



LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICE  
**KEY POINTS OF PLENARY PROCEEDINGS**  
*Second Regular Session, 19<sup>th</sup> Congress*

**Session No. 23**  
**Monday, 18 September 2023**

**1. Proposed Senate Resolution No. 758**

Resolution Commending and Congratulating De La Salle Santiago Zobel Strings Ensemble for Winning the Gold Award at the 2023 Bratislava Youth Musical Festival Competition, and 4th Place at the 15th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival Held in Europe

Sponsor: Sen. Risa Hontiveros

**Sponsorship Speech of Senator Hontiveros**

Senator Hontiveros congratulated De La Salle Santiago Zobel Strings Ensemble for winning the Gold Award at the 2023 Bratislava Youth Musical Festival Competition and 4th Place at the 15th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival Held in Europe. The Senator commended the 34 outstanding young kids for the countless hours of trainings and amazing dedication to their craft.

**Motion of Senator Villanueva that all members of the Senate present be made coauthors**

**Adopted, subject to style—RESOLUTION NO. 89**

**2. Senate Bill No. 2233 under Committee Report No. 71**

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

Sponsor: Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito

**Amendments of Senator Ejercito**

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

- a. On page 5, lines 29 to 30, delete the phrase “either by itself or through its contractors and/or Facility Operators”.
- b. On page 17a, line 25 to page 17c, line 2, delete the entire text of subsection “(a)” in and replace it with the following:

UPON RECEIPT OF AN UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL, AN IMPLEMENTING AGENCY MAY EITHER:

- (1) DECIDE TO PROCESS SUCH PROPOSAL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION; OR
- (2) REJECT THE PROPOSAL IF SUCH PROPOSAL IS DEEMED NOT ALIGNED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT PLANS OF THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY, OR IF THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY IS ALREADY DEVELOPING A PROJECT WITH A SIMILAR SCOPE AND/OR SIMILAR OBJECTIVE.

AN UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL, WHICH AN IMPLEMENTING AGENCY DECIDES TO PROCESS PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (A)(1) ABOVE, SHALL BE EVALUATED FOR COMPLETENESS: PROVIDED, THAT UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS REQUIRING APPROVAL OF THE NEDA BOARD OR THE NEDA BOARD-ICC SHALL BE SUBMITTED TO THE PPP CENTER FOR DETERMINATION OF COMPLETENESS. IN SUCH CASES, THE PPP CENTER SHALL THEREAFTER ENDORSE THE COMPLETE UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS TO THE APPROPRIATE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY.

THE DETERMINATION OF COMPLETENESS SHALL BE CONDUCTED WITHIN TEN (10) CALENDAR DAYS UPON RECEIPT OF THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL. ALL UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS THAT ARE DETERMINED TO BE INCOMPLETE SHALL BE RETURNED TO THE PRIVATE PROPONENT BY THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY OR THE PPP CENTER, AS THE CASE MAY BE.

IF THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL IS DETERMINED TO BE COMPLETE, THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY MAY:

- (1) CONTINUE PROCESSING THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION; OR
- (2) DECIDE TO BID OUT THE PROPOSAL AS A SOLICITED PROJECT, PURSUANT TO SECTION 9 OF THIS ACT.

IN ALL THE CASES CONTEMPLATED ABOVE, THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY SHALL STATE IN WRITING WITH CORRESPONDING JUSTIFICATION THE ACTION IT DECIDES TO TAKE ON THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL.

IF THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY FAILS TO ACT ON AN UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL THREE (3) CALENDAR DAYS AFTER THE END OF THE DETAILED EVALUATION PERIOD, THE PROJECT PROPOSAL SHALL BE DEEMED REJECTED, WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO ANY LIABILITY THAT THE ERRING OR NEGLIGENT OFFICIALS OR EMPLOYEES MAY INCUR UNDER THIS ACT AND/OR OTHER EXISTING LAWS.

THE DECISION OF THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY ON THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL SHALL BE DEEMED FINAL AND NON-APPEALABLE.

- c. On page 17c,
  - (i) line 5, subsection (b) on Limitations, delete from the word “the” until the words “PPP Project” on line 6, and replace it with the phrase PROJECTS SUBJECT OF AN UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL.

- (ii) line 7, after the word “years”, insert the phrase FROM THE SUBMISSION OF THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL.
  - (iii) line 10, after the word “sources”, insert a colon (:) and the proviso PROVIDED, THAT SUCH REIMBURSEMENT SHALL BE IN AN AMOUNT NOT EXCEEDING SIX PERCENT (6%) OF THE PROJECT COST EXCLUDING THE COST OF ROW ACQUISITION.
- d. On page 18, delete from line 21 until page 21, line 19 and replace them with the following:
- (1) INVITATION TO SUBMIT SIMILAR PROPOSALS. - IF THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY DECIDES TO CONTINUE PROCESSING THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL, THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY SHALL PUBLISH AN INVITATION TO SUBMIT SIMILAR PROPOSALS BY POSTING INFORMATION ON ITS WEBSITE WITHIN THREE (3) CALENDAR DAYS FROM THE ISSUANCE OF ITS DECISION TO PROCESS THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL. IN CASE THERE ARE PRIVATE PROPONENTS THAT INTEND TO SUBMIT SIMILAR PROPOSALS, SUCH PROPOSALS SHALL BE SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, WITHIN TEN (10) CALENDAR DAYS FROM PUBLICATION OF THE INVITATION.
  - (2) DETAILED EVALUATION OF AN UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL AND OF THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PRIVATE PROPONENT - IF THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY DECIDES TO CONTINUE PROCESSING AN UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL FOUND TO BE COMPLETE, IT SHALL CONDUCT A DETAILED EVALUATION OF THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL OR SIMILAR PROPOSALS, AND OF THE QUALIFICATION OF THE PRIVATE PROPONENT/S, WITHIN NINETY (90) CALENDAR DAYS. AFTER SUCH DETAILED EVALUATION, THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY MAY:
    - (i) ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL AND PROCEED TO THE NEGOTIATION PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (D)(3) OF THIS SECTION: PROVIDED, THAT IN CASE THERE ARE MORE THAN ONE (1) COMPLETE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL FOR THE SAME OR SIMILAR PROJECT, THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY SHALL DETERMINE THE MOST ADVANTAGEOUS PROPOSAL FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC AMONG THE SUBMITTED PROPOSALS, CONSIDERING AMONG OTHERS, ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF THE PROJECT, PROPOSED PROJECT SCOPE AND TERMS, INVESTMENT RECOVERY SCHEME, RISKS PROPOSED TO BE ASSUMED BY THE GOVERNMENT, AND THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PRIVATE PROPONENT;
    - (ii) REJECT THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL OR ALL SIMILAR PROPOSALS IN WRITING WITH THE CORRESPONDING JUSTIFICATION; OR
    - (iii) DECIDE TO BID OUT THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL AS A SOLICITED PROJECT PURSUANT TO SECTION 9 OF THIS ACT.

THE DECISION OF THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY SHALL BE COMMUNICATED TO THE PRIVATE PROPONENT/S IN WRITING NO LATER THAN THREE (3) CALENDAR DAYS FROM THE END OF

THE DETAILED EVALUATION PERIOD. SUCH DECISION BY THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY FOLLOWING THE CONCLUSION OF THE DETAILED EVALUATION SHALL BE DEEMED FINAL AND NON-APPEALABLE.

- e. On page 22,
  - (i) lines 5 to 14, delete the entire subsection and re-letter the succeeding subsections accordingly.
  - (ii) line 23, delete from the word “That” until the word “further” in line 25.
  - (iii) line 27, delete from the words “In evaluating” until the word “employed” in line 28.
  - (iv) line 29, delete from the word “whether” until the word “approve” in line 31 and replace it with THE MECHANISM FOR EVALUATING COMPARATIVE PROPOSALS, WHICH MAY BE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:.
- f. On page 23,
  - (i) between lines 4 and 5, insert as second paragraph under Right-to-match mechanism:

IF THE ORIGINAL PROPONENT IS ABLE TO MATCH THE PROPOSAL OF THE CHALLENGER, THE PPP PROJECT SHALL BE AWARDED TO THE ORIGINAL PROPONENT. OTHERWISE, THE PPP PROJECT SHALL BE AWARDED TO THE WINNING CHALLENGER.

- (ii) line 5, delete the phrase “the bonus shall be in the form of a percentage” and replace it with the words A BONUS.
  - (iii) line 8, after the word “bonus”, insert the phrase SHALL BE IN THE FORM OF A PERCENTAGE TO BE DETERMINED BY THE APPROPRIATE APPROVING BODY AS PART OF THE PTCS; PROVIDED FURTHER, THAT SUCH PERCENTAGE.
  - (iv) line 10, delete the word “comparative” until the word “Proponent” before the comma (,) in line 13, and replace it with IF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PROPOSAL OF THE TOP CHALLENGER AND OF THE ORIGINAL PROPONENT IS LESS THAN THE PRE-DETERMINED BONUS,.
  - (v) line 18, delete from the phrase “If the financial” until the word “Proponent” in line 20, and replace it with IF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PROPOSAL OF THE TOP CHALLENGER AND OF THE ORIGINAL PROPONENT IS BEYOND THE PRE-DETERMINED BONUS,.
- g. On page 25, lines 6 to 13, delete subsection (g) in its entirety and re-letter the succeeding sections accordingly.
- h. On page 27,
  - (i) line 7, after the word “mechanisms”, insert the phrase PURSUANT TO REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9285 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE ALTERNATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION ACT OF 2004.
  - (ii) line 8, delete the phrase “and venue shall govern their dispute, as well as the procedures”.
  - (iii) line 11, delete the word “fiscal” and replace it with the word FINANCIAL.

- (iv) lines 22 to 23, delete the phrase “as approved by the appropriate Approving Body, as well as” and replace it with the word AND.
- i. On page 28, line 7, after the word “Agency”, insert the phrase ARBITRAL AWARDS OR SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS,.
- j. On page 29,
- (i) line 2, after the word “recovery”, add S to the word “scheme” and add the phrase INVOLVING THE GRANT OF A PORTION OR PERCENTAGE OF A RECLAIMED LAND.
- (ii) line 4, delete the word “Upon” until the word “allowed” in line 6, and replace it with A CONTRACT VARIATION, EXPANSION, OR EXTENSION OF AN EXISTING PPP PROJECT MAY BE ALLOWED, SUBJECT TO DUE DILIGENCE AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE HEAD OF THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY.
- (iii) line 28, after the word “variations”, insert the phrase NOT COVERED IN ITEMS (A) TO (E) ABOVE.
- k. On page 30, line 9, delete from the word “subject” until the word “project” in line 10, and replace it with the phrase A PRIVATE PARTNER MAY DIVEST ITS OWNERSHIP, RIGHTS, OR INTERESTS IN A PPP PROJECT, SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE HEAD OF THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY:.
- l. On page 35,
- (i) line 14, between the comma (,) and the word “Infrastructure”, insert the words THE TECHNICAL BOARDS OF THE.
- (ii) line 28, insert the words AS VICE-CHAIRPERSON after the word “DOF”.
- m. On page 37,
- (i) lines 7 to 8, delete the sentence “The PPP Center shall continue to serve as the Secretariat for the PDMF Committee”.
- (ii) line 16, delete from the word “contributions” until the word “budgets” on line 17, and replace with the phrase (a) GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS.
- (iii) between lines 20 and 21, insert the following paragraphs:  
THE INTER-AGENCY TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON CONTINGENT LIABILITIES CREATED UNDER DBCC RESOLUTION NO. 2015-2 IS HEREBY INSTITUTIONALIZED.
- THE PPP CENTER, IN COORDINATION WITH THE AFOREMENTIONED INTERAGENCY TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP, SHALL FORMULATE THE GUIDELINES ON THE MANAGEMENT OF CONTINGENT LIABILITIES ARISING FROM PPP PROJECTS AND THE USE OF THE PPP RISK MANAGEMENT FUND, FOR APPROVAL BY THE DBCC.
- (iv) delete lines 24 to 29.
- (v) line 31, insert the phrase SUBJECT TO THE GUIDELINES TO BE ISSUED BY THE PPP GOVERNING BOARD after the acronym “LGU”.
- n. On page 38, lines 18 to 23, delete the entire sentence and replace it with: THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY AND THE PPP CENTER SHALL PUBLISH, THROUGH THEIR RESPECTIVE WEBSITES, COPIES OF ALL (A) TENDER DOCUMENTS, AND (B) PPP CONTRACTS EXECUTED UNDER THIS ACT. IN CASE OF PPP CONTRACTS WITH

PROVISIONS WHICH ARE PROPRIETARY, OR MAY POSE THREATS TO NATIONAL SECURITY OR PUBLIC SAFETY, THE PROCEDURES FOR THE DISCLOSURE AND PUBLICATION OF SUCH CONTRACTS SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING AND APPLICABLE LAWS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS.

- o. On page 39, line 26, delete from the words “or the document” until the words “regulatory body” on line 28, and replace them with the phrase: OR IF A LAW, OR A VALID ORDER OF A COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION OR OF A GOVERNMENT OR REGULATORY BODY, MANDATES THE DISCLOSURE OF SUCH DOCUMENT OR INFORMATION.
- p. On page 40, line 6, subsection (E), delete from the word “For” until the word “Body” on line 9, and replace them with the following: ALL MOAs SHALL BE SUBMITTED TO THE PPP CENTER, AND THE NEDA BOARD – ICC IN THE CASE OF NATIONAL PPP PROJECTS, OR THE APPROPRIATE APPROVING BODY IN THE CASE OF LOCAL PPP PROJECTS.
- q. On page 41
  - i. line 22, between the word “project” and “that”, insert the phrase BY A PRIVATE PROPONENT OR PRIVATE PARTNER.
  - ii. line 29, before the word “compliance”, insert the phrase FAILING TO EXERCISE THE REQUIRED DUE DILIGENCE AND/OR TO ENSURE.
- r. On page 42,
  - (i) lines 3 to 6, delete subsection F in its entirety, and replace it with (F) IN CASE OF PUBLIC OFFICER/S ACTING AS THE APPROVING AUTHORITY OR MEMBER OF THE APPROVING BODY, KNOWINGLY OR WITH GROSS NEGLIGENCE, APPROVES ANY PPP CONTRACT THAT IS CONTRARY TO LAW OR MANIFESTLY AND GROSSLY DISADVANTAGEOUS TO THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC, WHETHER OR NOT THE PUBLIC OFFICER/S IS/ARE SIGNATORY/IES TO THE PPP CONTRACT.
  - (ii) lines 7 to 8, delete the phrase “as provided in Section 10 (d) and (e)”, and replace it with the phrase INsofar AS DETERMINING COMPLETION AND CONDUCTING DETAILED EVALUATION OF THE UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL AND THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PRIVATE PROPONENT ARE CONCERNED.
- s. On page 43, lines 23 to 25, delete the entire sentence, and replace it with the sentence: NO ADMINISTRATIVE, CRIMINAL, OR CIVIL PROCEEDINGS SHALL LIE AGAINST ANY PERSON FOR HAVING COMMITTED ACTS UNDER ITEMS (A) TO (O) IN THE REGULAR PERFORMANCE OF HIS DUTIES IN GOOD FAITH.
- t. On page 44, line 8, delete from the word “Within” until the word “which” on line 12, and replace it with the following: THE IRR COMMITTEE, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, OTHER KEY IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES, LGUS, RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS, AND THE PUBLIC, SHALL FORMULATE AND PRESCRIBE THE IRR

WITHIN 90 CALENDAR DAYS FROM EFFECTIVITY OF THIS ACT. THE IRR.

- u. On page 45,
  - (i) line 3, delete the phrase “with ongoing procurement”, and replace it with the phrase WHICH HAVE COMMENCED BIDDING, AND UNSOLICITED PPP PROJECTS WHICH HAVE COMMENCED THE COMPARATIVE CHALLENGE PROCESS.
  - (ii) line 6, delete the phrase starting from the word “time” until the word “commenced” on line 7, and replace it with the phrase COMMENCEMENT OF THE BIDDING OR THE COMPARATIVE CHALLENGE PROCESS.
  - (iii) line 11, delete the words “procurement thereof”, and replace them with the phrase BIDDING OR THE COMPARATIVE CHALLENGE PROCESS.
- v. On page 47, between lines 6 and 7, insert a new subsection (8) with the following text: (8) SECTIONS OF PRESIDENTIAL DECREE (P.D.) NO. 1113, SERIES OF 1977, GRANTING TO THE CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (CDCP) THE RIGHT TO CONSTRUCT, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN TOLL FACILITIES IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH LUZON TOLL EXPRESSWAYS, WHICH ARE INCONSISTENT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT;.
- w. On page 48, lines 18 to 22, delete the entire subsection (17).

### **3. Senate Bill No. 2001 under Committee Report No. 43**

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

Sponsor: Sen. Imee R. Marcos

#### **Amendments of Senator Marcos**

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

- a. On page 2, line 28, after the phrase “entered into force in”, delete and replace the year “1968” with 1947.
- b. On page 3, line 8, after the phrase “adoption procedures”, add a comma (,) and the phrase AS PROVIDED IN REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11767, OR THE FOUNDLING RECOGNITION AND PROTECTION ACT.
- c. On page 6, line 18, after the word “Act”, add a comma (,) and the phrase OR COMPETENT PROOF OF IDENTITY.
- d. On page 8, line 29, after the phrase “Court of Appeals”, add a comma (,) and the phrase COURT OF TAX APPEALS and a comma (,).
- e. On page 10, line 9, delete the phrase “and household members”.
- f. On page 13, line 6, insert a new subparagraph (1), which shall read as follows: (1) WHEN A HOLD DEPARTURE ORDER OR A PRECAUTIONARY HOLD DEPARTURE ORDER IS ISSUED BY A COMPETENT COURT AGAINST A SUSPECTED PERSON OR A RESPONDENT TO A CRIMINAL CASE;.

- g. On page 15, lines 10 to 25, delete and replace the entire section with the following:

PASSPORT REVOLVING FUND. - THE DFA MAY CHARGE A SERVICE FEE OF NOT MORE THAN THIRTY PERCENT (30%) OF THE REGULAR PASSPORT FEES FOR SUCH SERVICE RENDERED TO APPLICANTS RELATING TO THE PROCESSING AND ISSUANCE OF PASSPORTS REQUIRING SPECIAL CONSIDERATION, WAIVER, OR ISSUANCE BEYOND REGULAR OFFICE HOURS.

THE SERVICE FEES RECEIVED BY THE DFA UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL CONSTITUTE A REVOLVING FUND TO BE CALLED AS "THE PASSPORT REVOLVING FUND," WHICH MAY BE UTILIZED BY THE DFA FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF ITS PASSPORTING AND CONSULAR SERVICES AND OTHER DFA SERVICES EXCEPT TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES.

THE SETTING UP, USE, AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW, ACCOUNTING, AND AUDITING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON AUDIT AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO ANNUAL REVIEW BY CONGRESS. THE DFA SECRETARY SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT ON THE DISBURSEMENT OF THE FUND EVERY SIX (6) MONTHS TO BOTH THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

### **Approved on Second Reading**

#### **4. Privilege Speech of Senator Hontiveros**

Senator Hontiveros narrated the harrowing story of rape, sexual violence, child abuse, and forced marriage perpetrated on minors by Socorro Bayanihan Services, an alleged cult group in Socorro, Surigao del Norte. She cited that the plight of eight children who managed to escape the cult and recounted their experience, and are now under the care of the local government unit and the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Given the circumstances, she stressed the urgency to save the children, stating that it is their duty not just as senators, but also as parents, as human beings, to save children in most need of their help.

The Senator also stated that the cult is armed and dangerous. In addition, she mentioned how they collect money, which includes, among others, 50% of the money received by the beneficiaries of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program and pension of senior citizens who are members, and 40%-60% of the government social assistance allotted to the residents when *Typhoon Odette* hit Socorro. It was also alleged that the cult is also involved in illegal drugs.

**Motion of Senator Villanueva to refer the privilege speech of Senator Hontiveros to the Committees on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs; and Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender**

#### **5. Senate Bill No. 2415 under Committee Report No. 106**

An Act Creating a VAT Refund Mechanism for Non-Resident Tourists, Adding a New Section 112-A to the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as Amended, For the Purpose



Sponsor: Sen. Win Gatchalian

### **Sponsorship speech of Senator Gatchalian**

Senator Gatchalian stated that proposed bill seeks to provide value-added tax (VAT) refund for non-resident tourists. Seen to drive economic growth and create employment opportunities, the proposed bill is intended to generate fiscal gain, which ranges from P3.3 billion to P5.7 billion per annum from 2024 to 2028. The proposed scheme is also expected to create additional employment opportunities of 4,400 to 7,100 per annum from 2024 to 2028.

The Senator further pointed out that the grant of a VAT refund can encourage purchases from tourists, especially since shopping has emerged as a motivating factor for travel in recent years. The bill is an opportunity to support One Town, One Product program. In the Philippines, shopping constitutes an average of 12% of the total expenditures by inbound tourists before the pandemic.

Under the bill, the Sponsor mentioned, the non- resident tourists will be eligible for a VAT refund for goods purchased under specific conditions.

- First, the goods must be locally purchased by the tourists themselves from duly accredited stores.
- Second, the goods must be taken out of the Philippines by the tourists within 60 days from the date of purchase.
- Third, the value of the locally purchased goods must amount to at least P3,000 per transaction.

Senator Gatchalian added that the proposed measure extends beyond the mere visitation of picturesque tourist destinations or immersion in the country's rich culture. It also provides a gratifying shopping experience facilitated by the VAT refund mechanism, which will result to a resurgence in business activities ultimately leading to an improved quality of life for the Filipinos.

### **Manifestation of Senator Villanueva that the cosponsorship speech of Senator Estrada be inserted into the *Record***

#### **6. Senate Bill No. 2028 under Committee Report No. 61**

An Act Expanding the Coverage of the Centenarians Act of 2016, Amending for the Purpose Republic Act No. 10868, and Providing Funds Therefor

Sponsor: Sen. Imee R. Marcos

### **Interpellation of Senator Pimentel**

Asked on the final form of bill, Senator Marcos stated that it has been agreed that a revision of the three bills presented—those of Senator Pimentel, Senator Revilla and Senator Gatchalian—has been put forth in consideration of the exigencies of the national budget and the many requirements on financing capacity. Based on the revisions, recognition will be given to 80-year-olds, providing them with P10,000 each; 90-year-olds, with P20,000 each; and centenarians with P100,000 each.

As for the life expectancy of Filipinos, Senator Marcos said that the life expectancy for Filipino men is 71, while the life expectancy for Filipino women is 78.

Concerning the estimates on the number of beneficiaries, Senator Marcos stated that, according to Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), about 131,000 for 80-year-olds, 26,700 plus for 90-year-olds, and 2,623 for 100-year-olds.

With regard to the inflation peg in the bill, Senator Marcos stated that the provision is no longer included.

Senator Pimentel inquired whether those who are already 80 years old and 90 years old at the time the law becomes effective would be covered by the measure. The Sponsor replied in the affirmative.

As for the total program cost, Senator Marcos cited estimates provided by DSWD and the Listahanan 3, which is P2.1 billion.

### **Manifestation of Senator Villanueva**

Senator Villanueva mentioned that despite the passage of the law on the doubling of social pension for senior citizens, the senior citizens are still receiving P500.

Senator Marcos stated that the P25-billion budget for social pension was put under unprogrammed appropriation because it was not allowed in 2023. She was hopeful that the allotted amount would be gradually released to address the backlog. She also noted that for 2024, only P3 billion is lacking.

### **Manifestation of Senator Revilla**

Senator Revilla stated that no less than the United Nations Principles for Older Persons mandates that senior citizens should have access to social and legal services to enhance their autonomy, protection, and care. He commended Senator Marcos for her efforts to ensure that the bill is given ample attention. He also urged the Department of Budget and Management to turn the dream for senior citizens into reality, given that senior citizens aged 80 to 100 years old are only few.

**Session was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.**