



LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICE
KEY POINTS OF PLENARY PROCEEDINGS
Second Regular Session, 19th Congress

Session No. 26
Monday, 25 September 2023

1. Approval of S. No. 2001 on Third Reading

An Act Providing for a New Passport Law, Repealing for the Purpose Republic Act No. 8239, Otherwise Known as the “Philippine Passport Act of 1996”, as Amended, and Providing Funds Therefor

2. Approval of S. No. 2028 on Third Reading

An Act Recognizing the Octogenarians, Nonagenarians, and Centenarians

3. Approval of S. No. 2233 on Third Reading

An Act Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes

4. Approval of S. No. 2224 on Third Reading

An Act Introducing Administrative Tax Reforms, Amending Sections 22, 34, 51, 56, 58, 76, 77, 81, 90, 91, 103, 106, 108, 109, 110, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 128, 200, 204, 236, 237, 238, 241, 242, 243, 245, 248, and 269 of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as Amended, and for Other Purposes

5. Approval of H. No. 6128 on Third Reading

An Act Establishing in the Municipality of Floridablanca, Province of Pampanga, a Campus of the Pampanga State Agricultural University, to be Known as the “Pampanga State Agricultural University-Floridablanca Campus”, and Appropriating Funds Therefor”

Motion of Senator Villanueva that Senator Padilla be made Cosponsor of H. No. 6128

6. Approval of H. No. 6552 on Third Reading

An Act Converting the San Isidro Satellite Campus of the Leyte Normal University Located in the Municipality of San Isidro, Province of Leyte, into a Regular Campus of the Leyte Normal University to be Known as the Leyte Normal University-San Isidro Campus, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

7. Approval of H. No. 6553 on Third Reading

An Act Converting the Bataan Peninsula State University - Bagac Extension Campus in the Municipality of Bagac, Province of Bataan, into Regular Campus of the Bataan Peninsula State University, to be Known as the "Bataan Peninsula State University - Bagac Campus", and Appropriating Funds Therefor

8. Approval of H. No. 6704 on Third Reading

An Act Establishing a College of Medicine in the Benguet State University Located in the Municipality of La Trinidad, Province of Benguet, to be Known as the Benguet State University-College of Medicine, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

9. Approval of H. No. 7087 on Third Reading

An Act Establishing a College of Medicine in the Southern Luzon State University-Main Campus Located in the Municipality of Lucban, Province of Quezon, to be Known as the Southern Luzon State University-College of Medicine, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

10. Approval of H. No. 7088 on Third Reading

An Act Establishing a College of Medicine in the University of Eastern Philippines Located in the Municipality of Catarman, Province of Northern Samar, to be Known as the University of Eastern Philippines-College of Medicine, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

11. Approval of H. No. 7090 on Third Reading

An Act Establishing a College of Medicine in the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University-South La Union Campus Located in the Municipality of Agoo, Province of La Union, to be Known as the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University-South La Union Campus-College of Medicine, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

Manifestation of Senator Tolentino that he be made cosponsor of H. No. 7090.

12. Approval of H. No. 7091 on Third Reading

An Act Converting the Campus of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines Located in the City of Parañaque, into a Regular Campus of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, to be Known as the Polytechnic University of the Philippines-Parañaque City Campus, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

13. Approval of H. No. 7397 on Third Reading

An Act Establishing in the City of Ligao, Province of Albay, a College of Veterinary Medicine of the Bicol University, to be Known as the Bicol University-College of Veterinary Medicine, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

14. Approval of H. No. 7398 on Third Reading

An Act Establishing the Southern Luzon State University-Catanauan Campus-College of Veterinary Medicine, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

15. Approval of H. No. 7412 on Third Reading

An Act Establishing a College of Medicine in the Visayas State University Located in the City of Baybay, Province of Leyte, to be Known as the Visayas State University-College of Medicine, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

16. Approval of H. No. 7961 on Third Reading

An Act Strengthening the Bulacan State University, Expanding its Curricular Offerings and the Composition of the Governing Board, and Appropriating Funds Therefor

Motion of Senator Villanueva that Sen. Robinhood C. Padilla be made cosponsor of the 11 previously approved measures on Third Reading.

17. Reconsideration of the Approval of S. No. 1846 on Second Reading

Senator Villar (M) moved to reconsider the approval on Second Reading of Senate Bill No. 1846 under Committee Report No. 22 which the Body approved.

Amendments of Senator Villar (M)

Senator Villar (M) proposed, and the Body approved, the following amendments:

- On page 36, delete entire lines 9 to 12
- On page 37, delete entire lines 10 to 14.

Approval of S. No. 1846 on Second Reading

Approval on Third Reading (certified measure)

Manifestation of Senator Pimentel

Senator Pimentel manifested his objection to the measures' two readings in one day. He stated that the Constitution provides that the presidential certification can only be issued for measures which are meant to address public calamity or an emergency. The Senator believes that there is no public calamity or an emergency which will be resolved by the Internet Transactions Act.

Senator Villanueva Moved for the Division of the House.

With 20 members voting in favor and 2 against, the motion is approved and the Body proceeded with the Third Reading of the measure.

Approval of Third Reading

Explanation of Vote of Senator Hontiveros

Senator Hontiveros explained that given the rising number of scams and the importance of protecting consumers on digital platforms, her vote for the measure does not invalidate the position she shares with the Minority Leader—that certifications of urgency should not be given too easily, absent emergencies and calamities.

Senator Villar (M) expressed his gratitude to everyone who had been instrumental in the passage of the bill.

Manifestation of Senator Villanueva that his Explanation of Vote on S. No. 1846 be inserted into the *Record*.

Motion of Senator Villanueva that the Manifestation of Senator Gatchalian on S. No. 2426 be inserted into the *Record*.

Manifestation of Senator Ejercito, expressing his gratitude for the support of the chamber in the passage of S. No. 2233, the Public Private Partnership Act. He also acknowledged the efforts and expertise of the technical team that supported the bill.

18. Senate Bill No. 2426 under Committee Report No. 107

An Act Mandating the Formulation, Funding, Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation of a Comprehensive and Multi-Year "Tatak Pinoy" (Proudly Filipino) Strategy, Establishing a Tatak Pinoy Council, Appropriating Funds Therefore, and for Other Purposes

Amendment of Senator Legarda

Senator Legarda proposed, and the Body approved, the following amendment:

- On page 2, line 4, the *Declaration of Policy*, paragraph (a), after the words “green technologies”, add a period (.) and insert the following sentence: THIS SHALL INCLUDE EMPLOYMENT GENERATION, SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT IN THE FORMULATION OF LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA.

Amendments of Senator Angara

Senator Angara proposed, and the Body approved, the following amendments, among others:

- On page 2, line 13, under Section 2, the *Declaration of Policy*, paragraph (d), after the word “strategies”, insert a comma (,) and the phrase INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO TARGETED SECTORAL AND FIRM-LEVEL SUPPORT PROGRAMS.
- On page 2, line 21, still the *Declaration of Policy* under Section 2, insert a new paragraph (f), and renumber the succeeding paragraphs accordingly. The new paragraph (f) to read, as follows:

F) THE STATE SHALL PROMOTE AND SAFEGUARD THE QUALITY OF PHILIPPINE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES IN BOTH THE DOMESTIC AND GLOBAL MARKET, AS A MEANS FOR ENCOURAGING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CONSUMER AND BUSINESS CONFIDENCE IN PHILIPPINE INDUSTRIES.

- On page 2, lines 23 to 24, delete the term “Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB)” and replace it with TATAK PINOY COUNCIL (TP COUNCIL).
- On page 4, lines 19 to 20, under Section 3, paragraph (b), subparagraph (ii), delete the whole subparagraph and replace it with ANY GOOD, ARTICLE, MATERIAL AND SUPPLIES, PRODUCED, MANUFACTURED OR ASSEMBLED IN THE PHILIPPINES WHICH HAS A MINIMUM LOCAL CONTENT AS MAY BE DETERMINED BY THE TP COUNCIL.
- On page 5, lines 12 to 13, delete the phrase “based on the probability of co-export of both of the two products” and replace it with WHICH IS DETERMINED BY FACTORS SUCH AS THE SIMILARITY OF PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES, THE USE OF COMMON RESOURCES, AND THE TRANSFERABILITY OF SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN INDUSTRIES.
- On page 8, lines 4 and 5 under Section 5, paragraph (e), after the word “and”, to delete the phrase “require submission of industry performance reports in order to identify and address industry gaps and other challenges” and insert the

phrase MANDATE SPECIFIC DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES TO ADDRESS GAPS AND CHALLENGES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY CONSTRAINING THE COMPETITIVENESS, SOPHISTICATION, AND DIVERSIFICATION OF PHILIPPINE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, AND REQUIRE THE CONCERNED AGENCY HEADS OR THEIR DULY AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES TO SUBMIT PROGRESS REPORTS ON THE ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES TAKEN TO RESOLVE THESE GAPS AND CHALLENGES AT THE SOONEST POSSIBLE TIME.

- On page 8, line 6, under Section 5, insert a new paragraph (F), and renumber the succeeding paragraphs accordingly, with the new paragraph (F) to read, as follows:

F) ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (LGUs), REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS (RDCs), LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES, OTHER PUBLIC SECTOR INSTRUMENTALITIES OR CLUSTERS THAT ARE SUBNATIONAL IN SCOPE AND COVERAGE, LOCAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, AND OTHER REPUTABLE PRIVATE SECTOR GROUPS WITH SUBNATIONAL CONSTITUENCIES, TO PURSUE PLANS, PROGRAMS, AND PROJECTS THAT ENHANCE THE DIVERSITY AND SOPHISTICATION OF PHILIPPINE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES OFFERED BY DOMESTIC ENTERPRISES, AS MEANS FOR SPREADING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND ENSURING MORE EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE COUNTRY;

- On page 8, Section 5, after the new paragraph (F), insert a new paragraph (G) to read, as follows:

G) ENSURE THE EQUITABLE SPREAD OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURES RELEVANT TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS ACT, AND FORMULATE THE NECESSARY GUIDELINES FOR MEASURING AND MONITORING THEREOF, PURSUANT TO SEC. 2 HEREOF;

- On page 8, Section 5, after the new paragraph (G), insert a new paragraph (H), and renumber the succeeding paragraphs accordingly. Such paragraph (H) shall read, as follows:

H) ENSURE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS INCORPORATE OR ADOPT THE TPS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS, AS MAY BE APPLICABLE, THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG);

- On page 9, line 4, Section 5, after the relettered paragraph (o), insert a new paragraph (P) to read, as follows:

P) COLLABORATE WITH REPUTABLE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES, PUBLIC RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D) INSTITUTIONS, OTHER GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES, AND RELEVANT INDUSTRY

STAKEHOLDERS TOWARDS PURSUING STRATEGIC R&D AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER INITIATIVES THAT ARE CRITICAL TO IMPLEMENTING THE TPS AND ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS ACT;

- On page 9, under Section 5, after the new paragraph (P), insert a new paragraph (Q), to read:

Q) STRENGTHEN THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES THAT WOULD SUPPORT COMMERCIALIZATION AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY AND CAPACITY BUILDING BETWEEN AGENTS OF THE ECONOMY, INCLUDING MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES AND INTERNATIONAL INVESTORS, AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS;

- On page 9, under Section 5, after the new paragraph (Q), insert a new paragraph (R), and renumber the succeeding paragraphs accordingly.

R) COLLABORATE WITH RELEVANT GOVERNMENT INSTRUMENTALITIES AND PRIVATE SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS TO IMPLEMENT JOINT INITIATIVES FOR PROMOTING AND SAFEGUARDING THE QUALITY OF PHILIPPINE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES; AND

- On page 12, lines 7 to 8, after the word “components”, delete the phrase “to improve the supply and production sectors of the economy” and insert the following: UNDER EACH TPS PILLAR FOR ACHIEVING THE AFOREMENTIONED NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC GOALS, PURSUANT TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS ACT.
- On page 12, Section 7, the *Tatak Pinoy Strategy*. This is the President Pro Tempore’s amendment.

After the insertions on Section 7, paragraph (a), insert the following sentence: THE PROCUREMENT SERVICE – DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT (PS-DBM) SHALL SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT TO THE TP COUNCIL ON THE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES THAT PROCURE COMMON-USE SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT (CSE) ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM THE PS-DBM, AND NON-CSE ITEMS BASED ON THE POSTINGS MADE BY AGENCIES AT THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT ELECTRONIC PROCUREMENT SYSTEM (PHILGEPS) AS PART OF THE TPS.

- On page 14, line 14, under Section 8, paragraph (b), after the word “requirements”, insert a comma (,) and the phrase SUCH AS INNOVATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH AND INCUBATION, AND NATIONAL AND REGIONAL INNOVATION HUBS, TO FEATURE RELEVANT ADVANCED AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY CENTERS.
- On page 14, line 21, after the word “to”, insert the following:

IDENTIFY AND ADVANCE STRATEGIC, MARKET-DRIVEN, AND CUSTOMER-CENTRIC R&D ACTIVITIES AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER INITIATIVES THAT ARE CRITICAL TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TPS AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS ACT; *PROVIDED*, THAT THE TP COUNCIL SHALL STRENGTHEN THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES THAT WOULD SUPPORT COMMERCIALIZATION AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY AND CAPACITY BUILDING BETWEEN AGENTS OF THE ECONOMY, INCLUDING MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES AND INTERNATIONAL INVESTORS, AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS; *PROVIDED, FURTHER*, THAT THE TP COUNCIL SHALL

- On page 19, line 20, after the word “lane.”, insert a new paragraph which shall read, as follows:

AN EXPORT GREEN LANE FACILITY SHALL LIKEWISE BE ESTABLISHED FOR QUALIFIED EXPORTERS FOR ADVANCED PROCESSING AND CLEARANCES OF THEIR EXPORT REQUIREMENTS, INCLUDING THE IMPORTATION OF CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS AND CAPITAL EQUIPMENT, UNDER THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND OTHER REGULATORY AUTHORITIES.

19. Privilege Speech of Senator Tulfo

Senator Tulfo stated that after fifteen years since the first filing of the Magna Carta for Filipino Seafarers, it is now on its final stage. The measure is in appreciation of the seafarers, which also coincides with celebration of the National Maritime Week.

Through the years, the global shipping industry has relied on the Filipinos to man their vessels. In 2022 alone, 489,852 Filipino seafarers were deployed. This is 25% of the world’s total 1.9 million strong seafarers. With this number, comes the incident of benefit to the Philippine economy for the remittances of our seafarers. In 2019 alone, it was estimated that Filipino seafarers remitted US\$6.5 billion to the Philippines. This is, practically, 1.7% of the country’s GDP that year.

Senator Tulfo informed the Body that he is closely working with the DMW to ensure that the seafarers’ rights, as provided in other international conventions, will be protected. To the fishers, necessary laws will be passed that will institutionalize the fishers’ industry.

The Senator is taking a firm stance against ambulance chasing, working alongside DMW, seafarers’ representatives, and several manning agencies to propose a targeted amendment to the Magna Carta to address this issue at its roots. He plans to introduce a mandatory system for determining disability grading by DOH-accredited doctors trained in maritime disability grading, with their findings to be final and binding. The Senator views this amendment as a protective measure for the seafaring industry, a tribute to seafarers during National Maritime Week, safeguarding the sector that supports them and their families.

Manifestation of Senator Villanueva

Senator Villanueva honored the seafarers in celebration of the 28th National Seafarer's Day, to recognize the Filipino seafarer's invaluable contribution to our society and economy.

Highlighting the seafarers strong work ethic and dedication, Senator Villanueva mentioned how the French Parliament holds Filipino seafarers in high esteem, especially those working on European vessels, making them highly sought after.

The Majority Leader emphasized that the enactment of the Magna Carta for Seafarers is poised to improve the lives of seafarers significantly. Furthermore, he advocated for government agencies to offer continuous skills training for seafarers and ensure compliance with the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) Audit.

Adding to this, Senator Gatchalian associated himself with the privilege speeches of Senators Tulfo and Villanueva, recognizing the potential of the maritime industry as a domain where our country can excel. He expressed his aspiration for a future where Filipino seafarers will fully staff vessels, from the maintenance crew to the captain's position, underscoring the capabilities and promise of Filipino maritime professionals.

Motion of Senator Villanueva that the speech of Senator Tulfo and the related manifestations be referred to the Committee on Migrant Workers.

20. Senate Bill No. 2034 under Committee Report No. 62

An Act Mandating the Institutionalization, Development, Training, Organization and Administration of Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Program in Higher Educational Institutions and Technical Vocational Institutions, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes

Sponsor: Sen. Ronald "Bato" Dela Rosa

Interpellation of Senator Gatchalian

Senator Gatchalian inquired about the updates and improvements in the revived ROTC program aimed at student development. In response, Senator Dela Rosa highlighted the establishment of an ROTC Grievance Board to ensure the program is free from abuse, corruption, and other malpractices. Another update includes providing a free set of uniforms for first-year ROTC students.

Senator Tolentino mentioned a commitment made during the DOST budget hearing to develop textile materials from indigenous sources for the ROTC program. This was confirmed by Senator Dela Rosa, noting an assurance from a DOST

undersecretary regarding the development of durable and presentable locally-produced fabric for ROTC uniforms.

Manifestation of Senator Legarda

Senator Legarda referenced Republic Act No. 9242, the "Philippine Tropical Fabrics Law," mandating government personnel to wear Philippine textiles, emphasizing its potential to boost local economies through rural sustainable livelihoods. Senator Dela Rosa confirmed the Philippine Textile Research Institute's commitment to developing a prototype for ROTC uniforms.

Senator Gatchalian questioned the existence of a mechanism to educate various stakeholders about their rights and the grievance process. Senator Dela Rosa responded that while a "proactive campaign" is not explicitly mentioned, it will be addressed in the IRR, and the bill mandates instructor training to high standards, ensuring familiarity with relevant domestic and international laws protecting students.

The innovations in the Mandatory ROTC Program aim to meet four objectives: national defense preparedness; emergency and disaster preparedness; fostering patriotism, nationalism, and respect for human rights; and promoting civic mindedness and volunteerism.

Manifestation of Senator Tolentino

Senator Tolentino inquired whether the modified ROTC Program would consider geographical relevance, suggesting Navy, Army, or Air Force ROTC Programs be offered based on the location of educational institutions. Senator Dela Rosa affirmed this, also noting a specialized program for foreign students to deepen their understanding of the Philippines, although they would not join the AFP Reserve Force.

Addressing Senator Gatchalian's question about the support for ROTC's revival, Senator Dela Rosa identified several reasons: a perceived decrease in youth discipline; heightened awareness due to geopolitical tensions; and the Philippines' vulnerability to natural disasters. These factors contribute to a desire for a more disciplined, prepared, and patriotic youth populace.

Manifestation of Senator Tolentino

Senator Tolentino stated that the collective sense of the youth probably can be attributed to the question of what can they do. The Senator expressed his desire to propose amendments, at the proper time, to include provisions that would encapsulate climate change mitigation, coral reefs protection, and preservation of the marine ecosystem, which would probably resonate to those who would want to join the navy ROTC.

21. Senate Bill No. 2221 under Committee Report No. 69

An Act Providing for the Magna Carta of Filipino Seafarers

Sponsor: Sen. Raffy Tulfo

Amendments of Senator Tulfo

Senator Tulfo proposed, and the Body approved, the following individual amendments, among others:

- On page 2, after line 9, under Section 2, add a new paragraph which shall read, as follows:

THE STATE SHALL LIKEWISE ENSURE THAT APPROPRIATE ACTIONS ARE IMPOSED FOR VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AT SEA, THAT EFFECTIVE SANCTIONS SHALL BE ADOPTED IN DETERRING FUTURE ABUSES AND ENSURING THAT THOSE WHO ENGAGE IN HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS DO NOT BENEFIT FROM THEIR ILLEGAL ACTIONS.

- On page 2, lines 24 to 25, after the word “seafarers”, delete the rest of the paragraph up to page 3, lines 1 to 2, and replace it with the following phrase:

PROVIDED THAT CHAPTER VII (TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT APPLICABLE TO OVERSEAS SEAFARERS) AND CHAPTER XII (REPATRIATION) SHALL NOT APPLY TO THEM.

- On page 3, after line 2, still under Section 3, add a new subparagraph, which shall read, as follows:

(C) ALL FILIPINO CADETS UNDERGOING SHIPBOARD TRAINING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER XVI OF THIS ACT.

- On page 3, line 8, after the word “support”, insert the phrase: WHICH INCLUDE ADEQUATE FOOD, ACCOMMODATION, DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES, ESSENTIAL FUEL FOR SURVIVAL ON BOARD THE SHIP AND NECESSARY MEDICAL CARE.

- On page 3, after line 13, add a new subparagraph, which shall read, as follows:

(C) *DOMESTIC SEAFARER* – REFERS TO A SEAFARER WHO HAS BEEN ENGAGED, EMPLOYED OR WORKS IN ANY CAPACITY ON BOARD A DOMESTIC SHIP;

Then renumber the succeeding subsections accordingly.

- On page 3, after line 19, insert a new subparagraph, which shall read, as follows:

(D) *EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT* – REFERS TO THE WRITTEN AGREEMENT BETWEEN A DOMESTIC SEAFARER AND SHIPOWNER, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER XIV OF THIS ACT.

Then renumber the succeeding subsections accordingly.

- As proposed by Sen. Joel Villanueva, on the same page, delete lines 20 to 21 on the definition of “*Green Lane*”, and replace it with a new definition, as follows:

(E) *GREEN LANE* – A CONTROLLED TRAVEL CORRIDOR FACILITATING IN THE SHORTEST TIME POSSIBLE A SAFE AND SWIFT ENTRY OF SEAFARERS WITH A VALID SEAFARERS’ IDENTITY DOCUMENT AND OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS, AND IF APPROPRIATE, EXEMPTING SEAFARERS FROM TRAVEL- OR HEALTH-RELATED MOVEMENT RESTRICTIONS DURING PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES WHEN ENTRY IS REQUESTED FOR:

(1) ONBOARDING THE SHIP TO WHICH THEY ARE DEPLOYED OR TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SHIP; OR

(2) PASSING IN TRANSIT TO JOIN THE SHIP TO WHICH THEY ARE DEPLOYED IN ANOTHER COUNTRY OR FOR REPATRIATION; OR

(3) ANY OTHER LEGITIMATE PURPOSE AS MAY BE APPROVED BY RELEVANT AUTHORITIES.

- on page 4, delete lines 20 to 23 on the definition of “*Maritime Labor Certificate*”, and replace with a new letter (k), and insert the letter “u” between the letters “o” and “r” in the word “labor”, as follows:

(K) *MARITIME LABOUR CERTIFICATE* – REFERS TO THE DOCUMENT, COMPLEMENTED BY A DECLARATION OF MARITIME LABOR COMPLIANCE, THAT CONSTITUTES AS *PRIMA FACIE* EVIDENCE THAT THE PHILIPPINE-FLAGGED VESSEL HAS BEEN DULY INSPECTED AND, TO THE EXTENT SO CERTIFIED, IS COMPLIANT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE MLC, 2006, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO WORKING AND LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE SEAFARERS AND OF APPLICABLE PHILIPPINE LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

- On page 5, after line 13, insert a new subitem, which shall read, as follows:

(P) *OVERSEAS SEAFARER* - REFERS TO A SEAFARER WHO HAS BEEN ENGAGED, EMPLOYED, OR WORKING ONBOARD IN ANY CAPACITY IN A SHIP OR VESSEL PLYING INTERNATIONAL WATERS, WHETHER PHILIPPINE-REGISTERED OR FOREIGN-REGISTERED.

Thereafter, succeeding subitems shall be adjusted accordingly.

- On page 5, lines 14 to 16, delete the entire phrase defining “*Ocean-Going Ship*”.
- On page 5, delete lines 20 to 25, and insert a new definition of “*One-Stop-Center for Seafarers*”, as follows:

(P) *ONE-STOP SHOP CENTER FOR SEAFARERS* - REFERS TO A UNIT IN THE ONE-STOP SHOP CENTER PROVIDED UNDER SECTION 11 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11641, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE DEPARTMENT OF MIGRANT WORKERS (DMW) ACT, THAT SHALL HANDLE THE SPECIFIC CONCERNS OF SEAFARERS, AND SHALL, AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE, LOCATED IN MAJOR CREW-CHANGE PORTS, SPECIFICALLY IN METRO MANILA, PANGASINAN, BULACAN, CAVITE, BATANGAS, ILOILO, CEBU, CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY, DAVAO CITY AND OTHER AREAS TO BE DETERMINED BY DMW, TO FACILITATE EASY ACCESS TO ALL RELEVANT GOVERNMENT CLEARANCES AND PERMITS, EMPLOYMENT DOCUMENTS, VALIDATION OF JOB OFFERS, REINTEGRATION SERVICES, SEMINARS OR TRAINING FOR UPSKILLING OR RETOOLING, AND ALL OTHER SERVICES INCLUDING LEGAL ASSISTANCE.

- On page 6, delete lines 1 to 3 and replace with a new definition of “*Recognized Organizations*”, as follows:

(R) *RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS* – REFER TO ORGANIZATIONS RECOGNIZED AND AUTHORIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT (DOLE), AS COMPETENT, INDEPENDENT AND HAS THE NECESSARY EXPERTISE RELEVANT TO THE MLC, 2006, TO CARRY OUT INSPECTIONS, REQUIRE RECTIFICATION OF IDENTIFIED DEFICIENCIES IN THE WORKING AND LIVING CONDITIONS OF SEAFARERS, AND ISSUE THE APPROPRIATE MARITIME LABOR CERTIFICATES ON BEHALF OF THE DOLE ON PHILIPPINE-FLAGGED SHIPS.

- On same page, line 15, add the sentence, IN THE CASE OF A CADET, ONE IS DEEMED ENGAGED UPON SIGNING OF A VALID SHIPBOARD TRAINING AGREEMENT.
- On same page, line 18, after the word “activities”, insert a comma (,) then add the following phrase: OTHER THAN ONE WHICH NAVIGATES EXCLUSIVELY IN INLAND WATER OR IN WATER WITHIN OR CLOSELY ADJACENT TO SHELTERED WATER, OR AREAS WHERE PORT REGULATIONS APPLY.
- On page 7, line 13, Section 6, after the word “law”, add a new paragraph that reads:

IN THE EXERCISE OF THIS RIGHT, THE EXEMPTIONS FROM TAXES, DUTIES AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS PROVIDED IN ARTICLE 251 OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 442, AS AMENDED, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LABOR CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES, SHALL CONTINUE TO BE ENJOYED BY LEGITIMATE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS OF SEAFARERS, WITHOUT NEED TO APPLY FOR OR

CONFIRM SUCH EXEMPTIONS, WHICH MAY BE WITHDRAWN ONLY BY A SPECIAL LAW EXPRESSLY REPEALING THIS PROVISION.

- On page 8, line 28, after the phrase “agency concerned”, insert the phrase WITH REGARD TO REMEDIES, MITIGATION OR REPATRIATION.
- As introduced by Deputy Minority Leader, Sen. Risa Hontiveros, on page 9, line 10, under Section 11, after the word “stakeholders”, add the phrase BOTH ON BOARD AND IN THE PHILIPPINES.
- On page 10, delete lines 1 to 3 and replace them with the following for clarity:

FOR THIS PURPOSE, THE PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION SEMINAR (PDOS) OF SEAFARERS SHALL INCLUDE THE POLICIES, PLANS AND ACCESSIBLE PROCEDURES TO ELIMINATE AND ADDRESS ALL FORMS OF HARASSMENT AND BULLYING ONBOARD SHIPS AND ONSHORE.

- On Page 10, Lines 4 to 6, under Section 14, after the word “Seafarers”, delete the phrase “who are victims of violations of the provisions of this Act or whose contracts have been breached, who cannot afford the services of a competent and independent counsel”.
- On the same page 10, Line 9, after the word “regulations”, insert a comma (,) and add the phrase: IN CASES OF VIOLATIONS OF THIS ACT OR BREACH OF CONTRACT AND THE SEAFARER CANNOT AFFORD THE SERVICES OF A COUNSEL.
- On page 13, line 13, after the word “regulations.”, insert a new sentence, as follows:

IN NO EVENT SHALL RECRUITMENT OR PLACEMENT FEES AND RELATED COSTS SHALL BE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY LEVIED OR COLLECTED FROM THE SEAFARERS OR THEIR FAMILIES.

- On the same page, delete lines 14 to 15 and replace them with:

ALL PRACTICES AND MECHANISMS THAT TEND TO PREVENT QUALIFIED SEAFARERS FROM GAINING EMPLOYMENT SHALL ALSO BE PROHIBITED.

- On page 15, after line 9, insert a new subitem which shall read, as follows:

(L) THE MANDATORY PROCESS FOR THE DETERMINATION OF THE FINAL AND BINDING DISABILITY GRADING TO BE DETERMINED BY A DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ACCREDITED THIRD DOCTOR WHO IS AN EXPERT IN THE DISABILITY OF THE SEAFARER, IN CASE OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE FINDINGS OF THE COMPANY AND THE SEAFARER’S DOCTOR.

Thereafter, the succeeding subitems shall be adjusted accordingly.

- On page 22, line 12, under Section 43, delete the word “covid-19” and replace it with AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE.
- On page 22, letter (e), delete lines 12 to 14, and insert a new letter (e), as follows:

(e) SEAFARERS WHO HAVE CONTRACTED COVID-19 OR SIMILAR DISEASES OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN OR WHICH CAUSES GLOBAL HEALTH EMERGENCY, OR ARE OTHERWISE IN ISOLATION, PRECAUTIONARY OR OTHERWISE, SHALL BE ENTITLED TO PAID SICK LEAVE OR SICKNESS BENEFITS AS LONG AS THEY ARE INCAPACITATED TO WORK, AND THE EXPENSES FOR MEDICAL CARE AND BOARD AND LODGING, SHALL BE BORNE BY THE SHIPOWNER.
- On the same page, delete lines 15 to 18.
- On page 24, line 25, after the word “onshore”, delete “procedures” and replace with the phrase GRIEVANCE OR COMPLAINT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS READILY ACCESSIBLE AND.
- On page 25, line 8, after the word “reached”, add the phrase AT THE GRIEVANCE MACHINERY LEVEL MUST BE IN WRITING AND DULY SIGNED.
- On page 25, line 15, letter (b), delete the phrase “compulsory arbitration or voluntary arbitration, or”, and replace it with VOLUNTARY ARBITRATION OR COMPULSORY ARBITRATION ABSENT A SETTLEMENT OR AGREEMENT UNDER THE.
- On same page, page 25, line 20, add the sentence: THEREAFTER, IF THE MATTER REMAINS UNRESOLVED, THE PARTIES HAVE THE OPTION TO SUBMIT THE CASE EITHER TO COMPULSORY OR VOLUNTARY ARBITRATION UNDER THE LABOR CODE.
- On page 25, delete lines 21 to 26, or the whole Section 50, and replace with the following:

SEC. 50. *MARITIME INDUSTRY LABOR CONCILIATOR-MEDIATORS AND ARBITRATORS.* – THE SECRETARIES OF DMW AND DOLE AND HEADS OF RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES SHALL ESTABLISH A POOL OF TRAINED MARITIME INDUSTRY CONCILIATOR-MEDIATORS, LABOR ARBITERS AND ACCREDITED MARITIME INDUSTRY VOLUNTARY ARBITRATORS. THEY SHALL HANDLE THE MEDIATION, CONCILIATION OR ARBITRATION OF ALL ISSUES RELATING TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF SEAFARERS. THEY SHALL HAVE EXPERTISE, APPROPRIATE COMPETENCE, INTEGRITY, AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE PHILIPPINE AND GLOBAL MARITIME INDUSTRY PRACTICES AND STANDARDS, MLC 2006, AND RELATED PHILIPPINE-RATIFIED CONVENTIONS AND TREATIES. FOR THIS PURPOSE, THE DMW, NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS COMMISSION (NLRC), AND THE NATIONAL CONCILIATION MEDIATION BOARD (NCMB) SHALL FORM A

SPECIALIZED MARITIME UNIT IN THEIR RESPECTIVE LABOR DISPUTE SETTLEMENT STRUCTURE, AS WELL AS ISSUE THE APPROPRIATE MARITIME INDUSTRY DISPUTE SETTLEMENT RULES OF PROCEDURE TO IMPLEMENT THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT.

- On page 26, lines 1 to 3, delete Section 51 (Judgment on the Basis of Certification), and replace with a new Sec. 51, which shall read, as follows:

SEC. 51. *DETERMINATION OF DISABILITY GRADING* - WHEN THE SEAFARER SUFFERS WORK-RELATED INJURY OR ILLNESS OCCURRING BETWEEN THE DATE OF COMMENCING DUTY AND THE DATE UPON WHICH THEY ARE DEEMED DULY REPATRIATED, OR ARISING FROM THEIR EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN THOSE DATES AND STILL REQUIRES MEDICAL ATTENTION UPON REPATRIATION, THE SEAFARER MUST UNDERGO A POST-EMPLOYMENT MEDICAL EXAMINATION BY A COMPANY-DESIGNATED PHYSICIAN FOR TREATMENT UNTIL THE SEAFARER IS DECLARED FIT TO WORK OR A DISABILITY GRADING IS GIVEN.

A SEAFARER, WHO DISAGREES WITH THE COMPANY-DESIGNATED PHYSICIAN'S FINAL ASSESSMENT, MAY SEEK ITS REEVALUATION BY A PHYSICIAN OF CHOICE WHO MUST SPECIALIZE IN THE ILLNESS OR INJURY. IF THE SEAFARER'S DOCTOR ISSUES A DIFFERENT DISABILITY GRADING, THE SEAFARER MUST FILE, WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS FROM RECEIPT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE SEAFARER'S DOCTOR, A WRITTEN REQUEST WITH THE DMW TO REFER THE CONFLICTING MEDICAL GRADING TO A THIRD DOCTOR. THE THIRD DOCTOR SHALL BE SELECTED FROM A POOL OF DOH-ACCREDITED MEDICAL SPECIALISTS RELEVANT TO THE INJURY OR ILLNESS OF THE SEAFARER....

THE THIRD DOCTORS SHOULD BE DULY TRAINED IN THE DETERMINATION OF MARITIME DISABILITY GRADING.

WITH ALL THE MEDICAL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED AND ISSUED BY THE COMPANY-DOCTOR AND SEAFARER'S DOCTOR, THE THIRD DOCTOR SHALL DETERMINE THE FINAL DISABILITY GRADING OF THE SEAFARER WHICH SHALL BE BINDING UPON THE SEAFARER AND THE EMPLOYER. THIS PROCESS SHALL BE MANDATORY BEFORE ANY DISPUTE SETTLEMENT, ARBITRATION PROCEEDINGS OR CASE MAY BE FILED WHERE THE ISSUE IS THE DISABILITY GRADING OF THE SEAFARER'S ILLNESS OR INJURY.

THE DMW AND DOH SHALL DEVELOP JOINT GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION, INCLUDING THE SELECTION, TRAINING, MAINTENANCE, AND REVIEW OF THE POOL OF ACCREDITED THIRD DOCTORS.

- On page 28, line 5, under Sec. 56, delete the phrase, "Before or during the process of repatriation," and replace with IN CASES OF EPIDEMIC OR

PANDEMIC AS DECLARED BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, THE SHIPOWNER OR MANNING AGENCY SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR.

- On the same page, line 11, before the phrase “the Philippine government”, create a new paragraph by inserting the following phrase UPON ARRIVAL AT THE POINT OF HIRE, UP TO THE SEAFARER’S RETURN TO THE PLACE OF DOMICILE.
- On the same page, line 23, under Sec. 58, before the word “There”, insert the phrase IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 17 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11641, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “THE DEPARTMENT OF MIGRANT WORKERS ACT.”
- On page 29, line 4, under Chapter XIV, change the title from “PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO DOMESTIC SEAFARERS” to DOMESTIC FILIPINO SEAFARERS.
- On page 32, after line 15, insert a new chapter number and title which shall read as:
CHAPTER XVI
INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT

And renumber the chapters accordingly.

- On the same page, delete lines 17 to 20, and replace them with the following:

(A) THE SECRETARY OF DOLE, IN COORDINATION WITH THE SECRETARY OF DMW AND OTHER RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, SHALL HAVE AUTHORITY OVER ALL PHILIPPINE-REGISTERED VESSELS, AND SHALL:
- On page 33, after line 26, insert new Sections 70 and 71 to read, as follows:

SEC. 70. *MARITIME OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS (OSHS).*
– THE DOLE, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DMW AND THE MARITIME INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS, SHALL FORMULATE THE MARITIME OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS (MOSHS) ACCORDING TO THE PROVISIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11058, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH LAW, AND APPLICABLE MARITIME CONVENTIONS AND TREATIES RATIFIED BY THE PHILIPPINES, AND SHALL ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH SUCH STANDARDS.

SEC. 71. *INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION AND COOPERATION COUNCIL (IGC3) ON MARITIME LABOR AND OSHS ENFORCEMENT.* – THE SECRETARY OF DOLE SHALL CONVENE A MARITIME LABOR AND OSH ENFORCEMENT INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION AND COOPERATION COUNCIL (IGC3) TO ENSURE EFFICIENCY, COHERENCE AND COORDINATION WITH REGARD THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11058, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND

HEALTH LAW. THE IGC3 SHALL INCLUDE THE DMW, MARINA, PCG, BFAR AND OTHER RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.

- On page 34, after line 8, insert a new chapter on Green Lane, which will read as:

CHAPTER XVI
GREEN LANE

- On the same page, after line 14, insert new Sections 72 and 73, to read, as follows:

SEC. 73. *GREEN LANE PROTOCOLS.* - THE DMW AND THE RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES SHALL ISSUE THE NECESSARY GREEN LANE PROTOCOLS FOR SEAFARERS, LICENSED MANNING AGENCIES OR SHIPPING PRINCIPALS AND THEIR AGENTS. THE PROTOCOLS SHALL INCLUDE, BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING:

(A) THE SEAFARER, LICENSED MANNING AGENCY OR SHIPPING PRINCIPAL OR THEIR AGENTS SHALL ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH ALL THE EMBARKATION AND DISEMBARKATION GUIDELINES ISSUED BY THE DMW AND RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.

(B) THE LICENSED MANNING AGENCY OR SHIPPING PRINCIPAL OR THEIR AGENTS SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FOLLOWING:

(I) ENSURING THAT ALL THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS AND CLEARANCES ARE COMPLETE (I.E., LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL, DECLARATION SIGNIFYING SEAFARER'S KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF RISKS INVOLVED, EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT, OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATE OR OFW PASS, PASSPORT, SEAFARER IDENTITY DOCUMENT AND/OR SEAFARER RECORD BOOK, SEAFARER CERTIFICATES, MEDICAL CLEARANCE, AND OTHER REQUIRED PRE-DEPARTURE AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS) AND SUBMIT THE SAME WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR (24) HOURS PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE OR INTENDED DATE OF ARRIVAL OR DISEMBARKATION, AS THE CASE MAY BE;

(II) COORDINATING WITH THE CONCERNED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS;

(III) PROVIDING FOR THE APPROPRIATE MEDICAL TESTING TO THE SEAFARERS, AS WELL AS MEALS, ACCOMMODATION, AND TRANSPORTATION FROM THE POINT OF HIRE TO INTENDED DESTINATION, AS CONDITIONS REQUIRE; *PROVIDED*, THAT IN THE CASE OF INBOUND AND REPATRIATED FILIPINO SEAFARERS, THE COST OF THE MEDICAL TESTING SHALL BE CHARGED TO THE PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION (PHIC);

(IV) PROVIDING FOR MEDICAL TESTING TO OUTBOUND FILIPINO SEAFARERS, AS REQUIRED;

(V) COORDINATING WITH THE RELEVANT MEDICAL FACILITY FOR THE PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE TREATMENT TO SEAFARERS WHO MAY TEST POSITIVE OF A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE;

(VI) PROVIDING FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL EQUIPMENT IN THE SEAPORT OR AIRPORT UPON ARRIVAL OR DEPARTURE OF THE SEAFARER, REGARDLESS OF NATIONALITY, IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS; AND

(VII) PROVIDING APPROPRIATE BRIEFINGS TO THEIR SEAFARERS ABOUT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND VARIOUS PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES AND HEALTH-RELATED PROTOCOLS MANDATED BY THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT.

(C) ALL SEAFARERS AND MARITIME PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN CREW CHANGE AND REPATRIATION, REGARDLESS OF NATIONALITY, SHALL OBSERVE PROPER HYGIENE AND HEALTH PROTOCOLS ISSUED BY THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT.

SEC. 74. *INFORMATION SHARING.* - NOTHING IN THIS ACT SHALL PREVENT ANY PRIVATE SHIPPING OWNER, LICENSED MANNING AGENCY, OR THEIR AGENTS, AND ALL OTHER SIMILAR ENTITIES FROM SHARING ANY INFORMATION TO THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT WHICH MAY BE DEEMED NECESSARY FOR THE EFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS CHAPTER, OR TO ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF ALL SEAFARERS.

- On page 39, line 3, under Section 80, add a new sentence which shall read, as follows:

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 51 OF THIS ACT, THE DOH SHALL LIKEWISE FORMULATE AND IMPLEMENT GUIDELINES, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DMW, IN THE SELECTION, TRAINING, MAINTENANCE, AND REVIEW OF THE POOL OF ACCREDITED THIRD DOCTORS FOR THE DISABILITY GRADING OF SEAFARER'S CLAIMS.

On page 42, line 9, after the word "seafarers", insert the phrase REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED, EMPLOYED, OR WORKING DUE TO EXPIRATION OF CONTRACT, OR ARE TRANSITIONING IN BETWEEN CONTRACTS, OR AWAITING RECALL FOR DEPLOYMENT.

- On page 42, after line 17, insert a new paragraph to read as follows:

THE TESDA AND THE NMP SHALL OFFER NON-DEGREE COURSES AND PROGRAMS ON MARITIME EDUCATION AND TRAINING, ESPECIALLY TO THE SEAFARERS WHO ARE AT THE WELFARE CENTERS AND WHO ARE NOT OTHERWISE ACTIVELY ENGAGED AS SUCH, OR ARE IN TRANSITION IN

BETWEEN CONTRACT, OR ARE AWAITING DEPLOYMENT TO ENSURE THAT THEY KEEP ABREAST WITH THE TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL CHANGES AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MARITIME INDUSTRY.

- On page 42, after line 22, insert a new section to read, as follows:

SEC. 82. *TRANSITION ASSISTANCE OR SUPPORT PROGRAM.* - THE DMW, DOLE, TESDA, OWWA, NMP, MARINA AND THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (SSS) SHALL ESTABLISH A TRANSITION ASSISTANCE OR SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR SEAFARERS WHO ARE NOT ACTIVELY ENGAGED, EMPLOYED, OR WORKING DUE TO EXPIRATION OF CONTRACT, OR ARE TRANSITIONING IN BETWEEN CONTRACTS, OR ARE AWAITING RECALL FOR DEPLOYMENT. THE PROGRAM MAY INCLUDE ACCESS TO THE UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS PROVIDED BY SSS, TESDA TRAINING PROGRAMS, DOLE LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMS, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING AND FINANCING PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (DTI).

- On page 43, line 16, under Chapter XIX, insert a new section on *PENALTIES*, which shall read, as follows:

SEC. 84. *PENALTIES* - UPON FINDING OF THE DMW OR DOLE, THAT A PERSON OR AN ENTITY, WHETHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, HAS VIOLATED ANY PROVISION OF THIS ACT AND ITS IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS, THE SANCTIONS UNDER, ADMINISTRATIVE OR CIVIL LAWS, OR OTHER APPROPRIATE LAWS SHALL BE RECOMMENDED TO THE APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT AGENCY EXERCISING QUASI-JUDICIAL OR JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS. IF THE VIOLATION IS COMMITTED BY A PRIVATE ENTITY OR INDIVIDUAL, THE PERSON DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VIOLATION SHALL BE LIABLE TO PAY DAMAGES.

Thereafter, succeeding sections shall be adjusted accordingly.

- On page 44, line 26, insert a new paragraph, which will read as:

THE DMW SHALL ENSURE THAT THE RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT ARE APPLIED TO SEAFARERS ON BOARD FOREIGN-REGISTERED COMMERCIAL FISHING VESSELS OR VESSELS FISHING IN DISTANT WATERS, THOSE SERVING AS CRUISE SHIP PERSONNEL OR AS YACHT CREW, THOSE STATIONED ON MOBILE OFFSHORE AND DRILLING UNITS IN THE HIGH SEAS, AND OTHER PERSONS SIMILARLY SITUATED.

Senator Tulfo expressed his appreciation for the support of the seafarers from AMOSUP, who were present at the session hall. He expressed his recognition of their effort and salute the AMOSUP and their members.

Amendments of Senator Tolentino

- On Section 19, page 10, after line 28, insert a new Section 19 to read, as follows:

SEC. 19. RIGHT TO CAST THEIR VOTE FOR NATIONAL ELECTION. – SEAFARERS WHO ARE REGISTERED OVERSEAS VOTERS SHALL NOT BE DEPRIVED OF THEIR RIGHT TO VOTE IN ANY NATIONAL ELECTION.

After consulting with the sponsor, Senator Tolentino temporarily withdrew the proposed amendment.

- On page 12, between lines 11 and 12, insert a new subsection (I) to read, as follows:

(I) TO BE ENLISTED WITH HIS/HER CONSENT AS PART OF THE RESERVED FORCE IN THE PHILIPPINE NAVY.

Senator Tulfo explained that this might cause some problem when other countries learn that there is a reserved navy among the seafarers, then that person might be endangered during their stay in that specific country.

Senator Tolentino reiterated that it is not mandatory, rather with the consent of the seafarer. Under Commonwealth Act No. 1, and the Constitution, any able-bodied Filipino can be called to serve and be part of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Upon the suggestion of the Senate President and the Majority Leader, the Body decided to lay the matter on the table for the meantime while waiting for the clean copy of the bill.

Motion of Senator Villanueva that Senator Binay be made cosponsor of Senate Bill No. 2221.

21. Senate Bill No. 2450, entitled

An Act Establishing a Framework for Blue Economy, Promoting Stewardship and Sustainable Development of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems and Resources

Sponsorship Speech of Senator Legarda

According to the Senator Legarda, in 2017, the World Bank unveiled a groundbreaking report, “The Potential of the Blue Economy,” highlighting the abundant opportunities lying dormant in the coastal and oceanic realms of nations that are yet to harness them fully. These untapped resources, such as natural gas and the Philippine Rise, a 13-million-hectare underwater plateau, have the power to transform economies and lives. Consider the staggering biodiversity found within the Philippines, nestled in the heart of the Coral Triangle. It boasts of marine shore-fish biodiversity that is unrivaled, offering not only tangible stocks of marine resources but also the invaluable regulating services that support coastal states outside or around the Philippines.

Amid this natural bounty, 60% of our population, calls the coast home, with fisherfolk representing the second highest poverty-stricken sector. This imbalance cries out for rectification.

The Blue Economy embodies the sustainable utilization of oceanic resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and the health of our ocean ecosystems. It embodies our commitment to conserve, protect, and prosper in harmony with our marine environments.

The Blue Economy bill is the solution to this pressing issue. It aims to rewrite the narrative for coastal and marine resources, elevating their status in our development plans, and ensuring that they contribute to our national economy and the realization of SDG 14.

This bill unites our government in its pursuit of SDG 14. It encompasses all maritime zones, their seabeds, and subsoils; and obliges us to act in accordance with international law.

The bill proposes the formation of a Blue Economy Council. This council will marshal the collective strength of various departments and agencies, creating a comprehensive policy framework and strategic plan within six months. It will address environmental-economic accounting, ecosystem services, marine spatial planning, industry development, and investment plans.

Moreover, the bill encourages investment agencies to establish Blue Economic Zones, while the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) promotes Blue Bonds for financing projects that safeguard our ocean health and contribute to SDGs 6 and 14.

The bill is a transformative step towards recognizing and maximizing the potential of our coastal and marine environments. It will bring them to the forefront of our development planning and investments, ensuring their enduring benefit.

Motion of Senator Villanueva that the cosponsorship speeches of Senators Villanueva, Estrada, and Tulfo on S. No. 2450 be inserted into the *Record*

22. Designation of Senate conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the Disagreeing Provisions on Senate Bill No. 2233 and House Bill No. 6527, entitled Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Act.

Chairperson: Sen. Joseph Victor “JV” Ejercito
Members: Sen. Mark A. Villar
Sen. Sonny Angara
Sen. Francis G. Escudero
Sen. Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III (alternate—Sen. Risa Hontiveros)

23. Designation of the Senate conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 2001 and House Bill No. 6510.

Chairperson: Sen. Imee R. Marcos
Members: Sen. Loren Legarda
Sen. Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay
Sen. Francis "Tol" N. Tolentino
Sen. Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III

24. Designation of the Senate conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 2028 and House Bill No. 7535.

Chairperson: Sen. Imee R. Marcos
Members: Sen. Ramon Bong Revilla Jr.
Sen. Win Gathalian
Sen. Mark A. Villar
Sen. Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III

25. Designation of the Senate conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 1846 and House Bill No. 4.

Chairperson: Sen. Mark A. Villar
Members: Sen. Win Gatchalian
Sen. Joel Villanueva
Sen. Raffy T. Tulfo
Sen. Risa Hontiveros

26. Designation of the Senate conferees to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the Disagreeing Provisions of Senate Bill No. 2224 and House Bill No. 4125.

Chairperson: Sen. Win Gatchalian
Members: Sen. Sonny Angara
Sen. Francis "Tol" N. Tolentino
Sen. Mark A. Villar
Sen. Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III

The session was adjourned at 7:29 pm.