Kurat" E. Present*
 Zamora, Ronaldo B. Present
 Zialcita Present
 Zubiri Present

The House is in receipt of the official advise of absence of the following Members: Representatives Alvarez (G.), Castelo-Daza, Dimaporo, Dominguez, Durano, Ferrer, Ledesma, Ponce-Enrile, Reyes (C.) and Salvacion.

Representatives Angara and Soon-Ruiz are on official mission within the country.

Representatives Arago, Bondoc, Climaco, Gonzalez and Robes are on official mission abroad.

The Speaker appeared before and/or after the roll call.

The results show that 195 Members responded to the call. (*Applause*)

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). With 195 Members present, the Chair declares the presence of a quorum.

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker.

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. Mr. Speaker.

REP. ESCUDERO. Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we approve the Journal of the previous session.

REP. ESCUDERO. Mr. Speaker.

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. Mr. Speaker.

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Honorable Tupas is recognized.

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker, with the permission of the Chair, I would like to rise on a question of personal and collective privilege.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). Before we go into the personal privilege, I would like to settle first our agenda, which is to have the Reference of Business.

* Appeared before/after the roll call

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker.

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. Mr. Speaker.

REP. ESCUDERO. Mr. Speaker.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

REP. GONZALES (N.). Can we just do away with the pending motion which is to approve the Journal of the previous session?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). Is there any objection to the motion? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. ESCUDERO. Mr. Speaker.

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. Mr. Speaker.

REP. ESCUDERO. Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GONZALES (N.). May I ask for a one-minute suspension of the session?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The session is suspended for a minute.

It was 4:30 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:31 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The session is resumed.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, before we allow the Honorable Tupas to deliver his personal and collective privilege, May we recognize first the Gentleman from Sorsogon.

REP. ESCUDERO. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Gentleman from Sorsogon is recognized.

REP. ESCUDERO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
May we be informed what is the purpose of the roll call?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, it is to determine if there is a quorum because under the Constitution, we cannot transact business without it.

REP. ESCUDERO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Having heard the answer, may we be informed if those on official mission are considered part of the quorum?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader will answer the query of the Gentleman.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GONZALES (N.). May I ask for a suspension of the session, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The session is suspended.

It was 4:32 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:36 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The session is resumed.

The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, Members who are on official mission are not considered for purposes of determining the presence of a quorum.

REP. ESCUDERO. Whether they are within the country or abroad, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZALES (N.). That is correct, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ESCUDERO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How about those with three asterisks after their name, which indicate "officially notified the House through the Secretariat of his absence?"

REP. GONZALES (N.). They are still absent, Mr. Speaker. Only those Members who responded to the roll call are considered present except members of the Commission on Appointments (CA) and the HRET who are concurrently or simultaneously holding their respective meetings during session hours, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ESCUDERO. And the fourth item, those with four asterisks, which indicate "absent without notice," I assume they are really absent.

REP. GONZALES (N.). They are absent without notice, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ESCUDERO. So, Mr. Speaker, why do we not just have one asterisk for those people attending the CA and certain committee meetings and therefore form part of the quorum? Because when we see asterisks, we are reminded of stars of officers in the Armed Forces of the Philippines or the Philippine National Police.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, those asterisks are designed based on tradition for purposes of Journal keeping only. Because like in roll call, there are situations that a

Member may not be physically present at the time the actual roll call was conducted up to the time that the Speaker has already declared the presence of a quorum; but they cannot by any stretch of imagination be considered as absent because they appeared. So, the asterisks there was for the purpose of indicating correctly that while the Member did not respond at the time his name was called during the roll, he appeared during the session.

As for other asterisks, Mr. Speaker, “on official mission,” “absent with notice” or “absent without notice,” that is only to indicate, for the benefit of the Members whose presence or absence are important to them, that they may not in fact be physically present during the session hours, but they are on official mission. So, it is just to distinguish the kind of non-presence during the session hours.

REP. ESCUDERO. Mr. Speaker, the item mentioned by the distinguished Sr. Dep. Deputy Majority Leader pertaining to the Members who appeared after the roll call is not covered by any asterisk.

The point of this Representation, Mr. Speaker, is that, when I asked the initial question, what is the purpose of the roll call, the reply was to establish a quorum and of these four asterisks appearing here, only one is valid for purposes of a roll call. The others are just a waste of ink and simply tradition given as an answer. It is high time to change traditions, Mr. Speaker. If there is no value for this asterisk, let us feel free to remove all of them.

REP. GONZALES. (N.). Can we just refer the suggestion of the distinguished Gentleman from Sorsogon to the Committee on Rules, Mr. Speaker? With the kind permission of the distinguished Gentleman.

REP. ESCUDERO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES. (N.). I understand, Mr. Speaker, that the Gentleman from Iloilo, the Honorable Tupas, would like to be recognized on the matter of personal and collective privilege,

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson E.). What is the nature of the matter that the Honorable Tupas rises?

REP. TUPAS. I rise, Mr. Speaker, on a matter that affects my dignity, reputation and honor as a Member of this House. This is with respect to what happened to us in the Province of Iloilo, seven months ago, vis à vis the powers of the Ombudsman. The other day during my consultation with my constituents, hundreds of them asked me what will happen now and they are still clamoring for justice. That is why, this Representation, with the permission of the Chair, would like to rise on a question of personal privilege.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Honorable Tupas has 10 minutes.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. TUPAS

REP. TUPAS. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to all my distinguished colleagues in this august Body.

I rise today on a question of personal privilege to examine the powers of the Ombudsman over local elective officials, and I would like to pose an important question. Is the Ombudsman’s power over public officials a tool to fight graft and corruption? Or is it a weapon for political oppression? To illustrate this point, or the points that I will speak this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, I would like to use the attempt made by the Ombudsman, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the elements of the Philippine National Police (PNP) to illegally and unjustly remove the governor of the Province of Iloilo in January this year, 2007. My constituents, as I said during my consultation the other day, are still clamoring for justice, and as Representative of my district, I think this is one way by which I can address their concerns.

Mr. Speaker, the provincial government or the provincial capitol of Iloilo is a beautiful structure. It has modern design and architecture, and has an imposing view, but what is more important is that it is a symbol of democracy and a seat of power of the local government.

On January 17, 2007, 300 fully-armed commandos, backed-up by two armored personnel carriers (APCs) and a dozen snipers positioning on top of the different buildings surrounding the provincial capitol, attacked the provincial government purportedly to implement the two decisions of the Ombudsman. What are these two decisions? The first was regarding a check amounting to P20,000. The second was regarding the check amounting to P65,000. At the time of the assault, we were praying. We just finished a mass and the people—the provincial, municipal and barangay officials—were praying the holy rosary. We were attacked in full view of national television audience. Uniformed members of the Philippine National Police turned into goons and bullies as they used their weapons and shields to crush the civilians who had stood in a harmless way. They kicked, shoved and hit with their armalite rifles the civilians who were begging them not to use force.

Mr. Speaker, even I, as a provincial official at that time, was not spared from the acts of violence of the Philippine National Police. Some elements coming from the regional mobile force pointed their guns at me, their fingers on the trigger and their eyes peeping through their sites ready to kill at the slightest provocation. It was at this time that my only sister ran towards us and used her body as a shield to protect me. By the way, she is right now here listening in the gallery.

When they attacked the capitol, one of them even used his heavy mallet to smash the doors of the capitol to provide an opening, although they were already opened. I will not elaborate further the things that happened during the attack because it was televised and it triggered national outrage, Mr. Speaker. For me, decency requires that the police treat the seat of power and the symbol of democracy, as well as those people occupying it with dignity, respect and courtesy.

It has been seven months, Mr. Speaker. One of the officers who assaulted us, a ranking member of the Philippine National Police, immediately or a few weeks after the assault was rewarded by being appointed as provincial director of the Province of Iloilo, just right before the election. Another thing, despite the petition signed by all the governors in Region VI, the regional director who led the assault is still occupying the same post of regional director of Region VI seven months after. Seven months after, Mr. Speaker, no investigation has

been made on the culprits and on the enlisted men, except on the cases we filed before the Ombudsman—the very same institution in which the members of the PNP just followed, according to them, the instructions of the Ombudsman.

I rise today not so much to talk on the incident, but to reexamine the powers of the Ombudsman. What is really the power of the Ombudsman, by the way? As a background, we actually patterned our Ombudsman before the Ombudsman of the Scandinavian countries. In 1809, a parliamentary Ombudsman was created in Sweden which at that time was ruled by a king. The parliamentary Ombudsman at that time was created to make sure that laws are faithfully executed. But the Ombudsman in Sweden and Scandinavian countries did not rely on the coercive powers of the State, but on moral suasion, on the dignity and respect of the office, and on the compulsion of public opinion.

That is why in the case of *Madriaga*, Mr. Speaker, decided in 2004, the Supreme Court stated that, in citing the proceedings of the Constitutional Commission of 1986 wherein there were discussions between Commissioners Colayco, Maambong and others, the Ombudsman of the Philippines was patterned after the classical role model of Ombudsman which has the power of investigation and recommendation. From that decision of the Supreme Court, it can be safely concluded that the power of the Ombudsman is basically investigatory and recommendatory in nature.

The power of the Ombudsman stems from the Constitution and the Ombudsman Act of 1989 passed by the legislature. What is this power from the Constitution? I would like to cite Section 13, Article XI of the Constitution which states, and I quote:

“The Office of the Ombudsman shall have the following powers, functions, and duties:

- (1) Investigate on its own, or on complaint by any person, any act or omission of any public official, employee, office or agency, when such act or omission appears to be illegal, unjust, improper, or inefficient.
- (2) xxxx
- (3) Direct the officer concerned to take appropriate action against a public official or employee at fault, and recommend his removal, suspension, demotion, fine, censure, or prosecution, and ensure compliance therewith.”

I would like to emphasize the word “recommend.”

However, Mr. Speaker, in the Ombudsman Act passed by this legislature in 1989, Section 21 of the said Act states, and I quote:

“Officials Subject to Disciplinary Authority –

The Office of the Ombudsman shall have disciplinary authority over all elective and appointive officials of the government and its subdivisions, instrumentalities and agencies, including Members of the Cabinet, local government, government-owned and -controlled corporations and their subsidiaries, except officials who may be removed only by impeachment or over Members of Congress and the Judiciary.”

This Section 21 of the Ombudsman Act is the basis of the Supreme Court in the case of *Ombudsman vs. Santos*, decided in 2006, in stating that the legislature vested Ombudsman the powers to discipline elective and appointive local officials.

However, Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite the attention of my distinguished colleagues in a book of Justice Magdangal Elma of the Court of Appeals, entitled *Treaties – The Aquino Presidency and the Constitution*. I would like to quote a pertinent paragraph which states:

When the enrolled bill in the Office of the Ombudsman was submitted to the President, Cory Aquino, who examined its provisions and found some constitutionally objectionable, particularly Section 21 thereof, granting disciplinary authority to the Ombudsman over elective and appointive officials including Cabinet members.

According to Justice Elma, the power of the Ombudsman under Section 13, Article XI of the Constitution, as stated earlier, is only investigatory and recommendatory in nature and this is with reason. Because the Ombudsman, being the lawyer of the government, is also the prosecutor in criminal cases and also the judge if we follow Section 21. So it gives the powers to the Ombudsman—the power of being a lawyer, a prosecutor and a judge rolled into one.

Mr. Speaker, I would like also to cite Section 16 of the Local Government Code: “The power to remove local elective officials was vested exclusively with the courts.” And in the case of *Pablico vs. Villapando*, decided in 2002 en banc by the Supreme Court, it states that:

It is beyond cavil, therefore, that the power to remove erring elective local officials from service is lodged exclusively with the courts of justice. The law on suspension and removal of elective public officials may be strictly construed and applied, and authority on whom such power of suspension and removal is vested, must exercise it with utmost good faith, for what is involved is not just an ordinary public official but one chosen by the people through the exercise of their constitutional right of suffrage. Their will must not be put to naught by the caprice or partisanship of the disciplining authority.

Despite the case of *Villapando*, and the case of *Pendatun Laja* which states that:

Aside from reprimand and suspension of not more than one month, decisions of the Ombudsman are not immediately executory pending appeal.

What happened in Iloilo seven months ago was a decision of dismissing an elected provincial governor with perpetual disqualification to hold office.

I would like to point out these decisions of the Supreme Court, especially *Pablico vs. Villapando*, and even in a layman’s view, this decision is sound in the sense that the quantum of evidence in an administrative case is lower than a quantum of evidence needed in the courts of law. As we know, the evidence in administrative proceedings is just substantial evidence, and in the courts of law, it is proof beyond reasonable doubt. That is why this is a sound decision—that a local elective official could only be removed from office by order of a proper court.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that in all decisions of the Supreme Court, the decision only involved appointive officials. There is no decided case yet with respect to the removal or dismissal of an elective official.

Second, Mr. Speaker, in an administrative due process, it does not require trial-type proceedings as in the courts of justice. That is why, with more reason, elective officials should

be removed only by order of the proper court because they will be benefited by a trial-type system, unlike in an administrative proceeding wherein the proceeding is a mere summary in nature.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today not to blame anybody. I rise today, not motivated by vengeance, because what happened to us is a thing of the past, and I think, is the will of God. But, I rise today to prevent similar incidents from happening in the future. As we all know, the Philippines, under Article II of the Constitution, which is the "Declaration of Principles and State Policies," is a democratic and republican State; sovereignty resides in the people, and all government authority emanates from them. This means that the people are supreme in a democratic and republican system, and each citizen under a system such as ours is an individual repository of sovereignty.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). May I remind the Gentleman that his time has been consumed.

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker, I move for an extension of my time to at least five minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The time of the Gentleman is extended for five minutes.

REP. TUPAS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In a republican system, the people are supreme. And when we remove an elective official by mere administrative proceeding without the benefit of a trial-type hearing, and without giving him an opportunity to submit evidence, we are not only depriving the elective official but also the people themselves of their representative.

So, Mr. Speaker, with this in mind, I would like to propose some amendments to the Ombudsman Law, especially on the Ombudsman's power over elective officials. The power should only be limited over appointive officials and only up to suspension on elective officials and never their removal because we already have an existing law, and that is the Local Government Code which provides for the removal of elective officials by order of the proper court.

Second, Mr. Speaker, I would like to propose that the decisions of the Ombudsman, other than reprimand, censure or suspension of not more than one month should not be immediately executory and that provision should be stated in the law. Because, as held in the cases of *Lopez*, *Lapid* and *Pendatun Laja*, when the legislature intends that the decision of an administrative agency should not be immediately executory pending appeal, it should provide so.

With this, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my distinguished colleagues for their patience. I would like to thank the Chair and this august Body for giving me an opportunity to rise on a personal privilege. And I ask for the support of my colleagues in this endeavor in giving the local elective officials the dignity and courtesy that they deserve under a democratic and republican system of government.

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much.

REP. GARIN. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Deputy Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. ROXAS. Mr. Speaker.

REP. REMULLA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we...

REP. ROXAS. Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN. Mr. Speaker.

REP. REMULLA. May we recognize the Lady from Iloilo, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Honorable Garin is recognized.

REP. GARIN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. REMULLA. Mr. Speaker, I move that we extend the time of the distinguished Gentleman by at least 10 minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson). The Gentleman is given another five minutes extension of time.

REP. ROXAS. Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN. Mr. Speaker, is our distinguished colleague amenable to some interpellation?

REP. TUPAS. Yes, willingly, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Gentleman mentioned a case involving public officials with the intention and the proposals of limiting the power of the Ombudsman only to appointive officials. May I know from our distinguished colleague how long does it take on the average for a case of graft and corruption to be solved by the present judiciary system?

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Lady from the First District of Iloilo if she is referring to the adjudication of the courts of justice or the adjudication of administrative agencies such as the Ombudsman.

REP. GARIN. Mr. Speaker, I am putting forward a general query as to the average time that it takes for our judiciary system to solve cases relating to graft and corruption involving elective and appointive public officials, if the good colleague has the data. If none, I am very much willing to wait for the proper data when a committee hearing will be conducted in line with the proposal of our distinguished colleague from Iloilo.

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker, I do not have the statistics on how long it takes for administrative agencies as well as the courts of law, except that with respect to courts of law there are certain periods that they have to follow in deciding a case once it is submitted for resolution.

REP. GARIN. Mr. Speaker, I asked that question simply because while we are somehow hitting the Ombudsman for some decisions that they have made, we cannot deny the fact that there is also a clamor not only from our people and the officials but more so from other countries, inasmuch as cases

of graft and corruption are being handled in our country, and this has put forward a very bad image for the Philippines in the international arena.

My next question, Mr. Speaker, is, does our good colleague here believe that graft and corruption is happening more among appointed officials as compared to the elected ones?

REP. TUPAS. I am not in a position to answer the question of the Representative from my province.

REP. GARIN. Well-accepted, Mr. Speaker. But let me ask again, if we limit the powers of the Ombudsman which is actually a graft-watch body in our society, is it not that we are tolerating and probably cultivating graft and corruption to happen more in our country?

REP. TUPAS. I think my proposal, Mr. Speaker, is not to limit the powers of the Ombudsman only over appointive officials. I am amenable to giving them powers over elective officials but only as to suspension and not removal from office, because as I have mentioned earlier, in the case of *Pablico vs. Villapando* decided by the Supreme Court en banc, it states that the will of the people should not be put to naught by the caprice or partisanship of the disciplining authority. So, the Ombudsman can still have powers over elective officials but only up to suspension and not removal from office.

REP. GARIN. Mr. Speaker, there were already two sides that were put forward when this case was opened to the public as far as I can recall. It was not only the governor of Iloilo who was given the dismissal order and perpetual disqualification, but as far as I was concerned, there were other officials. And all of us were left surprised by the decision because nobody knew that it would happen.

But on the contrary, will our good colleague here say that the Office of the Ombudsman has been somehow abusive in their decisions?

REP. TUPAS. Yes, I can categorically say that, but I posed the question, is the Ombudsman's power over elective officials a tool to fight graft and corruption, or is it a weapon for political oppression? I cited our own case based on my experience. And it was nothing but an abuse of their authority over an elective official.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, in my closing statement, I am asking the help of my colleagues so that these incidents will not be repeated in the future because, as correctly pointed out by my dear colleague, Honorable Janette Garin, it did not happen only in Iloilo. It happened in Pasay City, in the Municipality of Jaen in Nueva Ecija and in other local government units. And just for the information of the Body, there was an announcement after the decision made against the governor of Iloilo that 200 more local government chief executives will be handed down a decision similar to dismissal and perpetual disqualification to hold office. It was stopped because we fought hard. And sometimes, miracle happens. In this case, the court of justice properly intervened.

REP. GARIN. Mr. Speaker, I am not that privy to the other cases but with regard to the case involving the provincial

officials of Iloilo, not only was the governor involved, but other board members as well. I am somehow knowledgeable of these, being the Dep. Majority Leader during the time that these incidents and allegations of graft and corruption happened.

Let me divert, Mr. Speaker, to the issue involving the case. Would our good colleague here agree insofar as I say that provincial checks are not supposed to be issued to an individual, especially if he or she is a public official?

REP. TUPAS. A check can be issued to a certain organization as long as it has legal personality.

REP. GARIN. Mr. Speaker, that is an acceptable fact. But is a local government unit like the Province of Iloilo allowed to issue checks to a certain organization and have it signified and/or to a specific person like, for instance, the board member involved, Cecilia Capadosa?

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker, this is a specific question and, I think, there is a pending case right now. The governor won overwhelmingly in the latest elections, in fact, the biggest margin in the history of the Province of Iloilo. Based on the Salalima and Aguinaldo Doctrines, the administrative case is deemed obliterated, it is erased.

REP. GARIN. Yes, I am sorry.

REP. TUPAS. But there is a pending case right now with respect to other provincial officials who did not make it in the last elections and the question posed by my dear colleague is part of that argument in the courts of law and I will leave that to the courts of justice, if that is amenable to my dear colleague.

REP. GARIN. I would respect the decision of our good colleague here. But, Mr. Speaker, for the information of our colleagues in the Fourteenth Congress, I am referring to the checks issued by the Province of Iloilo to a specific person in the guise of an assistance to the Provincial Board Members League. This is the similar case that I have been questioning insofar as the disbursement of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) fund made during its outbreaks where an amount of P50 million was transferred to the Liga ng mga Barangay, and was then again transferred to a specific name and encashed for the purchase of video cameras, mountain bikes, television sets and things that I firmly believe, Mr. Speaker, are not in relation to the detection of SARS. The point is, I am directing that question as to the illegality of issuing a check because insofar as I am concerned, this check was issued by the provincial government to the Board Members League and/or Cecilia Capadosa who happens to be my colleague in the provincial board. Of course I respect the contention of our good colleague here from the Fifth District of Iloilo, but if we impinge too much on the powers of the Ombudsman, it might be tantamount to putting pressure on the Filipino people, on the nongovernmental organizations and on the graft-watch bodies that are continuously watching the coffers of the government believing that this taxpayer's money comes from them. Let me make it clear that I am not saying that the governor is directly involved, but what I am pointing out, Mr. Speaker, is the manner of the disbursement

of checks because I can surely say that this was never remitted to the Provincial Board Members League where I sit as one of the members. And it was not only done once and we received several warnings. There were already six warnings by the Commission on Audit (COA) but the releasing of checks persisted for years. This was being done in the legislative body of the province and not by the governor's office. But it was being released in concurrence with the officials of the other departments. And that, Mr. Speaker, is one system that we should also look into.

If we are pointing to the defects in the interpretation of the law as far as the Ombudsman's office is concerned, we should also look deeper into the concerns of the Catholic Church, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) for that matter, where Monsignor Oso filed the complaint. Because we should not only correct the Ombudsman but also the system that has continuously existed. And to be specific, Mr. Speaker, I cannot find a reason nor a justification that provincial money can be directly issued to a public official or a private person.

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). May I remind the Gentleman that his time is up.

REP. TUPAS. I move for an extension of my time.

REP. CHONG. Mr. Speaker, I move for the extension of the time of the Gentleman from Iloilo.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I hope the Members of the House will allow the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader to perform his functions. It is the function of the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader to move for an extension of the time of the Gentleman who has risen on a matter of personal and collective privilege.

Mr. Speaker, considering however, that there are several Members who have likewise manifested their desire to rise on a matter of personal and collective privilege, then I move for a final extension of the time of the Gentleman from Iloilo by five minutes.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Gentleman from Iloilo has five minutes.

REP. TUPAS. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With due respect to my dear colleague from the First District of Iloilo, I disagree on at least two points she raised.

First, she stated that the fund was released in the guise of an assistance to the Provincial Board Members League. And when we used that statement, there is already malice involved in it.

Although I agree in another statement that the governor has nothing to do with this. However, Mr. Speaker, I think we are deviating from the reasons why I rise today on a matter of personal privilege.

I am questioning the powers of the Ombudsman. It should be based on the Constitution. It is not within the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman to dismiss elective officials. That is one of the most important reasons why I rise today, Mr. Speaker.

And I hope that we do not deviate the topic from those issues, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GARIN. Mr. Speaker, with due courtesy to our distinguished colleague here, let me correct his presumption that I am speaking with malice. When I mentioned it, I was not saying things that I do not know. I was simply stating facts which happened during my incumbency as a member of the provincial board of the Province of Iloilo.

And it is precise for me to also mention that I was supposed to be one of the recipients of the said financial assistance which I entirely disagreed and there were two board members, to my knowledge, who refused said arrangement. That was yours truly and Dr. Ben Margarico. He is now a mayor of one of the towns of the Third District of Iloilo.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). With the kind permission of the two Members now on the floor, may I ask for a suspension of the session.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The session is suspended.

It was 5:19 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:22 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The session is resumed.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Considering that at least four other Members have manifested to this Representation their desire to rise on a matter of personal and collective privilege; considering, further, Mr. Speaker, that the time of the Gentleman from Iloilo has already expired, may we request him to make a windup statement so that we can give other Members the opportunity to likewise rise on a matter of personal and collective privilege.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). Will the Honorable Tupas now make a windup of his speech?

REP. CHONG. Mr. Speaker.

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker, instead of making a statement, since it was my time given by this honorable Body, may I request that the Gentleman from Biliran, as well as the Gentleman from Pasay be recognized on my time.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GARIN. Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, we have requested the Gentleman from Iloilo to please wind up his statement so that we can give other Members, particularly the Lady from Akbayan, Honorable Hontiveros-Baraquel; the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro, Rufus Rodriguez and also, the Gentleman from Manila, Jaime Lopez, who have likewise manifested their desire to rise on a matter of personal and collective privilege.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Gentleman from Iloilo is requested to wind up his speech so that the others may also take their occasion to deliver.

REP. TUPAS. All right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you for allowing me to rise on a question of personal privilege. I move that the matters contained in the speech be referred to the proper committees for appropriate action, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, instead of acting on the supposed motion of the distinguished Gentleman from Iloilo, may we request him to formalize the suggested amendatory bill on the Ombudsman Act so that we can refer his amendments to the proper committee, which I think in this particular case, would be the Committee on Revision of Laws, and after which, the contents of his speech, together with the interpellations will likewise be sent to the said committee for their appropriate information and guidance.

REP. TUPAS. Mr. Speaker, the suggestion of the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is well taken.
Thank you.

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). Yes, the Honorable Maza is recognized.

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. It is Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). I am sorry, the Honorable Baraquel is recognized.

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. I rise on a matter of personal and collective privilege, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). What is the nature of the matter that the Lady rises?

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. It is the sexism and the trivializing that attended the election of the woman Dep. Speaker yesterday, Mr. Speaker.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Rep. Singson, E.). The Lady has 10 minutes.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As a proponent of gender balance in the selection of this Chamber's leadership, it was very disappointing to me that the election of a woman Dep. Speaker yesterday was marred with sexism and trivializing.

As an institution, Congress is expected to embody the sense of equality and dignity that a Constitution affirms. Each Member of this Chamber is therefore expected to personify the basic principles of human rights and dignity, equality to all, justice and wisdom.

The issue was raised by this Representation at the beginning of the Fourteenth Congress because this Chamber has been remiss in ensuring gender balance in choosing its leaders. In terms of leadership selection, this Chamber has walked, talked and acted like a university fraternity. No wonder, as I have stressed in a speech last week, no law on women's rights was enacted during the Thirteenth Congress.

But electing a woman Dep. Speaker should not be an act of tokenism. I hope that Rep. Ma. Amelita C. Villarosa was not elected to handle so-called "women's issues." To think so would be to confirm that Congresswomen are second-class legislators. To believe so would be to commit an act of segregation that only the woman Dep. Speaker should be concerned with women's issues and the rest of the leadership can just ignore one half of society. I also hope that the woman Deputy Speaker was not elected because of her political affinity, because otherwise it would just doubled the act of tokenism. Again, leadership selection must be based on competence, not patronage.

It is also disturbing to note, Mr. Speaker, that homophobia was used to question the exercise of gender balance in the election of the woman Dep. Speaker. In the same manner that the positions of leadership in Congress are not reserved for men, they should not be reserved exclusively for heterosexuals alone. It is disturbing to note that discriminatory remarks were made yesterday. We should constantly remind ourselves that this Chamber's mandate comes from all Filipinos—from straight men and women, from lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders. There would be nothing wrong with a lesbian Speaker of the House, or a gay Dep. Speaker, and one's sexual orientation should not be the basis for selecting our leaders.

Homophobia—or hatred against homosexuals—is a breeding ground for discrimination and other forms of abuses. When we convey to the public that they do not deserve to be selected to the leadership of the House, we are limiting opportunities that should be accorded to all. When we question their capacity and competence on the basis of their sexual orientation, we are imposing a limitation to their exercise and enjoyment of their equal rights and fundamental freedoms. This, according to the United Nations, is an act of discrimination that violates various human rights instruments and conventions that the Philippines has signed.

In light of what took place yesterday, Mr. Speaker, this Representation wishes to make in turn, two motions:

First, I respectfully move that the reference to the words “third sex” be stricken off from the House Journal and the official records of this Chamber, for the simple reason that the term represents homophobia and sexism. There is no such creature and there is no hierarchy among sexes. To use the term is to perpetuate the false notion that men belong to the first or the superior sex, women to the second and inferior sex, and lesbians and gays to the third and most inferior sex.

I also encourage my dear colleagues to refrain from using the phrase “third sex” again and to use instead the more appropriate term which is “lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender” or LGBT.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

At this juncture, Deputy Speaker Singson relinquished the Chair to Rep. Jesus Crispin C. Remulla.

Second and lastly, I also move that the House Secretariat be directed to develop a gender sensitivity program for Members of Congress. If possible, let us make this program mandatory so as to educate ourselves that the issues of women are issues of men as well, and that women’s rights are part of human rights.

Again, I so move, Mr. Speaker.

Marami pong salamat, Mr. Speaker, at sa inyong lahat din.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). For the information of the Lady from Akbayan, the Journal has been approved. And in so doing, we cannot strike off the record the remarks made yesterday which were already approved by the Body.

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. Then, Mr. Speaker, I respectfully move to reconsider the approval of the Journal of yesterday to make way for this motion with regard to the Journal yesterday and other official records of this Chamber.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GONZALES (N.). May I ask for a one-minute suspension of the session.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is suspended.

It was 5:31 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:32 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is resumed.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, the Lady from Akbayan has moved for a reconsideration of the approval of the Journal of the previous session. To accommodate her

amendment, correction or manifestation, I move that we reconsider the approval of the said Journal.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is suspended.

It was 5:32 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:34 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is resumed.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, in consultation with the Lady from Akbayan, I withdraw my motion for the reconsideration of the approval of the Journal of yesterday’s session’s and instead, we suggest to the Lady from Akbayan to direct the motion for the striking off of the words “third sex” from the stenographic notes, Mr. Speaker. And if stricken off, then this order will appear in today’s Journal which will be distributed tomorrow.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank very much the Chair and the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader.

REP. GONZALES (N.). I therefore move that, in consonance with the motion of the Lady from Akbayan, we strike off from the stenographic notes of yesterday’s session any reference to “third sex.”

REP. ANTONINO-CUSTODIO. Mr. Speaker.

REP. CASTRO. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, the Lady from South Cotabato is recognized.

REP. CASTRO. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, the Honorable Castro is recognized.

REP. CASTRO. Is there a rule in the House that the words spoken by a colleague could be substituted by the terminology of another colleague?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GONZALES (N.). May I ask for a suspension of the session, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is suspended.

It was 5:36 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:40 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is resumed.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, before we act on the motion of the Lady from Akbayan, I move that we recognize the distinguished Gentleman from Capiz, the Honorable Castro, who would like to make a manifestation on this regard.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Honorable Castro is recognized.

REP. CASTRO. Mr. Speaker, by way of manifestation.

That the phrase or the term “third sex” is not intended to trivialize the election of the Lady Dep. Speaker yesterday. It might be a wrong choice of term but it should not be alluded to or interpreted as an act of discrimination or an affront against anyone or any Lady Member of this House who may be elected as Dep. Speaker. But this Representation’s statement yesterday in the form of parliamentary inquiry was simply addressed as a reaction to the phrase “balance of gender.” In any event, if the intention of the Lady from Akbayan is simply to improve the vocabulary of this Chamber, any amendment to the Journal is without objection from this Representation.

That is all, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). We would like to thank the Gentleman from Capiz for his manifestation. It is probably obvious to all of us that we just want the proper language to be used, the gender sensitivity to be raised in the House and the politically correct language to be utilized in our debates and discussions in the House. And for the other issue, the second issue raised by the Lady.

REP. GONZALES (N.). I move for the previous question which is to approve the first motion of the Lady from Akbayan.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the Gentleman from Capiz for concurring to improve both our vocabulary and our collective consciousness and culture here in the House. And I wish to restate my second motion, Mr. Speaker, that the House Secretariat be directed to develop a gender sensitivity program for the Members of Congress, perhaps, based on their already existing and ongoing gender sensitivity training for the members of the House Secretariat themselves.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, the Lady from Akbayan, I think, is aware of the fact that the Secretariat has an ongoing gender sensitivity program throughout the different departments of the House.

If the Lady from Akbayan wishes to improve the program of the Secretariat, she is most welcome to write the Secretariat to give her suggestions on how to further improve everything, including probably inviting the Members of the House for this purpose.

REP. GONZALES (N.). May we likewise suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this is a matter that is best addressed to the leadership of the House, considering that it is a program which the Lady from Akbayan would like to be associated with. Then, may we suggest that she likewise writes the Speaker, so that the proposed program be included for our House Members.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Does the Lady from Akbayan have any objection to write the Speaker to improve on the issue she is raising on gender sensitivity?

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. None at all, Mr. Speaker, and many thanks to the Chair and to the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I would also write to the House’s woman Dep. Speaker about this suggestion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ANTONINO-CUSTODIO. Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Does the Lady from South Cotabato have a point?

REP. ANTONINO-CUSTODIO. Mr. Speaker, yes, actually, I just like to interpellate my dear colleague from Akbayan, but it is more of a manifestation than an interpellation.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Then the Lady may go ahead with her manifestation.

REP. ANTONINO-CUSTODIO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First and foremost, I would like to congratulate Congresswoman Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel for enlightening the entire House to politically correct terms which, indeed, we should all be conscious of, especially as policy-makers and legislators as the House has always been an advocate of anti-discriminatory practices in all genders, as well as in all walks of life. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I would like to manifest is, I was not sure whether the Honorable Baraquel actually referred to this Chamber as only referring to the Fourteenth Congress or the previous Congresses. Because my recollection is that, indeed, this Chamber has not been remiss in recognizing women leaders who are capable of being part of the leadership of the House of Representatives or of the House, as a whole. My recollection will not go that far because I am not yet that old, but as far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, we indeed had a Dep. Speaker who is a woman, by the name of the Honorable Daisy Avance-Fuentes who

held the post of Dep. Speaker for Mindanao during the Eleventh Congress. And to be sure, that was indeed not an accommodation because at that time, we really had just three Dep. Speakers. And she was elected during the time when all the Dep. Speakers were elected to their post. So, this House, just as a manifestation, has not been remiss in appointing a woman Dep. Speaker. However, I do believe that each Congress, as there are new Members coming in, should always be conscious of this as we sometimes forget.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Chair thanks the Lady for her manifestation. Would Congresswoman Baraquel like a referral to her manifestation?

REP. HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully move for its referral to the appropriate committee.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). So, it is referred to the Committee on Rules. The manifestation of the Lady from Akbayan is hereby referred to the Committee on Rules.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro is recognized.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. I rise on a matter of constitutional privilege.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Rodriguez). What is this matter of constitutional privilege which the Gentleman wants to take up?

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Section 22, Article VI, the Legislative Department of the 1987 Constitution, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Gentleman has 10 minutes.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. RODRIGUEZ

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Section 22 of our Constitution on the legislative power provides that heads of departments may appear before and be heard by such House on any matter pertaining to their departments. This right of the House to summon heads of departments has been implemented by Rule XIII on the Question Hour particularly, Sections 88 to 101 of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

On August 8, 2007, Secretary Peter Favila of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) stated, in relation to questions on the contracts on the national broadband network (NBN) and also on the cyber education project (CEP), that no contract existed. I quote him: "It has not matured yet into a contract. What was signed in Haiku International Airport, Hainan, China on April 21 was a Memorandum of Agreement or MOA." Secretary Favila, on orders of the President, stated that what he signed before the MOA was a memorandum of understanding (MOU) which laid the groundwork for the MOA. Subsequently, Presidential Legal Adviser Sergio Apostol, when interviewed about the NBN and CEP contracts,

also said that these contracts could not be implemented because they were nonexistent.

So, this Representation on August 8, on the same day that Secretary Favila and the presidential legal adviser stated about the nonexistence of these contracts, submitted to the honorable Speaker of the House of Representatives a letter requesting that Secretary Favila appear before the House of Representatives to shed light on the NBN and the CEP.

Pursuant to Section 92 of the Rules of the House, I propose the following questions:

First, was a memorandum of understanding signed by our government for the NBN and CEP? When, where and who signed the MOU? What were the contents of the MOU?

Second, were the memoranda of agreement signed by our government for the NBN and CEP? When, where and who signed the MOA? What are the contents of the MOA?

Third, were final contracts signed by our government for the NBN and the CEP? What are the contents of the contracts?

The same letter of August 8 addressed to the honorable Speaker also requested that Secretary Favila be asked to bring the following documents for submission to the House of Representatives and to explain them: the MOU, the MOA or contracts on the NBN and the CEP.

Subsequently, on August 10, there was a supervening event, the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) Secretary was quoted as having confirmed that there was a contract on the NBN with ZTE Corporation. And under the contract, according to Secretary Leandro Mendoza, the Chinese government agreed to finance the broadband network project through a loan agreement with Export-Import Bank of China, subject to the condition that the equipment and services to be procured from the proceeds of the loan come from the ZTE Corporation. This was signed, according to Secretary Mendoza, at Boao, China.

Mr. Speaker, we now have different pronouncements from our heads of our departments. The DTI Secretary says, "no contract at all." The presidential legal adviser says, "no contract." And yet, now, the DOTC Secretary says that there is a contract, and this contract on the NBN would be US\$329 million or P15 billion.

Up to now, no copies of the contracts have been given to any government offices, to the House of Representatives or to other agencies of government. The press had always been mentioning about the NBN and the CEP but there is no contract that has really been submitted to the government institutions so that we could get them, and people would know about these contracts, and there will be transparency as far as these NBN and CEP contracts are concerned.

Because of this, Mr. Speaker, I am therefore moving that we, the House of Representatives, pursuant to Section 22, Article VI of the 1987 Constitution, and pursuant to Rule 13, Section 88(101) of the Rules of the House and pursuant to the letter that was submitted only the other day signed by yours truly; by the honorable Gentleman from Bukidnon, Teofisto DL. Guingona III, the Gentleman from Bayan Muna, Teodoro A. Casiño and the Gentleman from CIBAC, Joel J. Villanueva, we send another letter that in the interest of transparency, in the interest of the House of Representatives being able to exactly know what are these contracts for, after all, it will be the legislative department that will be appropriating funds to pay for these loan agreements. We,

therefore, ask, Mr. Speaker, that aside from Secretary Favila, that we also invite the honorable DOTC Secretary Leandro Mendoza to appear before the House with the same questions that we have given which are: 1) To answer whether a MOA was signed, an MOU was signed, or whether final contracts have been entered into by this government, to give copies of these contracts to the House so that we can read them and the entire Filipino nation would get that benefit of just reading them.

Mr. Speaker, our objective here is not to investigate the two honorable gentlemen. This is merely to have a Question Hour for them to shed light. In fact in the Committee on Rules this afternoon, there was already a House resolution to investigate the NBN contract but there can be no investigation that will be conducted to the Good Government Committee if even the Members of Congress are not enlightened because there are no contracts. So the Question Hour would merely enable us in Congress to get a copy, know the contents thereof and if the contracts are all right, then there could even be no basis to refer them to the Committee on Good Government or to the Committees on Trade and Industry, or Transportation. It depends, Mr. Speaker. So this is a motion that would make these two contracts transparent so that we, in aid of legislation, would be able to understand the contents thereof. I so move, Mr. Speaker, that we approve this motion so that we can request both Secretaries Favila and Mendoza to come to the halls of the House of Representatives, the plenary hall, on August 22, next Wednesday at four o'clock in the afternoon, so that once and for all, we will find out the truth regarding these contracts that I have mentioned.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, we confirm that the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro has in fact written the Speaker in reference to his desire to have a Question Hour with regard to Secretary Favila.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Both Secretaries Favila and Mendoza.

REP. GONZALES (N.). I am just not aware if the same thing was done by the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro in his desire to have the appearance of Secretary Mendoza in a Question Hour.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). If the recollection of the Chair is correct, the first motion filed before was referred to the Speaker's Office where the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro showed that he already had copies of the questions to be propounded to the DTI Secretary. I believe his motion now is for Secretary Mendoza to be invited over to a Question Hour.

REP. GONZALES (N.). May we just ask the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro if he has another letter requesting for the appearance of Secretary Mendoza already filed with the Office of the Speaker in compliance with our Rules, Mr. Speaker.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have here two letters. The first letter is dated August 8, received by the

Office of the honorable Speaker, also on the same date, proposing to invite Secretary Favila. I also have here a letter dated August 13, which is now signed by four of our colleagues, including this Representation. And this letter was received last August 13, also by the Office of the Speaker. So, we have two letters now complying with Section 92 of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, instead of acting on the motion of the distinguished Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro, may I suggest instead that the same be committed to the Committee on Rules. Because under our Rules, Section 101, Rule XIII, Question Hour of our Provisional Rules states, and I quote:

"A Question Hour Service Unit shall be organized in the Committee on Rules to facilitate, coordinate and expedite matters relative to the Question Hour."

It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that it was only today that the Committee on Rules met formally and we have not created a Question Hour Service Unit. That is why during the meeting of the Committee on Rules this afternoon, which the distinguished Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro attended, this Representation suggested to him that there might be a need for us to talk with the distinguished Majority Leader and the Minority Leader so that we will facilitate the creation of Question Hour Service Unit in compliance with our Rules. So, we can facilitate the requested appearance of the secretaries concerned in the Question Hour to be scheduled in the plenary.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The manifestation of the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is well taken. This House has not yet organized a Question Hour Service Unit. So, the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is directed to coordinate with the Minority Leader so that the mandate of Section 101 of our Rules—the Rules of the Thirteenth Congress that we are now using—would be fulfilled. When we are able to organize the Question Hour Service Unit, we can invite those people mentioned by the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro to the Question Hour.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I would certainly agree that under Section 101, we should have a Question Hour. I think that would be a quite fast and easy thing to do considering that that unit can just be created. And so my motion is to have the Question Hour on August 22, which is on Wednesday—I believe, next Wednesday.

I believe that we can facilitate the creation of the Question Hour Service Unit because, Mr. Speaker, this matter on these contracts has not been really put into a final determinative disclosure, whether there is a contract or not.

And what are the contents of the contract? May we know from the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader whether it is possible for us to create this unit and we can still have August 22 as the date for the appearance of the two secretaries or I would be amenable to August 29 to give us two weeks to organize, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Insofar as the actual date of the appearance of the secretaries is concerned, may we just refer the same to the distinguished Majority and Minority Leaders in coordination with the Question Hour Service Unit to be created. For all we know, it is very difficult for us to set a particular date because the secretaries concerned may be out of the country by that time. So, instead of constricting or choosing now a particular date, can we just refer the matter of the date of the appearance of the secretaries concerned to the Majority and the Minority Leaders?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). It is the view of the Chair that the Minority and the Majority Leaders have the obligation to create the Question Hour Service Unit prior to our Question Hour itself because there will be no one to serve the invitations, and it is quite premature actually to schedule a date at this juncture. But, may I suggest, since the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro belongs to the minority, probably he can talk with the Minority Leader on this matter so that they may agree on the date set in coordination with the Majority Leader and the Speaker.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will do that and we hope that we will be able to, as soon as possible, create this Question Hour Service Unit.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

ELECTION OF ADDITIONAL MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

REP. GONZALES (N.). Continuing the organization of the House, Mr. Speaker, I move for the election of additional members representing the majority coalition to the Committee on Rules, as follows:

1. Roman T. Romulo
2. Marc Douglas C. Cagas IV
3. Adam Relson L. Jala
4. Paul R. Daza

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. BIAZON. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, the Gentleman from Muntinlupa City is recognized.

REP. BIAZON. Mr. Speaker, I had wanted to ask some clarificatory questions to the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro. I am wondering if I may still be allowed.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Gladly, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, we will allow that.

REP. BIAZON. Mr. Speaker, I share the interest of the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro with regard to the said contracts that were mentioned a while ago, and I am very much interested in hearing the side of the said Cabinet

members. I would just like to know, under the Constitution, regarding the Question Hour, can the President say no to our invitation?

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Section 22, Article VI of the Constitution provides that in cases where national security or when the public interest so requires, the President may state so in writing but could not prevent the heads from going to the House to have an executive session. That is what is provided for by the Constitution.

So, when the President would state in writing, Mr. Speaker, that the NBN and the CEP contracts are imbued with national security or the public interest so requires, even with such status, the heads of departments would still have to come and appear before an executive session. That is what is provided for, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). In other words, the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro is saying that this is a duty on the part of the executive department to honor the Question Hour privilege of Congress.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. That is correct. It is in Section 22.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Section 22, Article VI of the Constitution.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. That is correct. Article VI regarding the legislative department, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BIAZON. Mr. Speaker, the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro enjoys my highest esteem because he is a legal luminary. And being a non-lawyer myself, I just had the reading of this Section 22, which says:

“The heads of departments may, upon their own initiative, with the consent of the President, or upon the request of either House, as the Rules of each House shall provide, appear before and be heard by such House on any matter pertaining to their departments.”

So, I was just wondering if, as written, and as a non-lawyer, the way I understood it, can the President simply not give her consent? Although, it does say, on the last paragraph of the same section that:

When the security of the State or the public interest so requires and the President so states in writing, the appearance shall be conducted in executive session.

But I am just concerned about the way the first sentence was written.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Yes, let me explain, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BIAZON. Because as we have experienced in the past, we have invited officials from the executive department to appear before this House but we were repeatedly ignored or turned down. So this matter being of high importance, we would just like to know if there would be any fruit to this effort that we will be undertaking.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Yes, to explain, Mr. Speaker, the first phrase of the sentence in Section 22 says that the heads of the departments may on his own volition try to come and

get time and appear. When he does that on his own volition or desire, he or she should get the consent of the President. That is why the phrase “consent of the President” pertains to the first situation where it will be the head who would want voluntarily to come.

But the second phrase of Section 22 precisely does not have any conditionality at all. That either House would request the appearance of heads of departments, then there is no requirement to get the consent of the President unless the head of the department will now tell the President that I have here an invitation to appear and my testimony would affect the national security or the public interest requires that I will not answer the questions.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). In other words, it is the position of the Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro that there is no ground for refusal of the Executive on this matter.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. As far as this is concerned, Mr. Speaker, and I think I do not foresee a situation where the President may not want her heads of the departments not to come here to present the contracts. As we will notice, Mr. Speaker, we are not investigating anyone. It is merely a Question Hour to be able to ask about the contract and what the contents are because we are limited in accordance to second sentence of Section 22. Our questions should be submitted to the Speaker before he can proceed. That is why the Speaker under Section 89, Rule XIII would now “screen” the question whether they would be proper or not. And that is why we have complied, Mr. Speaker, by sending already our questions which are harmless and they just want to know whether we have MOUs and MOA’s and their contents. Finally, as what Secretary Mendoza is saying, there is a final contract. So, where is the final contract? Nobody seem to have it.

So, I think that situation will not arise, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). So, the Minority and the Majority Leaders will be meeting on the Question Hour Service Unit to be organized as soon as possible. I think this question will be settled very soon.

REP. ZIALCITA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. BARZAGA. Mr. Speaker.

REP. BIAZON. Mr. Speaker, I am satisfied with the reply of the distinguished Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro and I just hope that the entire House will be one in making that stand. Just in case that a consensus is not given, we will invoke that explanation that was given to us by a legal luminary.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ZIALCITA. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Honorable Zialcita is recognized.

REP. ZIALCITA. I joined the distinguished Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro in his desire to find out the truth; if there is a contract, then it should be shown to

the Members of the House. Second, the government should be as transparent as they can be. It is very embarrassing even for those of us in the administration to be asked a question we cannot even answer, much less to be able to defend the contents of the contract if they can be defensible. So, I join the distinguished Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro in his desire to once and for all settle this matter, and if the Question Hour is indeed constitutional. As the Majority Leader stated, this is really a matter of discussions between the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I also join the Gentleman in his desire to ask Secretary Mendoza to come here and explain the contract. He said that there is a contract, but what is that contract all about? What are the contents? In my experience in this House, since 2001, I have been asking Secretary Mendoza about the MRT and the LRT railway projects. What is the status of the projects? When are they going to commence? Up to now, six years after, they have not started. But he said, “Next week, next week.” We have conducted numerous public hearings and investigations on that famous LRT, and the answer is just next week and that next week is six years after. Next week and there are still no LRT and MRT projects which are supposed to be priorities of the President. So, that may be a second question that I may ask Secretary Mendoza.

Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The remarks of the Gentleman from Parañaque City are well taken.

REP. BARZAGA. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, the Honorable Barzaga from Cavite is recognized.

REP. BARZAGA. May I be permitted to make some inquiries from the distinguished Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. My pleasure, Mr. Speaker.

REP. BARZAGA. Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, the purpose of the Question Hour for requesting the appearance of Secretary Peter Favila is to shed light regarding the contract on the national broadband network. I was looking at Section 93 of the House Rules, Rule XIII, with the heading “Standard Set of Questions,” to wit:

Questions shall be based on facts and asked to obtain information or press for action. No question shall (d) pertain to *sub judice* matters.

I have with me a copy of the *Manila Times*, dated August 2, 2007, with the caption, “Broadband Deal Challenged at Supreme Court,” and I quote:

Iloilo Vice-Governor Rolex Suplico on Wednesday asked the Supreme Court to nullify the controversial broadband contract between the government and the Chinese company, ZTE Corporation. In a 129-page petition, the former Congressman said the \$329 million contract to build a National Broadband Network violates the Procurement Act, the Build-Operate-Transfer Law

and the Telecommunications Policy Act which calls for the privatization of all telecommunication projects.

Under these circumstances, will it not be a violation of our Rules if we would require the Secretary of Trade to appear in a Question Hour when the matter to be discussed happens to be *sub judice* or pending before the Supreme Court?

REP. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Is the Gentleman from Cavite asking the Chair on this matter?

REP. BARZAGA. Yes, Mr. Speaker, because I do not want to be in an awkward position where our visitors would be invoking our own Rules and telling us that we are violating our own Rules of Procedures regarding the Question Hour, inasmuch as our Rules are very explicit that no question shall be asked on matters which are *sub judice*.

REP. REMULLA. The Chair would like to remind the Gentleman from the Second District Cavite that when we say *sub judice*, the respondent should already have been summoned by the Supreme Court or the appropriate court and the litigation ongoing, but it has to be under the cognizance of the court already. But as of this juncture, I do not think that there is any news coming out that the court has taken cognizance of this case. We are basing everything on newspaper accounts. So, the matter of *sub judice*, I think, is not really a matter that can be discussed right now, unless we find out officially from the court the status of the case filed by the vice-governor of Iloilo.

REP. BARZAGA. And it is in deference to the power of the court that when a matter has been presented before it, out of courtesy to the court, it should no longer be the subject of discussion outside of the court.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, considering that the Question Hour is initiated by the distinguished Gentleman from Cagayan de Oro and he has already agreed that instead of acting on his motion to set a particular date to hold the Question Hour, the same be referred to the Committee on Rules. May I suggest that instead of debating on what or what may not happen during the Question Hour, we just allow the Committee on Rules to function so that we can finally facilitate the holding of a Question Hour.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, and the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is directed to assure the Body that the matter is not really *sub judice*. The objection of the Gentleman from the Second District of Cavite is valid if the court has taken cognizance of the case as it is the position of this Chair. Because anybody can file a case and say it is *sub judice*, but unless the court takes cognizance of it, then it will not be *sub judice*.

So, I hope that the Majority and the Minority Leaders will take great pains and steps to assure us that the matter is not *sub judice* and violative of our Rules.

REP. GONZALES (N.). We assure, Mr. Speaker, that if and when we will hold a Question Hour, we will always comply with the mandates of the Constitution, as well as with our Rules.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Is the Gentleman from the Second District of Cavite satisfied with the discussion?

REP. BARZAGA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Sr. Dep. Majority Leader and also the Congressman from Cagayan de Oro.

REP. RODRIGUEZ. I thank also the Gentleman from Cavite. I just like to state what I know of this case in the Supreme Court. What was questioned were the advertisements that were put on the papers which, according to former Congressman Suplico, were illegal and not the contract itself. There is no contract that has come out anywhere, Mr. Speaker. And so, the existence of the contract has not been established and that is not also what is now pending in the Supreme Court.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Gentleman from Manila, the Honorable Lopez, is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a question of privilege.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). May I ask the Gentleman from Manila what question does this partake of?

REP. LOPEZ. It is the right of every Filipino, more particularly the Members of Congress, to be fully informed of what exactly is our national language. Considering that we are now in the middle of August, which is the month of the Filipino language, it is only fitting that we, Members of this august Chamber, devote a little time to observe, celebrate and give importance to our national language.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Gentleman has 10 minutes.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE OF REP. LOPEZ

REP. LOPEZ. Sa pagkakataong ito, Mr. Speaker, nais kong ibahagi sa aking mga kasama sa House of Representatives, Kamara de Representantes o Malaking Kapulungan ng Kongreso ang isang pag-aaral na ginawa ko tungkol sa wikang pambansa na ngayon ay tinatawag nating Filipino, with a capital F. Ngayon ay Buwan ng Wika, nararapat lamang na ang Malaking Kapulungan na pinagmulan ng Republic Act (RA) 7104 na siyang bumuo sa Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino.

REP. ROMUALDO. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, the Honorable Romualdo is recognized.

REP. ROMUALDO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is very explicit in our Constitution that we will only

have a national language once it has evolved. Now, may I know if there has already been an evolved national language? I understand the Gentleman from Manila is talking in Tagalog, and that is only one of the major dialects in the country today. The Constitution is really very clear. Otherwise, if somebody talks in Tagalog as what we did in the Tenth Congress, I will also deliver a speech and ask questions in Cebuano. Can that be tolerated? Because as far as the so-called Filipino national language is concerned, it has to evolve, Mr. Speaker.

In the past Congresses that I was a Member, Mr. Speaker, it was so clear in the Rules that before anybody will deliver a speech in Tagalog, there must first be an English translation distributed to every Member. But I do not know if that is still in the present Rules.

REP. LOPEZ. Mr. Speaker, may I reply.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, the Gentleman from Manila may reply.

REP. LOPEZ. Our Constitution says that "the national language of the Philippines is Filipino," with a capital "F." In continuing, the Constitution also states that "as it evolves, it shall be further developed and enriched on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages."

We may recall that in the Constitution during the time of President Marcos, the Batasang Pambansa was mandated to take steps to develop a national language which shall be based on all native languages. But the 1987 Constitution went further and said that we have already a national language called "Filipino." Republic Act 7104 was adopted and became a law in the Eighth Congress and nobody questioned the use of "Filipino."

Actually, Filipino is not Tagalog. It is based on all our native languages.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Chair agrees.

REP. LOPEZ. And we should have a national language. Since this is the month of our national language, we should at least give a little time to the observance of our national language. That is precisely why I now rise, Mr. Speaker, to give a bit of importance to our national language because it might seem that we have forgotten already that we have a national language that is called Filipino. It is not Tagalog, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Chair appreciates the concern of the Gentleman from Manila about our national language, an evolving national language as stated by the Gentleman from Camiguin. Because right now, if somebody speaks in pure Tagalog or pure Cebuano, I do not think we will understand each other in this Chamber. That is why we are using a more convenient language called "English"; that is why our Rules are written in English. But let us not preclude anybody, even the Gentleman from Camiguin, in delivering a speech in Cebuano and giving us the translation later.

REP. ROMUALDO. If that would be the ruling of the Chair, then I am just questioning the Gentleman from Manila's

statement "considering that it is a national language month." But the Constitution is very clear and we must all be aware that this is a ticklish issue as far as the Mindanaoans and the Visayans, even the Bicolanos and the Ilocanos are concerned.

In fact, I remember very well, in the Eleventh or Tenth Congress, all of us Mindanaoans and the Visayans walked out when—I am sorry to say this—there was a debate between the presiding officer then and this Representation on this matter.

So, I thank the Chair so much but I hope it is not the national language that the Gentleman is trying to impress on us but it should be Tagalog—that he wants to talk in Tagalog, deliver a speech in Tagalog—rather than using the words "national language."

Because the national language, as mandated in the Constitution, has to be evolved and it is to be called "Filipino," with a capital "F," Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes. I believe that the concern of the Gentleman from Manila is from the fact that this month is the month of the late President Manuel L. Quezon.

REP. ROMUALDO. Then that is another story, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes. If I am reading the Gentleman from Manila right, I think the National Language Week is supposed to be in August, in time for the birth anniversary of the late President Manuel L. Quezon. But, of course, several things have happened since the 60s, when Tagalog became some sort of national language and now it is being evolved, that is why we now have a Commission on Filipino Languages.

REP. ROMUALDO. It has not functioned so much because it is still composed of, generally, people from the Tagalog Region, and they would want to impose even the purest Tagalog, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROMUALDO. With the understanding that the Gentleman from Manila will be delivering a speech in tribute to the late President Quezon, then that is another story. But for him to say that it is a national language month, then this Representation would like to put it on record and object to the fact that as of today, we have never developed yet an evolved Filipino national language.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Definitely, the Gentleman from Camiguin is correct in saying that Tagalog is not the national language. We are currently trying to evolve "Filipino" as a language that is why, coming from the Tagalog region, we take great pains to understand our fellow legislators speaking in Cebuano in the lounge, so that I may learn bit by bit the intricacies of the dialect spoken in the country.

REP. LOPEZ. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Gentleman from Manila is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ. I would not like to belittle the efforts of the late President Manuel L. Quezon who fathered our national language, and who was in fact the one who worked for a proclamation which was questioned during that time. There was only a one-vote difference at that time, and the President voted for "Tagalog" as the national language. Actually, our national language now is not "Tagalog" anymore. Tagalog is just one of the dialects that we have. In fact, we have more than 100 dialects and languages in the Philippines, and it was the thinking of the Constitutional Convention that as a country, as an independent nation with a Constitution and a flag of its own, we should also have a common national language. That is why they thought that our national language should be based on all the dialects. In fact, according to the Constitution, we could base it on other foreign languages, like the words lamesa, silya and pansit. So, these words can be incorporated into the Filipino language to enrich it further.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The timing of the Gentleman from Manila is very correct in the sense that this country is already forgetting...

REP. CASIÑO. Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). What is the point of order of the Honorable Casiño?

REP. CASIÑO. The Gentleman from Manila rose on a question of collective and personal privilege, and I have yet to hear his speech. Kaya, baka naman puwede nating payagang magtalumpati ang kasama natin mula sa Maynila para malaman natin kung ano ba talaga ang nais niyang ipaabot sa ating Kapulungan at saka na tayo mag-interpellate.

REP. ROMUALDO. No, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Is there any objection from the Gentleman from Camiguin?

REP. ROMUALDO. The point of order that I am raising is kay ug magsali tagsulti dinhi tinagalog mag-binisaya sagku, Mr. Speaker, wah na, dina tayo magsabot ani. Naugsuman mag-binisaya ko? *(Applause)*

That is why I think that the Rules that we adopted in Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Congresses are good because before anybody will talk in Tagalog, there must first be a translation so that we can participate in the deliberation. I have a very little working knowledge of Tagalog. That is why, we, Visayans, especially from the Visayan and Mindanao areas, our dialect is Cebuano. And to us, Tagalog is still one of the dialects, because the Constitution is very clear, which the Chair himself has already ruled.

So, with that, if the Gentleman from Manila would want to continue delivering a speech in Tagalog, he should not use the phrase "national language," please.

REP. LOPEZ. Mr. Speaker.

REP. ROMUALDO. I was also a delegate of the 1971 Constitutional Convention, and that, to me, should not be called the Marcos Constitution. It was only the so-called

amendment no. VI that destroyed our work in the 1971 Constitutional Convention. So, in fairness to us, the elected delegates, that is a wrong information, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). So, the point of order of the Gentleman from Camiguin is the fact that he is objecting to the wish of the Gentleman from Manila to speak in Tagalog.

REP. ROMUALDO. No, I am not objecting to his talking in Tagalog, but to his using the phrase "national language." Because we have not yet evolved our own national language. And it was well-ruled by the Chair, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Anyway, I think it is just a case of misunderstanding, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the distinguished Gentleman from Manila would like to rise on a matter of personal and collective privilege in reference to a national language. And he is just delivering his speech in Tagalog or in English without necessarily meaning that Tagalog is the national language.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes. Probably, as a compromise, if it will satisfy the Gentleman from Camiguin, we will direct the Secretariat to translate the speech of the Gentleman from Manila to English so when the Journal is read, he may be able to understand everything that the Gentleman from Manila says.

REP. LOPEZ. There is no problem because I am going to speak in English.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes.

REP. LOPEZ. I will translate my speech in English. I can do that right away.

REP. ROMUALDO. All right, I thank the Chair so much for that, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). So, the point of order is now ...

REP. ROMUALDO. It is not withdrawn. It stays but with the tolerance of the Gentleman and this Representation, he shall talk in the Tagalog dialect.

REP. LOPEZ. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). All right, the Gentleman from Manila is recognized.

REP. LOPEZ. Mr. Speaker, as I speak on our national language, my colleagues will understand that there is really a problem. In fact, this has been an emotional problem in our country. And it is only fitting that since August is the month of the national language, I should make a little explanation on how our national language we call "Filipino" came about. Now, I will try to translate my Filipino speech into English as

much as possible. I made a thorough study of this problem, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to state this in the chronological order.

On March 26, 1946, President Sergio Osmeña issued Proclamation 35 designating the period from March 27 to April 2 of each year as our National Language Week. This period ends on the birthday celebration of Francisco Balagtas Baltazar, otherwise known as the Prince of Tagalog Literature.

Now, President Ramon Magsaysay, on September 23, 1955, issued Proclamation 186 declaring August 13 to 19 of every year as the National Language Week. The end of the week coincided with the birth anniversary of former President Manuel L. Quezon, known as the Father of our National Language. President Magsaysay, they said, changed the date from March 27 to April 2 to August 13 to August 19 of every year as the period of celebration because March 27 to April 2 was outside of the school year, thereby preventing and precluding the participation of schools in the celebration.

Former President Corazon Aquino, on August 12, 1988, after the EDSA revolution, issued Proclamation 19 and reiterated the proclamation of the National Language Week from August 13 to 19 of every year.

Now, to give more importance to our national language, former President Fidel V. Ramos, on January 15, 1997, issued Proclamation 1041 declaring the whole month of August every year as our National Language Month, instead of only one week.

Now, our national language is Filipino with a capital "F." But Filipino is not Tagalog. Tagalog is just one of our native languages, while Filipino is a living and evolving language that is based not only on one native language like Tagalog, but on all our existing native languages, including words commonly used by Filipinos coming from foreign languages as well.

The issue on the national language of the Philippines has been an emotional one. Actually, our people have already succeeded in choosing its national language, and I am referring to Tagalog, only to reject it later after 34 years, after its cultivation and propagation to renew again the search for our national language.

Unlike in some countries where the national language issue has provoked civil wars, like in Sri Lanka, Belgium, Canada and some other countries, the adoption of our national language has been achieved peacefully and orderly.

The question of our national language has a long history. It has been said that the choice of a national language by a country should be the product of historical circumstances. And this is oftentimes dictated by social and political considerations. While the Biak-na-Bato Constitution, at the initial stage of the Philippine revolution, provided that Tagalog should be the official language of the Philippines, the Malolos Constitution made a reversal when it mandated that the Spanish language should be the official language of the Philippines, without any provision on the adoption of our national language. It only said that Spanish should be the official language.

Our search for a national language received formal recognition under the 1935 Constitution when the National Assembly took steps towards the development of Tagalog as our national language. After the ratification of the 1935 Constitution, President Manuel Quezon worked very hard to

develop and propagate our national language, which was then Tagalog.

During the Japanese occupation, the Philippine government, pursuant to a 1943 Constitution under former President Jose P. Laurel, went even further by explicitly and categorically recognizing Tagalog as our national language. So everything seemed to be going smoothly for the development and acceptance of Tagalog until the 1971 Constitutional Convention, which became a forum, a venue for reexamination and discussion of our national language.

So, there are two main schools of thought on the national language: the mono-based language school of thought, which is the Quezon's school of thought; and the Vinzon's, Congressman Wenceslao Vinzon of Camarines Norte, or the multi-based language school of thought. And they had an occasion to meet once more in confrontation during the 1971 Con-Com.

And, of course, we know who won—the multi-based language school of thought—because our national language, which the 1973 Constitution mandated, should be based on all native languages. So whatever some critics may say with the adoption of the 1987 Constitution now, the search for our linguistic symbol of solidarity must have already ended because we now have a national language which is based on all native languages and not just Tagalog and Pilipino.

The heart of the language provision of the 1987 Constitution appears in Section 6, Article XIV of the Constitution which says, and I quote:

"The national language of the Philippines is Filipino. As it evolves, it shall be further developed and enriched on the basis of existing Philippine and other languages."

This should be read in relation to Section 9 of the same article which says, and I quote:

"The Congress shall establish a national language commission composed of representatives of various regions and disciplines which shall undertake, coordinate and promote researches for the development, propagation and preservation of Filipino and other languages."

That will be all, Mr. Speaker.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, the Gentleman from Manila, the Honorable Abante, is recognized.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you.

I wonder if the Gentleman from the Second District of Manila would yield to several clarificatory questions.

REP. LOPEZ. It is a pleasure, from my colleague and very good friend, Benny Abante.

REP. ABANTE. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I overheard the Gentleman from the Second District of Manila mention the word "Filipino" and that the word "Pilipino" refers to the language. There are two words that attribute to both the language and the people. It is Filipino and Pilipino, according to my history and language teachers. So I would like to ask the Gentleman from the Second District of Manila on the difference between the word "Filipino" and "Pilipino."

REP. LOPEZ. The spelling is the same but if we refer to our national language then it is “Filipino,” and if we refer to the people of the Philippines, we call it “Pilipino.” Like in the United Kingdom, they call their people English, British English, but their language is English also.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, therefore, when we speak of the people, we use the term “Pilipino” and when we speak of the language, we use the term “Filipino.” Is that correct, Mr. Speaker?

REP. LOPEZ. Yes. When we speak of our common national language, it is “Filipino.” But we have more than 100 native languages which we call auxiliary Filipino languages and the common national language should be Filipino. The one that is being developed and enriched and the one that we should adopt as our common national language should be called Filipino.

REP. ABANTE. May I know, Mr. Speaker, if the Gentleman from the Second District of Manila knows the origin of the word “Filipino”? Because I would think that the word “Filipino” would be of Spanish origin. That would be the etymology of the word. I am wondering if the word “Pilipino” is the origin of the word “Filipino”—Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano or whatever language or dialect we have.

REP. LOPEZ. Our Constitution says that the national language Filipino should consist not only of Philippine words of our native languages in the country. But we could also use foreign languages. And probably, it is the thinking of the Delegates of the Constitutional Convention that the most appropriate term to use is “Filipino.”

REP. ABANTE. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am referring to the word “Pilipino,” the etymology of the word “Filipino.” Where did it come from? Did it come from the Tagalog or the Ilocano dialects? That is what I am referring to—the word “Pilipino” itself. I know that “Filipino” refers to the language but what I am referring to is the origin of the word “Filipino.” Is it from the Tagalog dialect or from any language that our people are using?

REP. LOPEZ. Mr. Speaker, I would not know that because I do not know the more than 100 Filipino native languages in the Philippines. So, I would not know whether it came from the Kapampangan, Ilocano or the Visayas. But all I know is that the Constitution adopted that as the name of our national language.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Maybe the Chair can share insight to the Gentleman from Manila. “Filipino” comes from the rootword Philippines or Filipino, the way it is pronounced which comes from King Philip II, from whom our country was named after.

I think that is quite clear in our history books that our country was named Philippines because of King Philip II of Spain. And Filipino became the word by which we addressed ourselves, not by the spelling of our country P-H-I-L-I-P-P-I-N-E-S, but with the use of the letter “F” on a regular basis to say “Filipino.”

So, the etymology is quite obvious that in Philippine history, our country was named after the king of Spain.

REP. ABANTE. Yes, I mentioned this, Mr. Speaker, as the Chair defined to us the origin of the word “Filipino”. Therefore, may I also say that “Filipino,” “Pilipino” and “Philippines” are actually neo-colonial words.

I think that Congress should now realize that even the name “Philippines” ought to be changed to a name that will represent the real origin of our people. But nevertheless, the next question is: Mr. Speaker, is the Gentleman aware that the Linguistics Department of the University of the Philippines is drafting a national language that would make use of all prominent words of all the languages and dialects spoken by the Filipinos?

REP. LOPEZ. I am not aware of that. But that is in accordance with our Constitution that we could adopt words and terms coming from other languages.

REP. ABANTE. All right. Would the Gentleman think it is possible, Mr. Speaker, that there can be an integration of words among our native languages to put up a common language, Mr. Speaker?

REP. LOPEZ. And that is exactly the objective in adopting Filipino as the national language, to consolidate the selected words from various native languages.

At this juncture, the Presiding Officer relinquished the Chair to Rep. Rene M. Velarde.

REP. ABANTE. Like the word “lingkod” in Cebuano means “sit down.” Am I right? While the same word in Tagalog means “to serve.” Therefore, there can be no integration of common words and languages. That is very interesting even to think about.

As of today, there are 13 languages and 102 dialects in the Philippines and the number is increasing year by year, as our national agency is still discovering dialects and languages in our country. Is the Gentleman aware of that, Mr. Speaker?

REP. LOPEZ. I am aware that we have more than 100 native languages and dialects.

REP. ABANTE. This is very important, Mr. Speaker, because this concerns our existence and identity as Filipinos. And the question should be: Should our national language be one common language or multi-languages?

REP. LOPEZ. Our national language called “Filipino” should be a common national language.

REP. ABANTE. Would the Gentleman not think that it would be better if Filipino should consist for example of Tagalog, Cebuano, Kapangpangan, Bicolano and Ilocano, Mr. Speaker? Does he think that would be possible...

REP. LOPEZ. Our national language is Filipino.

REP. ABANTE. ... and we should not just be thinking of one common language?

At this juncture, the Presiding Officer relinquished the Chair to Rep. Jesus Crispin C. Remulla.

REP. LOPEZ. We can develop a national language consisting of words coming from the different dialects and languages in the Philippines.

REP. ABANTE. Because right now...

REP. LOPEZ. But now, we can never have, Mr. Speaker, a national language for the Tagalogs, for the Visayans and for the Kapampangan. That is ridiculous.

REP. ABANTE. Yes, I realize that, Mr. Speaker. Right now, the common language in Congress is English, not Tagalog.

REP. LOPEZ. English is our official language. And it is a universal language.

REP. ABANTE. I am being asked to finish the interpellation, Mr. Speaker. Can I ask two more questions? Just two more questions because this is very interesting and very important.

What is the role of Congress as far as putting up a common language is concerned, Mr. Speaker?

REP. LOPEZ. The role of Congress is, first of all, to create a Commission on National Language which will develop, evolve, enrich and propagate our national language. But, before it is propagated, it should first be developed. But I understand that since we have worked very hard already on the development of Tagalog, they are using Tagalog as the nucleus. But they admit that some of the words from Tagalog would be replaced with Visayan and Kapampangan words, and I am not so aware about that. I have not made a thorough study of the details on that particular matter.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, just one last question.

I am just thinking, should the common language be Tagalog because that is the one spoken in imperial Manila or should it depend on what language being spoken by the majority of the Filipinos? Because, if that would be the case, I would think that the Ilocano language would win because there are more Ilocanos in this country than Tagalog- or Cebuano-speaking people, Mr. Speaker.

REP. LOPEZ. No, actually, they say that the Visayan speaking people are greater in number than those from any other region.

REP. ABANTE. There should be an objection from the Ilocanos. I do not think there is any Ilocano Congressman anymore in this Chamber.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, may I just move ...

REP. ALFELOR. Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). ...that we refer the speech of the Gentleman from Manila, together with the interpellation, to the Committee on Rules for its proper referral.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The speech is referred to the Committee on Rules.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, may we just acknowledge the presence in the gallery of the following local officials from Rizal, Occidental Mindoro, who are guests of our distinguished Deputy Speaker, the Honorable Villarosa: Mayor Sonia Pablo; Vice-Mayor Nestor Perez; Councilors Felipe, Tamboong, Valdez, Robles, Pechon, and Tandug; ABC President Colesio; SK President Otic; Barangay Captains Arca, Santarin, Laredo, dela Cruz, Rodrigo and Tupaz; Barangay Kagawads Ayap, Flores, Dizon and Paecete; and LGU-Rizal Department Heads Zoleta, Montales, Labindao, Enelda, Celestino, Pable and Tacuyo. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Please rise. Welcome to the House. *(Applause)*

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO SEVERAL COMMITTEES

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, continuing with the organization of the House, I move for an omnibus motion for the election of the following House Members as no. 1 in the following committees:

1. Rep. Lorenzo R. Tañada III – Committee on Human Rights;
2. Rep. George P. Arnaiz – Committee on Local Government;
3. Rep. Danilo E. Suarez – Committee on Oversight;
4. Rep. Judy J. Syjuco – Special Committee on Globalization and WTO;
5. Rep. Nerissa Corazon Soon-Ruiz – Special Committee on Millennium Development Goals;
6. Rep. Manuel M. Mamba – Special Committee on Northwest Luzon Growth Quadrangle; and
7. Rep. Antonio H. Cerilles – Special Committee on Urban and Land Use

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Is there any objection? *(Silence)* The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Likewise, I move for the election of the following Members to the Committee on Health: Reps. Reynaldo S. Uy; Erico Basilio A. Fabian; Ferjenel G. Biron, Jose Antonio F. Roxas; Rolando A. Uy; Philip A. Pichay; Carlo Oliver D. Diasnes and Sharee Ann T. Tan.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes, we will just go through with the election.

REP. ABANTE. Did I hear, Mr. Speaker, that we are electing Congressman Tañada to be the Chairman of the Committee on Human Rights?

REP. GONZALES (N.). That is correct.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Yes.

REP. ABANTE. I am raising my objection to the election, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). May we just take note of that objection, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The objection of the Gentleman from Manila is noted.

REP. GONZALES (N.). I move for the previous question which is for the election of the Members I have already mentioned.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). This being a non-divisible question, we do not divide the House; and if it is a matter of election, the Members so named are hereby elected to their respective positions.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker, point of order.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). What is the point of order of the Gentleman from Manila?

REP. ABANTE. There is a motion electing Congressman Tañada to be the Chairman of the Committee on Human Rights. I raised an objection, Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader may please respond.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, the Chair has already noted the objection of the distinguished Gentleman from Manila and as correctly stated by the Chair, election of the members of the various committees is a non-divisible question, which means that while we can note the objection of any Member, it will not be a subject of a division of the House.

REP. ABANTE. May I know the basis of the ruling on this, Mr. Speaker?

REP. GONZALES (N.). Our Rules, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is suspended for one minute.

It was 7:03 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:04 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is resumed.

Section 30 of the Rules states that membership in each standing committee shall be by election of the House upon nomination by the Majority and Minority Leaders and shall not be subject to a division of the House.

REP. ABANTE. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, I would like to find out if we have enough warm bodies in this Chamber.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is suspended.

It was 7:05 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:08 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is resumed.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we proceed to the Reference of Business.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

The Secretary General will please read the Reference of Business.

REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

The Secretary General read the following House Bills and Resolutions on First Reading and Communication, and the Presiding Officer made the corresponding references:

BILLS ON FIRST READING

House Bill No. 1686, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING THE CREATION OR ESTABLISHMENT OF A GOVERNMENT OWNED AND CONTROLLED CORPORATION (GOCC) AND/OR OF A SUBSIDIARY OF A GOCC TO BE BY ACT OF CONGRESS”

By Representative Mandanas

TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION

House Bill No. 1687, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF FERNANDO AIRBASE FOR JOINT CIVILIAN-MILITARY USE, AT NO EXPENSE TO THE GOVERNMENT, CREATING THE CALABARZON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT CORPORATION AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Mandanas

TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

House Bill No. 1688, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FISCAL INDEPENDENCE TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSIONS, THROUGH THE AUTOMATIC RELEASE OF THEIR RESPECTIVE SHARE IN THE NATIONAL INTERNAL REVENUES”

By Representative Mandanas
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1689, entitled:

“AN ACT EXEMPTING THE JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT AND OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE COMMISSION ON AUDIT, THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS AND THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION FROM THE COVERAGE OF THE COMPENSATION AND POSITION CLASSIFICATION ACT OF 1989 (REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6758), POPULARLY KNOWN AS THE SALARY STANDARDIZATION LAW”

By Representative Mandanas
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1690, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING DECEMBER 6 AS A SPECIAL NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF INOPACAN, PROVINCE OF LEYTE”

By Representative Cari
TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 1691, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING AN ADDITIONAL REGIONAL TRIAL COURT BRANCH IN THE PROVINCE OF LEYTE TO BE STATIONED AT THE CITY OF BAYBAY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 14, PARAGRAPH (I) OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980’, AS AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9373, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Cari
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1692, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9164, RESETTling THE BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANg KABATAAN ELECTIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Uy (R.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND ELECTORAL REFORMS

House Bill No. 1693, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CALBAYOG STATE UNIVERSITY BY INTEGRATING THE TIBURCIO TANCINCO MEMORIAL INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN CALBAYOG CITY AND THE SAMAR STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAN JORGE, BOTH LOCATED IN THE PROVINCE OF SAMAR AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Uy (R.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1694, entitled:

“AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE FISCAL AUTONOMY OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 38 OF R.A. 6770, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘OMBUDSMAN ACT OF 1989’ ”

By Representative Nograles
TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1695, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING TWO ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN THE PROVINCE OF ILOCOS SUR, ONE IN THE CITY OF VIGAN, AND ANOTHER IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF STO. DOMINGO, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7472 ENTITLED ‘AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 1 OF THE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7154 ENTITLED ‘AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION FOURTEEN OF BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1981’ BY RESTORING THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT BRANCH IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CANDON AND CREATING TWO ADDITIONAL REGIONAL TRIAL COURT BRANCHES IN THE PROVINCE OF ILOCOS SUR, AND PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR’ AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Singson (R.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1696, entitled:

“AN ACT TO DEFINE ENFORCEABLE JURIDICAL RELATIONS ON OCCUPANCY ON OR POSSESSION OF PRIVATE LANDS IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Villafuerte
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 1697, entitled:

“AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES AGAINST UNLAWFUL IMPORTATION AND OTHER VIOLATION OF THE TARIFF AND CUSTOMS CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, AS AMENDED”

By Representative Singson (E.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 1698, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE MUNICIPALITY OF NARVACAN, PROVINCE OF ILOCOS SUR, INTO A COMPONENT CITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE CITY OF NARVACAN”

By Representative Singson (E.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 1699, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING ALL DISPOSABLE LANDS OF THE GOVERNMENT WHICH HAVE

REMAINED IDLE AND SUITABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES SHALL BE DEVELOPED INTO SOCIALIZED HOUSING SITE FOR LOW-SALARIED GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE EMPLOYEES AND SQUATTERS”

By Representative Singson (E.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 1700, entitled:

“AN ACT REVISING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7157, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE FOREIGN SERVICE ACT OF 1991”

By Representative Cuenco

TO THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

House Bill No. 1701, entitled:

“AN ACT EXEMPTING THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE AND BUREAU OF CUSTOMS FROM THE COVERAGE OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6758, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE SALARY STANDARDIZATION LAW WITH THEIR ANNUAL COLLECTIONS TO BE USED AS BASIS FOR SALARIES AND BONUSES OF OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Suarez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1702, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY SUBIC, MUNICIPALITY OF AGONCILLO, PROVINCE OF BATANGAS, TO BE KNOWN AS THE AGONCILLO NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Reyes (V.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1703, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING SEPTEMBER 1 OF EACH YEAR A NON-WORKING PUBLIC HOLIDAY IN THE COUNTRY TO BE KNOWN AS ‘NATIONAL FILIPINO FAMILY DAY’”

By Representative Reyes (V.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 1704, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 29 OF BATAS PAMBANSA BLG. 129, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980”

By Representative Reyes (V.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 1705, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING AN ADDITIONAL BRANCH

OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURTS IN THE CITY OF TANAUAN, PROVINCE OF BATANGAS, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Reyes (V.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1706, entitled:

“AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8293 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES TO PAVE THE WAY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, DISTRIBUTION, AND IMPORTATION OF CHEAPER MEDICINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Arroyo (D.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

House Bill No. 1707, entitled:

“AN ACT EXEMPTING FROM THE EXPANDED VALUE ADDED TAX THE SALE OF GOODS AND SERVICES TO SENIOR CITIZENS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9257, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘EXPANDED SENIOR CITIZENS ACT OF 2003’”

By Representative Yap

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 1708, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE SAN FERNANDO BRIDGE LOCATED AT THE CITY OF BISLIG, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Garay

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1709, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A BRANCH OFFICE OF THE REGISTER OF DEEDS OF SURIGAO DEL SUR IN THE CITY OF BISLIG, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Garay

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1710, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING INCENTIVES TO PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO ARE ASSIGNED OUTSIDE OF THEIR TOWNS AND PROVINCES, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Escudero

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 1711, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE FILIPINO ACADEMY OF ARTS, LETTERS AND PHILOSOPHY, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Escudero

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1712, entitled:

“AN ACT NAMING THE ROAD NETWORK TRAVERSING MARIFOSQUE STREET AND NATIONAL HIGHWAY AT BARANGAY DAO, MUNICIPALITY OF PILAR IN THE PROVINCE OF SORSOGON AS MANUEL T. SIA DIVERSION ROAD”

By Representative Escudero

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS

House Bill No. 1713, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE CUMADCAD - SAN ISIDRO - POBLACION PROVINCIAL ROAD IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF CASTILLA, PROVINCE OF SORSOGON, INTO A NATIONAL ROAD”

By Representative Escudero

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1714, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING TAX INCENTIVES TO BROADCAST AND PRINT MEDIA DEVOTING AIR TIME AND SPACE TO EDUCATION AS WELL AS, TO SPONSORS SUPPORTING SUCH PROGRAMS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Escudero

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 1715, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR PROTECTION, SECURITY AND BENEFITS OF WHISTLEBLOWERS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Casiño

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 1716, entitled:

“AN ACT PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF FREE/OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE (FOSS) IN THE PHILIPPINES, AMENDING RA 8293 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES’, PROVIDING PENALTIES THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Casiño

TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY AND THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

House Bill No. 1717, entitled:

“AN ACT STRENGTHENING RIGHTS RELATING TO TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLES 263 AND 264 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Hontiveros-Baraquel

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 1718, entitled:

“AN ACT TO ENHANCE THE PHILIPPINE INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR DISPUTE SETTLEMENT SYSTEM AND FOR THAT PURPOSE, AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Hontiveros-Baraquel

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 1719, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE TABON-LABISMA-LAWIGAN PROVINCIAL ROAD, OF THE CITY OF BISLIG, PROVINCE OF SURIGAO DEL SUR, INTO A NATIONAL ROAD AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Garay

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1720, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR TEACHING SERVICE AS PAYMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL LOANS DRAWN FROM PUBLIC FUNDS, INCLUDING TUITION SUBSIDIES FOR STUDENTS OF STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES”

By Representative Arenas

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1721, entitled:

“AN ACT GIVING CONGRESS BACK THE POWER OF THE PURSE, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION 31 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE 1177 AND SECTION 26, BOOK VI OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 292”

By Representative Arenas

TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1722, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A P125.00 DAILY ACROSS-THE-BOARD INCREASE IN THE SALARY RATES OF EMPLOYEES AND WORKERS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Beltran, Maza, Ilagan, Ocampo and Casiño
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 1723, entitled:

“AN ACT REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED 6727, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS AN ACT TO RATIONALIZE WAGE POLICY DETERMINATION BY ESTABLISHING THE MECHANISM AND PROPER STANDARDS THEREFOR, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE ARTICLE 99 OF, AND INCORPORATING ARTICLES 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 126, AND 127 INTO, PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, FIXING NEW WAGE RATES, PROVIDING WAGE INCENTIVES FOR INDUSTRIAL DISPERSAL TO THE COUNTRYSIDE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Beltran, Maza, Ilagan, Casiño and Ocampo
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 1724, entitled:

“AN ACT REPEALING REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED 8479, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE DOWNSTREAM OIL DEREGULATION ACT OF 1998”

By Representatives Beltran, Maza, Ilagan, Ocampo and Casiño
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

House Bill No. 1725, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JANUARY TWENTY-TWO OF EVERY YEAR AS A SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY TO BE KNOWN AS NATIONAL FARMER’S DAY”

By Representatives Beltran, Ocampo, Maza, Casiño and Ilagan
TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

House Bill No. 1726, entitled:

“AN ACT PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE (IRRI) AS ENSHRINED IN THE 1987 CONSTITUTION, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1620, THE DECREE GRANTING TO THE INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE (IRRI) THE STATUS, PREROGATIVES, PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION”

By Representatives Beltran, Ocampo, Maza, Casiño and Ilagan
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 1727, entitled:

“AN ACT REGULATING THE RESICADA SYSTEM IN THE COCONUT INDUSTRY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Beltran, Ocampo, Maza, Casiño and Ilagan
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

House Bill No. 1728, entitled:

“AN ACT SEGREGATING FROM STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE COUNTRY PORTIONS OF LAND THAT ARE IN EXCESS OF THEIR ACTUAL USE, NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS”

By Representatives Beltran, Ocampo, Maza, Casiño and Ilagan
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 1729, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MANDATORY APPOINTMENT OF COOPERATIVES OFFICERS IN EVERY LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT AMENDING FOR THAT PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Cua (G.)
TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 1730, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PROVIDENT PERSONAL SAVINGS PLAN, KNOWN AS THE PERSONAL EQUITY AND RETIREMENT ACCOUNT (‘PERA’)”

By Representative Puentevella
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

House Bill No. 1731, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CREDIT INFORMATION SYSTEM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Puentevella
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

House Bill No. 1732, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING THE PHILIPPINE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Puentevella
TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1733, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9280 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CUSTOMS BROKERS ACT OF 2004, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Puentevella
TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 1734, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE SOUTHERN

PALAWAN SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AND FREEPORT, CREATING FOR THE PURPOSE THE SOUTHERN PALAWAN SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AND FREE PORT AUTHORITY, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Mitra

TO THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY, THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1735, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING THE LOCAL SANGGUNIAN, EXCEPT THE SANGGUNIANG BARANGAYS, THE POWER TO CONDUCT INQUIRIES, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, TO ISSUE SUBPOENA AND TO PUNISH FOR CONTEMPT ANY PERSON WHO REFUSES TO OBEY SUCH PROCESS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTIONS 447, 458 AND 468 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7160, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991”

By Representative Apostol

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 1736, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING THE LEGANES TO STA. BARBARA PROVINCIAL ROAD IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF LEGANES AND STA. BARBARA IN THE SECOND DISTRICT OF ILOILO INTO A NATIONAL ROAD AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Syjuco

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1737, entitled:

“AN ACT UPGRADING THE ALEOSAN DISTRICT HOSPITAL LOCATED IN BARANGAY BANCAL, MUNICIPALITY OF ALIMODIAN IN THE SECOND DISTRICT OF ILOILO FROM A FIFTY (50)-BED INTO A ONE HUNDRED (100)-BED DISTRICT HOSPITAL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Syjuco

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1738, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9155 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘GOVERNANCE FOR BASIC EDUCATION ACT OF 2001’”

By Representative Duavit

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 1739, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE MAGNA CARTA OF THE BARANGAYS”

By Representative Defensor (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 1740, entitled:

“AN ACT GRANTING BENEFITS AND SPECIAL PRIVILEGES TO FORMER OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Defensor (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSEAS WORKERS AFFAIRS

House Bill No. 1741, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS AMONG GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES FOR AN INNOVATION-INSPIRED CORPS OF CIVIL SERVANTS AND A PRODUCTIVE POST-SERVICE CITIZENRY”

By Representative Defensor (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

House Bill No. 1742, entitled:

“AN ACT TO PROTECT WORKERS IN THE EVENT OF COMPANY CLOSURES OR CESSATION OF OPERATIONS BY ESTABLISHING THE MECHANISM AND PROPER STANDARDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Defensor (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

House Bill No. 1743, entitled:

“AN ACT LIMITING THE INVESTMENT OF FUNDS OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE SECTION TWENTY SIX OF REPUBLIC ACT NUMBER EIGHTY TWO HUNDRED EIGHTY-TWO, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT OF 1997”

By Representative Defensor (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES AND PRIVATIZATION

House Bill No. 1744, entitled:

“AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN AND PROPAGATE FOSTER CARE FOR ABANDONED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND OTHER CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, PROVIDING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Defensor (A.)

TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE EDUCATION AND WELFARE OF SPECIAL PERSONS

House Bill No. 1745, entitled:

“AN ACT DEFINING AND PENALIZING ENFORCED OR INVOLUNTARY DISAPPEARANCE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Defensor (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 1746, entitled:

“AN ACT REQUIRING INCLUSION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A SEPARATE SUBJECT IN THE HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM”

By Representative Defensor (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE

House Bill No. 1747, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1464, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE TARIFF AND CUSTOMS CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Defensor (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

House Bill No. 1748, entitled:

“AN ACT DEFINING AND PENALIZING CRIMES AGAINST INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND OTHER SERIOUS INTERNATIONAL CRIMES, OPERATIONALIZING UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION, DESIGNATING SPECIAL COURTS, AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES”

By Representative Golez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 1749, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A GOAT DAIRY FARM CENTER IN BARANGAY MAYATBA, MUNICIPALITY OF FAMY, PROVINCE OF LAGUNA, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative San Luis

TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1750, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING AN AGRO-INDUSTRIAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY KAPATALAN, MUNICIPALITY OF SINILAN, PROVINCE OF LAGUNA, TO BE KNOWN AS THE GOVERNOR FELICISIMO SAN LUIS AGRO-INDUSTRIAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative San Luis

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1751, entitled:

“AN ACT CREATING A GOAT DAIRY FARM CENTER IN BARANGAY SABANG, MUNICIPALITY OF MAGDALENA, PROVINCE OF LAGUNA, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative San Luis

TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1752, entitled:

“AN ACT CONSTITUTING A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TO AMEND OR REVISE THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Gonzalez

TO THE COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

House Bill No. 1753, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING SIX (6) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURT AND FOUR (4) ADDITIONAL BRANCHES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT IN VALENZUELA CITY, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 129 OR THE JUDICIARY REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1980, AS AMENDED”

By Representative Gunigundo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1754, entitled:

“AN ACT TO PROMOTE ENTREPRENEURSHIP BY STRENGTHENING DEVELOPMENT AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6977, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘MAGNA CARTA FOR SMALL ENTERPRISES’ AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representatives Sy-Alvarado and Cua (J.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT

House Bill No. 1755, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8379 TO BE KNOWN AS ‘AN ACT SEPARATING THE NEW ORMOC CITY NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (NOCNHS) IN BARANGAY DON FELIPE LARRAZABAL, ORMOC CITY FROM THE ORMOC CITY SCHOOL OF ARTS AND TRADE (OCSAT) NOW UNDER THE NEW NAME EASTERN VISAYAS STATE UNIVERSITY-ORMOC CITY SCHOOL OF ARTS AND TRADE (EVSU-OCSAT)’”

By Representative Codilla

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

House Bill No. 1756, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN BARANGAY LILO-AN, ORMOC CITY, PROVINCE OF LEYTE, TO BE KNOWN AS LILO-AN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Codilla
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1757, entitled:

“THE CONSOLIDATED INVESTMENTS AND
INCENTIVES CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Javier
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

House Bill No. 1758, entitled:

“AN ACT TO MAKE THE LAWS ON PATENTS,
TRADE NAMES AND TRADEMARKS MORE
RESPONSIVE TO THE HEALTH CARE NEEDS
OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE BY CLARIFYING
NON-PATENTABLE INVENTIONS,
ALLOWING THE IMPORTATION AND EARLY
DEVELOPMENT OF PATENTED MEDICINES,
AND MODIFYING GOVERNMENT USE
PROVISIONS FOR DRUGS OR MEDICINES,
TO LOWER PRICES AND INCREASE ACCESS
TO AND SUPPLY OF QUALITY DRUGS OR
MEDICINES, AMENDING FOR THIS
PURPOSE CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8293 OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Abaya
TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY

House Bill No. 1759, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL IN BARANGAY DINAPA,
MUNICIPALITY OF CASTILLA, PROVINCE OF
SORSOGON TO BE KNOWN AS THE DINAPA
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Escudero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1760, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL IN BARANGAY DANLOG,
MUNICIPALITY OF PILAR, PROVINCE OF
SORSOGON TO BE KNOWN AS MANUEL T.
SIA MEMORIAL NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Escudero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1761, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL IN BARANGAY BAYASONG,
MUNICIPALITY OF PILAR, PROVINCE OF
SORSOGON TO BE KNOWN AS BAYASONG
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Escudero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1762, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL IN BARANGAY BEHIA,
MUNICIPALITY OF MAGALLANES,
PROVINCE OF SORSOGON TO BE KNOWN AS
BAGATAO NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Escudero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1763, entitled:

“AN ACT SEPARATING THE MAYON HIGH
SCHOOL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF
CASTILLA, PROVINCE OF SORSOGON FROM
THE SORSOGON NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
SCHOOL IN BARANGAY MAYON,
MUNICIPALITY OF CASTILLA, AND
CONVERTING IT INTO AN INDEPENDENT
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS
THE MAYON NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Escudero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1764, entitled:

“AN ACT CONVERTING PILAR PRODUCTIVITY
DEVELOPMENT HIGH SCHOOL IN THE
MUNICIPALITY OF PILAR, PROVINCE OF
SORSOGON INTO A NATIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL TO BE KNOWN AS PILAR NATIONAL
COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Escudero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1765, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A BARANGAY HIGH
SCHOOL IN BARANGAY BUENAVISTA,
MUNICIPALITY OF CASTILLA, PROVINCE OF
SORSOGON, TO BE KNOWN AS BUENAVISTA
BARANGAY HIGH SCHOOL, APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES”

By Representative Escudero
TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1766, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION

OF PUBLIC RESTROOM ALONG NATIONAL AND
PROVINCIAL HIGHWAYS, APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Escudero

TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND
HIGHWAYS AND THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1767, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7941,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ‘PARTY-LIST
SYSTEM ACT’ ”

By Representative Hontiveros-Baraquel

TO THE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND
ELECTORAL REFORMS

House Bill No. 1768, entitled:

“AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF BREAST CARE CENTERS IN EVERY
REGION NATIONWIDE, APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES”

By Representative Soon-Ruiz

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND THE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1769, entitled:

“AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 17 OF REPUBLIC
ACT 6734 AS AMENDED BY SECTION 19 OF
REPUBLIC ACT 9054 ‘EXPANDING THE
ORGANIC ACT FOR THE AUTONOMOUS
REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES’ ”

By Representative Jaafar

TO THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

House Bill No. 1770, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A FIFTY-BED HOSPITAL
IN THE LONE DISTRICT OF BACOLOD CITY,
TO BE KNOWN AS THE BACOLOD CITY
HOSPITAL, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS
THEREFOR”

By Representative Puentevella

TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND THE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1771, entitled:

“AN ACT ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL IN BARANGAY MAAC,
MUNICIPALITY OF GUINSILIBAN, PROVINCE
OF CAMIGUIN TO BE KNOWN AS THE MAAC
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR”

By Representative Romualdo

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION
AND CULTURE AND THE COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

House Bill No. 1772, entitled:

“AN ACT DEFINING THE CRIME OF CHILD
PORNOGRAPHY IMPOSING PENALTIES
THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES”

By Representative Velarde

TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE

House Bill No. 1773, entitled:

“AN ACT DECLARING JULY 27 AS A SPECIAL
NON-WORKING HOLIDAY IN RECOGNITION
OF THE FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF
IGLESIA NI CRISTO IN THE PHILIPPINES”

By Representative Lazatin

TO THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF LAWS

RESOLUTIONS

House Resolution No. 71, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEES
ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY AND ON
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, INTO THE REPORTED
OVERPRICING OF FACTORY PRICES OF
CEMENT BY CEMENT MANUFACTURERS TO
THE DETRIMENT OF THE CEMENT
RETAILERS, THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR,
AND THE CONSUMING PUBLIC IN
GENERAL”

By Representative Gonzales (A.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 72, entitled:

“RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON
HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY,
IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE
CONTINUED DEPLOYMENT OF SOLDIERS IN
BARANGAY COMMONWEALTH, QUEZON
CITY AND IN OTHER URBAN POOR
COMMUNITIES IN METRO MANILA, AND TO
PULL-OUT THE DEPLOYED SOLDIERS
PENDING COMPLETION OF THE
INVESTIGATION”

By Representatives Maza and Ilagan

TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 73, entitled:

“RESOLUTION URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE AND OTHER GOVERNMENT
AGENCIES CONCERNED TO INSTITUTE
MEASURES TO ABATE THE EFFECTS OF EL
NIÑO AND AVERT FURTHER DAMAGE ON
WATER SUPPLY AND FOOD PRODUCTION”

By Representative Singson (R.)

TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND
FOOD

House Resolution No. 74, entitled:

“A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT
OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL
RESOURCES TO SUBMIT, WITHIN FORTY-
FIVE (45) DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THIS
RESOLUTION, TO THE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, IN AID OF REMEDIAL
LEGISLATION, ITS DETAILED INVENTORY,

EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON EXISTING MINING PERMITS, CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS, WHEREIN THE PERMITEES, GRANTEES AND PARTIES TO THE CONTRACTS THERETO ARE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE STIPULATED TERMS AND CONDITIONS, NON-PERFORMING WITH RESPECT TO WORK OBLIGATIONS OR VIOLATIVE OF THE PROVISIONS OF APPLICABLE LAW, SUCH THAT VALID CAUSES MAY EXIST TO REVOKE, CANCEL OR RESCIND EXISTING MINING PERMITS, CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS, IN ORDER TO OPEN UP OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPLORATION AND/OR DEVELOPMENT OF NATURAL MINERAL RESOURCES TO BONAFIDE INVESTORS WITH TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL CAPABILITY TO PRODUCTIVELY UTILIZE METALLIC AND NON-METALLIC MINERALS, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE MATERIALS FOR INDUSTRIES, CREATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, GENERATE GOVERNMENT REVENUES AND EXPAND OUR NATION'S EXPORT CAPACITY, IN A SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND POLICY SETTING"

By Representative Villafuerte
TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

House Resolution No. 75, entitled:

"RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE ALLEGED HOUSING SCAM VICTIMIZING THE EMPLOYEES OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES LIKE THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL RAILWAYS WITH THE END OF CREATING STANDARDS FOR THE PROTECTION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND THE GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM"

By Representative Biazon
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 76, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE) TO REVISIT AND REVIEW EXISTING PLANS FOR THE USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES IN THE PHILIPPINES AND SUBMIT TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ITS WRITTEN PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH SHALL BE THE STARTING BASIS FOR THE FORMULATION OF REMEDIAL MEASURES IN THE ENERGY SECTOR, IN AID OF LEGISLATION"

By Representatives Macapagal Arroyo and Villafuerte
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 77, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, TO SUBMIT TO CONGRESS, FOR ITS CONSIDERATION, A POSITION PAPER INDICATING THEREIN IF LEGISLATION OR ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS ARE NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS TO AVERT A PROJECTED ENERGY CRISIS, IF ANY IS ANTICIPATED"

By Representatives Macapagal Arroyo and Villafuerte
TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

House Resolution No. 78, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONGRATULATING FORMER SENATOR JOVITO SALONGA FOR BEING A RECIPIENT OF THE 2007 RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARD FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICE"

By Representative Hontiveros-Baraquel
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 79, entitled:

"RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRARIAN REFORM, THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND OTHER APPROPRIATE HOUSE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON NINETEEN (19) AGRIBUSINESS AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND PRIVATE CHINESE CORPORATIONS"

By Representative Hontiveros-Baraquel
TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES

House Resolution No. 80, entitled:

"RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AGAINST THE EXTENSION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM (CARP) BECAUSE IT HAS FAILED TO IMPLEMENT ACTUAL LAND DISTRIBUTION TO LANDLESS FARMERS"

By Representatives Ocampo, Beltran, Maza, Casiño and Ilagan
TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRARIAN REFORM

House Concurrent Resolution No. 8, entitled:

"CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR FOR THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES"

By Representatives Defensor (A.) and Zamora (R.)

ADDITIONAL COAUTHORS

Rep. Darlene R. Antonino-Custodio for House Bill No. 317;

Rep. Edgar M. Chatto for House Bills No. 659, 660 and 661;

Rep. Guillermo P. Cua for House Bills No. 62, 268, 375 and 421;

Rep. Orlando B. Fua for House Bills No. 1, 4, 9, 18, 26, 78, 92, 201, 268, 335, 357, 360 and 665;

Rep. Antonio F. Lagdameo Jr. for House Bills No. 1, 4, 32 and 303;

Rep. Jeci A. Lapus for House Bills No. 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697 and 698;

Rep. Monica Prieto-Teodoro for House Bills No. 10, 18, 138, 147, 159, 164, 263, 264, 266, 267, 271, 275 and 334; and

Rep. Rolando "Klaxex" A. Uy for House Bill No. 8.

COMMUNICATION

Letter dated July 27, 2007 of Armando L. Suratos, Officer-in-Charge, Office of the Governor, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, submitting a Report on Public Sector and Publicly-Guaranteed Private Sector Foreign Loans Approved by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) in the Second Quarter of 2007

TO THE COMMITTEE ON BANKS AND FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

REP. GONZALES (N.). May I request for a suspension of session, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is suspended.

It was 7:17 p.m.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 7:17 p.m., the session was resumed.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is resumed.

CONSIDERATION OF H.C.T. RES. NO. 8

PERIOD OF SPONSORSHIP

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we consider House Concurrent Resolution No. 8.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the motion is approved.

Consideration of House Concurrent Resolution No. 8 is now in order. With the permission of the Body, the Secretary General will read the title and text of the concurrent resolution.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL. House Concurrent Resolution No. 8, entitled: CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR FOR

THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

The Following is the text of the resolution:

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 8
Introduced by Reps. Defensor (A.) and Zamora (R.)

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR FOR THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES

RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That the Legislative Calendar for the First Regular Session of the Fourteenth Congress of the Philippines shall be as follows:

CALENDAR OF SESSION FIRST REGULAR SESSION

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. Commencement of Session | – July 23, 2007 |
| – October 12, 2007 | |
| 2. Adjournment of Session | – October 13, 2007 – November 4, 2007 |
| 3. Resumption of Session | – November 5, 2007 – December 21, 2007 |
| 4. Adjournment of Session | – December 22, 2007 – January 20, 2008 |
| 5. Resumption of Session | – January 21, 2008 – March 28, 2008 |
| 6. Adjournment of Session | – March 29, 2008 – April 27, 2008 |
| 7. Resumption of Session | – April 28, 2008 – June 13, 2008 |
| 8. Adjournment of Session | – June 14, 2008 – July 27, 2008 (<i>sine die adjournment</i>) |

ADOPTION OF H.C.T.RES. NO. 8

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, I move that we adopt House Concurrent Resolution No. 8.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Is there any objection? (*Silence*) The Chair hears none; the concurrent resolution is hereby adopted.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker.

REP. GONZALES (N.). Mr. Speaker, we just would like to acknowledge the presence in the gallery of the session hall, guests of our distinguished Representative from the Second District of Antipolo City, the Honorable Gatlabayan, Mr. Jose Pasepre and company.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). Please rise to be recognized. (*Applause*)
Welcome to the House.

REP. ABANTE. Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Honorable Abante is recognized.

REP. ABANTE. I just would like to make a manifestation, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Gentleman may please proceed.

REP. ABANTE. When I raised an objection to the chairmanship of the Committee on Human Rights, Mr. Speaker, I am not questioning the qualification of Congressman Tañada. I believe he is very much qualified. He is a brilliant lawyer and I believe that he could do a wonderful job in the Committee on Human Rights.

Mr. Speaker, I was the former Chairman of the Human Rights Committee but I was not even consulted on the nomination of Congressman Tañada as its Chairman. Because I think if I was consulted, I have some people to even suggest and nominate, Mr. Speaker. I hope and trust that when we nominate chairmen to the committees which are very important, the House should be involved in the nomination. I believe that we ought to be concerned for that.

So, may I just say that I am not questioning the qualifications of Congressman Tañada in raising my objection.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The Sr. Dep. Majority Leader is recognized.

REP. GONZALES (N.). May we just note the manifestation of the distinguished Gentleman from Manila.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The manifestation of the distinguished Gentleman from Manila is noted.

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

REP. GONZALES (N.). I move that we adjourn the session until four o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Rep. Remulla). The session is adjourned until four o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

It was 7:21 p.m.
