

Senate of the Philippines

Linkages Report

*Volume 12 No. 1
Series of 2018*

The **Linkages Report** is a digest that is aimed to inform the public on the activities, news reports on various concerns and is designed to report the accomplishments of the Senate covering the period **July 24, 2017 – December 31, 2017**. Also included in this issue is the Legislative Calendar for the Second Regular Session of the 17th Congress, Laws of National Importance and List of Committee Chairmanships as of May 31, 2017.

This publication is a project of the **INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGES SERVICE (ILS)** under the External Affairs and Relations Office.

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*Source : Performance of the Senate
for the Seventeenth Congress
covering the period July 24, 2017 to
December 31, 2017*

*The Institutional Linkages Service (ILS) is under the External
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and Executive Director Diana Lynn Le-Cruz.*

BILLS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE APPROVED ON THIRD READING BY THE SENATE/ PENDING IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The following are the bills of national importance approved on third reading in the Senate and pending in the House of Representatives:

- 1. Senate Bill No. 209 – “Declaring the Twenty-Fifth Day of August of Every Year as the National Tech-Voc Day”**

Intention of the bill:

The measure seeks to declare every twenty-fifth of the month of August as National Tech-Voc Day to give importance on the role of middle-level manpower and uplift the dignity of plumbers, carpenters, welders, household workers, drivers, seamen, cooks, dressmakers, among others.

- 2. Senate Bill No. 462 – “Regulating The Practice Of Speech Language Pathology In The Philippines”**

Intention of the bill:

This bill promotes the development of speech language pathology. It defines the term, “speech language pathology”, the scope of the practice and creates the Professional Regulatory Board of Speech Language Pathology, which shall supervise and regulate the registration, licensure and practice of the profession in the Philippines. The measure allows the practice of foreigners in the country provided the same privilege is granted to Filipino speech language pathologists in the recipient’s country.

- 3. Senate Bill No. 812 – “Institutionalizing The Grant Of A Teaching Supplies Allowance For Public School Teachers”**

Intention of the bill:

This measure institutionalizes the grant of P5,000.00 teaching supplies allowance to public school teachers engaged in actual classroom teaching. The teaching supplies refer to chalks, erasers, pens, papers, pastes and other classroom materials.

- 4. Senate Bill No. 1239 – “Granting The Chief Of The Philippine National Police (PNP) And The Director And The Deputy Director Of The Criminal Investigation And Detection Group (CIDG) The Authority To Administer Oath And To Issue Subpoena Duces Tecum, Amending For The Purpose Republic Act No. 6975, As Amended, Otherwise Known As The Department Of The Interior And Local Government (DILG) Act Of 1990”**

Intention of the bill:

This bill grants the Director and Deputy Director of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police (PNP) the authority to administer oath upon cases under their investigation and to issue subpoena and subpoena duces tecum in relation thereto.

- 5. Senate Bill No. 1255 – “Expanding The Coverage Of Exemptions From Revealing The Source Of Published News Or Information Obtained In Confidence By Including Journalists From Broadcast, News Agencies And Internet Publications, Amending For The Purpose Section 1 Of Republic Act 53, As Amended By R.A.1477”**

Intention of the bill:

The measure includes in the exemptions provided by the law on revealing the source of published news or information obtained in confidence, contributors, opinion writers and media practitioners, among others, that are involved in the writing, editing, production, and dissemination of news for mass circulation, of any print, broadcast, wire service organization, or electronic mass media, including internet and cable TV and its variants.

6. Senate Bill No. 1269 – “Providing For The Registration, Licensure And Practice Of Food Technology In The Philippines”

Intention of the bill:

This bill recognizes the practice of food technology as a profession and aims to produce highly capable and globally competitive Filipino food technologists. The bill mandates the institution of a Continuing Professional Development Program (CPD) for food technologies. Moreover, under its reciprocity clause, the bill allows the practice of foreigners in the Philippines provided the same privilege is granted to Filipino food technologists in the recipient's country. Finally, it integrates the profession into one national accredited professional organization.

7. Senate Bill No. 1281 – “Instituting the Farmers and Fisherfolk Enterprise Development Program of the Department of Agriculture”

Intention of the bill:

This measure creates the Farmers and Fisherfolk Enterprise Development Program that includes the agricultural and fisheries production, including processing of fisheries and agri-based products and farm inputs as well as working capital for agriculture and fisheries graduates to enable them to engage in agriculture and fisheries related economic activities. The bill seeks to mandate national and local government agencies to directly purchase agricultural and fishery products from accredited farmers and fisherfolk cooperatives and enterprise.

8. Senate Bill No. 1305 – “Increasing The Maternity Leave Period To One Hundred Twenty (120) Days For Female Workers In The Government Service And The Private Sector With An Option To Extend For An Additional Thirty (30) Days Without Pay, Providing A Parental Leave Period For Adoptive Parents, And Granting An Additional Thirty (30) Days For Solo Mothers”

Intention of the bill:

This bill provides for 120 days maternity leave for female workers in the private and public sector, as well as in the informal economy, with the option to extend for 30 days without pay. The bill also gives additional 30 days (or a total of 150 days) for solo mothers, as identified under the Solo Parents Act, and 30 days for adoptive parents upon receipt of the pre-adoptive placement authority issued by the DSWD. It also provides for sharing of leave credits to the father of the child, or in the absence of the same, an alternative caregiver, for a maximum of 30 days. Furthermore, it grants maternity protections for female national athletes who get pregnant.

- 9. Senate Bill No. 1354 – “Establishing A National Mental Health Policy For The Purpose Of Enhancing The Delivery Of Integrated Mental Health Services, Promoting And Protecting Persons Utilizing Psychiatric, Neurologic And Psychosocial Health Services”**

Intention of the bill:

The measure establishes the Philippine Council for Mental Health under the Department of Health (DoH), which shall formulate and implement a National Mental Health Care Delivery System. The bill further provides for the capacity building, reorientation, and training of mental health professionals and health workers.

- 10. Senate Bill No. 1355 – “Adopting Innovation As Vital Component Of The Country’s Development Policies To Drive Inclusive Development, Promote The Growth And National Competitiveness Of Micro, Small And Medium Enterprises”**

Intention of the bill:

The bill seeks to develop the country’s innovation goals, priorities and long-term national strategy. It carries the much needed innovation vision to inspire the commitment and cooperation of the government, industry, educational, academic, research and scientific institutions and the rest of the community,

towards building an innovation economy that would change the economic narrative of our country. It establishes a National Innovation Council (NIC), which will provide a system where numerous agencies are charged with carrying their respective parts of the innovation mandate. The NIC shall develop a National Innovation Agenda and Strategy Document (NIASD).

11. Senate Bill No. 1363 – “Institutionalizing Telecommuting in the Workplace”

Intention of the bill:

The measure institutionalizes telecommuting in the workplace and defines telecommuting as “the partial or total substitution of computers or telecommunication technologies, or both, for the commute to work by employees.” Under the program, employers are allowed to offer telecommuting program to its employees upon such terms and conditions as they may mutually agree.

12. Senate Bill No. 1431 – “Instituting A Philippine Labor Force Competencies Competitiveness Program, Establishing Free Access To Technical And Vocational Training Programs”

Intention of the bill:

The measure establishes a Philippine Labor Force Competencies Competitiveness Program that shall be funded through the Tulong-Trabaho Fund. The Tulong-Trabaho Fund will provide qualified recipients with access to Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs through the full payment of the selected programs’ training fees, as well as the possibility of providing additional financial assistance such as transportation allowance and laboratory fees, as needed.

13. Senate Bill No. 1444 – “Declaring Protected Areas and Providing for Their Management, Amending for this Purpose Republic Act No. 7586, Otherwise Known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992”

Intention of the bill:

The bill amends the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act. The Expanded NIPAS bill will facilitate 92 more protected areas by legislation.

- 14. Senate Bill No. 1454 – “Removing The Restrictions In The Registration Of Land Titles Under Sections 118, 119 and 121, And Other Restriction Against Encumbrance Or Alienation On Free Patents Issued Under Section 44 Of Commonwealth Act No. 141 Or The Public Land Act, As Amended”**

Intention of the bill:

The measure provides that agricultural public lands alienated in favor of qualified public land applicants under the law shall not be subject to restrictions with regard to encumbrances, conveyance, transfers or disposition.

CALENDAR OF SESSION

Below is the calendar of session for the Second Regular Session of the Seventeenth Congress as approved per Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 7 introduced by Senator Vicente C. Sotto III, as follows:

1. Commencement of Session : July 24, 2017 –
October 13, 2017
2. Adjournment of Session : October 14, 2017 –
November 12, 2017
3. Resumption of Session : November 13, 2017 –
December 15, 2017
4. Adjournment of Session : December 16, 2017 –
January 14, 2018
5. Resumption of Session : January 15, 2018 –
March 23, 2018
6. Adjournment of Session : March 24, 2018 –
May 13, 2018
7. Resumption of Session : May 14, 2018 –
June 1, 2018

(Sine Die Adjournment)

8. Adjournment of Session : June 2, 2018 –
July 22, 2018

LAWS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Below are the laws of national importance approved by the President of the Philippines for the Seventeenth Congress covering the period August 23, 2017 – December 31, 2017:

| Republic Act Number | Senate Bill Number | Short Title and Intent of the Law |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| RA 10951 | SBN 14 | <p style="text-align: center;">“THE REVISED PENAL CODE”</p> <p><u>Objective of the Law:</u></p> <p>“The measure aims to ensure the proportionality of punishment by adjusting the amounts in various provisions of the Revised Penal Code to their present values and to update the outmoded property values used to determine the penalty as well as the fines imposed on certain offenses.”</p> |
| RA 10952 | SBN 3064 | <p style="text-align: center;">“BARANGAY AND SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN ELECTION POSTPONEMENT”</p> <p><u>Objective of the Law:</u></p> <p>“To further amend Republic Act Nos. 9164, 9340, 19632 and 10656 in order to postpone the barangay and sangguniang kabataan elections on October 23, 2017 shall be postponed to the second Monday of May 2018 and subsequent synchronized barangay and sangguniang kabataan elections on the second Monday of May 2020 and every three (3) years thereafter”</p> |

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|---|
| <p>RA 10962</p> | <p>SBN 1466</p> | <p>“GIFT CHECK ACT OF 2017”</p> <p><u>Objective of the Law:</u></p> <p>“To protect the interest of the consumer, promote the general welfare and establish standards of conduct for business and industry; to promote and encourage fair, honest and equitable relations among parties in consumer transaction and protect consumer against deceptive, unfair, and unconscionable sales acts and practices.”</p> |
| <p>RA 10966</p> | <p>SBN 5241</p> | <p>“FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY”</p> <p><u>Objective of the Law:</u></p> <p>“To commemorate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Principal Patroness of the Philippine”</p> |

The Senate Permanent Committees

(as of December 31, 2017)

Below is the list of the Senate Permanent Committees and its Chairpersons:

| Committee (40) | Chairperson |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Accountability of Public Officers and Investigations (Blue Ribbon) | Sen. Richard J. Gordon |
| Accounts | Sen. Panfilo M. Lacson |
| Agrarian Reform | Sen. Cynthia A. Villar |
| Agriculture and Food | Sen. Cynthia A. Villar |
| Banks, Financial Institutions and Currencies | Sen. Francis “Chiz” G. Escudero |
| Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulations | Sen. Antonio “Sonny” F. Trillanes IV |
| Climate Change | Sen. Loren B. Legarda |

| Committee (40) | Chairperson |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Constitutional Amendments and Revision of Codes | Sen. Francis “Kiko” Pangilinan |
| Cooperatives | Sen. Juan Miguel “Migz” F. Zubiri |
| Cultural Communities | Sen. Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay |
| Economic Affairs | Sen. Win Gatchalian |
| Education, Arts and Culture | Sen. Francis “Chiz” G. Escudero |
| Electoral Reforms and People’s Participation | Sen. Leila M. De Lima |
| Energy | Sen. Win Gatchalian |
| Environment and Natural Resources | Sen. Cynthia A. Villar |
| Ethics and Privileges | Sen. Vicente C. Sotto III |

| Committee (40) | Chairperson |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Finance | Sen. Loren B. Legarda |
| Foreign Relations | Sen. Loren B. Legarda |
| Games, Amusement and Sports | Sen. Panfilo M. Lacson |
| Government Corporations and Public Enterprises | Sen. Richard J. Gordon |
| Health and Demography | Sen. Joseph Victor G. Ejercito |
| Justice and Human Rights | Sen. Richard J. Gordon |
| Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development | Sen. Joel Villanueva |
| Local Government | Sen. Juan Edgardo “Sonny” M. Angara |
| National Defense and Security | Sen. Gregorio B. Honasan II |
| Peace, Unification and Reconciliation | Sen. Gregorio B. Honasan II |

| Committee (40) | Chairperson |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Public Information and Mass Media | Sen. Grace L. Poe |
| Public Order and Dangerous Drugs | Sen. Panfilo M. Lacson |
| Public Services | Sen. Grace L. Poe |
| Public Works | Sen. Emmanuel “Manny” D. Pacquiao |
| Rules | Sen. Vicente C. Sotto III |
| Science and Technology | Sen. Paolo Benigno “Bam” Aquino IV |
| Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development | Sen. Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay |
| Sports | Sen. Emmanuel “Manny” D. Pacquiao |
| Tourism | Sen. Maria Lourdes Nancy S. Binay |
| Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship | Sen. Juan Miguel “Migz” F. Zubiri |

| Committee (40) | Chairperson |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Urban Planning, Housing and Resettlement | Sen. Joseph Victor G. Ejercito |
| Ways and Means | Sen. Juan Edgardo “Sonny” M. Angara |
| Women, Family Relations and Gender Equality | Sen. Risa Hontiveros |
| Youth | Sen. Joel Villanueva |

Reference: Senate website as of December 31, 2017

Other publications of the Institutional Linkages Service

- The Senate As an Institution
(A briefing manual on the workings of the Senate)
- ILS Resource Directory (Volumes 1 – IV)
(Compilation of contact person(s) and addresses of NGOs, POs, Academes, Associations, etc.)

Note: Copies distributed only to Senators and Senate Officials

- ILS Linkages Circular
(Compilation of bills and resolution, as well as the committee reports, filed/adopted by the Senators and taken up on the floor for a particular week/month)
- ILS Linkages Update
(Provides information on legislations approved and enacted into law, bills passed on third reading by the Senate, outputs of Forums conducted by ILS, and concerns of national importance)
- Directory of Senators and Committee Memberships

Brief Comment:

It is worth to mention that the accomplishments of the Senate reflect its leadership and the long tedious process of lawmaking. On the other hand, crafting sound, timely and relevant legislations to address national issues particularly on education, health, employment, and security are responsibilities of our Senators. However, in the end, it is the people who will measure the accomplishment of Senate and who shall judge its performance.

Juliet Cervo

The Senate As an Institution

The Senate of the Philippines is one of the pillars of the country's lawmaking body, the other one is the House of Representatives. It is composed of 24 elected Senators whose terms of office shall be six (6) years. This dynamic institution is established to balance our economic, social and political environment and whose concerns are national in scope.

As the bastion of democracy, its action is centered on consensus and consultation with the end purpose of serving the best interest of the Filipino people.

The **Senate** also values the importance of having productive and harmonious relationship with other institutions, from the government and the private sector, to create an environment where rapport and goodwill among institutions prevail. Its main objective is the passage of good, implementable and doable laws in pursuit of democratic ideals that would truly serve the national interest and the welfare of the people.

We will be happy to receive inquiry, comments, suggestions and recommendations on a particular law or Senate bill. You may send your letter to the address stated below:

Senate of the Philippines
Office of the Senate President
Institutional Linkages Service
External Affairs and Relations Department
Rm. 411, 4th Floor, GSIS Building
Financial Center, PasayCity

Or you may call telephone numbers:

552-6601 to 80 (locals 4104-4106)
552-6826 (Direct Line)
552-6687 (Telefax)

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