

SENATE'S CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
COMMENTS ON THE 3RD WEEKLY REPORT
OF THE PRESIDENT DATED 13 APRIL 2020

I. PROVIDE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO ALL AFFECTED SECTORS

Social Amelioration Programs (p.2)

- Based on the Report, the starting point in the identification of beneficiaries was the DSWD's *Listahan 2015* or the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction, adjusted for population growth. However, there is still a huge disparity between the estimated number of beneficiaries provided by the DOF and the DSWD through its "quota system" and the actual data provided by the LGUs. As previously commented, the bottom-up approach should be employed since LGUs are the ones on the ground and have the capability to conduct such listing. Note that pursuant to Sec. 394 (d)(6) of the LGC, barangays are required to maintain a Registry of Barangay Inhabitants and Migrants (RBIM).¹
- What are the DSWD's timelines and target date of completion? Will the DSWD be able to distribute the cash assistance to all eligible beneficiaries before the end of the ECQ? The government may wish to explore tapping the services of telecommunication companies that offer mobile money transfers to provide one-time cash assistance and consider removing the ID requirement to serve millions of Filipinos who do not have official birth certificates and who are unable to present valid IDs.²
- Re: failure to coordinate with LGUs - The DSWD, DOTr, LTFRB, and Land Bank signed a Joint Memorandum Agreement on the emergency cash subsidy for drivers of PUVs but failed to coordinate with and inform the LGUs. This is to ensure that the efforts of the LGUs are aligned with the National Government agencies and there is no duplication of efforts.³
- Based on the report, the DA has only reached 18,495 out of 591,246 target farmer beneficiaries. However, the DA must double its efforts to reach the farmer beneficiaries as soon as possible. Also, does the DA have any subsidy programs other than for rice farmers, which include cash for crop farmers and fisherfolk?⁴

¹ Sen. Cayetano, Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 2), Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 8), and Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 3)

² Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, p. 1)

³ Sen. Cayetano

⁴ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 2) and Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, pp. 2-3)

SAP and other Assistance to Laborers (p.4)

- The DOLE reported on the delivery of their services, however, what they have reported is far from the target. They must expedite the delivery of assistance to CAMP and TUPAD-BKKB target beneficiaries based on the figures submitted to the Office of Senator Joel Villanueva and for DBM to expedite the release of the total of Php 7.8B requested by DOLE.⁵
- The DOLE should also establish a real-time monitoring portal to reflect relevant information on CAMP, TUPAD-BKKB, and DOLE AKAP, respectively, including but not limited to distribution of financial assistance to formal and informal workers as well as to our OFWs, number of establishments that applied for CAMP (divided per province), number of approved, denied, or pending applications, number of employees granted assistance, actual date of remittance of the financial assistance to the bank accounts of the workers or to designated money remittance centers.⁶
- The DOLE should likewise report on the accomplishments of the DOLE AKAP for OFWs, a program intended to give USD 200 or Php 10,000 or its equivalent in foreign currency to displaced or repatriated OFWs due to COVID-19. We note that there was no mention of this program in this Report.⁷

Assistance to Overseas Filipinos and Foreign Nationals in the Country (p.5)

- Aside from emergency repatriations for OFWs, the OWWA, POEA, and the DFA, should also have other programs for our OFWs who are also under lockdown in their respective countries of employment.⁸
- Based on the Report, DFA will coordinate with receiving countries regarding the welfare of our OFWs. It must be pointed out that no migrant receiving state in Western Europe or North America has ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and members of their families which entered into force in July 2003. This may be a good time to revisit this and to push for its ratification because many of these countries are grateful for Filipino migrant workers, especially during this time of Covid and yet they do not have access to healthcare and remain unprotected and vulnerable in their host countries.⁹

⁵ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 4) and Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, p. 3)

⁶ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 4) and Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, p. 3)

⁷ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 4) and Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, p. 3)

⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 4)

⁹ Sen. Cayetano

Protection of Persons Deprived of Liberty (p.6)

- The Report mentioned the protection of Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Corrections. We must ensure the safety of detention personnel by providing them with PPEs, alcohol, and other needed supplies.¹⁰
- The national government must come up with a uniform policy in order not to congest jails any further. The government may consider: (1) separate facilities for new detainees or old detainees with COVID-19 concerns; (2) temporary release of bailable, non-violent, first time offenders; (3) early release of the most vulnerable detainees and those with minor offenses; and (4) recognizance. We likewise support the idea of conducting e-trial for criminal cases during the pandemic.¹¹
- The IATF, in coordination with the Supreme Court, may designate temporary holding facilities for detention prisoners with COVID-19 concerns.¹²

Assistance to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and Productive Sectors (p.9)

- In the IATF briefing last 12 April 2020, Secretary Nograles stated that export-oriented industries shall be allowed to enhance their operations by deploying their workers under on-site or near-site accommodation arrangements, or by providing P2P shuttle services. This seems to be based on DTI MC 20-14 s. 2020 dated 11 April 2020. What is the logic of singling out export-oriented businesses? Wouldn't locally consumed products be just as important or at least include certain types of products? Should the focus not be based on industry?¹³
- The economic team should quickly roll out the wage subsidy program for MSMEs, which it recently announced, as well as other relief programs for small businesses.¹⁴
- Regarding the wage subsidy program for MSMEs, logistical difficulties similar to the Emergency Subsidy Program (ESP) may arise if only a portion (estimated 3.4M workers affected by ECQ) of the total 5.7M MSME workers will be provided wage subsidy. We also request for the computation supporting the said estimate and hope the government reconsiders covering all MSME workers, instead of just 60% of them.¹⁵

¹⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 3)

¹¹ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 3) and Sen. Pimentel

¹² Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 3)

¹³ Sen. Cayetano

¹⁴ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 3) and Sen Cayetano

¹⁵ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 3)

- According to reports, recipients may receive the cash aid through their SSS Unified Multi-Purpose ID cards (UMID) The concern here is the possible delay in the distribution of cash aid. Not everyone has their UMID and it would take a lot of resources to collect bank account details or remit amounts via remittance centers. As a better alternative, the government should look into coursing payment through the respective businesses that they serve. It is much easier and efficient to forward the subsidy to businesses with their respective payment or payroll mechanisms set in place.¹⁶
- There are 7,317 retail borrowers and 205 wholesale borrowers who have been given reprieve on their payments. Of this number, is there data on how many MSMEs producing PPEs and other essential products/services were provided with funding?¹⁷
- Apart from loans, is there any other assistance provided to them by other agencies? Perhaps these companies can be prioritized by the wage subsidy program proposed by the DOF, aside from companies in the AlphaList of BIR and SSS.¹⁸
- Another available option is through the grant of tax exemptions or other incentives to MSMEs that will shoulder said amounts. The approach that should be adopted here must consider the use of the quickest and most efficient means of making the financial assistance available to the beneficiary.¹⁹

Ensuring Uninterrupted Supply Chain (p. 10)

- Based on reports, the Rapid Pass program is being rolled out. Since it uses a QR code to identify individuals, can we use the same app in contact tracing as well?²⁰
- The Report mentioned the Urban Agriculture Program without any details. Kindly provide the details as well as its targets.²¹
- Agencies should provide data on the impact of the pandemic on food security so that we can forecast our food deficit.²²
- The five hotlines designated by the DILG to receive complaints on undue restriction on the movement of essential goods and such other relevant information should be properly disseminated.²³

¹⁶ Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 3)

¹⁷ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 3)

¹⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 3)

¹⁹ Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 3)

²⁰ Sen. Cayetano

²¹ Sen. Cayetano

²² Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, p. 3) and Sen. Cayetano

²³ Sen. Cayetano

- Since packed and canned foods are the default relief products, more effort should be given towards the delivery of fresh and nutrient rich food. Thus, the uninterrupted movement of and access to vegetables should be prioritized.²⁴
- Given the fact that public markets are considered a hotbed for transmission, we recommend that the appropriate agencies consider adopting a farm-to-household model to reduce the need to go to markets. Moreover, the locations of the KADIWA markets should be directly coordinated with the LGUs and made known to the public.²⁵

Assistance to and Partnership with LGUs (p.12)

- PhilHealth should study the expansion of the health insurance coverage to include fees for teleconsultations provided by private telemedicine companies.²⁶
- The DOH should issue well-defined and easy-to-understand guidelines for the day-to-day use of telehealth technologies in the context of COVID-19. This must be adjusted to the most vulnerable and their needs.²⁷
- What is the timeline for the DICT to adopt a telemedicine technology solution to enable LGUs to provide remote consultation, electronic medical records system, and telemedicine kits?²⁸
- The DICT should also consult the NPC with regard to the handling, accessibility, and storage of personal data. It shall also ensure that telemedicine and broadband systems have sufficient bandwidth and security provisions as well as additional support through user-friendly guides so that elderly are still able to use the alternative models of care, particularly where technical literacy may be required.²⁹
- 664 cities and municipalities have submitted MOAs to the DSWD indicating their intention to avail of the SAP. On the other hand, the remaining 195 cities and municipalities are still in the process of crafting MOAs. What is the implication of not having a MOA? Does this affect the immediate delivery of SAP to their constituents?³⁰

²⁴ Sen. Cayetano

²⁵ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 9), Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 3), and Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, p. 4-5)

²⁶ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 1)

²⁷ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 1)

²⁸ Sen. Cayetano

²⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 1)

³⁰ Sen. Cayetano

Measures on Disposal and Related Wastes (p.14)

- We are still awaiting the guidelines from DENR on the proper waste management and segregation for communities and households. This is crucial if we hope to educate the public on containment of the virus at the level of their households and communities.³¹

Continuing Efforts on Information Dissemination (p. 14)

- We would also like to be clarified why the DOH resorted to the policy of adopting a centralized approach with respect to the release of information regarding the number of cases and deaths?³²
- The DOH must adopt a policy of transparency and accessibility with respect to the daily census of all hospitals and quarantine facilities. The DOH should maximize its online COVID-19 Tracker to include and make publicly available the daily updated information on all hospitals (public and private) and quarantine facilities grouped together by region to include their daily census and other details such as total bed space available, number of COVID-19 patients admitted, number of PUIs admitted, number of PUI hospital mortalities, number of deaths (confirmed and suspected), number of individuals tested, geographic and social demographic of persons tested, statistics on contacts traced, statistics on suspected and probable cases, breakdown of PPEs and other supplies by source, donations received and dispatched³³
- While the efforts of the different government agencies in disseminating information relative to the crisis should be commended, there is however the need to counter disinformation and spread of fake news, which could tilt the crisis against us. It is therefore recommended that DICT be instructed to set up a one-stop shop website for all information relative to the crisis. All issuances, updates, notices, advisories, instructions, data, and relevant information coming from all agencies of government, including data from the DOH, issuances of the IATF and the President's Reports, should be readily accessible to the public from a single website. With all relevant information in one website, the public needs only to verify from the site any information that they may receive or encounter.³⁴

³¹ Sen. Cayetano

³² Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 7)

³³ Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 7), Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 1) and Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, p. 3-4)

³⁴ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 9)

- LGUs must put in place transparency measures in the implementation of SAP, to be monitored by the DILG/DSWD, to prevent leakages.³⁵

II. SECURE FACILITIES AND RESOURCES FOR THE HEALTH SECTOR AND OTHER FRONTLINERS (p.15)

Human Resource for Health, Referral Hospitals and Equipment by the Numbers (p.15)

- The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) should enable LGUs to hire and compensate additional doctors in their public hospitals, including the medical graduates who will be given special authorization to practice medicine.³⁶
- The DBM should amend their recently issued Circular to allow payment by LGUs of compensation to newly-hired temporary LGU doctors coming from the Bayanihan Internal Revenue Allotment fund for cities and municipalities.³⁷
- Is DOH tapping the network of barangay health workers in the country?³⁸
- It is highly suggested that POEA's resolution, which temporarily restricted/regulated the deployment of health workers abroad without prior or existing contracts, be modified in order to temper the restrictions set in place. Perhaps, it may be permissible to regulate, if not restrict, the departure of such health care professionals.³⁹
- While the POEA has temporarily suspended the deployment of medical personnel abroad, are there any efforts by the government to actively engage the services of these health workers to our health care system?⁴⁰
- The said Report does not have a tally on the number of health workers (pegged at 172,744 based on the second Report) who are actively handling COVID-19 cases or otherwise exposed. This is so we can prepare for the worst case scenario of our health workers falling ill to COVID-19, project the numbers of how many reserve health workers may be needed, and augment the remaining health workers if necessary.⁴¹

COVID-19 Bed Capacity and Quarantine Facilities (p.16)

- We still need to be updated on the efforts by DOH, DPWH and DILG to assist LGUs with identifying or establishing isolation units, including targeted number

³⁵ Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, p. 2)

³⁶ Sen. Tolentino (Annex D-1)

³⁷ Sen. Tolentino (Annex D-1)

³⁸ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 2)

³⁹ Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p.3)

⁴⁰ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 9)

⁴¹ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 9)

of beds and needed medical supplies and equipment based on the population in that area. What is the target for establishment of isolation units?⁴²

- The next report should also show updates on efforts in assisting the 29,721 remaining barangays (as of 2 April 2020) to designate Barangay Isolation Units or Special Care Facilities for PUIs in their respective jurisdiction.⁴³
- How are the hospitals currently managing the accommodations of the patients when our current total already exceeds the total number of beds for NCR, Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao combined?⁴⁴
- What are the available options or steps that must be taken by a suspected COVID-19 patient in the event of failure to find a hospital or quarantine facility? The answer to this must be made known to the public so as to avoid confusion and panic.⁴⁵
- Allegations of unsanitary quarantine facilities must be investigated. There has to be an upscaling of such quarantine facilities especially if they will be designated for the use of people with pre-existing conditions or are suffering from COVID-19 symptoms.⁴⁶

Assistance to Healthworkers and Frontliners (p.17)

- We understand concerns raised by the toll operators-concessionaires on their fixed costs, which they incur relative to day-to-day operations. We, however, would still like to appeal for toll-free access for agricultural products.⁴⁷
- The Report acknowledged the recommendation of the Senate President of the need to activate the National ID System. Perhaps we can start with certain groups whose inclusion in the initial identification system will assist in our efforts to fight COVID-19 and who are otherwise easily identifiable, such as:⁴⁸
 - Frontliners, including health workers and law enforcers
 - Employees allowed to report to work
 - Beneficiaries of SAP, PPP and other government programs
 - All those registered with government agencies, such as but not limited to SSS, GSIS, Philhealth registered persons
 - Others
- On the issue of economic assistance to the health workers, the report failed to mention if the DOH is already rolling out the system of indemnifying health

⁴² Sen. Cayetano

⁴³ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 8)

⁴⁴ Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 7)

⁴⁵ Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 7)

⁴⁶ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 6)

⁴⁷ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Pimentel

⁴⁸ Sen. Cayetano

workers who contracted COVID-19 while on duty and those who have passed away.⁴⁹

Update on Test Kits and Testing Centers (p.19)

- Though there has been an increase in the number of testing kits and laboratories, we have yet to be informed of the target number of people to be tested, as well as the number of test kits needed. As such, the DOH should issue a report which includes the actual inventory of the test kits we have on hand, the number of purchased test kits, the plan on the use of both rapid tests and PCR based tests, and how these tests are distributed across the cities and municipalities with recorded cases.⁵⁰
- There are reports that the donation of rapid tests of whatever nature still undergo FDA testing. This is an unnecessary delay in the distribution of these health products. DOH should allow the distribution of these products to the public. Rather than a black and white approach in whether FDA testing is needed, the DOH should follow the law and automatically clear testing kits which are duly certified by the regulatory agency or their accredited third party from countries with established regulation.⁵¹

Strengthening Contact Tracing Measures (p.20)

- Following the designation of the OCD as the lead agency in the government's contact tracing efforts, it is hereby recommended that a Presidential Proclamation or an administrative order authorizing the OCD to carry out this function, in partnership with the DOH, be promulgated to bolster the legality of the delegated authority to the OCD to lead the contact tracing efforts.⁵²
- Based on the Report, the DOH has traced a total of 8,793 contacts and it seeks to further develop and strengthen its COVID-19 Information System and linkage with the RITM. This, however, may not be enough given our present circumstances. As such, the OCD, DOH with the DOST should look into applications being developed for contact tracing. In addition, the OCD and DOH should also look into recruiting medical students to aid the government in its efforts on contact tracing.⁵³

⁴⁹ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 2)

⁵⁰ Sen. Cayetano, Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 5), Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 8), and Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 2),

⁵¹ Sen. Lacson (Annex C, pp. 5-6)

⁵² Sen. Tolentino (Annex D, p.1)

⁵³ Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Tolentino (Annex D, p. 1)

Healthcare Supplies and Equipment (p.21)

- The demand for PPEs remains high, not only for healthcare workers, but also for law enforcement officers, barangay and city officials and other frontliners. Beyond the 1M PPEs, how much else is being procured and how many are still needed?⁵⁴
- Are there projections on the needed number of ventilators and respirators? How many ventilators should we be targeting to procure from abroad? How many should we have manufactured locally? Are there companies who have applied to become medical device manufacturers, specifically for ventilators and respirators? Please provide the details.⁵⁵

III. ESTABLISH SOUND FISCAL AND MONETARY ACTIONS THAT ARE RESPONSIVE TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS (p. 22)

Budgetary Measures to Fund COVID-19 Effort (p. 25)

- The report has to contain an accounting of the funds. Section 5 of RA 11469 mandates that the weekly report of the President to the Congressional Oversight Committee has to “include the amount and corresponding utilization of the funds used, augmented, reprogrammed, reallocation and realigned.” This is the essence of transparency, which is a key in the oversight function of Congress, and vital to the right to information of the general public. The Programs/Activities/Projects (PAPs) from where the savings were pooled should be specifically identified in the next report. Likewise, the report of LGUs on the use of the grant as well as the status of their implementation must be included.⁵⁶
- The next report should inform Congress of the current cash position of the government. This is to assist Congress in determining measures that it may need to enact.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Sen. Cayetano, Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 3) and Sen. Vilanueva (Annex E, p. 2)

⁵⁵ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 4) and Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 2)

⁵⁶ Sen. De Lima (Annex B, p. 3), Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 2), Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 1) and Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, p. 4)

⁵⁷ Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 2) and Sen. Pangilinan (Annex F, p. 6)

IV. RESPONSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY PLAN

Role of LGUs

- The role of the LGUs in this crisis, including recovery phase, cannot be overemphasized. It is therefore recommended that in crafting a truly Responsive and Sustainable Recovery Plan, a bottom-up approach should be employed to create a convergence with the national priorities.⁵⁸

V. OTHER OBSERVATIONS/COMMENTS

Lack of National Action Plan

- As was previously commented, there is still no concrete National Action Plan in combating the public health emergency. The approach of the government seems to be scattered and reactive. It addresses the problem on a weekly basis, if not on a day-to-day basis. This lack of action plan has caused confusion in roles as well as contradicting measures. R.A. 11469 provides for the specific powers granted to the President to equip him in addressing COVID-19 national emergency. It seems that the actions made by the government are confined within the measure. There are already existing powers that the National Government may employ to address the concerns of the public health emergency.⁵⁹

Plasma Donation Program

- The DOH should organize a plasma donation program composed of COVID-19 survivors to help treat seriously ill patients. A possible first step would be to create a database of COVID-19 survivors shared between hospitals and treatment facilities.⁶⁰

Management of COVID-19 Fatalities

- There appears to be no report on the provision of burial assistance and on the safe management of human remains in relation to COVID-19 other than those mentioned in the 2nd report on relief operations to Muslim communities which

⁵⁸ Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 8)

⁵⁹ Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p.1)

⁶⁰ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 2)

include (1) burial assistance for Muslims in the NCR, (2) observance of Muslim burial customs and (3) assistance in the transportation of cadavers.⁶¹

- On the other hand, there are reports that: (1) families of those who died from COVID-19 are having a hard time securing death certificates because some LGUs and barangay officials do not know what the protocols are if a patient dies inside his or her home, and how to properly handle the bodies which can no longer be accommodated in mortuary freezers and crematoriums; and (2) some private crematoriums are asking for Php100,000 for the cremation of COVID-positive remains.⁶²
- Given the above concerns, it is imperative for the IATF to immediately address the issues relating to the management of COVID-19 fatalities, including cadaver management, storage, burial/cremation and burial assistance to families.⁶³
- The IATF can adopt the following recommendations:
 - National Government to cover the entire amount of burial/cremation and other related expenses for the vulnerable sectors; cash grants for the middle class sector similar to the Php10,000 outright cash under the DSWD AICS Program;⁶⁴
 - Prepare an inventory of privately-owned funeral homes/crematoriums to handle the remains of suspected and confirmed COVID-19 patients;
 - Prepare an alternative storage for cadavers in case hospital morgues are filled to capacity;⁶⁵
 - As a safety measure, death of suspected COVID-19 patients should be treated as confirmed COVID-19 cases since there are instances when results were released after the patient's actual death;⁶⁶
 - Provide body bags and PPEs to hospitals, barangays, funeral homes/crematoriums handling the remains of suspected and confirmed COVID-19 patients;⁶⁷
 - Rehabilitate non-operational crematoriums in Manila to be environmentally compliant;⁶⁸
 - Enter into a MOA with mortuary associations or federations in the country for the transport of cadavers from hospitals, quarantine centers and houses;⁶⁹
 - Adopt and implement clear guidelines on COVID-19 deaths at home;⁷⁰

⁶¹ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 1)

⁶² Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 1)

⁶³ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 1), Sen. Pimentel, and Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 8)

⁶⁴ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 2)

⁶⁵ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 2) and Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 8)

⁶⁶ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 2)

⁶⁷ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 2)

⁶⁸ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 2)

⁶⁹ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 2)

⁷⁰ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 2)

- Designate hotlines for families or individuals dealing with COVID-19 patients who died at home;⁷¹
- Adopt and implement clear guidelines on reporting of COVID-19 deaths and issuance of corresponding death certificates;⁷²
- Adopt and implement clear guidelines and assistance to LGUs, remote barangays, municipalities or geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas which have no access to funeral homes/crematoriums;⁷³ and
- Information must be disseminated on the safe management of the remains of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients.⁷⁴

Extended Enhanced Community Quarantine

- April 30 is just around the corner. As such, we must prepare for the next step, which could be a modified community quarantine. But this can only be seriously considered if testing, contact tracing, and isolation protocols are in place. The need for reliable data all across the country is crucial to making any decision on the lifting of quarantine.⁷⁵
- In this regard, a sectoral view in gradually lifting the lockdown should be adopted, compliant with existing protocols on social and physical distancing in order to dampen the impact of COVID-19 to the economy without increasing the risk of spread of infection.⁷⁶
 - To further reduce the potential economic losses brought about by shutting down of private establishments in various areas, the government should look into feasible set-ups in gradually lifting the lockdowns.
 - Sectors whose current restrictions on movement may be lifted and may be replaced with more relaxed policies (such as social distancing and/or requirement to wear masks in workplaces) should be identified, putting the following factors into consideration: (i) their risk of contributing to the spread of the virus, and their (ii) relative value of contribution to rebooting the economy.
 - Sectors with low risk of spreading the virus such as subsistence agricultural workers as well as workers in food and agriculture may be allowed to resume their operations, provided social distancing and monitoring may be put in place. Lifting of quarantine is also crucial for the latter, which are considered to be crucial in rebooting the economy.

⁷¹ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 2)

⁷² Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 3)

⁷³ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 3) and Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 8)

⁷⁴ Sen. Binay (Annex G, p. 3)

⁷⁵ Sen. Cayetano

⁷⁶ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 7) and Sen. Lacson (Annex C, p. 9)

- Equally high value sectors such as logistics, transportation, and construction, may resume operations under strict monitoring of movement, social distancing, and regular COVID-19 random testing. Such is due to the fact that this sector may have high risk of spreading the virus.
- In effect, considering their high risk of spreading the virus and relatively less urgent role in rebooting the economy, among the last priorities for lifting the lockdown include schools and educational institutions, as well as theaters and resorts.
- It must be emphasized that any plan to modify the ECQ should be mindful of the demographics of the people involved. Thus, industries that may be reopened which employ young people should be treated differently from those industries that employ older people.⁷⁷

Extension/Suspension of Payments

- The DILG should encourage all the LGUs to extend the deadline for the payment of real property taxes (RPT) and other local taxes. DILG should also post the list of LGUs that have already passed ordinances/issuances extending the deadlines on its website.⁷⁸
- Pag-IBIG should suspend payments of contributions of both employers and employees for a reasonable period. The deferred payments may be made after the lockdown without penalties or interest.⁷⁹

Maximizing Operations of Essential Services

- Many essential businesses, which have remained open during the ECQ, could possibly be an avenue to provide more jobs. Tax incentives may be offered to such businesses with the condition that they will increase their workforce, by hiring workers that require minimal training.⁸⁰

DSWD and DepEd's Feeding Programs

- The DSWD should continue its supplementary feeding sub-program for pre-school and elementary students despite suspension of classes, to ensure their proper nutrition during the pandemic. There is currently a budget to

⁷⁷ Sen. Cayetano

⁷⁸ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 4)

⁷⁹ Sen. Angara (Annex A, p. 4)

⁸⁰ Sen. Cayetano

continue the said program and if the need arises, this can easily be increased as provided in Sec. 4(v) of the Bayanihan Act.⁸¹

Assistance from Other Countries

- The government should acknowledge the need for technical and medical assistance from countries and regions that have devised successful strategies against the spread of COVID-19, and use this information in a manner that is suited for our own needs based on our demographics.⁸²

On Law Enforcement

- In connection with the NBI's issuance of subpoenas during the pandemic, state agents must not resort to heavy-handed actions to suppress dissent.⁸³

⁸¹ Sen. Tolentino (Annex D, p. 1)

⁸² Sen. Cayetano and Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 6)

⁸³ Sen. Villanueva (Annex E, p. 7)