



Philippines - September 2019

BILLS ON REFORMING REAL PROPERTY VALUATION AND REORGANIZING THE BUREAU OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE UP FOR CONSOLIDATION 1

Bills on reforming real property valuation and reorganizing the Bureau of Local Government Finance up for consolidation

The House Committee on Government Reorganization chaired by Rep. Mario Vittorio Marino (5th District, Batangas) on Wednesday approved the consolidation of 13 measures which all seek to institute reforms in real property valuation and assessment in the country and reorganize the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF).

In his opening remarks, Marino said the mandate of the Committee, which is composed of 16 legislators, is to have general jurisdiction over all matters directly and principally relating to the reorganization of the government or any of its branches, departments or any instrumentalities, excluding government-owned and -controlled corporations, and the creation, abolition or change in the principal functions or nature of any government department, agency, commission or board.

Upon the motion of Committee Vice Chairperson Rep. Jose Gay Padriernos (Party-list, Galing sa Puso), the panel approved the adoption of the proposed internal rules of procedures.

In sponsoring House Bill 2400, Rep, Estrellita Suansing (1st District, Nueva Ecija), said real property is the country’s most important resource and biggest financial asset. She said a World Bank study indicated that 50 percent to 75 percent of the national wealth are contained in land alone.

However, Suansing mentioned that there are issues in the present valuation system which hinders the potential of real property to contribute to the social and economic development of the country.

Suansing said her bill seeks to promote the development and maintenance of just, equitable, impartial, and nationally consistent real property valuation by establishing appraisal standards, methods and procedures of property valuations and assessment.

“The bill’s enactment into law will assist the LGUs in maximizing revenue collections, which in turn, will promote genuine local autonomy,” said Suansing, Senior Vice Chairperson of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda (2nd District, Albay), author of House Bill 305, said pursuant to the Local Government Code of 1991 , his bill seeks to grant each LGU the power to create its own sources of revenue and to levy taxes, fees, and charges.

Salceda, Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, said this will enable the LGUs to become self-reliant and perform their role as development partners of the national government.

According to the Asian Development Bank, Salceda said that in 2007, collection efficiency on real property tax was only 27 percent in the provinces and 68 percent in the cities.

“This poor collection efficiency severely hampers the LGUs’ ability to raise revenue from real property taxes and correspondingly constrains their capacity to provide the necessary wherewithal for constituency welfare,” said Salceda.

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Resource persons from the Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF), League of Provinces, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) expressed their full support for the immediate passage of the consolidated version of the bills. They will also submit their respective amendments to the bill.

House Bills 1908, 1616, 2085, 0343, 815, 561, 1782, 1908, 3358, 3566, 3368, and 3668 are all authored by Deputy Speakers Luis Raymund Villafuerte and Neptali Gonzales II, Reps. Junie Cua (Lone District, Quirino), Xavier Jesus Romualdo (Lone District, Camiguin), Rozanno Rufino Biazon (Lone District, Muntinlupa City), , Ron Salo (Party-list, Kabayan), Ann Hofer (2nd District, Zambanga Sibugay), Sharon Garin (Party-list, AAMBIS-OWA), and Adolph Edward Plaza (2nd District, Agusan del Sur), respectively. /Eddie Galvez, News and Documentation Section-Press and Public Affairs Bureau/ House of Representatives of the Philippines

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